



E-ISSN ON PROGRESS

Submitted date : 2026-03-26
Revised date : 2026-05-27
Accepted date : 2026-09-10

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Dance Work "Candrasa" As A Visualization Of Women's Rebellious Spirit In The Dramatic Dance Type

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Abstract: *Candrasa is a dance work that visualizes women's rebellious spirit in response to patriarchal stigma and social restriction. The work departs from the social phenomenon of women who continue to face stigma, stereotyping, and oppression rooted in patriarchal constructions that limit their freedom, identity, and space for expression. Candrasa, a traditional Javanese weapon shaped like a hairpin, is reinterpreted as a symbol of women's inner strength, courage, and resistance in defending their dignity and identity. A dramatic approach portrays women's transformation from confinement toward becoming empowered and free individuals, drawing inspiration from the lyrical meaning of "Born Again" and "New Woman" by Lalisa Manoban, combined with local cultural symbols. Several earlier dance works served as references for this creation, namely Tari Gegerit, Lakone Dalang Wadon (2023), Legiun Estri, and Wa Ode Menerjang Badai (2020-2023). The novelty of this work lies in its use of the candrasa symbol as a metaphor for women's inner strength against stigma and social construction, while sharing common themes of struggle, courage, and women's empowerment through dance. The theoretical framework includes choreography, visualization, dramatic dance, the concept of rebellion, and the historical meaning of candrasa. The creation method applies Jacqueline Smith's choreographic construction, a work-design approach following Sal Murgiyanto, and a development technique following Y. Sumandiyo Hadi through stimulus, exploration, improvisation, composition, and evaluation. The result is a choreography built on modern movement technique elaborated with a footing in traditional technique (Surakarta style), developed according to individual need.*

Keywords: Candrasa, Women's rebellion, Dramatic dance, Visualization, Empowerment

1. INTRODUCTION

Dance is one of the most direct media through which human beings express feelings, ideas, and inner experience. Movement in dance does not merely serve an aesthetic function; it becomes a form of nonverbal communication capable of conveying meaning to an audience. Through movement, facial expression, and appreciation, a dancer can represent moods, inner conflicts, and life values. Dance is therefore not merely entertainment, but a vessel of expression carrying emotional, social, and cultural value.

Within social life, women are still frequently placed within stigmas that restrict their space for movement, expression, and freedom of



spirit. These stigmas take the form of judgments and demands regulating how women should behave, think, and present themselves; women are often expected to be gentle, obedient, and restrained in voicing their opinions. The female body itself frequently becomes the target of rules and social expectations shaped by culture, producing pressure and injustice that give rise to a sense of oppression among women who wish to be heard. Patriarchal norms and gendered role expectations often force women to suppress their desires, voice, and life choices to meet standards set by their surroundings a condition that gives birth to a deep inner conflict between compliance and resistance, between attachment and freedom.

Within this social reality, women are still often presented as figures without full autonomy depicted as weak or lesser, placed under male authority through various forms of injustice, signs that patriarchal ideology continues to bind women's lives. Forms of oppression such as this create a need for symbols of strength and resistance capable of representing women's courage in facing injustice. One such symbol can be traced in Javanese cultural history: the candrasa.

The candrasa is a weapon shaped like a hairpin ornament (*tusuk konde*). In the past it was carried by women warriors serving as *telik sandi* (spies); some of Prince Diponegoro's followers during the Java War also carried the candrasa. Because of its small, hairpin-like form, it could be worn tucked into a hair bun, remaining unnoticed by an opponent allowing its bearer to draw close through charm before drawing the weapon to strike. Made of iron and shaped much like a present-day hair ornament but sharpened and branched to be effective at wounding an opponent, the candrasa stands as evidence that Javanese women have long been known as independent and resilient, able to defend themselves even in moments of danger. Worn as an accessory it appears merely decorative soft, elegant, ornamental yet once removed from its place and held in the hand, it becomes a lethal weapon.

