

Sandur Mandura Performance as a Source Creation of Jombang Topeng Dance

Setyo Yanuartuti^{1,*} Jajuk D. Sasanadjati¹ Joko Winarko²

^{1,2} Faculty of Languages and Arts, the State University of Surabaya, Indonesia

*Corresponding author: Email: setyoyanuartuti@unesa.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Sandur Mandura performance has different characteristics from other *Sandur* performances in East Java. Also, the *Sandur Mandura* performance has forms and values that can be used as a source for creating or developing the Jombang *Topeng* (mask) dance. This study aimed to analyse the *Sandur Mandura* performance as a source of the Jombang mask dance creation. The research approach of this study used the concept of art creation, especially dance. The method used in this study was descriptive analytics. Data validity of this study used triangulation of sources and methods. The data were analysed by using interactive techniques. The study results indicated the uniqueness and strength of the performance as a creation source, including the Madurese language used and the dominance of *saronen* or *selompret* musical instruments. Moreover, the accentuation of movements and the trajectories of four-patterned also the left-turn circle pattern become the strength of this dance art as a source of inspiration, ideas in dance creations, as well as the iconography of masks and their meanings. The unique characteristics of the *Sandur Mandura* performance can greatly support artists' encouragement and stimulation to create the Jombang *Topeng* dance works.

Keywords: *Sandur performance, Creation, Topeng dance.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The creation of art is based on an individual's strong encouragement to create new artworks. This encouragement reflects an unusual reaction from individuals towards their life experiences. Several aspects urge someone to create art. First, the aspect of human nature related to the unity of the cultural environment and preservation of cultural heritage. Second, the aspect that promotes the cultural patterns in order to find new patterns and includes artists' experiences into these new patterns. This is a process of one's creativity in developing or creating new artwork.

Creating a dance is also based on how strong a choreographer's motivation is to be creative in creative unique dances. The process of creating dances begins with life experiences. These life experiences are a stimulus that causes an encouragement from heart to act. Through this application process, a choreographer enriches a sense of enjoyment then continues to the process of expressing through a medium of dance movement that is a song as an expression tool [1].

The creation of mask dance arts is a creative work in realizing the form of the mask dance. The choreographer promotes this creative process to create new things related to the mask dance forms. *Topeng* or mask dance is a dance

form that is performed by a dancer who uses a mask to cover the face.

Jombang *topeng* dance is a mask dance that has characteristics of Jombang arts and cultures. The characteristics of Jombang arts and cultures are shaped by the values and spirit of the arts and cultures of the people living in Jombang District, East Java. The cultural values of Jombang community are influenced by geographical locations and sociocultural traits of people who live in the area. Geographically, the location is surrounded by Majapahit culture, *Arek* culture, coastal culture, and Java-Mataram culture. From a sociocultural point of view, the Jombang community consists of the *pesantren* community, the Chinese community, the Christian community, and the Madurese community who have lived in a very long time on the slopes of the limestone mountains bordering the Lamongan area. The social culture of these communities produces artworks according to their characteristics [2].

A form of arts and cultures of Jombang community is a mask performance. In Jombang, there are several mask performances, one of them is the *Sandur Manduro* performance. The *Sandur Manduro* performance is a folk art performance that can be categorized as performing arts (theatre), including several repertoires such as un-masked dance, mask dance, joke or *banyolan*, and folklore. The

Sandur Mandura performance has different characteristics from other *Sandur* performances in East Java.

The *Sandur* art is a genre of performing arts that is well known in East Java. The *Sandur* art lives in several areas in East Java including in the areas of Madura, Tuban, Bojonegoro, Lamongan, Nganjuk, and Jombang. The forms of performing arts in these areas are varied. In general, the *Sandur* performances in these areas can be classified into two styles, namely the *Sandur* in Bojonegoro, Tuban, Lamongan, and Nganjuk; and the *Sandur* in Madura also *Sandur Mandura* in Jombang.

Sandur is a form or a type of traditional art in the form of drama performances using local languages and traditional music instruments. Suparto, an artist in Pamekasan, claimed that the *Sandur* is not much different from Ludruk's art in East Java. Yet, its style performances are different from Tuban, Bojonegoro, Lamongan, and Nganjuk.

