



Characteristics of East Sumatran Malay Dance as a New Dance Creation Engineering Foundation

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Abstract: Malay Dance is one of the local content dances from North Sumatra Province - Indonesia. It is important that Malay dance is well understood by various groups, both students and the general public as art connoisseurs. Understanding of Malay dance aims to increase insight and comprehensive knowledge related to Malay dance and its characteristics. Thus, through a deep understanding of the characteristics of Malay dance, the skills to create new dances become more creative. This study aims to formulate or formulate the characteristics of Malay Dance as the foundation for engineering new dance creations. The results showed that the characteristics of Malay dance were grouped into three major parts, namely: a) head movement group which includes four (4) kinds of motion; b) group of hand movements which includes fourteen (14) kinds of motion; and c) group of footwork which is divided into eleven (11) kinds of motion. All of these characteristics become the foundation for engineering the creation of a new Malay dance by using the elements of energy, space, and time as a foothold.

Keywords: characteristics of Malay dance; create a new dance; engineering foundation

I. Introduction

Ethnic Malays are scattered in various parts of Indonesia. Some of them are Tamiang Malay, Palembang Malay, Jambi Malay, Riau Malay, and Deli Malay. Deli Malays are an ethnic group that inhabits the eastern coast of North Sumatra. Lah Husni in Takari (2008:48) states that the Coastal Malays of East Sumatra are a mixture of Malays who have settled on the Coast of East Sumatra and immigrant Malay tribes such as Johor, Melaka, Riau, Aceh, Mandailing, Javanese, Minangkabau, Karo, Indian, Bugis and Arabic.

Until now, Malay is called Malay if are Muslim, speak Malay, and use Malay culture. This statement does not mean that ethnic Malays are ethnically inclusive or do not respect differences. Malays really value differences, governed by customs in a fair and dignified manner. Takari (2005) conveyed that Malay custom applies four concepts in carrying it out, namely: 1) true custom, 2) custom, 3) custom, and 4) custom. These four concepts are rooted in Islamic law, and are used as the basis for all forms of Malay art, such as dance. The Islamic nuance that is thick in traditional Malay dances, such as the Malay dance from East Sumatra, becomes its own character that should be maintained, even though it develops into new dance creations if the breath of tradition is the basis.

Malay dance is important to be well understood by various groups, both high school students, students especially in the field of dance, as well as the general public as art connoisseurs. Understanding of Malay dance aims to increase insight and comprehensive knowledge related to Malay dance and its characteristics. In addition, through a deep understanding of the characteristics of Malay dance, the skills to create new dances become more creative.

The creation of dance prioritizes the creativity of the choreographer in exploring ideas to be visualized in his work. Progress and innovation continues. Young choreographers continue to explore potential sources of ideas to be used as new dance creations. The beauty value of a newly created dance is not only influenced by the creativity of the choreographer, but also by the source of the idea. One potential source of ideas is the Malay dance with the rules for doing it. Through creative ideas, Malay dance choreographers can be a source of ideas in the creation of new dances.

II. Review of Literature

Malay dance besides relying on the rules in Islam also has its own characteristics that are different from dances in general. The introduction and understanding of the characteristics of Malay dance needs to be formulated. The formulation or formulation of the characteristics of Malay dance by the research team is expected to deepen the sense of belonging for anyone who becomes the audience, as well as become the foundation for engineering new dance creations.

This study aims to: a) Formulate / formulate the characteristics of the Malay dance of East Sumatra, and b) Applying the rules of the science of dance creation as a foundation in the implementation of new dance creations for Malay dance. This study uses an ethnographic investigative method, to foster a systematic understanding of culture from the perspective of others. In addition, a qualitative approach is also applied. This approach was chosen because this approach can explain history, behavior, people's lives, and cultural systems. Informants and material experts in this study are Malay dance artists from East Sumatra in Medan City, who understand and master the movement techniques and characteristics of Malay dance and their philosophical background.

The highest achievement of the research study on the formulation of the characteristics of the Malay dance of East Sumatra as the foundation for the engineering of new dance creations is to produce the formulation of the characteristics of the Malay dance of East Sumatra which can then be applied by students, students, teachers, and the general public in engineering to create a new Malay dance.

