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ENCEK GRENJENG DANCE BY NIKA KUSUMAWATI : A CHOREOGRAPHIC AANALYSIS

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Abstract: The Encek Grenjeng Dance comes from Bojonegoro Regency and was created by Nika Kusumawati in 2018 at the East Java Dance Festival. This dance, performed by nine young female dancers, is inspired by the Encek Nganten ceremony tradition in Grenjeng Hamlet, Sratujejo Village. This study aims to describe the creation process and choreography of the Encek Grenjeng Dance. The research uses a descriptive qualitative method with a choreographic science approach. Data was obtained through observation, interviews, and documentation studies, then validated using triangulation of sources, techniques, and time.

The research results show that the dance creation process includes exploration, improvisation, and composition. Exploration involves exploring ideas and movement sources from community activities, improvisation involves developing movement according to the theme, and composition involves arranging the movements into a complete dance presentation. The choreography includes floor design, overhead design, music design, dynamics, themes, make-up, costumes, and properties. All of these elements form the character of the dance which represents the local wisdom values of Bojonegoro Regency. The make-up used is corrective make-up, the clothes are dominated by dark blue and white, and the props are in the form of sampur and encek as symbols of the community's agricultural produce.

Keywords: Choreographic, Encek Grenjeng Dance, Nika Kusumawati.

1. INTRODUCTION

Dance is a branch of art that plays a vital role in society, serving as a medium of entertainment, a means of communication, and a platform for cultural expression. In their creative process, each choreographer possesses a distinct background, ideas, and artistic approach, whether addressing themes of nature, social life, tradition, or religious values. These differences give rise to dance works with their own distinct character and identity. Therefore, the study of choreography is crucial for understanding the creative process, the principles of movement composition, and the presentational structure that shape a dance work. Choreography is not only understood as the technique of composing dance movements, but also as an artistic process that produces a complete dance composition with aesthetic value.

The Encek Grenjeng Dance is a dance work originating from Bojonegoro Regency which is inspired by the traditions of the Grenjeng Hamlet of Sratujejo Village. The source of inspiration for the creation of the Encek Grenjeng Dance comes from the phenomenon of a community ceremony tradition as a form of respect for a pair of ancestors, namely Akuwu Basunanda and Nyi Lebdasar. This tradition is called the encek nganten tradition which has become an important part of the life of the people of Grenjeng Hamlet, Sratujejo Village. In the ceremony, there is a procession of the people's party "Encek" as a place for serving crops and food which is a symbol of gratitude for the produce of the earth. This tradition begins with purification at the nganten well which is the place where the



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ancestors of Akuwu Basunanda and Nyi Lebdasari purified themselves. This tradition is held twice a year in August and September. The Encek Nganten tradition was chosen as the inspiration for the Encek Grenjeng dance to highlight the values of local cultural wisdom of Bojonegoro Regency. This demonstrates a commitment to the Regency's cultural traditions.

This dance was created by Nika Kusumawati in 2018 to represent Bojonegoro Regency in the East Java Dance Works Festival. The choreography of the Encek Grenjeng Dance is arranged in the form of a group dance performed by nine young female dancers, highlighting a variety of movements based on the *tayub* style tradition. The dance movements are combined with the use of *encek* properties as symbols of offerings and white sampurs that symbolize purity, thus strengthening the symbolic value contained in the presentation. The dance accompaniment uses Javanese gamelan in *pelog* scale, while the costumes are dominated by dark blue and white colors that are developed according to the artistic needs of the performance. Through the combination of elements of movement, music, costume design, and properties, the Encek Grenjeng Dance not only presents aesthetic value, but also serves as a medium for preserving local culture. Starting from the need to participate in the 2018 East Java Dance Works Festival, this work successfully won an award as one of the 10 best dance works presented.

This study uses Alma Hawkins' (1988) theory of the creative process to analyze the processes of exploration, improvisation, and composition. The choreographic form is analyzed using La Meri's (1986) theory, which includes floor design, overhead design, musical design, dramatic design, dynamics, theme, make-up, costumes, and properties.

2. METHOD

The research entitled Encek Grenjeng Dance by Nika Kusumawati: Choreographic Study uses a descriptive qualitative approach. The qualitative approach aims to understand and examine phenomena related to the creation process and choreographic forms of the Encek Grenjeng Dance in depth. This research describes various aspects including the choreographic process and choreographic forms contained in the Encek Grenjeng Dance through data obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation studies. The data is then analyzed and presented in the form of descriptive descriptions by utilizing various natural methods so as to provide a complete picture of the choreography of the Encek Grenjeng Dance (Sugiyono, 2010:107).

