



Reconstruction of The Selodang Mayang Dance at Amantubillah Palace in Mempawah, West Kalimantan Province

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Abstract

This article is the result of research that focuses on the main issue of how the process of reconstructing the Selodang Mayang dance at Amantubillah Palace takes place. The Selodang Mayang dance is a welcoming dance that developed within the Royal Palace of Amantubillah in Mempawah Regency, West Kalimantan Province. The aim of this research was to understand and explain each stage of the reconstruction process of the Selodang Mayang dance, which aimed to revive the Selodang Mayang dance. The forms of the reconstructed Selodang Mayang dance include 1) Movement, 2) Music, 3) Costumes and Makeup, 4) Props, and 5) Floor Patterns. This research employed a qualitative method with an interaction analysis approach. The results of this research revealed a series of movements of the Selodang Mayang dance that use basic graceful steps of lenggang, with arms waving left and right in accordance with the rhythm of the accompanying music. In these movements, there are absolute rules from the palace regarding the motifs of the Selodang Mayang dance, such as graceful steps, arms not lifted beyond 45 degrees, a smiling face, no spinning movements, not turning the back to guests, keeping the legs from spreading wide, and adapting the movements to the lyrics used in the accompanying Selodang Mayang dance. The research findings also include the process conducted by the Selodang Mayang dance reconstruction team in the effort to preserve classical dance art. The objective of this research was to understand, study, and preserve the cultural values existing in Mempawah Regency, so that the Selodang Mayang dance continues to exist and thrive within the palace and the local community.

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INTRODUCTION

Amantubillah is one of the kingdoms located in West Kalimantan, specifically on Pedalaman island in the East Mempawah District, Mempawah Regency. In 1740, Amantubillah Palace was led by Opu Daeng Menambon, who originated from the Lowu Kingdom in Southeast Sulawesi Province. Opu Daeng Menambon is also the husband of Queen Kesumba. Opu Daeng Menambon's leadership is estimated to have lasted from 1740 to 1761. Currently, in 2022, Amantubillah Palace is led by Raja Mardan Adi Jaya Kusuma Ibrahim M.Sc as the twelfth king of Amantubillah Palace (Bernadeta Rosariana 2021). In the Amantubillah Palace, there is a dance that developed within the palace, namely the Selodang Mayang dance. According to Raja Mardan Adi Jaya Kusuma Ibrahim, the Selodang Mayang dance was created by the ancestor of Raja Opu Daeng Manambon, named Ratu Mas, and it can only be performed by unmarried women who have royal lineage and use Selodang Mayang as a prop in their dance (interview, May 3, 2018). During the reign of Raja Opu Daeng Manambon and Queen Kesumba, this dance began to be performed within the Amantubillah Palace in Mempawah to welcome guests or the king to the Amantubillah Palace in Mempawah.

In line to its name, this dance uses the Selodang Mayang prop, which can be found on coconut trees or betel nut trees. The Selodang Mayang dance is classified as a unique dance because it can only be performed by women and not by men. The movements in the Selodang Mayang dance depict the graceful, beautiful, delicate, and gentle characteristics of the palace's dayang-dayang (ladies-in-waiting) of Amantubillah. This can be seen in various movements, such as the lenggang or graceful steps, arms not lifted beyond 45 degrees, a smiling face, no spinning movements, not turning the back to guests, and keeping the legs from spreading wide. Over time, the Selodang Mayang dance was no longer performed and eventually disappeared. As a result, the researchers faced difficulties in finding information about the dance. This research was

conducted not only as an effort to document the existence of the related dance but also to find its meaning and usefulness manifested in the construction of the dance form. This was done to read the dance not only through texts but also through the actual movements. Thus, the position of the authors in such a context are as a researcher and a reconstructor. This dance was revived in 2008 through a reconstruction process by Deki Prasetya Ardiansyah, who received direct orders from Raja Mardan Adi Jaya Kusuma Ibrahim M.Sc to recreate and revive the dance. The efforts made by the Amantubillah Palace to reconstruct the Selodang Mayang dance aim to revive the classical dance that once thrived within the kingdom.

