



## The Process of Creating Mundong Dance in Sukoharjo Regency

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### Article Info

#### Article History

Received: 20-09-2023

Accepted: 28-09-2023

Published: 30- 11-2023

#### Keywords:

*Creating Process,  
Choreography, Mundong  
Dance*

### Abstract

Mundong Dance is a new dance creation created by Christina Sri Asih Handayani in 2011 in Sukoharjo. She got inspiration from the typical product of the people of the Sukoharjo Regency, namely traditional herbal medicine (*jamu*). The creation of the mundong dance is because the choreographer hoped that there would be a unique art from Sukoharjo, and it could become an excellent dance for the Sukoharjo Regency. This research used the theory of creation from Alma Hawkins, translated by Sumandiyo Hadi. This study aims to describe the process of creating mundong dance in the Sukoharjo Regency. This study used a choreographic approach with qualitative-descriptive research methods. Data collection techniques used are observation, interviews, and documentation. The data analysis used is data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusions. The results of this study show that the creation process of the mundong dance is obtained from the idea of working. It is because of the absence of dance describing the uniqueness and identity of the Sukoharjo Regency, namely *jamu gendong*. It is poured in three stages of creation, namely exploration producing movements of *ngramu empon-empon*, *ngedoli jamu*, and *mundur beksan*, improvisation creating a movement of *manembah*, and composition combining all of the movement findings in the process of exploration and improvisation. The elements of dance choreography in the creating mundong dance consist of movements, music, makeup, fashions, properties, floor patterns, and dancers.

## INTRODUCTION

Mundong dance is a dance from the Sukoharjo Regency. Its creation is motivated by the seller activities of traditional herbal medicine called "*jamu gendong*." The mundong dance creation aims to enhance the vocabulary of new art creation, especially in art dance. The other goal of creating mundong dance is to introduce the typical product from Sukoharjo, namely *jamu* (herbal medicine), illustrated through dance. The mundong dance is one of the excellent dances in Sukoharjo Regency because the mundong dance is a typical and beautiful work of dance reflecting the sellers of traditional herbal medicine. The mundong dance uses property such as basket or *tenggok*, interpreting the herbal medicine sellers of Sukoharjo Regency, with the moves that illustrate the process of making herbal medicine to its *jamu gendong* selling, accompanied by a song. The lyrics describe the herbal medicine seller from Sukoharjo as the identity of the Sukoharjo Regency.

The mundong dance tells a typical product, namely *jamu*. *Jamu* has been famous in the Sukoharjo Regency and outside Sukoharjo Regency. Recently, the sellers of *jamu gendong* are still available in the Sukoharjo Regency, especially in the Nguter Subdistrict. Besides *jamu gendong* has been made the home industry of the local community, there are also herbal medicine factories in this area. One of the herbal medicine factories is the Sabdo Palon herbal medicine factory located at Solo-Wonogiri Street KM 20, Nguter, Sukoharjo. Even though there are various professions in the Sukoharjo Regency, for example, farmers, tailors, craftspeople, factory workers, teachers, and others, sellers of traditional herbal medicine are still widely practiced by the people of Sukoharjo. It inspires the artists of the Sukoharjo Regency to create a dance that has a theme of the traditional herbal medicine seller.

The process of the mundong dance creation is beginning from the dance experiences providing opportunities for self-directed activity and giving donations for creative development. It can be classified

into three main stages: exploration, improvisation, and composition (Hawkins, 2001, pg.23). In the exploration stage, the choreographer uses three stimulations, namely visual stimulation, kinesthetic stimulation, and audio stimulation. The improvisation stage can be implemented from anywhere, for example, sensory captures, sounds, inanimate objects, and situations. The composition stage is the process of composing movements that have resulted from the exploration and improvisation process.

The researchers also discuss the choreography form of mundong dance. Hadi (2003, pg.86-93) states that the performance elements are movement, accompaniment, makeup, fashion, props, floor patterns, and dancers. The characteristic of the mundong dance is that the dance is played by 15 to 25-year-old female teenagers. It talks about a seller of *jamu gendong*. The seller is usually a female who uses *tenggok*. The costume used is *kebaya*, *jarik*, *sampur*, and bun with corrective makeup made like the seller of *jamu* in general. The accompaniment of the mundong dance is oriented to the Surakata style with a seven-minute duration, with the lyric that illustrates *jamu* from the making process to the selling process. In addition, the movements have been processed in such a way, describing the traditional herbal medicine sellers, from the making process to selling *jamu gendong*.

