

Reconstruction of The North Nias Giri-Giri Dance: A Creative Process

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This research aims to find out the views of the people of Lahewa Village, North Nias Regency, regarding the Giri-giri dance which has been lost; the process of reconstructing the Giri-giri dance; the results of the reconstruction of the Giri-giri dance; and the creative process in its reconstruction. This research process resulted in a video and book on the Giri-giri dance from the local culture of North Nias. The method used in this research is qualitative in the form of descriptive analysis. The scope of the discussion includes the following: 1) What is the process of reconstructing the Giri-giri dance? 2) What is the shape of the reconstruction of the Giri-giri dance? 3) What factors support the reconstruction of the Giri-giri dance? Data analysis was carried out from each part found. Data was obtained from literature study, observation, and interviews. The research locations were carried out in the cities of Medan and Nias. The data that has been collected is analyzed using a qualitative paradigm using project-based research. The concept used in reconstructing the Giri-giri dance is structuring forms so that changes can be seen in the movement components, make-up and clothing, floor design, and dance props by providing innovative tourism art concepts, namely short, concise, engaging, and selling value. So, based on this concept, the Giri-giri dance can become a performing arts asset in North Nias Regency and Medan City.

Keywords: *Reconstruction, Giri-giri Dance, North Nias*

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INTRODUCTION

Culture is a system of knowledge, values, beliefs, and products owned and grown together by a group of people, whether visible (tangible/able to be touched) or invisible (intangible/unable to be touched). Art has become one of the more dominant cultural products, to the point that many people think that culture is art, even though this is not entirely true. Culture that has developed within a community, a social system, and over a relatively long period, causes cultural perceptions to be very close to social assumptions, dance, which is a product of a living culture, grows in a system of interactions and social structures. One of the dances that is a product of the community and the object of this research is the Giri-giri dance.

The giri-giri dance is one of the traditional dances from Lahewa village in North Nias Regency. It is a dance that originates from the Minang coastal area and was brought by immigrants (Ndrawa) from the Minang tribe. In an interview with Taslim Zega (2022), it is stated that the Giri-giri dance contains special prayers so that not everyone can dance. Thus, the dance is challenging to develop and is no longer popular in the community that supports it. For this reason, this dance will be reconstructed. The reconstruction of the Giri-giri dance is a step toward saving the rare and almost extinct artistic treasures in North Nias and rediscovering them. Otherwise, it will disappear into history. This dance will be rearranged with the structure of the Giri-giri dance presentation using existing materials, which will then be developed into a more attractive and qualified performance. [Wahyudianto](#), in the journal Mudra volume 38 no.4 of 2023, wrote that "Quality refers to the ability to identify the cultural characteristics of society that are appreciated aesthetically as a principle," this is to maintain the preservation of one of the cultural heritages in North Nias Regency, North Sumatra.

Efforts to reconstruct the Giri-giri dance are a concrete manifestation of efforts to preserve traditional arts and rediscover one of the traditional arts that is said to be lost and almost extinct. Furthermore, reintroduce the forms of the Giri-giri dance so that it can be studied again and developed to increase appreciation towards traditional arts and the dance itself, especially for the younger generation. Giri-giri dance has unique

and specific characteristics; it is performed by men using deploy lights (an antique flask glass kind of light), which are put on the head, arms, and back of the performer's hands. This research will reconstruct it so that there is verbal and audio-visual documentation. The hope is that this documentation material can become study material for future generations.

Several things emerged as the background to the problem in this research, namely, carrying out the process and results of the reconstruction of the Giri-giri dance in North Nias Regency. Reconstruction is one of the processes carried out towards the revitalization stage. Conditions like this gave rise to the idea of carrying out excellent and coherent documentation through reconstruction so that it could become the primary source in the creative process for the traditional arts of the Nias region.