The formal object of this research is choreography. The material object is the Encek Grenjeng Dance, performed in 2018 at the East Java Dance Festival, and published on YouTube. The research location is at the home of the informant, Nika Kusumawati, located at Jl. Lisman Gang Subingan Lorong 2 Block B Number 36 B, Campurjo, Bojonegoro Regency, East Java Province.

The information sources used were observed and obtained from people who contributed to the creation of the Encek Grenjeng Dance. These individuals are categorized as sources who truly understand the dance they created. Researchers obtained data sources from the sources themselves, namely Nika Kusumawati, Rian Susilo, and Yasinta. In this study, the primary data source is the Encek

Grenjeng Dance. Secondary data sources were obtained indirectly through a video of the Encek Grenjeng Dance , performed in 2018 at the East Java Dance Festival, published on YouTube. The instruments used in this study were an observation guide, an interview guide, and a documentary study.

This data collection technique can be done by directly observing the object or phenomenon being studied to obtain accurate information. In this study, the researcher used non-participant observation. In carrying out this observation, the researcher was not directly involved in the Encek Grenjeng Dance process . The observation conducted in this study aims to collect data regarding the Choreography Study in the Encek Grenjeng Dance by Nika Kusumawati. Furthermore, the researcher interacted with the informants in the form of questions and answers with the aim of the researcher being able to obtain information from the research subjects. Interviews were conducted with 3 informants including Nika Kusumawati as the dance choreographer, Rian Susilo as the composer, Yasinta as the dancer. The interview technique uses structured interviews as a data collection technique by knowing what information will be obtained. Therefore, in conducting the interview, the researcher has prepared a research instrument in the form of a prepared interview guide. The interviews that have been conducted will later be used as a source of information to obtain data on the Choreography Study in the Encek Grenjeng Dance by Nika Kusumawati from Bojonegoro Regency. As for the research instruments used, the researcher used an interview guide and several visual instrument aids, namely stationery, cellphones, and laptops. In addition, the researcher analyzed photos and videos of the Encek Grenjeng Dance when it was performed at the 2018 East Java Dance Festival published on social media YouTube.

In this study, the researcher used data analysis models from Miles, Huberman, and Saldana in Sugiyono. Based on the research results to find information about data through observations, interviews with sources, then summarized according to the study of the Encek Grenjeng Dance choreography by Nika Kusumawati, the researcher focused the results of observations and interviews based on the predetermined focus of the problem. Data analysis was carried out through the process of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. From several data obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation studies, it will later be analyzed in order to be presented in the form of valid data presentation. After the above stages, there is data validation that will make the data we are studying gain credibility.

Data validation in this study was carried out to ensure the validity and credibility of the research findings. The technique used is triangulation, which includes source triangulation, technical triangulation, and time triangulation. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from several sources involved in the creation of the Encek Grenjeng Dance, such as choreographers, dancers, and supporting parties, so that the data obtained could strengthen each other. Technical triangulation was conducted through the use of several data collection techniques, namely observation, interviews, and documentation studies of the same sources . Meanwhile, time triangulation was conducted by collecting data repeatedly at different times to ensure the consistency of the information obtained. The application of these

three forms of triangulation aims to increase the validity and credibility of the data so that the research results regarding the study of the Encek Grenjeng Dance choreography can be scientifically accounted for.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 *The creation process*

A choreographer is an individual who plays a role in creating a dance work by processing ideas, creativity, and artistic experience into a movement composition that has meaning. One of the choreographers who contributed to the development of dance arts in Bojonegoro Regency is Nika Kusumawati. Nika Kusumawati was born in Bojonegoro Regency on April 15, 1984 to Sumindar and Nunuk Yuliati. His educational history began at SDN Banjarejo 1, continued to SMP Negeri 2 Bojonegoro, SMA Negeri 2 Bojonegoro, then pursued higher education at PGRI Ronggolawe Tuban University. His interest in dance began to grow when he was in high school and continued to develop until it became his profession. In addition to her work as a teacher at the Bojonegoro Regional Secretariat 2 Kindergarten, Nika is also active as a teacher and was the leader of the Angling Dharma Studio from 2013–2024. Through the studio, she plays a role in developing the younger generation and preserving traditional dance arts in Bojonegoro Regency. Thanks to her ability and dedication, Nika Kusumawati was entrusted by the Bojonegoro Regency Culture and Tourism Office to create a dance work that represents the region at the East Java Dance Works Festival. One of the works he successfully created was the Encek Grenjeng Dance in 2018. This work is inspired by the Encek Nganten ceremony tradition that lives in Grenjeng Hamlet, Saturejo Village, Baureno District, Bojonegoro Regency. Through the Encek Grenjeng Dance, Nika Kusumawati embodies local cultural values, community gratitude, and the spirit of preserving tradition in a creative and innovative dance form.

