



Symbolic Meaning Movements Dewi Tri Sekti Dance: A Study Of Denotative And Conotative Semiotics

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the symbolic meaning of movement in Dewi Tri Sekti Dance created and performed at the Sekar Kinasih Studio, Kuwasen Village, Jepara Regency. The main focus of the study is to reveal the symbolic meaning of movement, which is studied through the denotative and connotative meanings contained in the dance movements through Roland Barthes' semiology approach. The method used is descriptive qualitative with data collection techniques in the form of direct observation of the creative process and dance forms, in-depth interviews with key informants (choreographers and dancers), and visual documentation. Data analysis is carried out through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and inductive conclusion drawing. Data validity through triangulation of sources, methods, and theories. The results of the study show that the denotative meaning as textual is contained in the movement structure of the Dewi Tri Sekti Dance, with the beginning, the core, and the end. The dance movements not only function as aesthetic elements, but also have a contextual meaning that represents cultural values, local historical narratives, and women's identities in Jepara society.

INTRODUCTION

Dance as an expressive art that emphasize use the body on space and time has a very strong symbolic capacity. Jazuli (2016) stated, dance is an important part of human life, has a role in forming and representing cultural values. Maryono (2015) emphasized dance is an expression of human soul that communicated form the beautiful movements to be appreciated by public. Each element in dance performance contains the potential meaning can be analyzed semiotically, an approach dance places not only as an aesthetic artifact but cultural text full of meaning.

Jepara Regency as an regional rich witg local wisdom and cultural identity. In addition to being known as the City of carving and the figure of woman emancipation R.A Kartini birthplace, Jepara also has an active and growing performing arts tradition. One of the art studios that plays an important role in the preservation and innovation of dance is Sekar Kinasih Studio. This studio creates various creative dance that are sourced from history, culture, and local values including Dewi Tri Sakti Dance.

Dewi Tri Sakti dance was created in 2019 and was first performed at the opening of the dance drama Sungging Prabangkara at Taman Mini Indonesia Indah. This dance describe three important woman figure in history of the archipelago namely Ratu Shima, Ratu Kalinyamat, dan R.A Kartini who represents the strength, leadership, and struggle women. This dance perform by seven women, with three dancer playing the main characters and the four as soldiers. Dewi Tri Sekti choreography combines the refined and symbolic classical dance style of Surakarta with dynamic and expressive coastal style of Jepara, result in a presentation that is not only aesthetically appealing but also full of meaning. Along with a number of performances in various forums such as The Borobudur International Art and Performance Festival 2019, The IX JKPI Rakernas 2022 in Palembang and others. This dance shows the power of local narrative packaged in a contemporary performance medium. The uniqueness of

Dewi Tri Sekti's choreography seen in movements structure which combines pure movement and meaningful movement. Movements such as geyolan, dancing, and fast rhythms accompanied create by sigh from the wiraswara and communicative performance.

There are previous studies on Dewi Tri Sekti Dance that focus on presentation, as conducted by Intan Qoriah Aprilia who examined aspects of movement, accompaniment, costumes, and properties (Aprilia, 2023). Semiotic studies in dance have been applied by Nana Noviana (Noviana, 2018) to the Asmaradana Dance, which shows the effectiveness of this approach in revealing symbolic meanings in spiritual and humanistic contexts. However, until now there has been no study that specifically analyzes Dewi Tri Sekti Dance through Roland Barthes' semiotic approach, especially in the analysis of denotative meaning as textual meaning and connotative as contextual meaning in the structure of its performance (Barthes, 2017)

The novelty of this research lies in its attempt to dissect the system of signs and symbols in Dewi Tri Sekti Dance Movement. This approach allows the exploration of ideology and cultural construction behind the aesthetics of the performance that has the meaning conveyed. This study also contributes to strengthening the narrative of female heroism in performing arts, especially dance, and encourages the preservation of local culture by presenting symbolic interpretations that can be recognized and interpreted across generations. Thus, this research is relevant in both academic and cultural contexts, especially in building awareness of the younger generation towards the historical values and courage of women through the medium of dance movement.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research employs Roland Barthes' semiotic approach (Barthes, 2017), which distinguishes between two levels of sign meaning: denotative (textual) and connotative (contextual). This approach is utilized to analyze the

