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## **Bedhaya Retnatama Dance In Kraton Surakarta Hadiningrat: A Study Of Form And Its Correlation To Javanese Women's Emancipation**

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### **Abstrack**

Bedhaya Retnatama dance is one of the classical dances from the Surakarta Hadiningrat Palace which was created directly by one of the king's daughters, GKR Koes Moertiyah Wandansari during the inauguration of the Surakarta Hadiningrat Palace Museum. The purpose of conducting this research is to find out how the form of the performance of the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance and its correlation to the value of Javanese women's emancipation, which is seen as a whole through several main elements and dance supporters. This study uses qualitative methods which are described descriptively in accordance with field conditions using data collection techniques in the form of observation, interview, and documentation methods. The results of the study show that the form of the performance of the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance includes classical dance in the style of the Kraton Surakarta Hadiningrat which has a meaning regarding women's emancipation. Bedhaya Retnatama dance has three major parts, namely: the beginning; the middle / content; and the final part, as well as the middle/content part which is still divided into three parts, namely: *maju beksan*; *beksan*; and *mundur beksan*. The Bedhaya Retnatama dance is danced by nine female dancers who have gone through a long selection and training within the internal scope of the Surakarta Hadiningrat Palace. The purpose of conducting this research is expected to be used as a medium for educating women, especially Javanese women, in behaving and making decisions in life.

**Keywords:** Bedhaya, Kraton, Performance, Dance, Women's Emancipation.

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## INTRODUCTION

Art is a medium for expressing human interests and talents which are presented aesthetically through appearance, sound and movement. Various branches of art that were born and developed in Indonesia are inseparable from the role of a woman, seen from one branch of art, namely dance, which is dominated by women. The art of dance itself is thought to have been born when human civilization began, as evidenced by the existence of images of parts of worship movements found in caves in ancient times (Jazuli, 2008, p. 74). From the statement above, it can be concluded that dance has been a part of human life since ancient times, because dance starts with a moving body, where every living human definitely needs movement in their daily activities.

The distinctive nature of a culture can indeed only be manifested in a limited number of elements within a culture. In fact, the uniqueness of a culture can only be expressed in a small number of cultural elements, namely its language, art (both ancient and modern, including ways of dressing) and ceremonies (traditional and modern). non-traditional) Kentjaringanrat in (Mustika, 2018, p. 37). It will not be separated from the name of art. Art itself has an important function in the socio-cultural life of society. With regard to the function of art, according to Feldman in (Iskandar et al., 2020, p. 189) classifies three functions of art, namely: the personal function of art, the social function of art, and the physical function of art. Bedhaya Retnatama dance is one of the traditional Javanese dances which has a deep beauty and meaning. This dance originates from the Kraton Surakarta Hadiningrat and is used as part of a dance created directly by the descendants of the royal palace. Kraton Surakarta Hadiningrat has various types of dances, including the types of dance Bedhaya, Srimpi, Wireng, and fragment dance drama (Muhammad Jazuli et al., 2022, p. 406). Among the four types of dance that exist in the Kraton Surakarta Hadiningrat, the

Bedhaya and Srimpi dances are two types of dance that must be danced by female dancers. Bedhaya and Srimpi dances are two types of dance that are considered sacred and are also considered palace attributes (Agus Tasman, 1995, p. 1).

Bedhaya Retnatama dance is a dance performed by female dancers who wear beautiful and magnificent Javanese traditional clothing. The movements of the dancers are gentle and elegant, creating the impression of the elegance and refinement of a royal princess. This dance displays a perfect blend of the beauty of movement, music and the meaning embedded in it. Between the two dances, namely the Bedhaya and Srimpi dances, the Bedhaya dance is considered more sacred than the Srimpi dance. This is because it is closely related to the main dance itself, namely the Bedhaya Ketawang Dance. The Bedhaya dance is a group dance performed by a group of female dancers and is still sustainable today at the Kraton Surakarta Hadiningrat (Kandiraras, 2022, p. 165).