The exploration stage in the creation of the Encek Grenjeng Dance became the basis for the formation of the dance movement concept. Based on the results of observations and interviews, Nika Kusumawati explored ideas through observations of the encek nganten tradition in Grenjeng Hamlet, Saturejo Village, Baureno District, Bojonegoro Regency. This process is in line with the opinion of Alma M. Hawkins (1988) that exploration is the stage of exploring various movement possibilities based on the stimuli obtained. Community activities in this tradition are then transformed into a variety of movements that still reflect local cultural identity. The results of the exploration produced a graceful yet firm movement character, the use of grouped floor patterns, and variations in levels that strengthen the meaning of togetherness and the value of respect in tradition. This process also involved dancers and musicians through various movement experiments, thus enriching the choreographic form of the Encek Grenjeng Dance as a dance work rooted in the culture of the Bojonegoro people.

The improvisation stage in the creation process of the Encek Grenjeng Dance plays a crucial role in developing the results of exploration into more varied and aesthetic movements. This aligns with Alma Hawkins' (1988) opinion that improvisation is the process of spontaneously trying and developing various movement possibilities before being arranged into a dance composition. At this stage, Nika

Kusumawati developed movements derived from the encek nganten tradition, such as the activity of carrying offerings of agricultural produce, body postures in traditional processions, and interactions between traditional actors. These movements are not presented realistically, but are creatively processed through variations in space, time, and energy so as to maintain local cultural identity. The improvisation process also involved nine young female dancers who participated in exploring and perfecting movements with the choreographer. The involvement of dancers provides a variety of expressions and helps determine the movements that best suit the concept of the Encek Grenjeng Dance. Thus, improvisation becomes a connecting stage between exploration and composition that produces aesthetic choreography and still represents the cultural values of the encek nganten tradition in Bojonegoro Regency.

stage in the creation of the Encek Grenjeng Dance demonstrates the application of dance composition theory according to Alma Hawkins (1988), namely the process of composing and organizing movements resulting from exploration and improvisation into a complete and meaningful dance form. At this stage, Nika Kusumawati selects and arranges various movements into a presentation structure consisting of an introduction, core, and conclusion. Each section has a dramatic function that is interrelated in depicting the values of the encek nganten tradition, such as togetherness, mutual cooperation, gratitude, and cultural preservation. The composition of the dance is also seen in the arrangement of floor patterns, movement dynamics, dancers' movements, and the suitability of movements with musical accompaniment to form a harmonious choreographic unity. The results of observations show that the arrangement of movements considers the elements of space, time, and energy, while the results of interviews with choreographers and dancers confirm that the composition stage plays a role in producing a structured, compact dance presentation that has aesthetic value and cultural meaning. Thus, the composition stage in the Encek Grenjeng Dance meets the choreographic principles so that it is able to present a complete and meaningful performance.

3.2 Choreography

The floor design in the Encek Grenjeng Dance applies the floor design concept according to La Meri (1986), namely the dancer's movement patterns on the stage space which form the dance composition. The Encek Grenjeng dance utilizes a variety of floor patterns, including straight lines, diagonals, circles, and alternating group formations. These variations not only enhance the presentation but also represent the values of togetherness, cooperation, and the spirit of mutual cooperation in the Encek Nganten tradition. The presence of nine female dancers allows for dynamic and harmonious formations, thus ensuring that the floor design supports the choreographic structure, reinforces the meaning of the dance, and creates an aesthetically unified performance.

The upper design in the Encek Grenjeng Dance applies the upper design concept according to La Meri (1986), namely forms created in the air through the dancer's body movements. Its application can be seen in the variations in hand, head, body movements, and the use of sampur which forms curved, diagonal, vertical, and horizontal lines. These forms give a dynamic, flexible and

harmonious impression, thus strengthening the visual beauty of the performance. The above design is also seen in meaningful movements, such as carrying and lifting the encek and the movement of covering the body with cloth, which forms a visual pattern and also contains symbolic meaning related to the encek nganten tradition. Thus, the upper design in the Encek Grenjeng Dance not only functions as an aesthetic element, but also supports the conveying of the character, atmosphere and cultural values contained in the dance.

