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## **The Role Of Silek In Traditional And Modern Dance In Minangkabau**

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### **Abstract**

*This paper discusses the role of silek in the development of dance in Minangkabau. Silek became the root in the creation of dance movements. Starting from traditional dances such as pasambahan dance, galombang dance, piriang dance, to modern dance with a contemporary style. Every aspect of the initial movement to the final movement, Minangkabau dance is inseparable from the silek element that dominates and becomes a characteristic. Although the pattern of modernity affects the social life of the community, it does not change the belief in shifting the existence of silek in the creation of Minangkabau dance works. This study examines how important silek is in dance in Minangkabau. Through qualitative research methods, it will be seen from every aspect of silek and its development by observation, observation and interview. The development of dance in Minangkabau is seen from the intensity of society which always develops silek on dance and makes dance a medium to express meaning in the order of life.*

**Keywords:** *Silek, Traditional Dance, Modern Dance, Existence*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Silek was born from the Minangkabau community and developed into a form of martial arts. Every corner of the Minangkabau area has a silek training place, starting from the mainland area to the coastline. Silek develops for generations from tuo silek to heir and through several processes for the confirmation of knowledge or abilities around silek. The Silek school in Minangkabau is a pure martial arts school found in Indonesia (Olnadia ulfitrah, 2018). A stream is a categorization of the styles adopted in a silek based on what a college practices, understands, and believes. As a typical style of the Minangkabau silek, it is open and closed or a technique that is centered on the strength of the feet, steps, defense, strength, attack and tanking.

Each area or nagari in Minangkabau has different characteristics in terms of the shape of silek labour. This difference occurs due to natural factors or environmental conditions that make the movement have to adjust to its natural state (Saputra, 2011). For example, in the coastal areas of West Sumatra, every horse or technique stands almost touching the floor or low. This is because the soil factor contains a lot of sand so that if the position of the horses is a bit high, it will be easy to be dropped by the opponent when attacked. Another example is in the darek or mainland area, silek uses a horse that is tall and sometimes raises the next foot. The shape of the tall horses is based on the ground on the land that is dense and uneven so that when raising the legs it will feel easier to step and dodge.

As stated by Dreager in his 2000 research, the Minangkabau silek contains spiritual values, the nature of which is a belief in supernatural things that depend on their religious foundation; most commonly, the beliefs of Muslims . Silek training is usually conducted in surau at night. In addition to being a place of religious practice, surau is also used as a place to practice silek in every nagari in Minangkabau. As a place of silek practice, surau is attended by

various age kalaagan from the old, young and most of them are teenage boys who learn about Islamic science and silek as self protection.

The role of silek in minangkabau society becomes a cultural identity that needs to be maintained. Through the direction of tuo silek, cultural experts and traditional leaders, silek has moved into the basic form of Minangkabau art, especially in dance. Silek is the basic basic in all minangkabau dance movements. Whatever type of dance is created in various events, both national and international, it still makes silek the key to its basic movement.

The conversion from a martial art to a dance was originally initiated by Hoerijah Adam. Some of the phenomenal dance artworks of his time created and developed the basic movements of silek in a dance. The dance created gets a very good appreciation for the audience. A new offer that is very unique and has become distinctive in every movement of Minangkabau to date. The spirit brought by Horeijah Adam also continues to be passed on to later generations until today.

In addition to Hoerijah Adam, there are also other figures who influenced the development of silek in dance movements such as; Gusmiati Suid, Syofiani. These three female figures are the initiators or pioneers of dance in west Sumatra. Apart from the gender issue at that time that in Minangkabau women should not dance and hang out in the crowd because it is not in accordance with customary norms. Horeijah broke this habit with so many pros and cons that resulted in many oblique issues among the community about the existence of dance played by women in order to be accepted by society.

The basic technique of silek which is used as the basic base in Minangkabau dance becomes the archetype of creating artworks with a cultural background (Rosalina, 2021). The background of tradition does not preclude every movement that is created into a form that develops with different ideas or concepts. The development of movement in Minangkabau dance follows the flow of music based on minang instruments. The difference in each dance movement born in the creation of Minang dance refers to how the patterns, systems or concepts, ideas and ideas of the creator develop.