According to Sri Rochana Widyastutieningrum (2012:16-25). Revitalization has several stages carried out, which are 1) rediscovering, 2) reconstruction, and 3) reinterpretation; thus, in principle, it has the aim of reviving, maintaining, renewing, and creating dances that have higher value. The reconstruction process includes exploration, improvisation, and composition, focusing on movement, space, and time elements.

Efforts to reconstruct the Giri-giri dance are a concrete manifestation of efforts to preserve traditional arts and rediscover one of the traditional arts which is said to be lost and almost extinct, as well as reintroducing the forms of the Giri-giri dance so that the dance can be studied and developed to increase appreciation from the people of North Nias, especially the younger generation.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Qualitative research methods are approaches that express results in the form of descriptive data, especially words, not numbers. Bogdan and Taylor (2012) define qualitative research as a procedure that produces descriptive data through written or spoken words and observable behavior. The choice of a qualitative approach was motivated by a focus on issues involving description and explanation, not quantity or numbers, especially in the context of the reconstruction and creative process of the Giri-giri Dance.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Designing this product involved creating a design for the Nias ethnic in North Sumatra, considering the availability of easily accessible references for learners regarding Nias ethnic dances in the region. Media design experts and learning material experts validated this product design. To ensure the validity of the Giri-giri dance construction product, trials were carried out involving art teachers, individual learners, and small and large traditional community groups. Suppose the Giri-giri dance construction is proven to be flexible after being tested. In that case, the next step is implementation through official legality and funding policies because they are considered good quality, are relevant, and support the educational program being implemented.

The origins of the Giri-giri dance

The origins of the formation of the Giri-giri dance in Lahewa Village, North Nias Regency, where the Giri-giri dance originates from the Minang tradition that began when the development of Islam in North Nias occurred. According to Tuti Rahayu (2016), the development of Islam at that time used many methods, one of which was art. The art that developed then was the Giri-giri dance, held at the Kemidi event. Where the Kemidi event is an event to commemorate Islamic religious days. The Giri-giri dance is a dance that originated from immigrants, namely the Minang tribe. The pentang group is called Ndrawa. In the 1960s, the Ndrawa people, who had chosen to settle on the island of Nias, decided to establish a Muslim alliance or community. This community was founded to teach religion and Islamic law to the next generation.

As time progressed, the *Ndrawa* community continued to grow. This makes the Muslim community on Nias Island increasingly growing. As an effort to teach the teachings of Islam, the people of the Nias Muslim community decided to hold a series of events to celebrate Muslim holidays. The events held certainly contain religious values in them. Religious teaching and good attitudes are conveyed through predetermined events, one of which is a *Kemidi* event. The *Kemidi* program is a comedy show that, in its performance, presents the history of Islam's arrival to Nias and the exemplary qualities of Islamic figures.

One of the events that is part of a series of other events to celebrate the Muslim holiday is the *Kemidi* event. At this *Kemidi* event, the Giri-giri dance is performed to teach religion and retell the

brief history of the arrival of Muslims to the island of Nias. The Giri-giri dance was brought by the indigenous Minang tribe, who chose to settle on Nias Island. The Minang people who chose to become permanent residents of Nias then made the Giri-giri dance a typical dance of the village where the people lived, namely Toreloto Village.

Several rules exist in carrying out the Giri-giri dance, namely that it can only be performed by men; dancers who can learn this dance have a unique lineage from the community itself. Then, dancers who have this bloodline must master chanting or special knowledge that can be learned by dancers who have reached puberty (teenagers growing up).

During the performance, dancers who have mastered this dance's special knowledge can magically move the teplok lamp from the head to the dancer's shoulders. Dancers who have mastered the Giri-giri dance cannot pass on their knowledge of the Giri-giri dance to just anyone. By the rules established since the emergence of this dance, the Giri-giri dance can only be learned by the lineage of the community that owns it. This is the basis for the selective selection of dancers to perform this dance because this dance contains supernatural or magical elements (source: Hasmin Tanjung).