III. Discussion

3.1 Malay Dance

Malay dance is one of the cultural products of the people in the archipelago that do not escape experiencing the historical and social dynamics and influences of society. As a product of a community entity, Malay dance in its history could not refer to a territorial boundary of one region, and even one particular country. It is even a product of a nation that can be traced to its presence before the existence of national borders, so that its existence can be referred to many countries in one region. As a culture, Malay basically cannot be claimed as belonging to one particular country.

The identity of the Malays can be traced through their art forms, such as fine arts, music, theater, and dance. As part of their culture, Malay art expresses how the Malay community expresses their ideas while still prioritizing the norms and rules of life according to their customs. This also applies when they carry out artistic activities and creativity. That is why, the dances of the Malay Ethnic always reflect the subtleties of the Malay people's character.

The formulation of Malay dance characteristics can be understood as a formulation of the characteristics of the East Sumatran Malay dance that distinguishes it from dances from other ethnicities, even from fellow Malays such as Riau Malays. East Sumatran Malay dance is a dance that uses Islamic religious principles as a basis. This is in line with their philosophy of life, where the Malays in carrying out their lives always rely on five principles, namely:

- a. Malay is Islamic, universal and democratic, and prioritizes deliberation.
- b. Malay is cultured, reflected through language, literature, dance, music, clothing, and behavior.
- c. Malays are civilized, expressed in the respect of the young for the elders and the role of the older in guarding the younger.
- d. Malays are dispersed, meaning that the Malays prioritize peace and harmony to create an orderly and respectful society.
- e. Malays are knowledgeable, insisting that every individual of the Malay tribe has a solid knowledge and religion so that they are respected by the general public.

Related to the five principles above, the concept of dance in Malay culture has four terms. Sheppard (1972:82) describes it as follows:

There are four different words meaning 'dance' in the Malay language. Tandak emphasizes the dancer's steps, Igal means posturing or dancing with emphasis on body movement. Liok is applied to low bending and swaying of the body, and Tari describes dancing in which the graceful movement of arms, hands, and fingers plays the chief part. The Malays attach so much importance to the fourth of these that Tari is always used to mean the Malay style of dancing.

In Indonesian, the above opinion can be translated as follows:

There are four different words that mean 'to dance' in Malay. Tandak emphasizes the dancer's steps, Igal emphasizes body movement, Liok is used to refer to low bending motions while rocking the body, and Tari describes graceful movements of the arms, hands, where the fingers play the main part. Malays attach great importance to these four things, so Tari is always used to describe Malay dance styles

In the life of the Malay community, dance is always present by including a sense of friendship and brotherhood, as well as expressing the spirit of togetherness and cooperation. This is implied and expressed through the art of Ronggeng. In the context of the history of Malay civilization, Ronggeng art became the basis for creating Malay dances and songs. For example, the dances of Mak Inang Pak Malau, Mak Inang Pulau Kampai, Lenggang Patah Sembilan, Anak Kala, and others were developed from this Ronggeng tradition. It also includes the development of dance moves and song two songs into dance and music of Pulau Sari, which was later developed again in the form of Serampang Dua Belas, into a legendary art in the context of Malay and Indonesian national culture.

In response to this, Edi Sedyawati stated "Malay dance has a distinctive position among other regional dances in Indonesia because this dance style was once "proclaimed as a "national" dance around 1958, especially in its aspect as a social dance."National" social dance was something that was deliberately sought at that time, to compensate for the excessive influence of Western dances that plagued the social circle of Indonesian youth at that time.

Malay dances are still alive today in North Sumatra, such as the nine obligatory dances created by Sauti and OK Adram. These nine dances, apart from being referred to as obligatory dances, are also referred to as traditional dances, because they are always part of various events or ceremonies of the Malay community. The existence of these nine dances remains part of the activities of the Malay community in the midst of globalization, which is an interesting phenomenon. The term obligatory dance is used to emphasize that these nine dances are standard dances, whose variety of movements and the order in which they are performed are absolute and cannot be changed. The nine dances are: the Lenggang Patah Sembilan dance, the Mak Inang Pulau Kampai dance, the Tanjung Katung dance, the Black Manis dance, the Serampang Twelve dance, the Anak Kala dance, the Sri Langkat dance, the Cek Minah Sayang dance,

The designation as a traditional dance for the nine dances is in line with the opinion of Soedarsono (1979) and Kasim Achmad (1977) which is based on traditional patterns, becomes a community identity, has characteristics that do not change, has been determined from generation to generation, is perceived as a owned by the local community, and its processing is based on the taste of the supporting community. Sal Murgiyanto (2004) and Kartono (2005) reinforce it by conveying that dance that develops in certain communities, based on and guided by the customs adopted by the community that owns it is traditional dance, where its use is related to the life cycle or customs of the community.

