

Aesthetic of Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri Dance Performance

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to provide information and references about the aesthetics of the performance form of Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri Dance in terms of the elements of wiraga, wirama, and wirasa. This study was conducted to examine the aesthetic aspects of the Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri dance.. Although the Bedhaya dance contains philosophical values, studies that specifically highlight the application of the concepts of wiraga, wirama, and wirasa in the Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri work are still limited. The method used in this research is qualitative research methods with descriptive and aesthetic approaches. Data collections techniques consist of three stages: observation, interviews, and documentation. The results of the research can be concluded that the aesthetics of the performance form of Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri Dance can not only be seen from the visualization of motion

and musical accompaniment but also from the elements contained in the dance: wiraga, wirama, and wirasa. This concept is fundamental and used as a guide by dancers, choreographers, and academics in enriching the study of performing arts, especially Javanese dance. This study provides insights and information about the aesthetic aspects of the Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri dance performance through the fundamental concepts of wiraga, wirama, and wirasa.

Keywords: Aesthetic, Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri, Wiraga, Wirama, Wirasa

INTRODUCTION

Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri dance is a dance work created by Dwi Rahmani in 2019 in Surakarta. Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri Dance is a *bedhaya* genre dance. Unlike other *bedhaya* dances, the number of dancers in this Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri Dance consists of 11 dancers. In some parts of the sequence, it uses the character of the movements of the *putri lanyap*, and there is also a development of movement in the sequence. There is also indicated some part of Balinese dance vocabulary, one of which is shown in the *agem* movement, and there is also a slight addition of Yogyakarta movement vocabulary. This can happen on the basis of new innovations in the development of movements in *bedhaya* dance as well as the body memory of a choreographer. This work was inspired by the attitude and character of Princess Gayatri Rajapatmi, who was the female figure behind the glory of the Majapahit Kingdom. Gayatri Rajapatmi is a woman whose character reflects Dewi Saraswati, Dewi Laksmi, Dewi Kali, Dewi Uma, and Dewi Durga, who has a beautiful, graceful, authoritative, brave, intelligent, and strong presence,

besides that, Gayatri also has a loving nature (Rahmani, 2019).

Bedhaya dance cannot be separated from the element of beauty inherent in the dance itself. The element of beauty in dance is generally referred to as aesthetic. The aesthetics of the Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri dance performance can be evaluated or viewed from the elements of wiraga, wirama, and wirasa. Wiraga is the dancer's physical ability to dance, wirama is the dancer's ability to adjust their movements to the rhythm, and wirasa is the ability to bring characters to life in a dance performance. In the context of the Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri dance, this beauty is expected to be reflected through the dancers' ability to display harmony between movement, rhythm, and feeling, resulting in an elegant, refined, and meaningful performance (Maryani, 2007).

Some related research that support and reinforces of this research includes: (Rahmani, 2019), (Rahmani, 2021), (Banowati, 2015), (Sa'ati & Indriyanto, 2022), (Aristi & Lestari, 2021), (SARI, n.d.), (Maryani, 2007), (Murti, 2018)

Based on the existing research above, there has been no discussion related to the aesthetics of the performance from of Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri Dance, which is reviewed through the main elements of dance,

namely wiraga, wirama, wirasa. There is a gap between the expectation that the Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri dance can be understood in depth in terms of aesthetics and the fact that previous studies have not paid attention to these fundamental aspects.

Therefore, the researches are interested and want to write this research with the aim of providing insight of aesthetic elements in Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri Dance.

METHODOLOGY

This research employs a qualitative method with a descriptive and aesthetic approach. Qualitative research is research that uses a natural setting, intending to interpret phenomena that occur and is carried out by involving various existing methods. From this understanding, the author still questions the natural setting with the intention that the results can be used to interpret phenomena, and what is used for qualitative research is a variety of research methods (Slamet, 2018). Thus, it can be concluded that qualitative research methods aim to understand the phenomenon of what is experienced by the research subject, such as behavior, perception,

motivation, action, holistically, and descriptive by utilizing various natural methods (Slamet, 2018.).

The research begins with problem identification and the formulation of objectives, followed by data collection through observation, interviews, documentation, and literature review. The collected data are then analyzed using the concepts of wiraga, wirama, and wirasa, interpreted to describe aesthetic values, and finalized in the conclusion and report writing.

The techniques used in data collection are observation, literature study, interviews, and document utilization. The interview data was collected by interviewing the source, Dwi Rahmani (63 years old), who is the creator of the Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri dance. The interview was conducted in March 2025. The interview was conducted with the aim of obtaining information related to the choreographer's biography, the choreographer's background, the background of the work, the stages of creation, the process of developing ideas to movements, and the elements that are important in the Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri dance as supporting data in this research.