The relationship between the Bedhaya Ketawang Dance and the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance is very close, this is because the movements of the Bedhaya Retnatama dance take a lot from the main dance. Apart from that, the Bedhaya Ketawang Dance, which is considered as the mother of dance and also a sacred dance, makes dance creators more confident in being able to create new dances with the provision of movements taken from the Bedhaya Ketawang Dance. The Bedhaya Ketawang dance is thought to have been created during the time when the Mataram kingdom was founded. Bedhaya Ketawang dance is a traditional palace dance which is considered sacred and noble and is used as a ritual dance in Jumenengan Raja activities. Furthermore, according to (Supriyanto, 2019, p. 167) the Bedhaya Ketawang dance is a dance embodiment that tells the love story of Susuhunan or the kings of Mataram with Kanjeng Ratu Kidul. Therefore, the Bedhaya Ketawang dance is considered a dance that has the highest degree when compared to the

other bedhaya and srimpi dances because it is considered a dance that is directly related to invisible beings.

Talking about the Bedhaya Dance, it cannot be separated from 1) the background of creation; 2) makeup and clothing; 3) forming a group of dancers; 4) musical accompaniment along with all existing regulations (Prihatini, 2007, p. 61). In line with the Bedhaya Ketawang Dance, the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance performance also has several elements of performance which are complemented by the use of dance props. This performance is unique in that it involves beautiful and graceful movements and is accompanied by typical Javanese traditional music. Bedhaya Retnatama dance also has a deep meaning and philosophy. When this form is connected with the word art, it becomes a word "performance form" which means a display of an art that can be seen and heard (Wiyoso, 2011, p. 3). As a form that appears in a dance performance, namely through motion, and the accompaniment element is a form that can be heard.

Bedhaya Retntama dance is a dance that cannot be separated from the two elements, namely the main elements and supporting elements, through the main element in the form of motion which is supported by supporting elements in the form of accompaniment and other elements, a meaning can be drawn which can be seen through the symbols in the dance. This. By utilizing the human senses, it can be seen how important the dance is in community groups. This will be used in observing the form and meaning of the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance. Furthermore, in outline the meaning of the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance is about the emancipation of Javanese women. The emancipative form and meaning can be seen through several elements of dance, including: 1) elements of movement; 2) accompaniment elements; 3) property elements. The Bedhaya Retnatama dance was performed by nine female dancers who had undergone a long training process, because the nine dancers

were dancers from the Kraton Surakarta Hadiningrat who had been prepared to perform court dances. As for other elements that have an emancipative meaning, namely the element of dance accompaniment. One of the interesting elements of the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance is the music that accompanies it. The music used consists of traditional gamelan instruments, pelog barrels. The sounds produced by these musical instruments provide the right rhythm and melody for dance movements. Through the combination of movement and music, it is hoped that the audience can feel the meaning of dance which contains the emancipated side of Javanese women.

This article will specifically discuss the form and meaning of the Bedhaya Retntama Dance performance. As it is known that usually the Bedhaya dance has a meaning in the form of a king's love story or a story about a gentle woman, so it is different from the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance which has a meaning regarding the emancipatory side of a Javanese woman. This is in line with the aim of this research which is expected to be used as educational material for the wider community, that women also have equal portions and places with men in the fields of education and employment. Furthermore, by being given the trust in terms of emancipation, women, especially Javanese women, are still women, namely women who are aware of their corridors and nature. In addition, Bedhaya Retnatama Dance also involves aspects of social and moral life, which can describe the values of kindness, decency, and courage. The method used is descriptive qualitative method using Roland Bhartes' semiotic theory as a scalpel in analyzing the meaning of the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance in depth and in more detail.

## METHODES

This study uses qualitative research methods and is described descriptively in accordance with field conditions which focus

on the form and meaning of the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance performance. Qualitative research is often referred to as naturalistic research or natural research, and is also known as ethnographic research. The research results are presented descriptively in the form of words and language, in a special natural context and by utilizing various natural methods. The approach used in this study is a descriptive qualitative approach, which explains the object under study based on the actual field conditions. This research has reasons for choosing to use qualitative research, namely: a) to find out the amount of information that is not yet widely known, b) to overcome the tendency to dig up empirical data with the aim of proving the truth of the hypothesis as a result of the hypothesis that was prepared previously, c) to overcome the tendency to limit variables the previous one and, d) to overcome the presence of rough indices.