symbols and meanings embedded within the movements of Dewi Tri Sekti Dance, as well as to uncover the implicit ideology within its movement variations, which are structured into initial, core, and concluding sections. This study is qualitative descriptive research, aiming to construct a systematic, factual, and interpretive description of symbolic meaning within a cultural context (Moleong, 2022). The research was conducted at Sanggar Sekar Kinasih, Kuwasen Village, Jepara Regency, from December 2024 to January 2025. Data collection techniques were carried out through three main methods: 1) Direct observation of Dewi Tri Sekti Dance performance, 2) In-depth interviews with key informants, namely the choreographer (Aris Setiasih) and the principal dancer (Retno Puji Lestari), and 3) Visual documentation, such as photographs, videos, as well as performance archives and other supporting materials.

Data sources were classified into two categories: primary data, which included direct interview results and field observations; and secondary data, comprising visual documentation, archival records, and relevant written references (Rohidi, 2017). To ensure data validity, this study employed source, method, and theoretical triangulation as a form of cross-verification for the information obtained (Sugiyono, 2018). Data analysis was performed through three stages: 1) Data reduction: selecting and filtering important data from observation and interview results; 2) Data presentation (display data): systematically organizing the data for easy comprehension and analysis; and 3) Drawing conclusions and interpretations regarding the symbolic meaning in Dewi Tri Sekti Dance based on Barthes' semiotic framework, in order to reveal the relationship between the textual and contextual forms contained within it.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The History of the Creation of Dewi Tri Sekti Dance

The history of dance creation is a crucial study for understanding the development of a dance work from various angles, including the creative process, its socio-cultural context, and the personal background of the choreographer (Hadi, 2017). Sumandiyo (2017) argues that dance creation does not occur in a vacuum; rather, it is the result of a complex interaction between the creator, the environment, ideology, and specific historical and cultural conditions.

The creation of Dewi Tri Sekti Dance was initiated by Aris Setiasih, an artist who hails from Jepara. Dewi Tri Sekti Dance was first conceptualized when Jepara was appointed as a representative for the opening ceremony of Taman Mini Indonesia Indah. The creation process itself only took two weeks. Dewi Tri Sekti Dance is a type of group dance, and its performance typically lasts for about seven minutes. Given the very short creation time, the accompanying music for Dewi Tri Sekti Dance was composed using a simple Javanese gamelan.

Initially, Aris Setiasih had the idea that three figures could serve as iconic representations of Jepara Regency, and all three were women. These three women were then expressed in a dance named Dewi Tri Sekti Dance. These three women certainly possessed distinct characters, temperaments, perspectives, and varying degrees of public familiarity. Aris Setiasih stated that these three individuals were figures who had played significant roles in the advancement of Jepara. The most well-known among them is R.A. Kartini, a pioneer of women's emancipation. The second is Ratu Kalinyamat, a brave queen who led a kingdom and was a protector of Jepara's maritime affairs. The third figure, Ratu Shima, is less popular among the general public, even though she was a just and firm leader.

“three figures to the people of Jepara and its surroundings, as many are still not very familiar with them, except for R.A. Kartini and Ratu

Kalinyamat. I hoped to advance this to a national level, showcasing that these three figures originated from the city of Jepara. Behind the resilient persona of these three figures, there must still be a feminine side to them” (interview with Mrs. Aris Setiasih, January 1, 2025).

The Structure of Dewi Tri Sekti Dance

The structure of a dance refers to the arrangement of its various components, forming a cohesive and meaningful whole within a dance piece (Sari, Malarsih, & Jazuli, 2022). This structure doesn't just pertain to the sequence of movements, but also to the dramatic and aesthetic organization that underpins the entire dance performance. Maryono (2015) explained that dance structures generally comprise three main sections: the beginning, the core, and the ending (Sutejo & Pebianti, 2024). Movements within these sections are categorized into two types: pure movements, which primarily emphasize beauty, and meaningful movements, where each motion carries specific significance.