The Giri-giri dance has barely experienced development due to factors that hinder its preservation. One of the factors is the difficulty of learning this dance, and not all community lineages can do it. Another obstacle factor is the development of the times, which presents various modern things so that the next generation becomes more interested in modern things.

The function of the Giri-giri dance is as a means of entertainment and as a means of spectacle. In the Giri-giri dance, movements involve the expression of power or energy manifested in space and time. Movement is an integral part of human life, allowing the expression of all feelings, and is visible through changes arising from the movement of body parts. Movement arises from processing changes and produces two types of movement, pure and meaningful, which are then arranged into a dance. As Ida Ayu [Trisnawati](#) and Dedi Gusman wrote in the *Mudra Journal* Volume 38 no 3, 2023, dance is a potential diversity that can be made into a product and packaged into economic value. This economic

packaging can be sold in tourism activities. Reflecting on tourism development in Bali, the potential for cultural diversity is a pearl that must be maintained and developed. Overall, if used well, it will undoubtedly support the future development process. This economic packaging can be sold in tourism activities.

Reconstruction is an activity that depicts an event through movement and expression, accompanied by music, to convey specific messages to the intended audience. Along with the times and the increase in technology-based entertainment, the art of Giri-giri dance, especially in the Lahewa area, has experienced a decline in popularity. The researcher aims to ensure that the Giri-giri dance can still be performed in the North Nias area, and to achieve this; reconstruction is carried out through a choreographic process.

Giri-Giri Dance Reconstruction Process

1. Exploration Stage

The first thing that is done is movement exploration, where movement is obtained through recording and observation in search of appropriate movements to create movement. Exploration here is the initial stage in composing the Giri-giri dance. This initial stage is thinking, imagining, feeling, and processing the movements seen by the resource person who still remembers the dance. Simple movements include moving your legs, crossing your legs, lifting one leg, etc. Observing this object, we can explore it by imagining it in body movement while carrying a *teplok* lamp above the head.

We see the movement process from the source, who directly dances it according to what he remembers.



Picture 1. Cross, dotted, and diagonal leg movements



Figure 2. Spinning Process



Figure 3. The process of walking around

2. Improvisation Stage

After determining the basic movements, researchers and choreographers carry out movement improvisations, namely spontaneous experiences in trying or exploring possible movements found. The choreographer develops every movement that appears during movement exploration through considerations of energy, space, and time, resulting in various movements. In the Giri-giri Dance, the choreographer looks for basic movements by observing the dancers' activities as a source of information and developing the movements involving Dance Education students who take Independent Study courses. The movements in the Giri-giri dance are also a development of the traditional movements of the Lahewa region, North Nias, including swaying, stepping, crossing the legs, and leaning.

3. Evaluation Stage

In the evaluation stage, after successfully creating body movement through exploration and improvisation, the next step is to select movements based on the basic idea, including theme, story, movement character, and movements characteristic of the idea. Next, the movement is structured, involving elements such as foot, hand, head, and body or torso movements.

4. Forming Stage

At the forming stage (formation of movement/composition), this activity is called composing or forming (making a composition), and the need to create a composition arises from the human desire to give shape to what is found during exploration. Although movement spontaneity has an important role, it should be combined or enriched with movement selection, integration, and unification.

5. Composition

In the composition phase, the choreographer selects several movements that are considered suitable after going through the exploration, improvisation, and evaluation stages. Next, these movements are arranged into a series of movements, which will be used as the basis for the Giri-giri Dance.

The movements that have been arranged based on the exploration stage are:

1. Motion,

In the Giri-giri dance, the type of dance movement pattern used is a traditional dance that is almost extinct, which is re-exposed by following the existing movements and also being developed but still sticking to the existing traditional patterns, where this movement was developed from the beginning but did not change the original movement.

a. Manembah:

The second hand is opened wide at shoulder level, holding a teplok lamp in front of the chest while the feet stand on their knees. The body bends forward while placing the teplok lamp on the floor, then greets with both hands at eye level. After greeting, the lamp is taken, and the standing process is carried out.