As for this research, it will describe field activities and events descriptively. Data was obtained using three data collection techniques, namely: observation techniques, literature study, and the last is interviews. Data analysis in this study uses four stages, namely: data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and the last is drawing conclusions. The theory used to dissect the object of this research is the theory of feminism and semiotics. The two theories were chosen because the topic of this research will embody two different research variables, namely the meaning of the performance of the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance and the values of Javanese women's emancipation. The semiotic approach is used to embody the meaning contained in the elements of the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance performance, while the feminist approach is used to identify and analyze the representation of emancipatory values contained in the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance performance. Research has objects and subjects that are the target of research, it is from the objects and subjects of the research that the author collects as much data as

possible which is then processed. The object of this research is the Value of Emancipation in the Performance of the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance, namely the meaning of the performance of the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance and the emancipation values of Javanese women, while the research subjects consist of informants who serve as research informants, who act as actors, creators, and connoisseurs of the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Form of Bedhaya Retnatama Dance Performance

Before entering into the discussion regarding dance forms, the researcher will explain a little about the historical process of creating the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance. Bedhaya Retnatama dance is a dance created directly by one of the royal daughters named GKR Koes Moertiyah Wandansari or commonly known as Gusti Mung. During the reign of King Pakubuwono XII, Sinuwun, who was also the father of Gusti Mung, gave an award to his son in the field of women's emancipation. Furthermore, the award was given simultaneously with the inauguration of the Museum which is within the Kraton Surakarta Hadiningrat. The Kraton Surakarta Hadiningrat itself was established in 1745 which was founded by Ingkang Sinuhun Kanjeng Sunan Pabkubuwana II (Indah Nuraini, 2021, p. 77). Gusti Mung's father, who at that time served as King Pakubuwono XII, gave a mandate to Gusti Mung to create a work as part of a series of museum inauguration events. Gusti Mung, who has a dancer background and is active in working with the midwife, finally created the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance as an offering to PB XII and at the same time to fulfill the mandate given by his father. There are several forms of traditional folk dance in Central Java: single, pair, group and mass forms (Malarsih et al., 2022, p. 140)

Bedhaya Retnatama dance takes the theme of the emancipation side of a Javanese woman, the theme was chosen by the creator of the dance because it is a symbol of the character of the creator of the dance itself. According to (Muhammad Jazuli, 2007, p. 21) the theme is a basic idea, main idea, as well as the main idea of a dance creator. The Bedhaya Retnatama dance was created in 2003 by Gusti Mung, and was first performed at the inauguration ceremony of the museum at the Kraton Surakarta Hadiningrat. Even though it is a relatively young bedhaya dance when compared to other bedhaya dances, the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance still prioritizes court dance norms. At the time the performance of the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance was first considered an important performance for the royal family, because this dance was directly created by a daughter of the king who ruled at that time.

According to Tasman in (Zairani & Cahyono, 2020, p. 162) form is an internal and external experience of an object being. Furthermore, the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance also uses the same sequence composition as classical dance in general, namely by dividing into three major parts, namely 1) The initial part: which is filled with the preparations for the dancers of the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance; 2) The main part: the main part is filled with all the performances of the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance; 3) Final part: the final part contains dancers who have finished performing the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance and proceed with removing facial makeup and changing clothes. Overall, the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance performance takes approximately two hours, with an hour division for preparation, thirty minutes for the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance performance, and thirty minutes for removing makeup and changing clothes.

### Structure and Elements of Bedhaya Retnatama Dance

Based on the classical dance order rules, the dance is divided into three parts consisting

of the advanced beksan; exan; and retreat beksan (Rokhim, 2013, p. 228). The Bedhaya Retnatama dance also has the same structure, namely forward beksan, beksan, and backward beksan. Maju beksan is the initial or opening part of classical dance, especially Javanese dance (Herawati & Prihatini, 2019, p. 238). In the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance, the advanced part of beksan begins by walking from the side of the stage and then slowly walking towards the stage. Furthermore, when the dancers are walking, the floor pattern used is the *urut kacang* pattern and is started by dancers *endhel ajeg, batak, apit mlakungarep, apit mlaku mburi, gulu, apit meneng, endhel weton, dhadha*, and lastly, *boncit*.