In this work, the candrasa is not read literally as an instrument of violence, but reinterpreted as a symbol of women's inner strength a metaphor for self-awareness that grows out of the experience of oppression. When a woman becomes conscious of her own worth and power, the candrasa emerges as an emblem of courage: the courage to refuse subordination, resist injustice, and defend her dignity. The relationship between candrasa and the rebellious female spirit lies in this transformation of meaning where a weapon ordinarily identified with masculinity, domination, and aggression is here reinterpreted as a symbol of firm, courageous, feminine energy. The rebellion this work portrays is not destructive resistance, but a liberating one: the struggle of women to free themselves from social confinement, patriarchal norms, and constructions of identity that restrict their space for movement and expression, moving through phases of awareness, rebellion, and rebirth as whole, free individuals.

Building on this idea, the concept of women's rebellion becomes the central foundation for interpreting the candrasa symbol in this dance work. Rebellion, here, refers to the process of growing awareness, capacity, and strength that allows women to determine their own life choices independently, free from oppression and subordination empowerment understood not merely in physical terms, but encompassing psychological, social, and spiritual strength as well.

Several earlier dance works informed the positioning of "Candrasa" within this thematic landscape, including *Tari Gegerit*,

Lakone Dalang Wadon (2023), *Legiun Estri*, and *Wa Ode Menerjang Badai* (2020–2023), all of which similarly address women's struggle, courage, and empowerment through movement. What distinguishes "Candrasa" from these references is its specific use of a historical object the candrasa, a hairpin-shaped weapon once carried by Javanese women warriors as the central metaphor through which inner rebellion is visualized. Rather than portraying resistance through narrative conflict alone, this work grounds the concept of empowerment in the object's own duality: an ornament that reads as feminine softness until the moment it is drawn into the hand, at which point it becomes an instrument of strength. This reinterpretation of a culturally specific symbol, combined with a soundscape blending Javanese gamelan with contemporary references such as the songs "Born Again" and "New Woman," forms the novelty this work contributes to the existing body of women-centered dramatic dance works.

Based on this background, this study addresses two central questions: how is the concept of women's rebellion visualized through the candrasa symbol in the dramatic dance work "Candrasa," and how are the elements of choreography, property, costume, music, and staging integrated to support that visualization. Accordingly, this study aims to describe the creative process and choreographic form of "Candrasa," as well as to explain how the reinterpretation of the candrasa symbol constructs meaning around women's inner strength and resistance against patriarchal restriction.

Several theoretical concepts underpin the interpretation developed in this study. Choreography, derived from the Greek *choreia* (group dance) and *graphia* (writing), refers broadly to the process of selecting and shaping dance movement (Murgiyanto, 1983:3–4), guided by fundamental principles of composition: *sequence*, the chronological arrangement of movement into a coherent whole; *repetition*, the deliberate recurrence of a motif to emphasize thematic weight; *unity*, the integration of every supporting element without disrupting overall coherence; *variation*, movement diversity introduced purposefully to avoid monotony; *contrast*, shifts in energy, style, or tempo that build dynamic range; *transition*, the connective material linking otherwise opposing sections; *climax*, the peak moment foregrounding the work's central idea; *balance*, the spatial and energetic arrangement of dancers on stage; and *harmony*, the coordinated relationship among movement, space, time, energy, and music (Murgiyanto, 1983). These principles guided the structuring of "Candrasa" from initial motif development through to the final staged composition.

Visualization, following the Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia, refers to the expression of an idea or feeling through image, writing, or symbolic form; in dance creation it functions as the medium through which a choreographer's concept and imagination are translated into a communicative performance. In "Candrasa," visualization is realized through the elaboration of modern movement with Surakarta-style traditional technique, supported by the candrasa property, white brocade cloth symbolizing confinement, futuristic-glam makeup, kebaya-fusion costume, lighting, and stage composition, together reinforcing the representation of a woman's journey from confinement toward courage and freedom.