The literature study data was obtained by reading several references obtained from scientific articles, some of which include: Bentuk Pertunjukan Tari Bedhaya

Kidung Gayatri, Strategi Politik Wanita Dalam Sejarah, *Wiraga Wirama Wirasa Dalam Tari Tradisi Gaya Surakarta*, as well as several scientific papers discussing the aesthetics of performance in a dance work. From studying the literature, the author obtained information on the form of the Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri dance composed by Dwi Rahmani, as well as information on the concepts of *wiraga*, *wirama*, and *wirasa* and their application. information about the figure of Gayatri Rajapatni, a female figure behind the glory of the Majapahit Kingdom, and information and references related to the aesthetic form of a performance, especially dance performances.

Next, the data collected was analyzed by sorting and interpreting it. Data that did not pass this process was eliminated and stored as a comparison in case additional information was needed for the mapped concepts.

The analyzed data was then presented in the form of a description to facilitate the reader. The description was also accompanied by photo illustrations to summarize the discussion and provide a complete picture of the analyzed work.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Aesthetics of Performance Form of Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri Dance

Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri dance is

a dance work composed by Dwi Rahmani, S.Kar., M.Sn and directed by Didik Bambang Wahyudi, S.Kar., M.Sn, who is a dance lecturer at Institut Seni Indonesia Surakarta. This dance was created in 2019. Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri is a development of Sesaji Dance created by Dwi Rahmani in 2017. At that time, the number of dancers was still nine people and the music was composed by Waluyo, S.Kar. This Sesaji dance is inspired by the strength of a woman. Equally departing from the power of a woman, this Sesaji dance was developed in 2019 into a Bedhaya dance entitled Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri Dance and composed by Dedek Wahyudi Sutrisno (interview with Dwi Rahmani, 2025).

This dance was inspired by an influential princess figure behind the glory of the Majapahit kingdom, namely Gayatri Rajapatmi. The figure of Gayatri Rajapatmi has a beautiful, graceful face, a strong personality, courage, intelligence, authority, and a loving nature. Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri Dance is a *bedhaya* dance genre. Unlike other *Bedhaya* dances, the number of dancers in this Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri Dance consists of eleven dancers. Each dancer has a role known as a position in a dance

composition, with names such as *batak*, *gulu*, *dada*, *apit ngarep*, *apit mburi*, *endhel weton*, *apit meneng*, and *buncit*. Essentially, this Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri Dance is based on the bedhaya dance standard, but in this Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri Dance there is a development in the number of dancers, which generally *endhel weton* and *apit meneng* of one person, but in this Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri Dance there are two *endhel weton* and two *apit meneng*. This dance also has its own characteristics.

Characteristic of Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri can be seen in some parts of the sequences that utilize the character of female movements with *lanyap* character but still have a soft and graceful impression, and along with a development of movements in the sequences. There is also the incorporation of a small vocabulary of Yogyakarta-style movements, and in the *sirepan* section there is a Balinese impression. This is due to the quality of movement and volume combined with flute accompaniment that gives the impression of Balinese movements. This is what makes Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri a very interesting dance work. The combination of these movements can

occur due to new innovations during the exploration process in the development of the bedhaya dance variety itself, and is also influenced by the body memory of the choreographer who is a lecturer and an alumnus of the Akademi Seni Karawitan, which is now renamed the Indonesian Institute of Arts Surakarta, in the creative process of combining the various movements to produce a new variety movements. (interview Dwi Rahmani, 2025).

1. Wiraga

Wiraga is a skill in visualizing every movement made by a dancer and is related to memory or memorization, mastery of motion techniques, and space (Maryani, 2007). *Wiraga* also includes the dancer's ability to regulate physical strength and control the volume of movements while dancing, because strength is the main factor of a dancer (Faishal, 2021). The application concept of *wiraga* in the Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri dance can be seen in the variety of movements and movement motifs. The variety of movements and movement motifs used in the Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri dance utilize the

vocabulary of classical Surakarta-style dance movements, which have been developed in several of its movements. Within this movement vocabulary, elements of the Yogyakarta style are also incorporated, as seen in the *srisigan* movement. The proper application of posture and movement can be observed in the movements executed by the dancers.