Sandur in Tuban is interpreted as *sandhing luhur*, which is side by side with ancestors, or *sandhangan dhuwur*, that is an ancestral fashion or *busana luhur*. The *Sandur* is also interpreted as *beksan ngedur* means dancing all night long. This *Sandur* art has a close relationship with *pedhayangan*, a tradition of respecting village ancestors with a *nyekar* ceremony where the *dhayang(s)* are believed to reside. These four main characters, namely Balong, Petak, Tansil, and Cawik, have an agrarian society's life background.

Sandur in Bojonegoro is interpreted as *isan sandur; ngaso sendal sandur*, which means that after the harvest period in life, a break time occurs by playing or singing with a combination of drama, music, and dance. The term of *Sandur* also comes from the abbreviation of *beksan* word which means 'a dance' and *mundur* word means a dance performed 'backward'. In addition, the *sandur* comes from *ikhsan* word means 'the after' and *dur* from the word of *tandur* means 'planting'. Moreover, the content story theme is about agricultural activities: finding the agricultural land, plowing the fields, planting, and finally harvesting agricultural products. The crops commonly grown are tobacco and rice [3].

In Madura, the *Sandur* art is found in Sumenep, Pamekasan, and Bangkalan. In the West Madura, the *Sandur* is also called as *Sronen* or *saronen* or *selompret*. *Saronen* or *selompret* is a wind instrument made of bamboo. These terms are mentioned based on the dominance of the *sronen* musical instrument.

In the past tense, the *Sandur* Pamekasan had a series of repertoires namely *Gettak Topeng* (mask) dance, *Rondhing* dance, and folklore. There were three stages in the *Sandur* Bangkalan, namely *dhing-gendhing* (opening), *dhung-dhung*, (the welcome dance), and *andongan* (invited guests were called in turn to join the dance with *lenggek*) or *atandheng* in Madurese. The shape

of the mask used in this *Sandur* performance was a white Baladewa mask that tended to be flat. The *Sandur* term or *sronen* was dominated by the trumpet music instrument used [4].

According to the several previous *Sandur* performances, they have varied characteristics or styles that are almost the same as the *Sandur Madura*. The similarities of these styles are in the presentations of mask dances, folklore, the music used, and the varied shape of the masks.

One of the effort sources to create a Jombang mask dance is the *Sandur Mandura* performance. In order to make the *Sandur Mandura* performance as the source of the Jombang mask dance creation, an analysis is necessary. Therefore, the research problem is "Why the *Topeng Sandur* performance is used as a source of the Jombang mask dance creation?" Thus, the research objective is to analyse the uniqueness and strength of the *Sandur Mandura* performance as a source of the Jombang mask dance creation.

Discussion of this research problem requires previous research studies. Ridwan, et al. have written an article entitled "Creativity and Innovation of Artist in Maintaining and Developing the Songah Tradition Art." The finding of this study is the creativity of Songah community in maintaining and developing their traditional arts by managing natural resources. The resource contained is called Songong, which is a fire blower in a furnace, used as a musical instrument called Songah as a pitchless musical instrument. The community has collaborated songs using the musical instrument with other musical instruments as a result they turn into unique musical compositions. These creativity and innovation have impacted on the existence of traditional arts of Songah [5].

Mega Lestari Silalahi studied "Development of Creativity and Innovation in the Creation of Dance Arts Using Dance Laboratory Method (A Case Study of Duta Santarina Batam Arts Foundation)". The results of this study explained that the dance laboratory is a program and process of searching and discovering new dance art results including training with skills development, creative and innovative processes, and implementation of findings with the results of art performances in the form of new dance arts as well as updates from previous artworks that researchers with an experimental model have designed carried out or created by choreographers and dancers of Duta Santarina [6].

Kuswarsantyo's article entitled "Creativity of Virtual Dance Competition of 'Beksan Nir Corona' in The Kraton of Yogyakarta" explained that a virtual dance competition guidance of the Beksan Nir Corona contains a dance model recording which is the stylization of washing hands five steps into simple movements in a Yogyakarta classical dance. There were 196 participants who

uploaded their dances to the competition. The judges' results showed that 85% of participants could imitate all movements. In the aspect of creativity assessment, 60% of participants showed their ability to express ideas, and 40% tended to imitate existing movement patterns. The average score of the six judges was 85.5 which indicates the ability of imitation, meanwhile the creative ability in performing dance arts averaged 70.5 [7].