The dramatic dance type, meanwhile, centers attention on an event or atmosphere rather than unfolding a complete narrative plot, remaining closely tied to emotion and to situations directly connected

to human experience; character therefore becomes a central concern, requiring careful translation of atmosphere into movement, while relationships between dancers must be clearly felt even without being stated explicitly (Smith, 1985:20).

Rebellion, the study's central conceptual lens, is understood as an action, attitude, or movement arising in response to pressure, injustice, or restriction on freedom. It is not always destructive; it may equally be understood as a form of critical awareness the capacity to question, refuse, and pursue change when a condition contradicts one's values or rights. In a social and cultural context, rebellion becomes a process through which individuals assert identity and claim the right to determine their own life choices. Women's rebellion, in particular, is not limited to physical resistance but may be expressed through the courage to voice opinion, resist stereotype, and build independence the conceptual foundation through which this study interprets the candrasa symbol.

2. METHOD

2.1 Creative Approach

The creative approach used in "Candrasa" follows the choreographic construction method of Jacqueline Smith, whose stages beginning with an initial stimulus (auditory, visual, ideational, tactile, or kinesthetic), followed by the determination of dance type and mode of presentation, and continuing through movement exploration into a series of motifs provide a detailed and systematic framework for the choreographic process (Smith, 1985:20).

1) Initial Stimulus. The initial stimulus for this work arose from the narrative of self-transformation carried in the songs "Born Again" and "New Woman" performed by Lalisa Manoban, both representing a woman's rebirth: rising from adversity, releasing an old identity, and affirming a new sense of self with confidence. Through visual exploration prompted by this stimulus, the choreographer identified the candrasa as a symbolically potent and contextually relevant form through which to visualize transformation and women's empowerment reinterpreted not as an instrument of physical defense, but as a metaphor for women's inner strength and capacity to free themselves from oppression.

2) Dance Type. The choreographer selected the dramatic dance type, which centers attention on an event or atmosphere rather than unfolding a full narrative plot (Smith, 1985:27). This type allowed the choreographer to express ideas and emotion more deeply through the language of movement, expression, and the shaping of atmosphere, with a clearly sequenced progression of scenes so the audience can follow the woman's emotional development from growing self-awareness, through resistance, toward transformation into a strong, empowered figure achieved through rebellion.

3) Mode of Presentation. The choreographer applied a representational mode of presentation, bringing forth movement drawn from real-life activity and imbued with symbolic meaning (Smith, 1985:29). In "Candrasa," this mode depicts a woman's journey through social pressure toward self-awareness, while the candrasa itself functions as a metaphor for women's strength and courage in defending their identity.

4) Improvisation. Improvisation spontaneous movement arising once the stimulus, dance type, and mode of presentation have been established (Smith, 1985:31) became the primary space for exploring movement representing women's inner journey, including the body's interaction with the candrasa as a symbol of strength: movements tracing a shift from a defensive posture toward firmness and rebellion.

5) Evaluation. Evaluation served to refine the choices made during improvisation (Smith, 1985:31), ensuring that every movement, expression, and use of property genuinely represented the themes of rebellion and women's empowerment, by checking the correspondence between the conceptual idea of women's awakening and its visual realization in movement.

2.2 Development Technique

Following Y. Sumandiyo Hadi's approach, choreographic development proceeded through the stages of stimulus, exploration, improvisation, composition, and evaluation, adapted to the individual needs of the work. Movement technique in "Candrasa" combines modern dance vocabulary with a footing in traditional technique (Surakarta style) not as decorative addition, but through a process of reworking and reinterpreting traditional values into a modern form. The choreographer drew inspiration from K-pop choreography and modern dance, blended with elements of Surakarta-style Javanese traditional movement, translating the philosophy carried by the candrasa into a body language relevant to contemporary women's issues.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Results

3.1.1 Description of the Work

"Candrasa" is a dramatic dance work addressing the social phenomenon of women who continue to experience stigma, stereotyping, and patriarchal constructions that restrict their freedom, identity, and space for expression. The work presents a woman's emotional journey from confinement toward the courage to resist, rise, and discover strength within herself through rebellion. The candrasa, a traditional weapon of Central Java and Yogyakarta, is interpreted not as an instrument of violence but as a symbol of inner strength, courage, dignity, and the spirit of resistance against oppression.