The *wiraga* element here is also influenced by the dancer's *adeg*. In selecting dancers, the choreographer has his own criteria. When choosing dancers, the choreographer chooses women with the same *adeg* or *gandar*, or body attitude. In this dance, the choreographer needs dancers who match the characteristics of the character of Gayatri, such as women who have a high posture, a beautiful face, and of course can perform this dance according to the character of Gayatri, namely authoritative, graceful, brave, strong, intelligent, beautiful and loving nature. It is intended that the message contained in this Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri Dance

can be conveyed well. This is where the dancer's bodily ability in the accuracy of movement is applied. Based on observations in the video document, the author believes that the dancer in this Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri Dance succeeded in interpreting the character of Gayatri. This can be seen from the suitability of the movements in each atmosphere, as well as the connection of the racket from one movement to another which seems always continuous and unbroken. From this suitability, the quality of the dancers movements proves to be able to perform motion techniques well so that they appear flexible.

In the selection of dancers, the dancers were chosen directly by the choreographer, Dwi Rahmani. The dancers in this performance are students of the Dance Study Program at Institut Seni Indonesia Surakarta. However in selecting dancers, Dwi Rahmani also has her own criteria. The criteria for being chosen as a dancer for The Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri Dance is a woman with tall stature, having an authoritative presence, possessing good dance skills, has

the same *gandar*, beautiful, and most importantly always having the desire to learn and process together (interview Dwi Rahmani, 2025). This is important because in the aesthetic value of Bedhaya dance, what is first seen is the visual form of the dancers, therefore the suitability or similarity of body posture or *gandar* is important in the presentation of this work. The selection of dancers who have good dancing skills and the desire to learn and process together means that dancers can apply dance concepts such as *wiraga*, *wirama*, and *wirasa* well, so that the impression and message of this work are conveyed effectively to the audience and can build an interactive atmosphere between the choreographer and dancers. This interaction makes it easier for the choreographer to communicate and discuss the work together.

2. Wirama

Wirama is a combination of movement and rhythm. Rhythm in a dance includes the rhythm of the music, the rhythm of the movements, and the rhythm of the movements

themselves. Of course, when performing a movement in a dance, it must be in accordance with the *wirama*, such as in accordance with the count, the accuracy in executing or adjusting the movements to the accompanying music.

In a performance art, especially dance, it cannot be separated from musical accompaniment. In this dance work, Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri is accompanied by traditional Javanese musical instruments, namely gamelan, whose *gendhing* arrangement has also undergone development. The musical arrangement of the gamelan is very well arranged by the composer and can be a unity with the dance movements, so that it succeeds in bringing out the atmosphere of the dance character performed. The *gendhing-gendhing* performed consist of *Pathetan Kebyar Mantram* followed by *gendhing Ganthungan* which is filled with the literary *mantram* of Puja Dewi verses accompanied by *gender*, *rebab*, xylophone, flute, and trumpet (Rahmani, 2021). Then it is followed by *buka celuk* which is

the beginning of the beksan section. The second section is the *ketawangan* section accompanied by *gendhing ketawang gayatri alit garap kemanak*, but in the third section it is accompanied by the vocal work of *Mantram Gayatri*, and in the *sirepan* accompanied by *sirep kemanakan* which is accompanied by vocal *mantram Gayatri* and hybrid vocals (Rahmani, 2021). In the backward part of the beksan (*mundur beksan*) accompanied by the *Ladrangan Kidung Gayatri Alit gendhing* form.

Wirama includes the suitability of the rhythm of dance movements with the rhythm of the *gendhing*. There are three types of movement rhythms in traditional Surakarta-style dance, namely *irama midak*, *irama nggandhul*, *irama nujah*. The rhythm of motion consists of *nujah* rhythm, which means performing the movement by preceding the *gendhing*, for example in the *seblak sampur* movement vocabulary, the application of *nujah* rhythm in *seblak sampur* means that the dancer spreads the *sampur* before

the *gong*. Then there is rhythm *midak*, rhythm *midak* means accuracy in performing a movement in accordance with the *gendhing*. Usually, *midak* rhythm is used for characters who are assertive, brave, and authoritative. An example of movement in the *midak* rhythm is when during *seblak sampur*, the dancer spreads the *sampur* right along with the sound of the *gong* or if calculated using counts 1 to 8, *seblak sampur* is done on the eighth count (1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8). And the third is the *nggandul* rhythm. *Nggandhul* in Indonesian means hanging, like a hanging movement. The application of motion in the rhythm of *nggandul* actually looks like a delayed movement, this is intentionally done and not adjusted to the rhythm of the *gendhing*, however this *nggandhul* rhythm tends to be occur at the end of the *tibo gendhing* or is adjusted to the *selehan tibo tembang* or the end of the vocal sound. An example of *nggandul* rhythm is in the *seblak sampur* movement vocabulary, where the dancer spreads her *sampur* after the *gong* is beaten. When done

with a count of 1 to 8, the *nggandul* rhythm is usually excuted in counts of 1 or even 2 (1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,1,2) usually the *nggandul* rhythm is done for the *luruh* character to clarify its soft character.