3.2 Malay Dance Characteristics

Like other ethnic dances, Malay dance also has distinctive characteristics to show its identity. Based on the character and nature of the movement, Malay dance is divided into two types, namely movements for male dancers and movements for female dancers. However, the uniqueness of the movement in Malay dance which later became one of its characteristics is seen in the character and nature of the movement. The movements of male and female dancers are generally the same. The difference lies in the volume of movement, where male dancers adopt silat movements in their dance moves as seen in one of their mandatory dances, namely the Mak Inang Pulau Kampai dance.

Another characteristic of Malay dance is seen in the 'sing-sing' movements of female dancers. This movement is part of almost all Malay dances, both traditional dances, traditional creations, and even regional Malay dances. The 'sing-sing' motion is a sign for the Malay community who live and live on the beach, where women will lift their cloths when they are on the beach to avoid sea water that will wet their cloths.

The next characteristic is manifested through the motion of the feet which is named the Double Step or Cleatuk range of motion. Common people call it a double step. All Malay dances that use musical accompaniment with a dance tempo will use this variety of motion. This variety of movements shows that Malay dance is a dynamic, agile, and agile dance.

The explanations related to the characteristics of the Malay dance movements above are then grouped into three major parts of Malay dance movement techniques, each of which has its own meaning, purpose, and purpose. Here's the explanation.

1. Head movement group which includes four (4) kinds of motion, namely:
 - a. Toleh

Movement of the head by 'shifting the gaze towards the left or right' with the intention to see or express something that is felt.

b. Teleng

Movement of the head by 'tilting the head to the left or right' with the intention to see or express something that is felt.

c. Look up

Move your head by lifting your chin slightly up with a slightly elevated view.

d. Bow down

Head movement by lowering the chin down, followed by a downward gaze, so that the eyelids seem to be closed.

2. Hand movement group which includes fourteen (14) kinds of motion. Each form of movement shows the characteristics of movement or the peculiarities of Malay dance, namely:

a. Jump

The shape of the fingers where the thumb and index finger touch each other and are close together, the other four fingers adjust by prioritizing the beauty of the finger shape.

b. Sing-sing

The fingers of both hands form a jump, but the thumb and index finger clamp the scarf (can be with cloth) around the groin. Shows how coastal women on the beach raise their cloths so they don't get wet in the sea.

c. Blush

Same with the jump movement, close the index finger with the thumb of the right hand which is placed near the collar of the shirt. The left hand like sing-sing above the groin of the left leg.

d. Dodge

Movement of the hand with the right finger pointed straight up, as if rejecting or parrying something. Left hand finger sing-sing position.

e. Swing

Swinging both hands up and down, forward and back alternately, the shape of the fingers of both hands is pinched.

f. Leaving

Both hands are graceful, moved up and down alternately following the footsteps like a person walking, but given stylization / smoothing motion.

g. Squeak

It is a movement in which the hands are opened wide to the sides with slightly different heights, and are in front of the dancer's body.

h. Lentik

The shape of the fingers in Malay dance where the thumb is straight forward, while the four fingers are close together.

i. graceful

Gemulai is the movement of opening the hand to the side, then turning the wrist followed by the five fingers.

j. Saok

The right hand is like a curvature with the fingers up at waist level in front of the navel, and the left hand is sing.

k. Sambar

A fast motion where the hand is swung like a grab with the finger 'pinch' position.

l. Sow Flowers

Starting with the right hand above the left hand in front of the navel, then simultaneously open the hands as if they were sowing flowers in a diagonal line.

m. Pick Flowers

Both hands are in front of the chest / body. The right and left hands alternately rotated like picking flowers.

n. Worship

It is a gesture of respect at the beginning of a dance such as the dance of eating betel or other welcoming dances. The palms of the hands are close together or clasped together.