Choreographically, the work develops modern movement technique elaborated with a footing in traditional technique (Surakarta style). Strong, firm, and flowing movement vocabulary serves as the primary medium for conveying the emotion of each scene; space, time, energy, and dynamics are composed to build dramatic tension pressure, inner struggle, resistance, and the achievement of freedom. Music blends traditional and modern elements following the emotional development of each scene, while lighting reinforces each shift in atmosphere through color, intensity, and direction. Costume is dominated by red as a representation of strength, courage, and hope; the stage setting uses white brocade cloth symbolizing social confinement, later used as a medium for movement exploration representing the struggle to break free. "Candrasa" is performed by seven female dancers who collectively represent women's varied experiences of social pressure; in the final section, all dancers appear united in a spirit of empowerment.

3.1.2 Synopsis

"The inner journey of a woman living in the shadow of oppression and social restriction. The struggles, wounds, and pressures she experiences gradually transform into awareness and the courage to rise. The candrasa appears as a symbol of strength and resistance not as an instrument of violence, but as a representation of women's fighting spirit and firmness in defending their dignity and determining their own path in life: the rebirth of a woman as a free and empowered individual."

This synopsis aligns with the theme of rebellion, as "Candrasa" positions women as subjects capable of transforming wounds into strength, with the courage to independently define their identity amid social pressure.

3.1.3 Scene Flow

The following table describes each scene of "Candrasa" to aid understanding of its dramatic progression.

Table 1. Scene Flow of "Candrasa"

No.	Scene	Sub-theme	Motivation	Atmosphere	Duration
1	Introduction	Attitude	Depicts women's initial image as expected by society: gentle, elegant, and polite. The dancers move with a smooth, flowing, controlled quality reflecting caution and awareness of social norms.	Calm	1.5 min
2	Scene 1	Reality of Women's Life	Depicts women's social environment as a space full of rules, norms, and expectations that both shape and confine them, demanding gentleness and obedience so that freedom of expression becomes restrained.	Calm, sorrowful	3 min
3	Scene (Conflict)	2 Social Pressure and Inner Resistance	Depicts a woman's inner turmoil facing pressure, injustice, and restricted expression, giving rise to self-awareness and the intent to rebel in search of an empowered identity.	Tense	3.5 min
4	Scene (Climax)	3 Women's Awakening	Depicts a woman discovering strength within herself, manifested through the candrasa symbol representing courage and firmness in facing and surpassing her limitations through rebellion an act of awareness, not mere refusal.	Tense	3.5 min
5	Scene (Conclusion)	4 Transformation and Freedom	Depicts a woman transformed into a confident, strong figure capable of determining her own path, no longer bound by stigma but standing as a free and whole individual.	Joyful	2.5 min

Following this scenario, the choreographer applies a single-cone dramatic design, reflecting a plot that proceeds from introduction, through conflict and climax, to resolution.

3.1.4 Dance Movement

Movement in "Candrasa" combines modern dance technique with a footing in traditional technique (Surakarta style), developed through exploration drawing on K-pop choreography and modern dance blended with elements of Surakarta-style Javanese traditional movement. Rather than reconstructing tradition in its complete form, the work reinterprets the values traditional movement carries, translating the philosophy of the candrasa into contemporary body language. Movement style shifts from unison, soft quality toward fast, firm dynamics as scenes require; exploration also extends to the properties used the candrasa, a rose, a fan, and a length of cloth resembling a sampur each carrying a symbolic function that reinforces the character and meaning of the movement.

3.1.5 Musical Accompaniment

The musical accompaniment for "Candrasa" combines Javanese gamelan instrumentation with modern instrumentation produced through the Studio One application. This pairing was chosen to create a composition consistent with the work's concept carrying a modern nuance without abandoning the traditional values forming its cultural root. The arrangement was built using MIDI technique combined with vocal recording, producing a dynamic, dramatic composition able to support the developing narrative of each scene.