2. METHODS

This study is dance development research. The object of this research is the Jombang *Topeng* Dance Art and the *Sandur Mandura* performance, meanwhile the formal thing of this study is art creation, especially dance arts. The research procedure was carried out by using a reconstruction method with some steps including digging forms and values of the *Sandur Mandura* performance, drafting the concept of dance ideas, and actualizing or performing the dance arts.

Data collection were collected by several steps. First, the *Sandur Mandura* performance was observed directly and indirectly. The observation was conducted by watching directly then observing the *Sandur Mandura* performance. Also, the indirect observation was carried out by observing documentation in the form of videos and photos both the performance before and after the research conducted. Second, the researchers conducted interviews to interviewees namely Warito and Rifai. Third, documentation of the art performance was conducted by the researchers. Besides, in order to get data validity, the cross-checking data was carried out directly and online by several interviewees or the triangulation of data sources. Also, the data were cross-checked through several methods including observation, interviews, and documents.

Data analysis used descriptive analytics with steps, data reduction, data presentation, and data verification or conclusion. The data reduction was conducted by classifying the data according to the existing problem formulation and analyzing its content. The data presentation was also carried out by compiling research data and discussing it with various theories as well as concepts used related to the art creation, then presenting it based on the problem needs. Further, the data verification or conclusion was completed by acquiring the essential of discussion results then drafting them in sentences that show the research findings.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 The Uniqueness of *Sandur Mandura* Performance

Sandur Mandura art is one of the performances in Jombang where people live in the Madurese ethnic. The characteristic of the Madurese ethnic community is the

language used in daily life. If we turn back to the past, the existence of Mandura Village community comes from descendants of the Madurese. It is certainly very different from the language used by people of Jombang in general. The majority of Jombang people use the Javanese slang language (*Arek* language) in their daily life.

The use of the Madurese language also occurs in the *Sandur Mandura* performance. Songs and rhymes used as a folk dance music are also Madurese. Rifai claimed that the use of the Madurese language has been carried out for a long time by his ancestors although its dialect and structure are very different from Madurese language in the Madura area (interview on 10 May 2021). The presence of Madurese rhymes is very prominent in the musicality sense of the *Sandur* performance. Therefore, the Madurese rhyme is the first unique feature of the *Sandur* performance.

The element of musicality in the *Sandur* performance is very prominent. In addition to the rhyme used in the Madurese, the musical instruments' elements are also unique. A musical instrument that dominates the musical composition of the *Sandur* performance is *sronen* or trumpet. The *sronen* has similarities with the *sronen* of Madura [8].

The *Sandur* performance has various dance presentations. The dance presentation/ performance can be classified into two types, including un-masked dance and masked dance. Dance without a mask is performed at the beginning of the performance, followed by five *Topeng* dance performances. *Burlebur* dance as well as the Balinese dance that is performed after *Burlebur* dance are un-masked dance performances (the dance without a mask).

These five performances of *Topeng* dance include *Klana* dance, *Gunungsari* dance, *Bapang* dance, *Ayon-Ayon Lembut* and *Jalang* dance, and *Panji* dance. Further, characteristics of *Topeng* dance movement in the *Sandur Mandura* performance as follows. The *Topeng* dance uses small volumes of roars formed by the movement design that tends to be close to the body. All dances use a medium level of movement. In addition, a dominant characteristic of *Topeng* dance in the *Sandur* performance is that the trajectories formed by the movement of moving places in each dance, including patterns of four or quarters and circles.