The movements of Dewi Tri Sekti Dance were created by incorporating elements from various regional dances. The primary foundation for its movements lies in the Surakarta dance style and the coastal dance style. These two distinct styles have been harmonized to form a new creative dance. Dewi Tri Sekti Dance is structured into three main parts: the beginning, the core, and the ending. These sections feature several movement variations, including: (1) *Srisig*, (2.) *Pentangan tangan kanan atas*, (3.) *Ukelan tangan*, (4.) *Srisig sampir sampur*, (5.) *Mayuk ngolong sampur kanan*, (6.) *Perang sampur*, (7.) *Ukel tangan atas*, (8.) *Ukel kedua tangan*, (9.) *Ukel seblak sampur*, (10.) *Jogedan*, (11.) *Sampuran*, (12.) *Ukel penthangan*, (13.) *Menthang tangan*, (14.) *Sikap Tiga Perempuan*. Each of these movement variations can be classified as either pure or meaningful movements. Further details are provided below.

| Movement Structure | Pure Movement | Meaningful Movement |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| The Beginning | - <i>Pentangan Tangan Kanan Atas</i> | - <i>Srisig</i> |
| | - <i>Ukelan Tangan</i> | - <i>Srisig Sampir Sampur</i> |
| | - <i>Ukel tangan atas</i> | - <i>Mayuk Ngolong Sampur</i> |
| The Middle | - <i>Ukel kedua tangan</i> | - <i>Perang Sampur</i> |
| | - <i>Ukel seblak sampur</i> | - <i>Jogedan</i> |
| | - <i>Sampuran</i> | - <i>Sikap Tiga Perempuan</i> |
| The End | - <i>Ukel Penthangan</i> | |
| | - <i>Menthang Tangan</i> | |

Table 1: Pure and Meaningful Movements of Dewi Tri Sekti Dance

(Source: Nurul, 2025)

Table 1. The data shows that Dewi Tri Sekti Dance is categorized into three distinct structural movement sections. Importantly, each of these sections contains various movement types, and every single one carries inherent meaning. In the dance's opening section, we find pure movements, which include variations like *srisig*, *penthangan tangan kanan atas*, dan *ukelan tangan*. The meaningful movements in the opening section consist of the *srisig sampir sampur*, dan *mayuk ngolong sampur*.

The core section of the dance features pure movements, which include variations like *ukel tangan atas*, *ukel kedua tangan*, dan *ukel seblak sampur*. Additionally, the meaningful movements within this core section are comprised of *perang sampur*, dan *jogedan*. Following this, the concluding section of the dance presents its own set of pure movements. These consist of *sampuran*, *ukel penthangan*, dan *menthang tangan*.

The Symbolic Meaning of Movements in Dewi Tri Sekti Dance

According to Barthes, symbolic meaning is a crucial concept in semiotics, where a sign possesses not only a literal or direct meaning but also deeper, more cultural layers of significance. He posited that symbolic meaning is divided into two levels: denotative meaning and connotative meaning. Denotative meaning refers to signs where the signifier has an agreed-upon understanding, resulting in a concrete interpretation of the sign. In contrast, connotative meaning is the meaning held by societal myths that speak about the signifier from within the text (Barthes, 2017). Researchers study the symbolic meaning of the movements in Dewi Tri Sekti Dance using both denotative and connotative approaches. The denotative meaning is understood as the textual interpretation of Dewi Tri Sekti Dance movements. The connotative meaning, on the other hand, is derived from the contextual role of three female figures, who represent strength, leadership, and struggle, as analyzed through the following movements.

The movements within Dewi Tri Sekti Dance are not merely interpreted denotatively as a representation of characters and historical narratives. Instead, they are also understood symbolically and connotatively as a medium for conveying the values of struggle, leadership, and enlightenment for Indonesian women. Therefore, this dance possesses a broad and profound dimension of meaning. The following provides a detailed explanation of the meaning within the movements of Dewi Tri Sekti Dance.

Denotative Meaning of Movement in Dewi Tri Sekti Dance

The denotative meaning within Dewi Tri Sekti Dance, particularly in its movement, refers to the physical form of the dancer's body activity. This activity is comprised of several movement variations that are divided across the dance's structural sections: the beginning, the core, and the ending. Below, I have

provided a detailed explanation concerning the denotative meaning of Dewi Tri Sekti Dance's movements.