**Figure 1.** Pathetan mblebet  
(Source: Kraton Surakarta Hadiningrat)

The movements performed by the dancers in the *pathetan mblebet* section are walking slowly or commonly known as *lumaksana kapang-kapang* accompanied by *pathetan* accompaniment and *sulukun* music. The dancers walk sequentially then position each and form a *montor mabur* floor pattern. After turning towards the audience, the *pengprak* gives a sign for the dancers to do the *debeg gejug* movement and then sit in their respective positions. Furthermore, after sitting down, then proceed to the core of the dance performance, namely the *beksan* in a cross-legged position or *trapsilantaya*. When the dancers walk, the *lumaksana* is accompanied by the chanting of a set of gamelan with *gendhing Pathetan Pelog Manyura*.

*Beksan* is a core part of a series of dance performances. In the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance, there is a series of movements for the

beksan, which begins with the *silantaya* worship and then continues with other movements. After completing the worship movement, the connecting motion is continued in the form of *sindheth* and barrel for *sampur pendhapan*, *ngetoni*, *wutuh pendhapan*, *sampur* again, *srisig mundur*, *golek iwak*, *gedheg*, *sirepan* towards archery, *waran*, *nangguh*, *hormatan*, *pendhapan separo*, *engkeyek*, *menthangan gendewa*, *mblangsur*, and closed with a variety of motions *jengeng* worship. The whole series of movements that are part of the *beksan* are carried out slowly or in the Javanese term *banyu mili*. The floor patterns used in the *beksan* include: *montor mabur*, *apit mlaku ngetoni*, *jeblosan*, *batak moncol tengen*, *batak moncol kiwo*, *gawang rakit tiga-tiga*. In the *batak moncol* floor pattern, the *batak* is indeed located some distance from the other eight dancers, the *batak* is on the other side of the eight other dancers. Most of the range of movements used in the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance are the range of movements taken from the main bedhaya dance, namely the Bedhaya Ketawang Dance. This was deliberately done by the creator of the dance because the creator's main goal is to continue to adhere to the rules and norms of the bedhaya dance which has gentle, *mbanyu mili*, authoritative, majestic, and sacred movements.



**Figure 2.** Srisig mundur

(Source: Kraton Surakarta Hadiningrat)

The backward part of *beksan* is the part that is at the very end of classical dance, which is usually filled with movements to leave the stage. In the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance, *mundur beksan* is performed starting from the *silantaya* offerings, then proceed with the

dancers standing together then walking slowly to become the target of the bean sequence again and at the end the movement is closed with an archery movement together. Furthermore, after shooting together, the *lumaksana kapang-kapang* accompanied by the same *pathetan* as the accompaniment at the beginning of the dancers when they entered the stage. In contrast to the forward part of the *beksan*, in the backward part of the *beksan* the order of the dancers changes, starting with *apit mlaku ngarep*, *apit mlaku mburi*, *endhel ajeg*, *gulu*, *buncit*, *batak*, *dhadha*, *apit meneng*, and in the last order, namely *endhel weton*.



**Figure 3.** Pathetan medhal

(Source: Kraton Surakarta Hadiningrat)

### Elements of the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance Performance

Dance is the basic science of the elements of beauty in a dance composition. This element is a fundamental composition, which means an arrangement of positions, movements, accompaniment, even make-up and clothing performed by the dance director (I Wayan Mastra, 2022, p. 144). Bedhaya Retnatama dance has several performance elements that have deep meaning regarding the emancipation side of Javanese women, including 1) Theme; 2) Motion; 3) accompaniment; 4) Makeup and Clothing; 5) floor pattern; 6) Property. However, it should be underlined that this article is limited to discussing a few elements, including: 1) Theme; 2) Motion; 3) Makeup and Clothing; 4) Dance properties.

The first element discussed is the theme of dance. Dance is an art form that has existed since ancient times (M. Jazuli, 2016, p. 44). As



a cultural expression, dance has a very important role in maintaining and developing the identity of a society. Each dance has its own unique characteristics, drawing on the stories, feelings and traditions of the community that created it. This is what causes a theme to appear in every process of the birth of a work of art. The overall theme of the Bedhaya Retnatama dance is about women's emancipation, especially modern Javanese women. This was stated by Gusti Mung that women actually had a role for a long time, even during the royal era, women were given their own space and place to be able to lead a government. As stated by Gusti Mung in the following interview:

*“sebetulnya dalam kehidupan berbangsa di Jawa itu, untuk perempuan sudah diberi kursi yang sama dengan pria, contohnya seperti pusat pemerintahannya saja waktu itu kerajaan, itu bahkan pemerintahan di kraton ada pemerintahan keputren (Pengageng Parentah Keputren) itu biasanya yang memegang kedudukan itu gelarnya Sedhah Mirah, terus Sinuwun itu juga ada yang namanya Kanjeng Ratu Kulon kalihan Kanjeng Ratu Wetan.”* (Interview, GKR Koes Moertiyah: 2022)

The main goal of the dance creators is to take the theme of women's emancipation, which is none other than to provide education for the public, especially women, that women are not only *konco wingking*, but can also play a deeper role in the realm of the wider community. Javanese women in modern times are indeed placed in a position which is very difficult, because on the one hand a woman must be a child who is devoted to her father and husband, and is able to be a good mother for her child. Furthermore, but on the one hand, women are currently required to be more independent and able to lift their own heads in order to meet the needs of life and also to meet their educational needs.

The next element to be discussed is motion. Movement is the main element in dance. Dance movements that develop in the palace are arranged using existing rules and regulations with the aim of obtaining dance

quality which includes form, pressure, volume, tempo and speed, Rochana in (Sari & Lestari, 2022, p. 68). The main characteristic displayed in classical dance is the movement that is flowing and has a fairly long tempo. In general, classical palace dances in the form of bedhaya and srimpi dances have a duration of between 30 and 60 minutes. This is what ultimately makes many millennials less able to enjoy classical dance.

The Bedhaya Retnatama dance has movements that are almost the same as other bedhaya dances, namely playing, slow, and *mbanyu milli*. Basically, the movements of the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance are the typical female dance movements of the Keraton Surakarta Hadiningrat style, but the movements used by Gusti Mung are movements that have already gone through a stylization process. However, apart from the slow tempo movements, the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance has its own characteristics and uniqueness that can be seen through the entire series of dances. This characteristic can be seen from the movements that have a firm and sophisticated impression amidst gentle and flowing movements.

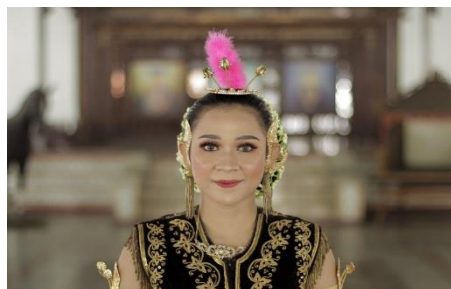
Furthermore, the next elements discussed in this study are makeup and dance attire. Make-up and clothing are two supporting elements that cannot be separated from the whole series of dance performances. Makeup itself has a function to strengthen the dancer's character and is also used to cover up the flaws on the dancer's face. The main function of make-up is to have a firm effect on the dancer's expressions to make them more attractive and in accordance with the reality of the role they are playing (Nursyam et al., 2020, p. 84). Makeup is also used as a means for dancers, both female and male dancers, to be able to express themselves through the streaks on their faces. Eze and Akas in (Malarsih & Utina, 2019, p. 77), suggest that the use of make-up and clothing is necessary with the aim of creating and strengthening the dancer's physical appearance. This is in line with the make-up used in the Bedhaya

Retnatama Dance. The make-up used in the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance is corrective make-up which aims to sharpen and define the dancer's face. The dancer's makeup that is in accordance with the character of the dance being performed will add a beautiful impression to the dance (Supriyanto, 2019, p. 170).

Apart from the make-up used in the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance which depicts the elegance of a princess, there is also a hair make-up in the form of a bun which is different from the new bedhaya-bedhaya dance. In the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance, the bun used is the *krukup* bun where the style of the bun is adapted from the bun style of the Bedhaya Ketawang Dance, as explained by Gusti Moeng in the following interview:

*"bisa dilihat dari sanggul yang dipakai itu kalau tari bedhaya lain kan biasa menggunakan jamang, kadhal menek, kalau Retnatama pakai sanggul krukup yang pakai donat seperti Ketawang, dengan maksud supaya lain daripada yang lain, dan menggambarkan bahwa wanita itu saat melakukan suatu pekerjaannya harus dalam keadaan siap, rapi, dan bersih."* (Interview, GKR Koes Moertiyah: 2022)

In addition to make-up, fashion is also an important supporting element to note, considering that this dance is a dance that depicts the emancipated side of Javanese women, so the selection of dance attire must also go through a long process. The creator of the dance chose a *rompi kotang* made of black premium velvet as the attire for the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance because the black color itself means a person's dignity and majesty. Make-up and clothing in dance is of great concern, because through the use of clothing and facial makeup, dancers can convey messages from dance creators to dance connoisseurs (Nursyam et al., 2020, p. 83).