There have been some similar previous studies including (Herawati dan Prihatini (2019) which discusses the reconstruction of the Bedhaya Endhol – Endhol dance performed by Gusti Kanjeng Ratu Wandansari at the Kesunanan Surakarta Hadiningrat Palace. Another study (Utami, Fretisari, dan Tindarika 2020) discusses the Presentation Form of the Selodang Mayang Dance at the Kadriah Sultanate Palace in West Kalimantan. Ika Ayu Kuncara Ningtyas (2016) discusses the Reconstruction of the Bedhaya Sukoharjo Dance by M.TH. Sri Mulyani. Furthermore, there is a discussion on the Reconstruction of the Baris MagPag Yeh Dance in Subak Tegan, Adat Village, Menwi District, Badun Regency (Ni Luh Putu Wiwin Astari I Ketut Gede Rudita Ni Dewi Septiandriani 2022). Next, there is a study on the Reconstruction of the Chinese Raja Legong Dance at the Puri Taman Saba, Blahbatuh, Gianyar, A Creative Process (Susanti, Seramasara, dan Arshiniwati 2019). These studies share similarities with the current research. The similarities lie in their material and formal objects, which revolve around reconstruction. The material object similarity lies in both studies discussing the Selodang Mayang dance. However, the Selodang Mayang referred to in the previous studies differs from the one currently being studied, particularly in terms of the location where the dance

developed. The similarities found in the previous research can assist the current research, especially in terms of the tools used. What sets this research apart is its material object which focuses on the reconstruction of the Selodang Mayang dance, which is a classical dance at the Amantubillah Palace. The stages of reconstruction will undergo deconstruction in accordance with the principles of the dance.

According to the Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), deconstruction means rearrangement. Meanwhile, the French term deconstruction, "déconstruire," means dismantling a machine, but with the intention of putting it back together. Therefore, deconstruction is a positive process as it involves dismantling and overturning the meaning of a text, not merely for the purpose of dismantling but rather to reconstruct the deconstructed text (Akbar 2020). The deconstruction of the Selodang Mayang dance is carried out by gathering oral data through interviews conducted by the researchers. Additional data is obtained from the lyrics used to accompany the Selodang Mayang dance. The state of artistic development at the Amantubillah Palace serves as the reason for Raja Mardan Adijaya Kusuma Ibrahim to undertake the reconstruction of the Selodang Mayang dance. The Selodang Mayang dance once existed during the reign of King Opu Daeng Menambon has now become extinct. This forms the basis for the idea of reconstructing the Selodang Mayang dance. The reconstruction process involves various artistic teams at the Amantubillah Palace.

The development of traditional arts, especially dance, in Mempawah Regency is very slow. This affects the palace and catches the attention of the King of Mempawah. In addition, the lack of interest among young people in the arts has resulted in stagnant artistic development in Mempawah Regency. Based on this phenomenon, a study is needed for the reconstruction of the Selodang Mayang dance and its reorganization, both internally and externally, at the Amantubillah Palace. The purpose of the

reconstruction is to restore the existence of the Selodang Mayang dance. The innovations made in reconstructing the Selodang Mayang dance do not change the meaning of the dance itself. Instead, the aim is to make the Selodang Mayang dance more appealing, so that it captures the interest of young people and the community, and encourages them to get to know and learn the dance.

RESEARCH METHOD

To address the issues regarding the reconstruction, this research used the descriptive analysis method. The descriptive analysis method was employed by the researchers to analyze and solve problems in collecting the necessary data to discover the presentation form of the Selodang Mayang dance (Moleong dan Surjaman 1989). This descriptive analysis method was used to analyze, gather, and explain the presentation form of the Selodang Mayang dance. The research took a qualitative form, which is non-numerical. The data can be in the form of documents, audio and video recordings, and all qualitative data. The primary data source was the main informant, Raja Mardan Adi Jaya Kusuma Ibrahim M.Sc. The data collection techniques employed in this research included observation, interviews, and documentation. The techniques used to test the validity of the data in this research involved prolonged observation and source triangulation.