Srisig Movement

The denotative meaning of the *srisig* movement can be explained as a motion that displays the feet in a tip-toe position (*jinjit*), with the knees slightly bent and the body held upright. Simultaneously, the right hand is placed in a *ngithing trap cethik* position meaning the middle finger and thumb form a small circle, and the hand is bent at the hip. Meanwhile, the left hand remains straight down, following the line of the body. This movement then continues with small, quick, and rhythmic steps that resemble a light run. Crucially, throughout this sequence, the dancer maintains body balance and a firm, definite form. This specific combination of actions has been observed to be fundamental in many traditional performances.

Pentangan Tangan Kanan Atas Movement

The denotative meaning of the *pentangan tangan ke atas* movement can be explained as a body gesture where the right hand is positioned in an *ngrayung mentang ke atas*. Specifically, the right hand is lifted straight up, with fingers spread open to create an expansive or outward expression, while the left hand remains straight down, following the line of the body. The dancer's posture stays upright, and the feet are in a tip-toe position, like the *srisig* movement, which gives the impression of a body lightly lifted and ready to step forward. This movement has often been observed to signify readiness or a moment of broad presentation within the choreography.

Ukelan Tangan Movement

The denotative meaning of the *ukelan tangan* movement refers to a series of hand gestures that are performed alternately with the right and left hands. Specifically, this movement is executed with the right hand in a *ngithing* position where the index finger and thumb form a small circle while the other fingers are kept close together.

Simultaneously, the left hand is placed in a *menthang ngrayung* position, which means it is extended straight to the side with an open palm. This entire sequence is repeated three times, alternately, creating a rhythmic and recurring movement pattern. The footwork involves a *pancat menyilang* position, characterized by alternating crossed steps between the right and left feet. This specific footwork causes the body to undergo a slight shift in position, yet the dancer must maintain balance and an elegant posture throughout. Crucially, the body remains upright, consistently adjusting to the direction and rhythm of both the hand and foot movements. I've noticed that this meticulous coordination truly showcases the dancer's skill and control.

Srisig Sampir Sampur Movement

The denotative meaning of the *Srisig Sampir Sampur* movement represents a form of dance that combines elements of footwork and hand expressions, with a clear focus on visual aesthetics and technical execution. This movement begins with the feet in a tip-toe position (*jinjit*) and the body in a lowered stance (*mendhak*), while the dancer executes small, rhythmic, and light running steps (*srisig*). The body's position is maintained with full balance control, always preserving the overall flexibility and beauty of the form. The right hand is placed in front of the stomach, creating a symmetrical and organized structure. Simultaneously, the left hand is extended to the side in a *ngrayung* position (fingers held close together and slightly bent), while the right hand is bent towards the left. Following this, the dancer performs the action of *menyampirkan sampur* (draping the dance scarf) towards the left side of the body. This *sampir sampur* process is carried out gently and rhythmically, showcasing the dancer's hand agility in treating the *sampur* (scarf) as an integral part of the dance's visualization. This movement truly has been choreographed to highlight both technical skill and graceful interaction with the prop.

Mayuk Ngolong Sampur Movement

The denotative meaning of the *Mayuk Ngolong Sampur* movement lies in its intricate structure, which emphasizes a precise combination of hand gestures, body posture, and foot placement. The right hand is positioned in a *menthang* attitude, meaning the *sampur* (a long scarf or sash) is lifted towards the upper right side, with the elbow slightly bent. This creates a diagonal line extending from the shoulder outwards and upwards. This specific position showcases the arm's flexibility and strength in manipulating the *sampur* as an integral part of the dance's visual composition. Meanwhile, the left hand is in a *ngithing ngolong sampur* stance, which supports the balance of the right-hand movement. The body's position is initially *mendhak*, meaning it is lowered with the knees slightly bent. Following this, the body performs a *mayuk*, where it leans or tilts gently towards the right. The movement then continues with a specific body rotation, indicating a shift or transition of position within the dance space. This sequence of movements has been crafted to convey both aesthetic grace and dynamic spatial awareness.