The researchers refer to some previous studies as references and comparisons. One of some studies is from Ulivia (2015) in the Journal of Acta Universitatis Agriculturae et Silviculturae Mendelianae Brunensis Volume 16 No.2 2015, page number 39-55 *Proses Kreatif Penciptaan Tari Parijoto Sinangling Karya Eko Ferianto*. The novelty of this research is that the object and topic of this research are "mundong dance" and "creation process" which have never been researched before, so it is interesting to conduct research with the title "*The Process of Creating Mundong Dance in Sukoharjo Regency*".

## RESEARCH METHODS

The research method is a method used to investigate natural object conditions, where the researchers become the key instrument according to Sugiyono (2016, pg.25). Sanjaya in Marlina (2017, pg.263) states that the descriptive method is a method of research obtained to illustrate or explain systematically, factually, and accurately regarding facts and characteristics of an exact population. The method used in this study is the descriptive qualitative method. The research approach used in this study is the choreography approach. The location in this study is the mundong dance choreographer's house, in Jetis Helmet 01, Neighborhood 09, Jombor, Bendosari, Sukoharjo.

The primer data based on Suhadi are data obtained by the main and supporting informants. Secondary data based on Suhadi (2012, pg.66-67) are data that function as a complement or support of the primer data, such as kinds of literature of books, articles, journals, and many others. The data that should be submitted in this study are primer data and secondary data. The primer data are about the creative process of mundong dance creation involving dance creation and choreography. In addition, the secondary data are the location of the dance creation.

The data collection based on Sugiyono in Rosida (2016, pg.28-29) is the most strategic step in the study because the main objective of the study is to obtain data, namely observation, interview, and documentation. Observation, interview, and documentation were held for the first time on January 24th, 2021, in Jetis, Helmet 01, Neighborhood, 09 Jombor, Bendosari, Sukoharjo. The second observation, interview, and documentation were held on April 7th, 2021, in the Central of Herbal Medicine Industry, Nguter Village, Nguter Sub-district, and Jamu Sabdo Palon Factory.

Observation aims to find out the location of creating mundong dance, the place of the central industry of *jamu* and the factories of *jamu*. The result obtained in this observation stage is to find out the practice

location of the dancers, to find out the place of the choreographer and composer's houses, and to find out the location of the central industry of creating *jamu* in Nguter Village. The interview was conducted by the mundong dance choreographer, Christina Sri Asih Handayani, regarding the process and steps of the creation, choreography elements, and the names of the movements. The result of the interview is the availability of various mundong dance movements, namely the initial movement such as *sisig*, *jalan step lembahan*, *nyukil empon-empon*, *madahi empon-empon*, *numplek empon-empon*, *nyortir empon-empon*, *ngumbah empon-empon*, *miles Empon-empon*, and *mManembah*. The middle movements are *nutu empon-empon*, *ngramu empon-empon*, *nyaring jamu*, *ngisi jamu*, and *ngedoli jamu*. In addition, the final movement range consists of *mundur beksan*. The documentation of this study is regarding the photos of the movements, the photos of the research location, and the photos of the properties, makeup, and costumes. The interview was conducted by the mundong dance's composer, namely Yohanes Sri Raharjo, regarding the music accompaniment of mundong dance.

Researchers need a triangulation technique for the accuracy of the research based on Sugiyono in Pratiwi (2017, pg.202). This study used a triangulation source. The researchers took the data collection from some informants with the same technique. Moreover, the data analysis techniques used data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Mundong dance is a dance work created by a couple whose profession as artists from Sukoharjo Regency, Christina Sri Asih Handayani, S.Sn and Yohanes Sri Raharjo, S.Sn in 2010. They invented the mundong dance because of the choreographer's desire to enhance the new creative arts vocabulary, especially in the field of dance arts.

The word mundong itself is an acronym from the words *jamu* and *gendong*. *Jamu* is one of the typical products of the people of

Sukoharjo. It functions as alternative or traditional medicine whose concoction comes from plants and spices, for example, papaya leaf, ginger, kaempferia galanga, turmeric, clove, and others. The word *gendong* is a technique used by the Sukoharjo people to sell traditional herbal medicine (*jamu*). The packaged herbal medicines (*jamu*) using certain bottles for *jamu* are put into a basket or *tenggok* and then sold by holding *jamu* executed by a woman wearing a shawl and walking from house to house. (Interview with Christina on January 24, 2021).