Music in dance not only serves as an accompaniment to movement, but also builds the atmosphere, emotion, and meaning of the performance. According to La Meri (1986), musical design is a choreographic element that supports the structure and dynamics of movement. Based on research, the Encek Grenjeng Dance uses Javanese gamelan accompaniment in pelog tuning, which strengthens the character of Bojonegoro's local culture. The accompaniment functions to regulate the tempo, emphasize the dynamics of movement, create an atmosphere of enthusiasm, joy and togetherness, and help the dancers experience the character of the dance.

The poetry and cakepan in the accompaniment of the Encek Grenjeng Dance contain meanings related to the life of an agrarian society, the encek nganten tradition, gratitude to God, and the preservation of local culture. Several songs, such as Retna Pamudya and Candra Purnama, symbolize the purity and beauty of women, while Subakasta Rinengga and Monggang Kirab describe agricultural products and emphasize the identity of the Encek Nganten tradition as a cultural heritage of the Grenjeng Hamlet community. Instrumental parts, such as Srepeg, Monggang, Lancaran, and Sampak, function to build transitions, dynamics, and the atmosphere of the performance until the climax and conclusion. Overall, the musical design in the Encek Grenjeng Dance strengthens the choreographic structure while conveying three main values, namely religious values through expressions of gratitude to God, cultural values through depictions of the Encek Nganten tradition and the lives of the Bojonegoro people, and aesthetic values reflected in depictions of beauty, harmony, togetherness, and joy of the community.

Dramatic design is the arrangement of the flow of emotions and tension in a dance work through the development of the intensity of movement, dynamics, and expressions of the dancers (La Meri, 1986). In the Encek Grenjeng Dance, the dramatic design is structured in stages, starting from the opening section, development, and climax. The initial exposition section introduces the theme of the encek nganten tradition through simple movements, the use of encek and white sampur props, and the atmosphere of community togetherness. Furthermore, at the complication stage, the musical tempo, movement variations, floor patterns, and property exploration increasingly develop, thus building the intensity of the performance. The dramatic climax is marked by more energetic movements, fast musical tempo, dynamic group formations, and the simultaneous use of encek properties, creating a festive atmosphere. These findings indicate that the dramatic design of the Encek Grenjeng Dance has been systematically arranged according to the La Meri concept, thus strengthening the delivery of the theme of togetherness and mutual cooperation and creating an aesthetic experience for the audience.

Dynamics are elements of choreography that relate to changes in energy, tempo and intensity of movement (La Meri, 1986). Based on the research results, the dynamics in the Encek Grenjeng Dance are seen through variations in movement from soft to strong, slow to fast tempo, and changes in movement pressure supported by changes in musical accompaniment. These variations build the character of the dance, depicting the spirit, joy, and togetherness of the community in the encek nganten tradition, while still presenting a graceful impression in certain parts. The dynamics graph shows a gradual increase and decrease in intensity throughout the 6-minute, 53-second performance. The initial section begins with low dynamics as an introduction to the atmosphere, then gradually increases until reaching a climax at the 06:10 minute mark with the highest intensity of movement, energy, and tempo. The dynamics then decrease in the closing section, creating a calm and complete finale. The Encek Grenjeng dance applies the principles of crescendo and decrescendo through the manipulation of time, energy, and tempo. This dynamic arrangement creates a lively, non-monotonous dance performance, and reinforces the theme of community activity and togetherness in the Encek Nganten tradition.

The theme in choreography is the main idea that forms the basis for creating a dance work. According to La Meri (1986:83), the selection of a theme needs to consider five aspects, namely the creator's belief in the value of the theme, the possibility of the theme being danced, the theme's influence on the audience, the technical abilities of the dancers and choreographers, and the availability of supporting facilities. Based on the research results, the theme of the Encek Grenjeng Dance originates from the encek nganten tradition of the Grenjeng Hamlet community, Saturejo Village, Baureno District, Bojonegoro Regency. This theme was chosen because it has important cultural values to be preserved and has the potential to be developed into a dance work through exploration of movement, music, floor patterns, makeup and costumes, and properties. The cultural theme also provides the audience with knowledge about local traditions while fostering an appreciation for cultural heritage. Furthermore, the skills of the dancers and choreographers, along with the support of performance equipment, such as gamelan, encek props, and white sampur, enhance the presentation of the theme. Thus, the Encek Grenjeng Dance fulfills La Meri's five considerations for selecting a theme, enabling it to present a dance work with artistic value and serve as a medium for cultural preservation.