Perang Sampur Movement

The denotative meaning of the *Perang Sampur* movement refers to a precise combination of hand and foot movements that collectively create a rhythmic and dynamic atmosphere; specifically, the left hand is held in a *nyempurit* position, which establishes a vertical line on the dancer's body and emphasizes the expression of the upper body, while the right hand grips the *sampur* (shawl) in a *menthang* position, ready to be moved, a hold that allows for the dynamic exploration of the *sampur* as a primary visual element in the dance, and simultaneously, the right and left feet move alternately back and forth, thereby creating a stepping rhythm that resembles a simulation of active movement, much like in a face-off scene or when physically confronting a challenging situation, all of which contributes to the movement's vibrant and purposeful impression.

Ukel Tangan Atas Movement

The denotative meaning of the *Ukel Tangan Atas* movement, a distinct variation in traditional dance, involves a combination of wrist rotations and shifts in body position. The movement begins with an *ukel*, which is a repetitive, small circular rotation of the wrist performed in front of the chest. In Javanese dance technique, this action serves to emphasize the flexibility and grace of the arm movements. Subsequently, the hand is swiftly *seblak*-ed upwards twice; *seblak* itself is a sharp, flicking or waving motion of the hand rapidly directed upwards, executed twice in succession. This movement creates a rhythmic impression and adds an accent to the upper body. The *ukel* is then performed again beside the ear, demonstrating a transition in the movement's direction from the center to the upper side, which enriches both the vertical and lateral dimensions within the dance space. Throughout these hand movements, the body remains in a *mendhak* position (slightly lowered with bent knees) and *mayuk*, meaning the torso is subtly tilted to one side, collectively enhancing the overall body expression.

Ukel Kedua Tangan Movement

The denotative meaning of the *Ukel Kedua Tangan* movement emphasizes a refined and measured manipulation of the wrists. Both hands perform the *ukel* movement simultaneously, which involves rotating the wrists to form a semicircle in front of the stomach. This *ukel* action is executed at a gentle and simultaneous tempo, reflecting the harmony of both hands within a complete movement pattern. During this, the body maintains a *mendhak* position, meaning the knees are slightly bent and the torso is gently lowered. The body also adopts a *mayuk* posture, meaning it leans or tilts softly to one side, adding expression and lateral dimension to the movement. Concurrently, the feet advance two steps, combining a *jinjit* (tiptoe) with a *napak* (full sole) action. The first step is performed with a *jinjit* position, where the toes touch the floor, which is then followed by a

napak step, where the entire sole of the foot makes contact, thereby creating a structured and dynamic forward rhythm.

Ukel Seblak Sampur Movement

The denotative meaning of the *Ukel Seblak Sampur* movement showcases the coordinated use of both hands and feet, prominently featuring the *sampur* (shawl) as an ornamental element. Specifically, the left hand performs an *ukel* movement, which involves rotating the wrist to form a semicircle beside the ear; this gesture reflects the left hand's flexibility, with its position beside the ear highlighting a vertical visual line and the suppleness of the upper body. Simultaneously, the right hand also executes an *ukel* but begins from a lower position, serving as a transition into the next movement, as it immediately performs a *seblak sampur* to the right—meaning it flips or snaps the shawl to the right side with a quick and decisive tempo. This *seblak sampur* movement activates dynamic and accentuating elements within the choreography. Concurrently, the right foot performs a *gejug* movement, which involves stomping the foot onto the floor in two directions: alternately stepping forward then moving backward. This specific footwork imparts a rhythmic impression, strengthening the momentum of the hands, and emphasizing the foot's position within the space.

Jogedan Movement

The *Jogedan* movement stands out as a dynamic and rhythmic pattern where both feet move alternately forwards and backwards, demonstrating a constant shifting of body weight in a consistent tempo. This particular movement highlights the dancer's stability and balance as they transition across the space with a regular rhythmic pattern. Significantly, the hands move in opposition to the feet, establishing a cross-coordination between the upper (hands) and lower (feet) body movements; for instance, when the right foot steps forward, the left hand becomes active, and vice-versa. The hands perform *ukel* movements (wrist rotations) near the right

and left ears alternately, with these crossing motions following the rhythm of the steps, which shows the seamless continuity between hand gestures and footwork. Throughout this, the body posture remains upright, indicating strong body control, while the alternating, crossing hand positions around the ears enrich the expression of the upper body.