The ethnochoreological approach is highly recommended for this research. Ethnochoreology is a multidisciplinary approach to studying ethnic dance from both textual and contextual perspectives (Pramutomo, 2007:92) cited in (Putri Yunita Permata Kumala 2019). The research on the Selodang Mayang dance focused on data collection through interactive, descriptive, and analytical methods. The aim was to gather information through interviews and direct interaction with individuals who have a connection to the research object. The data obtained in the field was then analyzed and described. The data analysis technique involved systematically searching and

organizing the data obtained from interviews, field notes, and documentation. This included organizing the data into categories, breaking it down into units, synthesizing it, identifying patterns, selecting important aspects for further study, and drawing conclusions to enhance understanding by oneself and others (Sugiyono, n.d. 2008). During the data analysis stage, information was obtained regarding the history, function, movements, themes, makeup, costumes, accompanying music, performance venues, and floor design.

Koentjaraningrat states that the interview method is used to obtain oral information directly from the sources, allowing for responses and finding answers to specific questions (Materi 2022). The conducted interviews yielded several data, including the dance's history, an overview of the movements, and the function of the Selodang Mayang dance, which was frequently performed during the reign of King Opu Daeng Menambon. The interview process took place at the Amantubillah Palace with Raja Mardan Adijaya Kusuma Ibrahim M.Sc. as the informant.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Reconstruction Process of Selodang Mayang Dance

According to the Indonesian Dictionary (Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia, 1978:410, "rekonstruksi" means rebuilding towards a renewed system or reestablishing what once existed. Meanwhile, Djelantik (1999:85), defines "rekonstruksi" as the creation of something new based on what previously existed but is no longer or nearly extinct. Therefore, it can be concluded that reconstruction in a dance context is an activity that portrays an event through movements and expressions accompanied by music as a means of conveying specific messages.

Dance reconstruction is an effort to revive a dance form that no longer exists and present it as a complete performance through processes that involve data excavation and reinterpretation. Based on

the phenomenon, the researchers formulated two problems: the process of Selodang Mayang dance reconstruction at the Amantubillah Palace in Mempawah Regency, and the form of presentation of Selodang Mayang dance at the Amantubillah Palace in Mempawah Regency. To answer the question regarding the reconstruction process, the researchers used the concept proposed by Sri Rochana Widyastutiningrum in her book, "Revitalisasi Tari Gaya Surakarta" (Revitalization of Surakarta Style Dance), which discusses the revitalization process that includes dance reconstruction. The revitalization, as one of the efforts to develop Surakarta style dance, is carried out through several activities, including excavation, reconstruction, reinterpretation, and reactualization of a dance, with the aim of reviving, preserving, actualizing, and enhancing the value of Surakarta style dance (Widyastutiningrum 2012, 25). The second problem regarding the form of Selodang Mayang dance presentation was addressed using the concept of form proposed by Slamet MD, in the book "Melihat Tari" (Observing Dance), which mentions that the elements that shape a dance consist of movement, rhythm, expression or emotion, costume, performance venue, and dancers (MD 2016).

The Investigation

The data collection on Selodang Mayang dance is obtained from the Amantubillah Palace. The initial step in preparing the reconstruction process conducted by Deki Prasetya Ardiansyah is done by holding a meeting with the Amantubillah Palace officials, attended by the King, the Commander, and the royal artists. The meeting is conducted to plan the initial steps of investigating Selodang Mayang dance and to prepare the necessary equipment for the investigation process, such as musical instruments, props, and rituals. During the first meeting, a team is formed to be involved in the investigation process. The team also selects the individuals who will be involved in the investigation of Selodang Mayang dance.

The invited sources include the King of Amantubillah Palace, Mardan Adijaya Kusuma Ibrahim M.Sc, the Commander of Amantubillah Palace, Bambang Permadi (late), and the palace guards who are involved in the process of investigating Selodang Mayang dance.

Deki Prasetya Ardiansyah himself is one of the guards of the Amantubillah Palace who has received an honorary degree/title as Oeloebalang Muda. Further, the process of recreating this dance requires a different process, which is by performing various specific rituals. According to Stallsmith (2008), this new performance context requires a shift in meaning related to its original performance. The current generation of performers represents a different understanding and interpretation of the old rituals. In the process of tracing the footsteps and movements of the Selodang Mayang dance, the reconstruction team performed several rituals. These rituals were performed by communicating with the ancestors through bodily means. The rituals began with floral baths, flower eating, and so on. This was done because there were no physical evidence or written records of the dance. However, the Selodang Mayang dance is believed to have once existed and developed in the environment of the Amantubillah Palace. Therefore, the reconstruction team is motivated to find traces of the Selodang Mayang dance.