3.1.6 Dancers

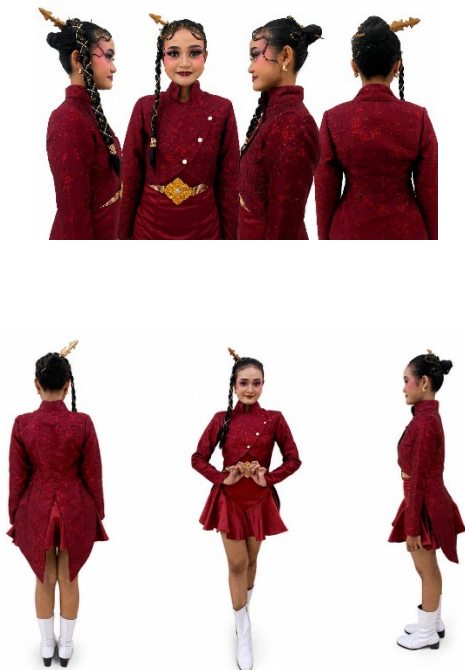
"Candrasa" involves seven female dancers committed to the process in terms of both time and energy. The number seven refers to the notion of "lucky seven," an expression associated with the belief that the number brings good fortune, success, and happiness. Beyond its symbolic value, this number was also chosen for its practical suitability to the proscenium stage: seven dancers gave the choreographer sufficient flexibility to build both small, intimate formations for moments of inner reflection and larger, unified formations for the climactic scenes of collective empowerment, without overcrowding the performance space or diluting the focus on individual expression during solo passages.

3.1.7 Makeup and Fashion

Makeup and costume in "Candrasa" were designed to visually reinforce the tension between softness and strength that runs through the work's central theme. Stage makeup emphasizes sharp, defined eyes and a bold red lip to project both feminine elegance and firmness, allowing facial expression to remain legible from a distance under stage lighting. Hairstyling gathers the hair into a tightly secured bun, referencing the traditional konde into which the candrasa itself was historically tucked a direct visual link between the dancers' appearance and the work's central property.

Table 2. Makeup and Fashion

Figure	Description
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Makeup: The makeup for "Candrasa" applies a futuristic glam / cyber-glam approach with avant-garde editorial touches experimental, glamorous, and artistic, marked by bold, unconventional visual elements. Black, maroon, silver, and gold are used on the eyes, with red blush and red lipstick to project firmness. The hairstyle follows a "Futuristic Traditional Fusion" theme: a circular braided bun accented with a candrasa ornament, blending Javanese tradition with a modern, geometric touch.

Costume (front and back): The costume follows a "Kebaya Contemporary Royal Fusion" concept reflecting the themes of women's empowerment and graceful yet firm rebellion. A kebaya janggan is combined with a Royal Military Aristocratic Formal back panel in classic jacquard-patterned cloth, paired with a short red skirt carrying an edgy, youthful touch, completed with white boots.

3.1.8 Property

The choreographer selected the candrasa, shaped as a hairpin, as the primary property explored through movement reimagined from a hair ornament into a symbol of inner resistance, firmness, and courage in the struggle for identity and freedom. A rose is used as a symbol of beauty paired with strength, a reminder that true beauty lies not only in softness but also in the courage to face life's thorns. A fan represents women's feminine side, its opening and closing motion tracing a woman's emotional shift from closed and pressured toward open, confident, and empowered. A length of cloth resembling a sampur enriches movement quality and reinforces bodily dynamics, its swinging, wrapping, and pulling motions tracing a woman's inner struggle against social restriction toward eventual release and freedom.