Figure 4. Manembah Movement Process (Respect)

b. Wamalega danga, waniti tumi ba nuwu gahe:

The position of the left hand holding the teplok lamp is directly in front of the chest, the right hand is parallel to the chest and then swings forward and backward. The heel and tip of the right foot point to the floor alternately. Then, it is placed on top of the head



Figure 5. The process of placing the lamp on the head

c. Wandru ba dete galisi gambolo count 1x8

Then the lamp is moved above the right shoulder using the left hand, the right hand is rotated in front of the chest and swung towards the right side of the body repeatedly.



Figure 6. The process of placing the lamp on the shoulder

d. Wandru ba dete zi'u gambolo count 1x8

Then the lamp is placed on the elbow of the right hand using the left hand, the right hand is swung left and right repeatedly.



Figure 7. Process of the lamp being placed on the elbow arm

e. Wandru ba dete danga gambolo count 2x8.

The lamp's position is placed on the back of the right hand; both hands are shoulder-width apart while swinging to the right and left, with the body following the direction of the swing repeatedly while the feet walk in place 1x8. Then, in the same position, do 1x8 again, but the right heel and toes move to the floor alternately.



Figure 8. Process of placing the lamp on the back of the hand

2. Accompaniment.

In the Giri-giri dance, the music accompanying the dance comes from the musical accompaniment of the coastal Nias area using instruments such as the violin, drum, or rapai. The choreographer composes the musical accompaniment by starting with soft sounds, then slowly increasing the intensity to louder so that the accompaniment is arranged orderly. In addition, the choreographer synchronizes the musical accompaniment with the dance movements to create continuity between music and dance in the Giri-giri Dance. It involves musical instruments, and the Giri-giri dance also uses poetry. Poetry in this dance aims to describe and explain the meaning of the movements, and the vocals presented are an additional variation in the Giri-giri Dance.

3. Makeup and Clothing.

In selecting and applying make-up for dancers, the choreographer adapts to the theme of the Giri-giri Dance. The choreographer chose to use beautiful and straightforward make-up, considering that this performance would be presented at the Independent Study exam. At the makeup selection stage, the choreographer connected it to the Giri-giri Dance theme, which reflects human activities in community life. The use of clothing involves clothes brackets and songket cloth, with the addition of a scarf for the head, which is still maintained.

4. Properties

The property used in the Giri-Giri traditional dance is Wandru Ganefo, a teplek lamp or wall lamp. In this dance, the choreographer uses the props used by the dancers.



Figure 9. Wandru Ganefo (Teplek Light)

5. Floor Pattern,

The arrangement of floor patterns in the Giri-giri Dance includes all the variations of floor pattern configurations available. These configurations are also adjusted to the dance movement patterns. This floor pattern aims to give beauty to the dance and avoid a monotonous impression. There are eleven-floor patterns implemented in this dance, including straight-line movements, moving to cone or bamboo shoot patterns, circles, diagonals, and small circles.

D. Form of Reconstruction Results of the Giri-Giri Dance.

The results of improvisation and providing space for a movement that can produce aesthetic movements were then evaluated, and the Giri-giri dance movement was created using the properties of teplek lights and clothes modified to look beautiful, then demonstrated in the independent study course exam.



Figure 10. Dancers Enter the Stage



Figure 11. Dancers salute



Figure 12. Dancer taking a teplok lamp



Figure 13. Kneeling dancer standing process



Figure 14. Dancers with a second-row floor pattern



Figure 15. Dancer with a straight-line floor pattern



Figure 16. Dancers perform the floor pattern of bamboo shoots



Figure 17. Dancers with lights moving overhead with a floor pattern of bamboo shoots



Figure 18. Dancer with a rotating squat movement



Figure 19. Dancers with a large circular floor pattern



Figure 20. Dancers perform squatting movements with lights on the backs of their hands



Figure 21. Dancers perform overhead light movements



Figure 22. Dancer with a diagonal line floor pattern



Figure 22. Dancer with a two-diagonal floor pattern



Figure 23. Dancers with small circle floor patterns.