3. Footwork group which is divided into eleven (11) kinds of motion.

a. Step One

Stepping motion with one foot forward and preceded by the right foot.

b. Step Two

Alternating double-stepped foot movements for movement in place, walking/forward, turning or circling.

c. Shake

Move the foot by moving the heel and the tip of the thumb alternately touching the floor.

d. spike

Foot movements that are almost the same as jiggle but are moved while jumping.

e. Steps on the Stem

Foot movements step forward or backward in a way as if climbing on a rod.

f. Side Step

The right foot opens to the right side with the tip of the big toe touching the floor. The position of both hands in front of the chest, right hand on top of the left hand in a bent position.

g. Step Down

Step in place while slowly lowering the body to a squatting position. Swinging hand.

h. Step back

Footsteps step backwards preceded by the right foot.

i. Play Step

The leg rotates 180 degrees, preceded by the right foot and then followed by the left foot until it returns to its place.

j. Side Shake:

The movement of the legs opens to the side like a jiggle, the difference is in the movement of the hands.

k. Humming Feet From Behind:

Footsteps step to the right side, followed by the left foot from behind the right foot, the right foot steps back to the nan, and the left foot closes next to the right foot. Vice versa.

3.3 Create a New Dance

Engineering in this study is a word that represents the intent of applying science to solve problems through knowledge and practical experience in creating new dances. Creating or choreographing a new dance can be done in two ways, 1) based on the traditional dance movement pattern, and 2) independent of the traditional dance movement pattern. Whichever method is used, creating a new dance can be achieved by developing the elements of dance, namely space, energy, and time.

The way the dance stylist thinks in developing dance moves can be done separately, for example, only space, or time, or energy. According to Febrianto (2020) dance is an expression of the soul of human art expressed through beautiful movements and rhythms that give satisfaction to others. Dance, as one form of art is inseparable from the context of the problem of art in the Community (Adlin, 2020). The development of performing arts, especially dance, will not be far from the development and habits of the community as cultural owners (Martozet, 2021). Because choosing to develop only one element will be related to the other two elements as well. In this way, it is easier for dance stylists to use their creativity to produce new dance moves while still prioritizing the artistry of their movements.

The development of dance movements based on space is carried out by first understanding and mastering what is meant by 'space' in dance, namely 'space where dancing' and 'space formed by the dancer's body'. The space in which to dance is related to the dancer's ability to translate the area of the room that can be reached by the dancer's body through his movements. Whereas in the space formed by the dancer's body, the dance stylist must master that there are at least eleven (11) spaces produced by the dancer's body, namely: 1) front room, 2) back room, 3) right side room, 4) left side room. , 5) upper space, 6) lower space, 7) front right diagonal space, 8) front left diagonal space, 9) right rear diagonal space, 10) rear left diagonal space, and 11) circular space formed by the dancer's body when turning. In addition to these 11 spaces, dance stylists can also develop dance spaces based on the 19 top designs, such as flat designs, deep designs, advanced designs, and others.

Developing dance moves based on the time element can be done by utilizing the tempo of motion and the tempo of the dance accompaniment music, both internal music and external music. In Malay dance, the tempo of humming is known to describe the tempo of humming or slow tempo, the tempo of two songs or medium tempo, and the tempo of dance or fast tempo. A new dance creation will be more beautiful and interesting, if the dance stylist does not only use one tempo in his work, but a combination of the three tempos. In this way, dynamics, one of the compositional elements that must be present in new dance creations, can be realized.

In the development of dance movements based on energy, dance stylists can take advantage of the types of energy used in dancing, such as intensity, accent, and quality. Intensity is the inner strength used by dancers so that dance movements can be well

expressed. Accent is a word to describe sudden and contrasting movements with the aim of generating dynamics in new dance creations.

IV. Conclusion

From the explanation above, engineering the creation of a new Malay dance will be optimal if the dance stylist understands and masters the characteristics of the standard Malay dance movements. Utilizing three major groups of standard Malay dance movements with their characteristics, namely the head movement group, hand movement group, and footwork group, and developing it into a new dance using three dance elements, namely energy, space, and time, it will definitely produce a new dance that is considered artistically.

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