Sampuran Movement

The denotative meaning of the *sampuran* movement is characterized by the dancer's feet stepping on their toes, indicating that they are balancing on the balls of their feet when moving forward or changing position; this movement showcases the body's flexibility and balance during spatial transitions. Following this tiptoe step, the feet then transition into a *mendhak* position, which involves slowly bending the knees while lowering the body; this movement provides a rhythmic accent and creates an elastic and lithe impression in the dancer's performance. Throughout this, both hands hold the *sampur*, a piece of fabric draped around the neck or waist, which serves as an integral visual accent in the dance; in this specific movement, the *sampur* is gently swayed, signaling the initiation of light and rhythmic hand manipulation, after which the hands perform an *ukel* movement, meaning they rotate the wrists while still holding the *sampur*, and this rotation produces a dynamic visual effect from the fabric's movement.

Ukel Penthangan Movement

The denotative meaning of the *ukel penthangan* movement involves the right hand performing an *ukel* gesture beside the ear, specifically by rotating the wrist outwards with the hand positioned near the right ear. This *ukel* movement demonstrates the subtle yet structured flexibility and rhythm of the hand. Simultaneously, the left hand is held in a *menthang* position, meaning it is straightened forward or to the side, parallel to the shoulder, forming a straight line that reinforces the impression of directional movement and visual balance

of the upper body. Concurrently, the left foot executes a *gejug* movement, which involves stamping the foot onto the floor with a specific rhythm. This particular action provides a strong accent on the floor and is utilized to mark the tempo or rhythmic emphasis of the movement. The entire sequence is performed alternately for both the right and left sides, thereby creating a balanced rhythm and dynamic interplay between the hand and foot movements.

Menthang Tangan Movement

The denotative meaning of the *Menthang Tangan* movement refers to a series of techniques that combine a tip-toe foot position to add a sense of lightness and mobility. This is complemented by the graceful manipulation of the hands in a *ngrayung* position, moving in various directions—upwards, sideways, and downwards—to create visually appealing and diverse lines. The alternation between the right and left hand positions serves as a form of rhythmic and symmetrical variation. Technically, this movement functions to highlight the flexibility of the upper body, the harmony between hand and foot rhythms, and the dancer's ability to maintain postural balance within a beautiful visual composition.

Sikap Tiga Perempuan

The denotative meaning of this movement is characterized by three dancers forming a semicircle, each standing in a striking and distinct posture. One dancer raises a *cundrik* (traditional weapon), another theatrically opens a book, and the third dancer lifts or extends a *gendhewa* (bow). Technically, this movement is performed in an upright position, accompanied by serious and highly concentrated facial expressions, which collectively underscore the bravery and steadfastness of the characters being portrayed.

Connotative Meaning of Dewi Tri Sekti Dance Movements

While the denotative movements solely focus on expressing the beauty of the dancer's physical form, Dewi Tri Sekti Dance doesn't stop at achieving mere visual appeal. Instead, it can be interpreted deeply through a connotative study. The following provides an explanation of the connotative meanings behind the various movements of Dewi Tri Sekti Dance.

Srisig Movement



Figure 1. *Srisig Movement*
(Source: Nurul, 2025)

The connotative meaning of the *srisig* movement symbolizes the freedom of expression granted to women in Jepara Regency, emphasizing that they can embrace this liberty without abandoning the cultural norms already embedded in their daily lives. This concept is inspired by three influential female figures: Queen Shima, Queen Kalinyamat, and R.A. Kartini. This interpretation aligns perfectly with the choreographer's statement, "*This movement was created to illustrate how a woman, interpreted through a female dancer, can experience freedom of expression. The small, quick steps are likened to the path a woman will determine for herself, as she seeks to decide the direction of her own life*" (interview with Ms. Aris Setiasih, January 1, 2025). This really highlights how the dance has been designed to convey a powerful message of empowerment and cultural adherence.