The creation of the Selodang Mayang dance movements is obtained through the lyrics used in the dance. According to Abrams (1981:38), the essence of deconstruction is a way to read texts that have a foundation in the prevailing language system, affirming the structure, integrity, and predetermined meaning (Fudin 2014). The lyrics in the accompanying music of the Selodang Mayang dance can assist in the process of reconstructing the Selodang Mayang dance. Through the lyrics of the dance accompaniment, the team is able to describe the flow and movements of the dance visually. The synchronization between the movements and the music makes the Selodang Mayang dance more captivating.

After obtaining an overview of the Selodang Mayang dance movements, the reconstruction team starts to have meetings with the parties involved in the revitalization. These meetings are conducted to ensure that the movements obtained through the ritual process yield results. The discovered movements are then presented directly in front of the Amantubillah Palace King for approval regarding the dance movements.

With the approval of the king, the reconstruction team begins to work on or actualize these movement motifs, resulting in a complete Selodang Mayang dance. Gradually, the process is carried out until the dance is completed perfectly. The most important aspect of these movements is the meaning of the gestures and the distinctive characteristic of the palace itself, which is reflected in smooth, gentle movements that uphold high standards of propriety.

The next stage in the reconstruction of the Selodang Mayang dance is the selection of the dancers. In this process, the royal court orders the search for young unmarried female dancers. The purpose of selecting young unmarried women is to uphold the dignity of the palace itself. Based on the information conveyed by King Mardan Adijaya Kusuma Ibrahim, M.Sc, the Selodang Mayang dancers during that time were the ladies-in-waiting of Ratu Mas. This is the reason why the recruitment of Selodang Mayang dancers must be young unmarried women. Further, the investigation is carried out at the Amantubillah Palace, Pedalaman island, Mempawah Regency, the place where the Selodang Mayang dance flourished. This reconstruction process is kept secret and only involves the palace authorities and the participating artists. The activity lasts for approximately 4 weeks. The research is conducted through interviews, rituals, and the actualization of movements. It is greatly appreciated that the efforts made within a relatively short period of time have been successfully realized.

The Arrangement

The research results are further developed through the arrangement of movements, music, costumes, and props in the Selodang Mayang dance. The rearrangement is carried out by choreographer Deki Prasetya Ardiansyah, resulting in more concise movements that represent the Malay community within the Amantubillah Palace. The dance is performed with an odd number of dancers, as one of the dancers will carry the Selodang Mayang prop, always positioned in the front and center. Each stage of the reconstruction process is carried out with consensus and approval in accordance with the orders of the Amantubillah Palace King. Therefore, this process is conducted meticulously and gradually. It is done to minimize errors in the arrangement of the Selodang Mayang dance. After reaching an agreement, the arrangement process begins. The elements that are arranged include movements, music, props, and floor patterns.

The Movement

The initial step done by Deki Prasetya Ardiansyah is to provide material on the dancers' embodiment, i.e., the meaning of the dancers' bodies. After that, basic dance training is given. Even though the selected dancers are already skilled in dancing, the focus should be on basic movement training in dance. After acquiring all the material on the dancers' embodiment, the choreographer begins to provide material on the performing techniques of the Selodang Mayang dance. The material for the dance movements is started by demonstrating the dance movements based on counts. The movements given are gentle and graceful. In this process, the dancers are expected to memorize the given movements, with the hope that they can internalize each movement in the Selodang Mayang dance. Besides memorizing and internalizing the dance, the dancers also need to master and express each movement in accordance with the rhythm of the accompanying music.