Based on observations, the rhythm used in The Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri Dance is the rhythm of *midak* and *nggandul*, the application in the movement section is as follows:

1. In the motion of *kapang-kapang* accompanied by *pathetan* from Mantram Gayatri, the rhythm used is a stable rhythm in accordance with the *tibo gendhing*. The dancers stepped towards the *beksan* goal with confidence to create a majestic atmosphere and depict the figure of Gayatri, who at that time was said to be a candidate for a leader before the position was given to her daughter, Tribuwana Tungadewi.
2. When entering the *buka celuk* section, the rhythm used is *nggandul* rhythm. This part begins with *Batak* dancing solo first as an introduction to the character of Gayatri who is gentle and loving, transitioning into the *gendhing ketawangan*.
3. When entering the movement before the *gendhing ketawang hibryd*, the atmosphere and rhythm of the movement begin to rise into a *midak* rhythm. Then at the time of *ketawang Hibryd*, it stabilizes to create an impression of *antep* and authority, visualizing the characteristics of Dewi Saraswati, Dewi Laksmi, Dewi Durga, Dewi Uma, and Dewi Kali that unite in Gayatri.
4. During the *sirep* section, wich uses the *nggandul* rhythm, the character that appears in this scene is a visualization of the tenderness and love of Gayatri.
5. At the time of *Ketawang Kidung Ajang Gayung*, the rhythm of arriving *gendhing* and *tembang* is also used. The impression seen from this scene is the majesty of the goddesses who become one unit in a Gayatri, accompanied by praises of holy prayers in accordance with the lyrics of the vocal song: “*manunggal nyawiji sang hapsari dewi saraswati miwah dewi laksmi durga uma, miwah dewi kali ring kidung gayatri kidung puja puji mantra*

suci mrih hayu basuki nuswantara hayu ing salaminya” which means “Become a unity of the goddess hapsari, goddess Saraswati, and goddess Laksmi, Durga, Uma, and Goddess Kali, with the Sufi song Gayatri, Sufi songs of *puja-puji mantra suci* so that the whole is safe, and all residents are preserved forever”(Rahmani, 2019).

6. At the time of *mundur beksan*, the *beksan* uses a rhythm that matches the arrival of the *gendhing*. The atmosphere presented seems majestic, this is also a visualization of the peak of Gayatri Rajapatmi's journey who is ready to change her destiny to become a Biksuni (interview Dwi Rahmani, 2025).

The purpose of these three rhythms in the Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri dance is to realize or visualize the character of this bedhaya dance. The character of the Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri dance is based on the character of Gayatri Rajapatni, a woman behind the glory of Majapahit who had an elegant, beautiful, intelligent, authoritative, majestic, yet humble, strong, and loving character.

The dancers' sensitivity to the

rhythm of the movements and the *gendhing* creates a *luwes* impression, and each movement appears *resik* or clean.



Picture 1. *sekaran lincak gagak seblak nggandhul* visualizing beautiful, gentle, graceful, and loving characters. Source: Youtube channel Upt.Audio Visual ISI Surakarta



Picture 2. *Sekaran gedheg leyotan* visualizing a character *lanyap*, strong, and courageous. Source: Youtube channel Upt.Audio Visual ISI Surakarta

3. Wirasa

Wirasa is a combination of movement and rhythm that produces a feeling. In achieving *wirasa*, dancers no longer think about memorizing choreography or floor patterns, but instead focus on the dance they are performing, so that they become one with the dance. In achieving an

emotion, the dancer must also be able to control their emotions. Additionally, the dancer must be confident, as this confidence fosters a convincing attitude, ensuring that their movements do not convey hesitation.

The spiritual essence of traditional Surakarta-style dance is still very much influenced by aesthetic principles, while the aesthetic concept of traditional Surakarta-style dance itself has four parts, namely physical form, artistic form, dynamic form, and aesthetic form (Maryani, 2007). This can be seen in the final result of the movements performed by the dancers, both in terms of their poses and body shapes.