Table 3. Property

Figure	Description
	Candrasa Hairpin



Rose

Fan

Cloth resembling a Sampur

3.1.9 Stage and Lighting Arrangement

"Candrasa" uses a proscenium stage, allowing the audience to view the performance from a single, focused vantage point so that every movement, expression, and use of the candrasa property remains clearly visible; the format also reinforces the floor pattern, movement dynamics, and dramatic composition tracing the woman's emotional journey. General lighting illuminates the stage as a whole, while PAR 64 fixtures sharpen focus on the dancers and on key dramatic moments within each scene. Lighting color and intensity shift in step with the work's dramatic structure: cooler, dimmer tones dominate the opening scenes to reflect confinement and restraint, gradually warming and intensifying as the choreography moves through awareness and rebellion, before resolving into full, bright illumination during the closing scene of collective empowerment. This progression allows lighting to function as a silent narrator of the emotional arc, building an atmosphere consistent with the work's dramatic progression tense, reflective, and ultimately triumphant.

3.2 Discussion

"Candrasa" departs from the social phenomenon of women experiencing restriction through stigma, social construction, and patriarchal values that persist in everyday life. The work presents women's inner journey in confronting pressure, injustice, and social demands that limit their space for expression and freedom. Through the medium of dance, the female body becomes a space of expression capable of conveying conflict, resistance, and transformation toward self-awareness.

The central concept of "Candrasa" focuses on representing the rebellious female spirit. Rebellion here is not understood as a destructive act or a form of resistance leading toward violence, but as an energy of awareness that emerges once a woman begins to understand her own value, rights, and inner strength. Rebellion becomes a process of release from the various forms of social

attachment that have long restricted women in determining their identity, life choices, and freedom of movement.

The title itself carries this reinterpretation. The candrasa is not treated merely as a historical object but undergoes a process of reinterpretation into a symbol of women's inner strength a metaphor for sharpened awareness, the courage to take a stand, and the capacity to defend one's dignity and existence. This duality of meaning forms the conceptual basis of the work: worn as a hair ornament, the candrasa carries an aesthetic value representing femininity beauty, softness, and elegance yet once removed from that function and held in the hand, it transforms into a symbol of strength and self-protection. This shift in function became the choreographer's central inspiration for depicting women's transformation from being regarded as objects into individuals who hold strength, voice, and control over themselves.

This finding resonates with Butler's (1990) notion of gender as performative rather than essential, in which the meaning of an object or gesture is not fixed but produced through repeated, situated enactment. The candrasa's shifting identity from decorative hairpin to weapon visually performs precisely this instability, allowing femininity and strength to be enacted through the same object rather than treated as opposites. This also echoes Beauvoir's (1949) argument that womanhood is not a biological given but a condition continuously constructed through social relations; "Candrasa" stages the reversal of that construction, positioning the female body as an active agent of meaning rather than a passive recipient of patriarchal expectation.

This transformation is structured dramatically through three phases traced across the choreography. In the opening phase, the work depicts a woman confined by social pressure and external judgment, visualized through narrower, heavier, and more restrained movement quality symbolizing inner confinement. In the developmental phase, growing self-awareness becomes visible through rising energy, wider use of space, and bodily expression that signals the courage to resist; the candrasa begins to appear here as a symbol of previously hidden internal strength coming to the surface. In the closing phase, the woman is no longer portrayed as pressured but as an individual capable of determining her own path; the candrasa's presence marks a victory over fear, wounds, and past limitation, with rebellion realized as a rebirth into a stronger, more autonomous self.

These dramatic phases are not communicated solely through narrative progression but are also reinforced by the choreographic organization of the performance. The interaction between movement, space, time, and supporting theatrical elements enables the audience to perceive the dancers' emotional transformation more clearly.

The dramatic progression described above is further strengthened by the integration of choreographic elements that consistently support the visualization of women's rebellion. According to Murgiyanto (1983), choreography is formed through the relationship between movement, space, time, energy, and various supporting stage elements. In *Candrasa*, these components do not merely function as aesthetic complements but become important instruments for communicating the emotional transformation experienced by the dancers.

Spatial organization gradually changes throughout the performance. The opening scenes employ relatively limited floor patterns and narrow movement pathways, symbolizing social

restriction and the limited freedom experienced by women under patriarchal expectations. As the work develops, dancers increasingly occupy wider spaces and create more open formations, reflecting the process of gaining confidence and independence. This expansion of performance space metaphorically illustrates women's journey from limitation toward liberation.