The foundation of the Selodang Mayang dance movements is the "Lenggang," which means a gentle walking movement, with the arms waving to the left and right in accordance with the beats of the accompanying music. The Selodang Mayang dance does not focus on physical strength in its execution, but rather, the most important aspects are the mental and spiritual aspects, aiming to convey messages through each variety of dance movements to the invited guests or audience. The development of the basic motifs in this dance sometimes gives the impression of monotony. This is due to several reasons: first, the basic movement motifs are obtained through investigation processes; second, there are absolute rules from the palace regarding the motifs of the Selodang Mayang dance, such as the "lenggang" walk, raising the arms not exceeding 45 degrees, maintaining a subtle smile, avoiding spinning movements, not turning the back to the audience, keeping the legs from opening too wide; and third, the obtained movements are adjusted to the lyrics used in the dance accompaniment.

In his writing, Slamet MD explains the understanding of spontaneous and simple folk dance. Spontaneous in this context means that the dance emerges as an expression related to the beliefs of the community. They perform a ritual, and unintentionally they dance and wear attire that they consider appropriate and respectful for their performance. This is what is meant by spontaneity and simplicity, where the movement expression is not dictated by rigid rules (MD 2016). The previous statement aligns with the movements found in the Selodang Mayang dance, which are relatively simple as the movements tend to be repetitive and are spontaneous expressions of the dancers.

The initial position in the Selodang Mayang dance is for the dancers to enter in a procession from within the palace. They run in small steps and form a formation. After that, they stand while bowing their bodies and heads as a sign of respect to the arriving guests. Next, the dancers perform the "lenggang" with a subtle smile. The arms of the dancers sway up and down, to

the right and left, forming various floor patterns until the dance concludes. It ends with a respectful gesture, and the dancers clear the way for the invited guests to enter.

The presence of movement restrictions in the Selodang Mayang dance gives it a distinct quality. The entirety of the Selodang Mayang dance movements follows the lyrics of the accompanying music. The attractiveness of the Selodang Mayang dance is not solely based on its historical significance, but also on the uniqueness of its movements, props, and music. Amidst the modernization of the Selodang Mayang dance, it is hoped that it can continue to thrive in the Amantubillah Palace through the process of reconstruction.

The Music

The accompanying music for the Selodang Mayang dance is arranged by Budi Harun, who is an artist in the field of music. The music arrangement for this dance uses only one instrument, which is the organ, mixed with song editing applications. Although the dance itself is classical, its accompanying music is modern. The lyrics of the song accompanying the Selodang Mayang dance are created directly by the King of Mempawah, Marda Adijaya Kusuma Ibrahim M.Sc. Here are the lyrics of the song in the Selodang Mayang dance.

*Rapi berbaris, nak dare manis berjinjit
kaki
Melangkah pelan, senyum dikulom
tangan melambai
Senyum yang manis tangan menepes,
runtohan hati
Membawa tarian di depan umum,
dilapang landai
Ini tarian Selodang Mayang darilah
dolo'
Untuk menghibor, pare tetamu...
dijunjung hormat
Kalaulah bukan karena kan sayang,
kepala dijunjung
Tak kame' hatur para tetamu tinggi
nya derajat
(note: repeat the lyrics twice)*

Basically, the movements of the Selodang Mayng dance are based on the lyrics used, as if they provide a depiction of the dancer's movements. For example, in the first verse "rapi berbaris, nak dare manis, berjinjit kaki, melangkah pelan, senyum dikulom tangan melambai," the dancer enters in a neat line, tiptoeing with slow steps, and waving their hands, often referred to as lenggang or graceful steps.

Furthermore, the accompanying lyrics of the Selodang Mayang dance also command the dancers to smile. In essence, as a way of welcoming guests, they should be greeted with a smile. This ensures that the guests feel happy and respected when visiting the Amantubillah Palace. In these lyrics, the Selodang Mayang dance song also explains the location and purpose of this dance.

The lyrics found in the music accompanying the Selodang Mayang dance carry deep meaning and messages. The meaning and message revolve around the obligation to receive guests with joy, courtesy, and politeness. In the lyrics of the Selodang Mayang song, there is also a hidden message that this dance has existed since ancient times. It means that the Selodang Mayang dance has been present since the reign of Opu Daeng Menambong's kingdom.

The Costumes and Makeup

The costumes worn in the Selodang Mayang dance feature distinctive elements from the Malayu culture of Mempawah Regency. They include the baju kurung (a traditional Malay blouse), a long skirt that covers down to the ankles, the Pandan Antenna hair bun, swaying flowers, jasmine blossoms, and earrings. As for the makeup, a beautiful makeup style is applied.