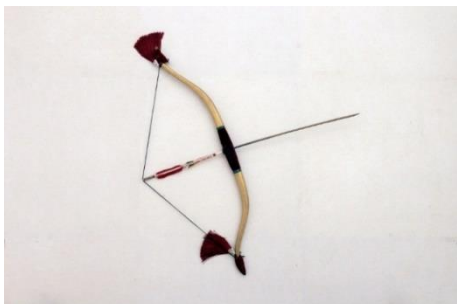
**Figure 4.** Make-up and clothing  
(Source: Kraton Surakarta Hadiningrat)

From the photo above, it can be seen that the make-up used in the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance is corrective make-up. Furthermore, for the use of a *sanggul*, namely using a *sanggul krukup* which consists of *donat* and garlands of jasmine flowers. The *donat* itself is a tool made of thin slices of pandan leaves and then formed using a *harnet* into a circle resembling the shape of a donut cake which is then wrapped using ruffles of jasmine flowers and equipped with various other head accessories in the form of: *cunduk mentul*, *cunduk jungkat*, *bulu*, dan *penetep*.

The last element to be discussed in the discussion section of dance elements is the property element. Property is an object or tool that is usually used by dancers when performing dances on stage. Property is also commonly called the absolute complement of dance in supporting the theme of the dance. According to (Condropangrawit, 2019, p. 13) classical dance has standard rules that cannot be violated. This is also in line with the use of the property used in the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance. The property used in the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance is in the form of *gendewa*. *Gendewa* was chosen by the dance creator as a dance property because it is considered to be in accordance with the theme that the dance creator wants to convey. The use of *gendewa* in the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance itself is by holding it in the left hand from the start of the dance to the end. Furthermore, the position of the arrow that continues to stick to the *gendewa* in a position like ready to shoot, illustrates that a Javanese woman should have the character of being always ready in all conditions and



situations wherever she is. This is in line with the theme of the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance which describes the emancipation values of Javanese women who are smooth, gentle, good-natured and well-behaved, and have independent, hard-working and tough characteristics.



**Figure 5.** Property used in Tari Bedhaya Retnatama

(Source: Kraton Surakarta Hadiningrat Performance)

### Correlation between Bedhaya Retnatama Dance Performance and Javanese Women's Emancipation Values

#### Motion Element Correlation

Before going into a more detailed element regarding the correlation of the performance of the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance to the emancipation values of Javanese women, the theme of this dance actually gives a big picture of the title of this dance, namely Retnatama. Literally, Retnatama consists of two elements of words in Javanese, namely "Retna" which means "woman", and "tama" which means "main" or primacy. So that in general the word Retnatama means "Female Excellence". Based on the description above, this dance will describe the rights and obligations of a woman, as stated by Gusti Mung in the following interview:

"Saya menciptakan tarian ini sebagai bentuk penggambaran pemikiran saya sebagai seorang wanita yang merupakan sosok yang dianggap lemah namun sebenarnya paling kuat dalam keluarga, karena Wanita mengurus semua kebutuhan keluarga, apalagi wanita masa kini yang mayoritas juga harus membantu ekonomi

keluarga." (Interview: GKR Koes Moertiyah, 2022).

The movements that symbolize the gentleness and strength of a Javanese woman in the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance performance are as follows:

#### Pendhapan Movement

The pendhapan movement in the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance is felt to be able to describe the gentleness of Javanese women. This subtle movement that is carried out continuously in a long tempo like the flow of water is known as "*mbanyu mili*". The *mbanyu mili* element is very visible in this variety of *pendhapan* movements. The gentle side of women is found in the series of *pendhapan* movements in the *ngembat sampur* section which are carried out very slowly starting from the hands parallel to the waist and then going down until they almost touch the dancer's calves. This illustrates that Javanese women do not need to act in a hurry, or the Javanese term that is commonly heard, namely *alon-alon waton*.