Moreover, a mask of the *Topeng* dance is one of the characteristics in the *Sandur* performance. *Klana* mask is white, showing its teeth, has wide eyes, mustache, and beard. This mask is a picture of the king of Manduro namely Baladewo. The depiction of Baladewo's figure is the same as the description of a mask of *Getak Pamekasan* which is also described as Baladewo since he is believed to be the king of Madura. The *Gunungsari* mask is white with brown, red, and green taper decorations also it has *gabahan* or grain eyes (sleepy eyes) that are slightly

tapered at the points. This mask has a thin moustache, no jaws, and a smiling mouth. This mask depicts a subtle character yet flirty which is exactly like Panji Gunungsari's character. The *Bapang* mask has a slightly round and wide face shape with a red base color. This mask has wide round eyes, a long nose, thick mustache, open mouth, and grinning. Its character is dashing, quite violent, and slightly funny. The *Ayon-Ayon* or *Keputren* contains two masks with different personalities. Both of these masks have a white base. The first mask of *Ayon-Ayon* has a slightly pointed face shape, *gabahan* or grain eyes (sleepy eyes) with the eyeballs tend to downwards, a head decoration in the middle namely a *karang melok* such as a Madurese mask head decoration. Next, the second mask of *Ayon-Ayon* has a slightly round face shape, a little centered eyeballs, a red and white head decoration with a pointed shape, and a smiling mouth. In brief, both masks are clearly different; the first is more delicate and the second is more open and flirty such as the Panji dance.

3.2 Sandur Mandura Performance as a Source Creation of Jombang Topeng (Mask) Dance

The source of creation is where the ideas and thoughts come from the origin of the dance ideas. Dharsono explained that the source of art creation could come from etic and emic data sources. The etic data sources collected from data collection results, including the results of a literature review, which is carried out by reviewing the literature in the form of scientific books such as training, scientific articles, and scientific papers. Next, the emic data sources were collected from observations conducted by observing subjects and objects of the creation research based on the scope and objectives related to work aspirations that will be created [9].

In creating dance arts, something that promotes either thoughts or enthusiasm also encourages someone to carry out dance arrangement activities is called a stimulus. Stimuli in the creation of dance arts can be audio, visual, idea, tactile, and kinaesthetic [10].

In the context of this study, the creation of the Jombang *Topeng* Dance is an attempt to create a new dance form that high school students can learn. In addition, there are various forms of mask performances in Jombang. Among those various mask performances, there is a form of mask dance. However, to be positively learned by high school students, the packaging of this dance art should be made easy and enjoyable.

Topeng or mask dance art is included in the performance of the *Sandur Mandura*. Yet, the *topeng* or mask dance in the *Sandur Mandura* performance is less attractive to children because it is neither steady nor constant and is performed by dancers who lack of dance forms as well as techniques.

The *Sandur Mandura* performance has various unique features related of the Jombang arts and the mask performances. This *Sandur Mandura* performance can be used as an initial stimulus in creating the Jombang *Topeng* dance. The *Sandur Mandura* performance's visual elements can encourage imaginations that can be developed into the concept of creating a mask dance. These visual elements are iconographic mask elements and their values also meanings are a strong source of inspiration in creating the Jombang *Topeng* (Mask) dance.

In addition to the visual elements, music in the *Sandur* performance can also be used as an initial stimulus in developing the Jombang mask dance. The uniqueness of tones, Madurese rhymes, and bugle's sound domination can stimulate a person or an individual to create the mask dance. Also, the uniqueness of its musicality has a distinctive sense value that can strengthen the originality of the dance work.

The characteristics of dance movements in the *Sandur* performance can stimulate the creation of the mask dance arts. Although the dance movements presented are pretty simple, the accentuation and the existing trajectories stimulate an individual to explore the concept and its meaning, which will be developed into a new dance with its meaning. The current floors patterns contain community cultural values such as *papat kiblat lima pancer* or a circle concept or the circle of life in Javanese society. Moreover, the *Sandur Mandura* performance is full of Panji cultural values. Nasrul ilahi claimed that the property of horses or *jaran* is believed by the public to be the Sembrani horse related to the existence of Airlangga story. This is a symbol of the Panji culture which is full of values in people's lives (interview on 4 July 2021).

The *Sandur Mandura* art condition in the life context of Mandura Village people also enhances the high encouragement to be used as a source of ideas, thoughts, and inspirations in developing the mask dance art in Jombang.

4. CONCLUSION

Traditional folk arts have the power to be used as a source of ideas, thoughts, and inspiration to create dance arts. Folk performing arts such as the art of *Sandur Mandura* have elements, forms, and high values for the society. Those elements, forms, and values of folk performing arts have great power in creating any dance arts or whatever their condition.

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