The attire and makeup in the Selodang Mayang dance enhance the grace and beauty of the dancers. The baju kurung worn by the dancers is also one of the traditional costumes of the Malayu people in West Kalimantan Province. Here are some examples of the costumes, positions, and various movements in the Selodang Mayang dance.

The Props

The most important aspect of the Selodang Mayang dance performance is the props. True to its name, the prop used in this dance is the Selodang Mayang, also known as Mayang Kelapa or Mayang Pinang. Mayang Kelapa or Mayang Pinang refers to the young fruit of the coconut/pinang tree.

The Mayang Kelapa/Pinang has a shape resembling a boat, inside of which are the young fruits of the coconut or pinang tree. The philosophy behind the Mayang is to serve as the precursor fruit, ensuring its safety and readiness to grow larger (Suhendra 2019). Similarly, the meaning of Selodang Mayang used in this dance is that the Amantubillah Palace takes care of and respects its guests while they are within the premises of the Amantubillah Palace. The Floor Pattern and Performance Venue

The Selodang Mayang dance is performed to welcome the arrival of the King's guests who visit the Amantubillah Palace. Therefore, indirectly, the Selodang Mayang dance is performed in the courtyard of the Amantubillah Palace or on the front terrace of the Amantubillah Palace. The floor pattern in the Selodang Mayang dance does not have a fixed set of rules.

The floor pattern is designed to enhance the aesthetic element of the Selodang Mayang dance. Common floor patterns used include squares, diagonals, straight lines, horizontals, and circles. In creating these floor patterns, the dancer holding the Selodang Mayang prop should be positioned in the middle or front. This is because the prop holder serves as the focal point of the dance. The presence of the main dancer in the Selodang Mayang dance is also the reason for having an odd number of dancers.

The Socialization/Dissemination

The presence of the Selodang Mayang dance signifies that in Mempawah Regency, particularly in the Amantubillah Palace, there are still classical dances that have evolved within the palace environment. Classical dances are traditional dances that originated within the

palace and have been passed down through generations among the nobility (Ananda 2021). Although this dance can only be performed within the palace and with the King's permission, it can be enjoyed by people from all walks of life.

Students are allowed to study this dance for their final projects. Several students from Tanjungpura University, specifically from the Performing Arts Education program, have conducted research on the Selodang Mayang dance. The exclusivity of this dance does not rule out the possibility of introducing it outside the palace. To preserve the existence of the Selodang Mayang dance, it is always performed during significant palace events to welcome distinguished guests to the Amantubillah Palace.

CONCLUSION

The Selodang Mayang dance is one of the cultural arts found within the Amantubillah Palace in Mempawah Regency. This process of reconstruction has helped rediscover and preserve the classical dance that exists in Mempawah Regency. The results obtained are not the exact movements but rather an overview or embellishment of the movements. The results of this reconstruction have been approved by Raja Mardan Adi Jaya Kusuma Ibrahim M.Sc and have been frequently performed at traditional events held at the Amantubillah Palace, such as Robo-robo.

The reconstruction process of the Selodang Mayang dance includes several stages: investigation, arrangement, and socialization or dissemination. Equally important in this reconstruction is the process of deconstruction. The deconstruction refers to the dismantling of the Selodang Mayang dance to create something new and with aesthetic value within the dance itself. The Selodang Mayang dance, as one of the identities of the Amantubillah Kingdom, functions to describe the attitudes, character, and courtesy held by the people of Mempawah Regency.

Further, in the reconstruction process, the choreographer and research

teams discovered numerous symbols and meanings within the movements of the dance. The Selodang Mayang dance is considered as a sacred dance within the Amantubillah Palace, with specific requirements during its presentation, such as the ritual of seven-colored flower bath. The Selodang Mayang prop is stored one day prior to the performance, and a permission from the King of Mempawah is obtained. The previous explanations are the results of the Selodang Mayang dance reconstruction carried out by the Amantubillah Palace. To this day, the Selodang Mayang dance continues to be performed at royal events in the Amantubillah Palace.

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