**Figure 6.** Pendhapan

(Source: Kraton Surakarta Hadiningrat)

#### Panahan Movement

The second movement that symbolizes gentleness and equality between women and men is in the *Panahan* movement. *Panahan* motions have almost the same meaning as the range of combat movements, except that in the range of motions, the points of motion that

describe gentleness and equal degrees of women and men can be seen when releasing arrows, where the arrows do not just slip away but are still stuck in the *gendewa* because it is indeed being held by a thread. *Panahan* in the Bedhaya Retnatama dance is performed simultaneously by nine dancers, but only two dancers perform archery in a standing position, because the seven dancers perform archery in the *jengkeng* position. This illustrates that women have the same degree as men, or if in Indonesian proverbs it is called " *Duduk Sama Rendah, Berdiri Sama Tinggi* ". However, this degree of similarity does not change the nature of a woman, that is, she can still be a hero in her family and social environment.

The *Panahan* Movement described above shows the gentle side and equality of a Javanese woman to men. The position of women in the practical life of Javanese society is that a woman is someone who must always strive for an orderly situation, so for that she must also have the courage to be organized (Sarno Hanipudin, 2021, p. 13). In addition to the gentle side and equality of degrees which are depicted through the variety of *panahan* movements, in the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance there is also a depiction of the emancipative side of women. This depiction is reflected in *hormatan* and *perangan* movement



**Figure 7. Panahan movement**  
(Source: Kraton Surakarta Hadiningrat)

### Hormatan Movement

The *Hormatan* is a movement that becomes a series of *nangguh*. The *Hormatan* Movement is performed by dividing the dancers into two groups, one group which is on the far left side of the stage, consisting of four dancers in the *jengkeng* position and facing the audience, then the other group of dancers stands and their backs to the audience. Even though the position of the body is different in height, all the dancers make the same movements, this illustrates that even though women are in a position below men, they can still get the same rights and can do a job that is also done by men.



**Figure 8. Hormatan**  
(Source: Kraton Surakarta Hadiningrat)

### Perangan Movement

The *Perangan* movement is widely used in classical traditional dance with different goals and purposes for each dance. The Bedhaya Retnatama dance has a variety of movements with the intention of illustrating how a Javanese woman carries out her journey in getting what she wants to achieve, in this case what is meant is a woman's rights. The *Perangan* movement also shows the inner turmoil or battle experienced by women in facing the challenges of the times, where women must be able to take on a dual role, namely as a household manager and active in the public sphere (work).



**Figure 9.** Bedhaya dancers demonstrate the *perangan* movement  
(Source: Documentation of Kraton Surakarta Hadiningrat)

### Correlation of Elements of Musical Accompaniment

In dance performances, musical accompaniment is the main element that binds and reminds the dancers to stay in line with their series of movements. The accompaniment also functions as a reinforcement for the illustration of the dance performance so as to support the conveyance of the meaning and atmosphere of the performance. As explained in the previous chapter, the accompaniment (*gendhing*) used in the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance performance is *Gending Ketawang Retnatama* which consists of several elements, namely: *Pathetan pelog Manyura, Kethuk Kalih Kerep, Kethuk Sekawan, Ladrang Sukarsih, Ketawang Retnatama Laras pelog Pathet Nem*. The use of *Gending Ladrang Sukarsih* is inseparable from the meaning of the *Gending* which strengthens the narrative of this dance performance, because *Ladrang Sukarsih* is a symbol of charm and charisma which in this case is the figure of the Javanese woman herself.

The palace tradition, which was full of patrilineal (male-centered) culture, slowly began to shift by giving women the opportunity to appear and occupy certain positions. The existence of GKR Koes Moertiyah who wanted to take part as the cultural leader of the palace was a form of

emancipation for Javanese women to take a role in the public interest.

“.. Cahaya terang yang memberi penerangan pada para wanita. Menyinari niat dan keinginan dengan menjalankan kewajiban dan berbuat kebajikan Sudah terlepas dari belenggu gelang besi. Pada akhirnya bisa mensejajarkan dengan kaum pria”

**Source:** Archive Translation of Cakepan Tari Bedhaya Retnatama, (Kraton Surakarta Hadiningrat 2003)

The catch quote above is the “*Inggah*” part. The “*Inggah*” part is the rise of the opening cake to the main cake. In the cakepan it is mentioned about how the light gives light to women. According to the results of an interview with the creator of this dance, GKR Koes Moertiyah, he stated that what the bright light meant was education. Education is full of modernism of human thought whose goal is to bring change to fight for rights and obligations which is called emancipation.