Srisig Sampir Sampur Movement



Figure 2. *Srisig Sampir Sampur Movement*
(Source: Nurul, 2025)

The connotative meaning of the *srisig sampir sampur* movement signifies the readiness of a female figure who is prepared to uphold the law impartially to safeguard the people's honor. This statement is corroborated by interview findings, specifically from Ibu Aris Setiasih on January 1, 2025, who stated that "*through the srisig sampir sampur movement, the choreographer endeavors to convey the meaning of a woman's readiness to uphold justice, defend the homeland, and champion knowledge for her nation's dignity, as indicated by the straight position of the sampur held in both hands.*" This symbolism is reflected in the figure of Ratu Shima, who was prepared to advance to the front lines, embodying courage in every step to defend the homeland from all forms of oppression; in the figure of Ratu Kalinyamat, who stood firm against threats; and in the figure of Raden Ajeng Kartini, who was ready to champion the light of knowledge and open the gates of education for her people, ensuring that women could stand equal in intelligence and dignity.

Mayuk Ngolong Sampur Movement



Figure 3. *Mayuk Ngolong Sampur Movement*

(Source: Nurul, 2025)

The connotative meaning of the *mayuk ngolong sampur* movement signifies a refined and profound gesture, where the dancer embodying Raden Ajeng Kartini demonstrates an attitude of surrender to God and to life's destiny. This symbolizes her sincerity in striving for women's rights through education and intellectual thought. This interpretation is further supported by interview data, which states, "In my opinion, the *mayuk ngolong sampur* movement was intentionally designed to show Kartini's sincerity in her struggle, portraying a sense of surrender yet remaining full of spirit to advance women through education; that's why we made this movement subtle and profound" (interview with Ibu Aris Setiasih, January 1, 2025).

Perang Sampur Movement



Figure 4. *Perang Sampur Movement*
(Source: Nurul, 2025)

The connotative meaning of the *Perang Sampur* movement symbolizes the embodiment of bravery and agility in a female leader who rises against various forms of oppression, whether they are moral, colonial, or ideological intellectual in nature. This interpretation is further strengthened by an interview with Ms. Aris Setiasih, who stated, "In the *Perang Sampur* movement, I see the essence of courage and agility in a female leader who has risen against various forms of oppression, be it moral, colonial, or the limitation of thought" (Interview with Ms. Aris Setiasih, January 1, 2025).

Jogedan Movement



Figure 5. *Jogedan Movement*
(Source: Nurul, 2025)

The connotative meaning of the *jogedan* movement signifies a resilient and courageous female figure, as a woman, no matter how strong, will ultimately return to her innate feminine essence. This interpretation aligns with insights from the choreographer, who stated in an interview, "*For me, the essence of the jogedan movement is about how a woman, no matter how strong and brave she is, will always return to her natural disposition*" (interview with Ibu Aris Setiasih, January 1, 2025). The "natural disposition" referred to here encompasses a desire to be praised, a graceful coquettishness, and an inclination to appear beautiful.

Sikap Tiga Perempuan



Figure 6. Sikap Tiga Perempuan
(Source: Nurul, 2025)

The connotative meaning of the "three women's stance" (*sikap tiga perempuan*) is conveyed through specific symbols. The *cundrik* represents resistance against colonial powers, the open book symbolizes enlightenment of perspective and knowledge, and the extended *gendhewa* signifies firmness and legal justice. This interpretation aligns with the choreographer's statement, "*I tried to convey to the audience that in the stance of the three women, the cundrik is present as the spirit of resistance, the open book as the gateway to enlightenment, and the extended gendhewa as a representation of the firmness of justice*" (interview with Ibu Aris Setiasih, January 1, 2025).

CONCLUSION

This study reveals Dewi Tri Sekti Dance by Sanggar Sekar Kinasih in Kuwasen Village, Jepara Regency, has a symbolic wealth that is full of meaning, both aesthetically and ideologically. Through Roland Barthes' semiology approach, it was found the movements of Dewi Tri Sekti Dance contain denotative meanings that are textual and connotative meanings that are contextual. The symbolic meaning of Dewi Tri Sekti Dance can be seen from the movements of the representation of three historical woman figures from Jepara as symbols of the strength of women who shape civilization through justice, courage, and thought. The movements of the embodiment of Dewi Tri Sekti Dance show that war does not always rely on weapons, but can be manifested in the form of thoughts, life principles, and real actions in defending the truth and future of the nation. Overall, these symbols represent the strength of women as guardians of fertility, protectors of life, and maintainers of harmony between humans and nature.

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