Makeup is a visual element that serves to strengthen the character and expression of the dancer in a dance performance. According to La Meri (1986), makeup and costumes play a role in clarifying the character and supporting the delivery of the meaning of the performance. Based on the research results, the Encek Grenjeng Dance uses corrective stage makeup that is commonly applied to female dances. Makeup emphasizes the eyes, eyebrows, nose, and lips so that the dancer's expression is clearly visible on stage while displaying a cheerful, agile, and graceful character. The use of cosmetics such as powder, eyeshadow, eyebrow pencil, blush on, and lipstick is adjusted to strengthen facial expressions and create harmony with the costume. Thus, makeup in the Encek Grenjeng Dance not only functions as an aesthetic element, but also supports the delivery of character, identity, and the meaning of the performance to the audience.

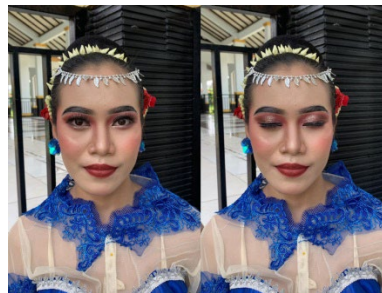


Figure 1. Encek Grenjeng Dance Makeup

Costume design is a visual element that supports character, clarifies themes, and enhances the aesthetic value of a performance. According to La Meri (1986), dance costumes not only serve to cover the body but also support the spatial design and the dancer's expression. Based on research, the Encek Grenjeng Dance costumes are designed in harmony with the movement, character, and concept of the performance. The combination of dark blue and white gives an elegant, clean and harmonious impression and strengthens the visual identity of the dance. The Encek Grenjeng dance attire consists of a kebaya, camisole, sekar jati batik cloth, rapek, ilat-ilatan, belt, chignon, earrings, jasmine flowers, headdress, and bracelets. All these elements create a visual unity with the makeup, highlighting the dancer's character, and supporting the conveyance of cultural meaning and values in the performance.



Figure2. Encek Grenjeng Dance Costume

Properties in dance function to support the movements, characters, themes and composition of the dance. Properties are divided into stage properties, which are equipment placed on stage, and dance properties, which are properties used directly by the dancers. Based on the research results, the Encek Grenjeng Dance uses two properties, namely encek and white sampur. Encek functions as a symbol of a container for agricultural produce that represents the community's gratitude and is the identity of the encek nganten tradition. Meanwhile, the white sampur serves to enhance the quality of movement through swings and turns, while also symbolizing purity, sincerity, and togetherness. Thus, these two properties not only support the aesthetic aspect, but also strengthen the symbolic meaning and cultural themes in the Encek Grenjeng Dance

4. CONCLUSION

The Encek Grenjeng Dance is a dance work created in 2018 by Nika Kusumawati to represent Bojonegoro Regency in the East Java Dance Works Festival. Departing from a structured creative process, the choreographer developed ideas sourced from the local wisdom values of the Grenjeng Hamlet community, Saturejo Village, Baureno District, Bojonegoro Regency. This inspiration is realized in the form of a dance presentation that elevates community traditions as a symbol of gratitude, togetherness, and respect for the earth's produce. Through the processing of movement, music, and visual elements, the Encek Grenjeng Dance Not only is it a medium for artistic expression, but it also preserves local culture through choreography. This work won an award for Top 10 Dance Performers at the 2018 East Java Dance Festival.

the Encek Grenjeng Dance choreography was carried out through the stages of exploration, improvisation, and composition as per the concept of dance creation. During the exploration stage, the choreographer explored various sources of ideas from the traditions of the Grenjeng Hamlet community in Saturejo Village. They then developed these ideas through improvisation to discover movement possibilities that fit the theme. These movements were then arranged during the composition stage to form a cohesive performance. This form of dance choreography is supported by various elements, such as floor design, overhead design, musical design, dramatic design, dynamics, themes, make-up, costume design, and use of properties. The make-up used is corrective make-up with a bun decorated with jasmine flowers, while the clothing is adapted to the character of the people of Bojonegoro Regency. The dance accompaniment uses tayuban-style musical nuances that strengthen local cultural identity. Meanwhile, the main property in the form of an encek, which is a place for serving agricultural produce, is the main symbol that represents the traditions of the Grenjeng Hamlet community while strengthening the meaning of gratitude and togetherness in the entire dance presentation.

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