Changes in movement dynamics also reinforce this transformation. Soft, restrained, and controlled movement qualities dominate the beginning of the choreography, portraying women who attempt to adapt to social expectations. As conflict intensifies, movement becomes firmer, faster, and more expansive, representing the growth of courage and self-awareness. Rather than emphasizing aggression, these dynamic changes symbolize emotional resilience and personal determination.

Musical rhythm, lighting transitions, and stage composition further strengthen the dramatic atmosphere. Slower musical passages encourage emotional reflection during scenes of oppression, while increasingly dynamic accompaniment supports the emergence of confidence during the climactic section. Together, these choreographic elements construct a unified visual language through which the audience can experience the gradual transformation of women from silence and restraint toward empowerment and freedom.

The properties used throughout the work carry this same symbolic logic. Beyond the candrasa itself, the fan represents femininity softness and beauty reframed within this work not as weakness but as a form of strength able to coexist with courage. The cloth resembling a sampur traces emotional attachment, wounding, and eventual release from restriction, while the rose represents duality through its petals and thorns: a woman capable of holding both gentleness and self-protection at once. On stage, three lengths of white brocade cloth spanning from top to bottom function as a visual element reinforcing themes of shadow, boundary, and hidden identity, while a flowing blood-red effect across the fabric symbolizes wounding and sacrifice reframed not as suffering alone but as a source of strength driving transformation and rebirth. Musical accompaniment reinforces this same dramatic arc, its shifting rhythm and dynamics building the atmosphere from pressure and conflict toward a peak of courage, creating unity between sound and movement that strengthens the work's message of struggle and awakening. Among the supporting theatrical elements discussed above, the candrasa property occupies the most significant symbolic position within the choreography.

Beyond its practical function as a performance property, the candrasa also carries an important symbolic role throughout the choreography. Historically recognized as a concealed weapon used by Javanese women warriors, its reinterpretation in this work shifts the focus from physical defense toward psychological strength and self-awareness. This symbolic transformation enables the property to function as a visual metaphor for women's resilience in confronting various forms of social oppression.

Throughout the performance, the candrasa undergoes a gradual change in meaning alongside the emotional development of the dancers. Initially appearing as part of the dancers' appearance, it represents traditional expectations of femininity characterized by elegance and obedience. As the dramatic conflict develops, the act

of drawing the candrasa from the hair becomes a symbolic gesture indicating the emergence of courage and the willingness to challenge restrictive social norms. Consequently, the object no longer serves merely as an accessory but becomes an extension of the dancers' emotional expression.

This reinterpretation demonstrates that traditional cultural objects remain relevant within contemporary artistic creation. Rather than preserving the candrasa solely as a historical artifact, *Candrasa* reconstructs its meaning to respond to present-day discussions concerning gender equality, identity, and women's empowerment. Through this approach, cultural heritage is positioned as a dynamic source of inspiration capable of generating new artistic interpretations while maintaining its historical significance.

Taken together, "Candrasa" represents a woman's journey toward discovering her own strength through the process of rebellion not only addressing the pressure and injustice women face, but tracing a process of change toward awareness, courage, and freedom. Through the candrasa symbol, the work affirms that women's strength has long existed and continues to develop in confronting various forms of social restriction, positioning "Candrasa" as an artistic statement about women who are able to stand, speak, and hold full authority over their own identity and lives. Beyond interpreting the symbolic meaning of the work, these findings also demonstrate its broader contribution to contemporary dance creation.

3.2.1 Artistic Contribution of the Work

As a contemporary dance work, *Candrasa* contributes to the development of Indonesian performing arts by demonstrating how traditional cultural symbols can be reinterpreted to address current social issues. Instead of reproducing historical narratives literally, the choreography reconstructs the symbolic meaning of the candrasa as a representation of women's courage, resilience, and autonomy within contemporary society.