### The Process of Creating Mundong Dance

The creative process is the initial capital for choreographers in creating works. The creating process of the mundong dance goes through several steps as follows:

#### Exploration

According to Hawkins in Prastya (2017, pg.5), exploration is the experience of exploring movements by thinking, imagining, feeling, and responding to find and produce the various movements according to the creation idea. In this step, the choreographer explores by observing the conditions and actions of the traditional herbal medicine sellers. Therefore, it can be concluded that the stimulations used by the choreographer are visual stimulation, kinesthetic stimulation, and audio stimulation.

Visual stimulation is a stimulation obtained from the choreographer's activities in seeing the seller of *jamu* from the initial making process (various motions of *ngramu empon-empon*), praying (various motions of *manembah*), selling *jamu* from house to house (various motions of *ngedoli jamu*) until the sellers go home (various motions of *mundur beksan*).

Kinesthetic stimulation is a stimulation obtained from imitating the existing motions and then developing and customizing them to the mundong dance creation. For instance, in the motion of playing *tenggok*, there are so many dances

that use *tenggok* as the property, and it can be developed and customized with the dance. In Mundong Dance, the *tenggok* is a place not only for selling *jamu* but also for washing *empon-empon*, filtering *jamu*, and becoming the dancer's chair.

Audio stimulation is a stimulation obtained from the existing motions, and it is customized with the music accompaniment or the music accompaniment that is customized into the motions, for example, the *mundur beksan* movement. The composer makes the music accompaniment first. Then, the choreographer and the dancers look for motions that match the music accompaniment that has been made.

#### Improvisation

The improvisation step is a creative effort that is often marked with spontaneity. The motions happen easily, and each new motion will create other motions that can expand and develop the movement experience based on Hawkins (2003, pg.29-39). In the execution, the choreographer looks into the motions produced by the dancers and chooses the movements considered the best and most appropriate to the work theme. The improvisation step of the mundong dance is various motions of *manembah*. This movement is received from the observing result of the activity of the *jamu* seller who is praying before going to sell *jamu*.

#### Composition

According to Hadi in Restiana & Asih (2019, pg.155), composition is a process of arranging movements that have been produced from exploration and improvisation processes. The composition of the mundong dance is divided into three parts, namely the initial part, the middle part, and the ending part. The explanation of various motions is as follows: The initial parts include *sisig*, *jalan step lembehan*, *nyukil empon-empon*, *madahi empon-empon*, *numplek empon-empon*, *nyortir empon-empon*, *ngumbah empon-empon*, *miles empon-empon*, and *manembah*. The middle parts consist of *nutu empon-empon*, *ngramu empon-empon*, *nyaring jamu*, *ngisi*

*jamu*, and *ngedoli jamu*. Moreover, the ending part consists of *mundur beksan*.



Figure 1. Various motions of *manembah*  
(Source: Agnes, 7 April 2021)

### The form of Mundong Dance Choreography

Murgiyanto in Maharani Hares Keksi (2016, pg.16) states that the form of dance presentation or choreography is interweaving between elements of expression or concrete embodiment through audience forms and can appreciate the content of the dance. A dance performance can be seen generally from several performance elements, namely movements, music accompaniment, makeup, costumes, properties, floor patterns, and dancers, according to Hadi (2003, pg.86-93).

#### Movement

According to Malarsih (20070, pg.4), movement is a main medium in dance. The intended movement is the movement that had been produced through the special processes by the artist based on the feeling, fantasy, and imagination of the artist's intellectuality.

The movements used in the mundong dance are movements developed from society's activities in making *jamu*. The movements begin with finding the *empon-empon*, processing the *empon-empon* into *jamu*, and preparing before the selling activity until how to

sell *jamu* by holding. Those movements provide the element of beauty. According to Christina, she says that the movements of the mundong dance include the initial part, the middle part, and the ending part.

#### Music Accompaniment

According to Muljono (2018, pg.86-87), music is the spirit inside the dance that functions as accompaniment in a dance. The Javanese ethnic calls it *karawitan* which is a group of musical instruments or *gamelan*.