The final part of the accompaniment *cakepan* of the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance uses the Ketawang Retnatama recitation. *Gending Ketawang Retnatama* in general is the final part of the moral message conveyed by GKR Koes Moertiyah for Javanese women facing the reformation era, especially regarding their duties and responsibilities as a mother and wife.

“... Sudah merata , Merata di bumi Nusantara

*Tertata dan selamat*

*Hilang musnah kelakuan kelakuan atau watak yang jahat, Tertata dan selamat*

*Pemberian, panembah, doa dan puji*

*Pemberian dari Tuhan yang maha luhur dan yang berkuasa*

*Memberi sesuatu, Memberi ganjaran yang besar, Itulah sang maha Agung”.*

**Source:** Archive Translation of Cakepan Tari Bedhaya Retnatama, (Kraton Surakarta Hadiningrat 2003)

The quote from *Gending Ketawang Retnatama* above is the end of a series of advice given by the creator of the Bedhaya Retnatama dance. According to GKR Koes

Moertiyah, balance is the key to happiness from various aspects of life, especially in this case the role of a Javanese woman, both in household matters and in matters of public service (community) according to her interests and competence. In this Gending Ketawang Retnatama, the contents of the *cakepan* convey the message that if Javanese women are able to place themselves, then it will not damage the order of the household and society.

### Property Element Correlation

According to the choreographer of this dance, the use of the *gandewa* property does not only symbolize weapons of war which are then correlated with the emancipation of women who also have the right to take up arms. The deeper meaning of using *gandewa* is the philosophy of using *gandewa*.

*".. Gandewa tidak hanya berbicara tentang peperangan saja. Saya mengambil filosofi justru dari bagaimana seorang pemanah itu membidik sasaran dengan hati-hati dan terukur (tidak asal). Ketika pemanah melepaskan anak panah, maka brarti pemanah sudah memperhitungkan dengan matang agar tepat sampai sasaran. Selain itu, bagaimana anak panah melesat menuju sasaran memiliki nilai filosofis tersendiri yaitu bagaimana seseorang harus fokus melesat ke sasaran yang di tuju."*

(Interview, GKR Koes Moertiyah, 18 November 2022).

The excerpt from the interview with the choreographer of the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance above shows that there are many philosophical meanings contained in the use of the *gandewa* property in this dance. The big message that the choreographer wanted to convey was that through the depiction of the dancers carrying the *gandewa*, it was a symbol that Javanese women in the reform era held dual roles, namely as housekeepers as well as taking on roles in the public sphere.

### CONCLUSION

Bedhaya Retnatama dance is a dance created by GKR Koes Moertiyah Wandansari

(Gusti Mung). This dance has a different theme from the usual Bedhaya dance which discusses love, this dance actually tells about women's emancipation. The form of the performance of the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance has in common with other classical dances, namely it is divided into three major parts, including: the first part; the middle / content; and the last part. In terms of the contents of the show, it is further divided into three parts, namely: *maju beksan*; *beksan*; and *mundur beksan*. The difference that can be seen from the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance when compared to other bedhaya dances is seen from the movements that seem firm and *sigrak*. This is in line with the theme that the creator of the dance wants to convey, namely the emancipation value of Javanese women. The addition of properties in the form of *gandewa* gives a firmer and stronger impression on the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance. The make-up and clothing used in the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance, which has black and pink basic colors, further adds to the impression of the majesty and authority of this dance. The dance accompaniment used in the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance performance is *Gendhing Ladrang Sukarsih*. There are a number of *gendhing* used in the Bedhaya Retnatama Dance, including: *Pathetan Pelog Manyura*, *Kethuk Kalih Kerep*, *Kethuk Sekawan*, *Ladrang Sukarsih*, *Ketawang Retnatama Laras Pelog Pathet Nem*. Bedhaya Retnatama dance has a different and unique meaning, which tells about the emancipation of contemporary Javanese women. This meaning can be seen in the *cakepan* which is accompanied by *gendhing* which functions as a binder for the dance.

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