Figure 24. Dancer with swinging movements



Figure 25. Dancers perform a floor pattern of closed bamboo shoots



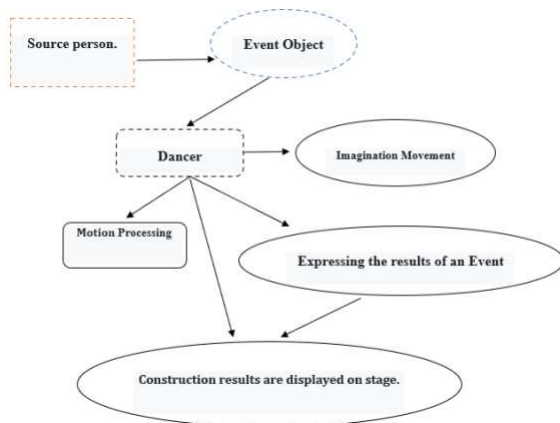
Figure 26. Dancers make movements to leave the stage.

The first process to reconstruct dance is to dig up movements that have long been lost and then rearrange them so that the various existing movements can be organized and whole again through the composition process. Dance artists use traditional movement patterns and develop these movements to make them look more beautiful. The reorganization of this dance was carried out to recall a dance that had long been lost and packaged so that it could function again and be recognized by the supporting community. In this research, there are many developments and changes to existing movements, including movements that provide an element of beauty. This reconstruction uses a previously existing repertoire of movements without changing the values and essence contained in the Giri dance; in other words, the reconstruction is only in terms of its form without changing the content contained in the dance.

The Giri Giri dance initially had magical elements in it, which made this dance challenging to learn. This movement is in the wandru ganefo movement where the light is directly above the head. Then it moves to the shoulder, to the elbow, and the back of the hand, just shaking the shoulder, and then the light moves to the shoulder without using the hand; this looks magical. Not everyone can learn this magical thing in this movement, so the movement is considered weak and collapsed. Then, using the Wandru Ganefo properties, we will reconstruct the updates contained in several movements, eliminating magical elements but still retaining their original characteristics and presenting beauty elements.

In this reconstruction, the method of placing the light from above the head is to move it using the left hand to move it to the shoulder, to the elbow, or the back of the hand. So that dancers are also comfortable with these movements. This change is a movement that does not abandon the original movement but uses a different method.

Creative Process in Constructing the North Nias Giri-giri Dance



This creative process starts from hearing and seeing the movements of the resource person and then seeing the object from one event of the giri-giri dance. Dancers and choreographers see and hear and then create movements based on the imagination of the event. Dancers perform movements and also express an event from the giri-giri dance. The results are then displayed, and the shape of the Giri-giri dance is visible.

CONCLUSION

Giri-giri dance reconstruction attempts to recreate this dance by taking the remaining data from the past to present it in the current context. This data includes music and movement as the primary information in reconstructing the Giri-giri dance in North Nias. The reconstruction approach involves a structuring concept in movement components, make-up, clothing, floor design, and dance prop changes. Excavation activities to reconstruct the dance involve the participation of dancers, musicians, fashion stylists, and artists in the North Nias area and the Dance Students class of 2018. Therefore, cultural imagination and reality cannot be separated from the community that owns the dance, creating a new identity as self-expression through the production of dance works with a new vision.

Cultural heritage reflects values, beliefs, traditions, lifestyles, and cultural traces from the past to the present. It also shows a community's attachment, representing its history and identity from the past, present, and future. Cultural heritage involves the physical products and spiritual values of traditions that are crucial elements in the identity of a group or nation. Therefore, cultural heritage is the past's physical result and cultural values that can be maintained and developed as a sustainable preservation effort.

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