The mundong dance's music composer is Yohanes Sri Raharjo who is the husband of the mundong dance choreographer, Christina Sri Asih Handayani, while the music players are the artists from the Sukoharjo Regency with the coordinator, Mr. Pardi. The mundong dance uses Javanese Gamelan with the music accompaniment of the pelog barrel. The use of the pelog barrel is because it can achieve tones that are still rarely encountered and used, with the accompaniment characteristic of the mundong dance having a spiral pattern, namely a pattern of tones repetition from 1 to 7, for example, 2 3 5 1 2 3 5 4 5.6. 5 7 6 5 7.6. 4 5 6 7 6 4 5 3 4 2 3 1.

#### Makeup

According to Kusnadi in Lutfyana (2015, pg. 14), makeup comes from the word *tata* which means rules, and *rias* which means forming or painting the face to suit the theme or character presented.

The makeup used in the mundong dance is corrective makeup. It functions to beautify and cover all the imperfections of the face. The corrective makeup aims to match the *jamu* seller character played by the woman.

#### Costume

Soedarsono in Susanti (2015, pg.50) states that costume involves all the clothes, shoes, head accessories, and other equipment, both seen or unseen by the audiences.

In the mundong dance, the dancers use pine made into a bun and head



accessories with *kembang goyang* and imitation flowers for the upside part of the dancers. The costumes used in the body are long-sleeved striated *kebaya*, *stagen* on the inside, *camisole*, and *jarik batik parang*.

#### Property

Irdawati (2018, pg.24-25) adds that property is a tool needed by someone in performance where its function is as equipment of the performance.

The property used in the mundong dance is *tenggok*. *Tenggok* is a description of the *jamu* seller who sells it by holding. The sellers carry *jamu* by using *tenggok* and shawl. *Tenggok* in the mundong dance functions as a place or a bottle place for *jamu*, a filter, a place to store *empon-empon*, and as a chair.

#### Floor Pattern

Soedarsono in Nofitri (2015, pg.123) says that floor pattern is a line in the floor passed by the dancers. Floor patterns ease the dancers to decide where to move and do movements.

Floor patterns use straight-line and curved floor patterns, such as horizontal, diagonal, zig-zag, circle, and curve. The mundong dance usually uses curved floor patterns to give a religious impression. It is implemented in the *manembah* movement describing the *jamu* seller who is praying and grateful for all the blessings so she can sell smoothly and get an abundant fortune.

#### Dancer

A dancer is someone who should understand the dance movement techniques and dance elements, namely *wiraga*, *wirama*, and *wirasa*, when dancing. Jazuli adds that dance can only be concreted, appeared, and seen if it is performed by the dancers (Restiana 2019, pg.116).

The mundong dance is a group dance, so the dancers are more than two people. In the initial of creating mundong dance, it was danced by six dancers who were 17-25 years old.

## CONCLUSION

Mundong dance is one of the dances from the Sukoharjo Regency. The mundong dance was created by Christina Sri Asih Handayani in 2011. The mundong dance is a new dance creation that is danced in a group using *tenggok* as the property, which tells about how the traditional herbal medicine seller makes, sells, and carries it using *tenggok*. Traditional herbal medicine (*jamu*) is one of the typical products from the Sukoharjo Regency that has become one of the identities of Sukoharjo so that it is known as a city of *jamu*.

The process of creating mundong dance is obtained from a working idea. It is the absence of dance describing the uniqueness and identity of the Sukoharjo Regency. Then, the idea is poured into three stages of creation, namely exploration, improvisation, and composition. The exploration stage carried out by the choreographer is to look for and find the movements of *jamu* sellers through visual, kinesthetic, and audio stimulations. Meanwhile, the improvisation stage produces movements that appear spontaneously to beautify movements. In addition, the composition stage aims to compile all movements obtained from the exploration and improvisation process into a series of beautiful movements. It consists of the initial, middle, and ending parts. The form of the mundong dance choreography consists of themes, movements, music accompaniment, makeup, fashions, properties, and floor patterns.

The mundong dance will be known by society well through the support of the Sukoharjo Regency government in involving the mundong dance in various events. Researchers also hope the government and the people of Sukoharjo Regency support artists to continue working, especially in creating new dance works to increase dance arts in the Sukoharjo Regency.

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