In achieving *wirasa*, each dancer no longer thinks about memorizing movements, but has reached a level where they can feel them. Feeling here means that dancers can feel each movement combined with the accompanying music. In achieving *wirasa*, dancers are also required to be able to interpret the characters in the dance being performed. Every dance work has a background story that will be conveyed to the

audience. To be able to convey the message, atmosphere, and present the dance work well, a dancer must be able to interpret the characters and stories contained in the dance work. The result of this interpretation then becomes a basic guideline for a dancer in presenting a dance work. The purpose is for dancers to be able to internalize and portray a character in the dance work, so that the message to be conveyed is effectively communicated. The application of *wirasa* in the Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri dance can be seen and felt through the movements and atmosphere created by the dancers. Therefore, *wirasa* can also be referred to as the result of the combined application of the concepts of *wiraga* and *wirama*. The harmony between the movements and the rhythm of the music and *gendhing* creates and visualizes the atmosphere, thereby creating a theatrical effect in the Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri dance. This is intended to ensure that the character of Gayatri Rajapatni is well visualized. The integration of the elements of *wiraga*, *wirama*, and *wirasa* is also supported by the

integration of the elements contained within *wiraga* and *wirama*, namely movement, musical accompaniment, makeup and costume, the makeup and costume in this Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri Dance use bedhaya dance corrective makeup or commonly called beautiful makeup. The aesthetic value embodied in this makeup aims to clarify the lines of the face and support the aesthetics of this dance. The clothing used in this dance is using *dodot* with *babon angrem* patterns, which complemented by *bokongan*, *sampur*, *slepe*, *thothok*, then uses yellow *jarik samparan* and is equipped with *wiron sandatan*, and uses *buntal* accessories (Rahmani, 2019). There are accessories such as bracelets, necklaces, and studs or earrings to complete the appearance. On the *dodot* there are gold-colored ornaments, so that the impression of majesty and the impression of the Balinese style are visible. The hairdo uses a bun that is equipped with *cunduk jungkat* or *sirkam* accessories, and on the back there are accessories such as *garuda mungkur*. In this part of the hairdo,

it looks more beautiful and attractive because there are decorations made from jasmine flowers. The makeup and clothing used by these dancers support the aesthetic value of this performance and which gives the impression and character that matches the character desired by the creator. *Gawang*, The *gawang* arrangement pattern or floor pattern here uses a *pendhapa* stage wicket that can be seen from four sides at once. The beauty value of this dance is supported by the neatness of the floor pattern formation, the accuracy in changing places, the appearance of the dancers, and the high and low volume of the dancers when performing movements (dancers standing or kneel). Then the dancers' movements, which are an attempt to achieve character *putri lanyap* but still appears elegant. *Putri lanyap* in the Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri performance can be presented through technical and non-technical aspects of dance, such as posture and *polatan* or facial expressions such as strength when performing hoyog movements with a wide range, broken movements

that give an impression of *antep* and bravery, ornamentation that forms a stupa (figure of the goddess on a temple), tempo, and rhythm in performing movements. The grace and loving nature of the Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri dance can also be presented when the *batak* dances alone and the other dancers are in a *trap sila* position, then in the *beksan* movements in the *sekarang laras la la*, *sekarang laras manglug*, *laras anglir mendung*, and *sekarang lincak gagak* sections. The *gedheg leyotan* movement with its *midak* and *patah-patah* tempo and rhythm visually portrays Gayatri as strong, brave, and authoritative. The application of these emotional elements is successfully executed by the dancers, and this success can be attributed to the collaboration between the dancers and the musical accompaniment, which harmoniously unites the emotions, thereby creating the atmosphere intended by the choreographer and director through the movements synchronized with the musical accompaniment.



Picture 3. Kesatuan gerak penari menghasilkan rasa yang menyatu pada antar penari Source: Youtube channel Upt.Audio Visual ISI Surakarta



Picture 4. rias busana Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri Dance Source: Youtube channel Upt.Audio Visual ISI Surakarta

CONCLUSION

The Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri dance was created in 2019 and was inspired by a figure behind the glory of the Majapahit kingdom, namely Gayatri Rajapatni. Choreographer Dwi Rahmani used traditional Surakarta dance movements to create this dance. The traditional Surakarta dance style has a basic concept that includes rules governing dance movements, namely *wiraga*, *wirama*, and *wirasa*. This concept is fundamental and must be understood and used as a guide and reference by dancers, choreographers, and academics in enriching the study of

performing arts, especially Javanese dance. In relation to this, this study aims to provide insights and information about the aesthetic aspects of the Bedhaya Kidung Gayatri dance performance through the fundamental concepts of wiraga, wirama, and wirasa. Therefore, further research is recommended to enhance understanding of this work and similar studies.

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