This creative strategy also illustrates the possibility of integrating traditional movement principles with modern choreographic approaches. The combination of Surakarta dance vocabulary, contemporary movement exploration, theatrical staging, and modern musical arrangement creates a performance language capable of communicating local cultural values through a contemporary artistic perspective. Such integration reflects the dynamic nature of Indonesian dance, where tradition continues to evolve alongside changing social realities.

Furthermore, *Candrasa* presents rebellion not as destructive resistance but as a process of self-realization and personal transformation. Women's empowerment is visualized through emotional development, symbolic movement, and the reinterpretation of cultural objects, allowing the audience to understand rebellion as an internal process leading toward confidence, independence, and freedom. Consequently, the work functions not only as artistic entertainment but also as a medium of social reflection concerning women's position within contemporary society.

The findings of this creative process indicate that choreography can effectively communicate complex social issues through symbolic movement and theatrical composition. The reinterpretation of the candrasa demonstrates that traditional cultural heritage remains relevant when approached through contemporary artistic

perspectives, providing opportunities for future choreographers to explore local cultural symbols as meaningful sources of creative inspiration.

4. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the dance work "Candrasa" successfully visualizes women's rebellious spirit through the reinterpretation of the candrasa as a symbol of courage, awareness, and empowerment. Its central focus is to present a visualization of the rebellious female spirit through the candrasa symbol, as a form of inner strength, courage, and self-awareness in facing pressure. The rebellion portrayed here is not destructive resistance, but a process of transformation a woman's release from confinement toward empowerment, freedom, and sovereignty over herself.

The candrasa, a traditional Javanese weapon once used for self-defense by women warriors, became the central source of inspiration for this work. Through reinterpretation, it is understood not merely as a physical weapon but as a symbol of sharpened awareness, strength, and courage in defending dignity and identity its presence in the work tracing a shift in meaning, from an object of physical defense to a symbol of women's inner resistance against social restriction.

The creative process moved through exploration, improvisation, selection, evaluation, and refinement of movement to arrive at a form capable of representing this emotional journey. A dramatic approach was used to build the progression of atmosphere from pressure, through emerging awareness and rebellion, to transformation into a stronger, more empowered woman combining modern dance approaches with traditional symbolic elements to produce a work carrying both aesthetic value and social and philosophical meaning.

Supporting elements property, makeup, costume, staging, music, and lighting reinforce the work's central concept. The candrasa property stands as the principal symbol of women's strength, while other elements clarify the journey from confinement toward freedom; white brocade cloth, used as a medium for shadow and a flowing "blood" effect, symbolizes the experience of wounding, pressure, and the rebirth of a woman discovering her own strength.

Through "Candrasa," the choreographer wishes to convey that women hold the space to determine their identity, voice their ideas, and hold authority over their own bodies and lives a reflection that women's strength arises not only from physical capacity, but from courage, awareness, and steadfastness in facing injustice. "Candrasa" thus becomes a dance work carrying a message of women's empowerment through cultural symbol, movement language, and emotional experience realized in artistic performance.

This study is limited to the choreographer's own creative and interpretive process and does not include audience reception data, so the symbolic meanings discussed here reflect the creator's perspective rather than empirical audience response. Future research could examine audience interpretation of the candrasa symbol through reception studies, or compare "Candrasa" with other contemporary Indonesian dance works addressing women's

empowerment to map broader patterns in how traditional objects are reinterpreted as feminist symbols in dramatic dance.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The author was responsible for the conceptualization, choreography design, data collection, movement analysis, interpretation of findings, and manuscript preparation. The author read and approved the final version of the manuscript.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author would like to express sincere gratitude to the Department of Drama, Dance, and Music Education, Faculty of Languages and Arts, Universitas Negeri Surabaya, for the academic support provided throughout this study. Special appreciation is extended to the supervisor for valuable guidance, constructive feedback, and continuous encouragement during the creative and writing process. The author also thanks the dancers, music collaborators, artistic team, and everyone who contributed to the creation and performance of *Candrasa*. Their dedication and support were invaluable in the completion of this study.

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