## RESEARCH METHODS

Research on silek as the basic movement of dance aims to re-examine how much role silek plays in dance works in Minang. Using qualitative research methods, which focus data collection as well as data analysis. Data collection is based on observations, interviews and accompanied by literature source studies. Through direct observation, observations are made on the object of study. Through observation researchers can document and reflect systematically on the activities and interactions of research subjects (Nugrahani, 2014). The results of an observation will be observed as well as an in-depth interview with cultural experts and observers. Bungin (2010: 108) explains that in-depth interviews are an effort to obtain information for research purposes by means of direct question and answer with informants whether using interview guidelines or not.

Data processing is carried out by classifying the results of the data collected to make it a conclusion from the research results so that they can be systematically, factually and accurately compiled against the points studied.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses qualitative library research with a series of activities related to library data collection methods in this study (Mestika: 2004, p. 3). The author employs a content analysis strategy in this study. This study provides a comprehensive examination of the content of a printed or written piece of information regarding the idea of incorporating multicultural education into Islamic education. The materials that make up the research material are the subject of the data's origin. Material for research is related to the subject of the study. Primary and secondary data sources can be distinguished as data sources.

Documentation studies use data collection methods to look for information about things or variables in the form of notes, books, papers, articles, journals, and so on. The goal of this study is to find information about multicultural education in books, articles, and journals. The method of content analysis was used as the method of data analysis in this study. Valid inferences can be derived from content analysis, which can be reexamined in light of the context. Throughout this analysis, various meanings are selected, compared, combined, and sorted until relevant data are discovered. Cross-library checks are performed and the supervisor's comments are taken into consideration in order to maintain the accuracy of the assessment process and to prevent and eliminate misinformation (errors caused by a lack of librarians). Research reports should be written in a way that is easy to understand and use. In order to make it simpler for readers to comprehend the research topics that were discussed, these principles were selected.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### **Dance as a cultural identity in Minangkabau**

Minangkabau has many types of dance that have been created by experts, ranging from traditional to modern styles. Each dance that has been created has distinctive characteristics and styles that become a unique one (Journal et al., 2022). Dance in Minangkabau usually departs from social phenomena, issues, cultural events, natural factors, myths and everything related to the environment. The existence of dance in the Minangkabau community was originally used as a means of cultural rituals that functioned on sacred occasions. Currently, dance in Minangkabau is often found at batagak panghulu events, manjapuik marapulai, cultural events and formal community institution events. Dance is an important percentage in the community order to show the dignity and dignity of the event organizers.

In addition to formal cultural events, dance also acts as entertainment for the local community. The dynamic movement accompanied by Minangkabau instrument music makes the spectacle interesting for people in each region. Through dance as an entertainment, it does not escape the message, meaning and social phenomenon that is used as a creative presentation on movement. Because every arrangement created based on the observation of an object that is born into motion. Every move is very meaningful and gives a message that is conveyed to the audience so that it can be used as a lesson in life. Motion becomes a symbol of people's lives, such as sitting cross-legged with hands arranged tightly in front of the chest, this symbolizes an offering or a tribute to anyone who sees and as a form of humility to appear in the public. In addition, there are also many other forms of symbols that are born and have a certain purpose and purpose. The local people really understand the symbols that are born in the Minangkabau dance movement and as spectators they also know the tatakrama and rules when watching a dance performance as entertainment and dance performance as a cultural ritual.

### Silek In Minangkabau Tradition dance

Some dance traditions that still exist today and are still developing among the Minangkabau community are: Galagbang Dance, Piriang Dance, and Pasambahan Dance. The dance is still popular among the public and is often performed at every cultural event. These four dances use the silek basik in their creation, starting from steps, footwork, hands and floor patterns following the grooves in the silek movement:

#### a. Galombang Dance

Galombang dance is a traditional Minangkabau dance that is always presented as a dance to welcome guests in various Minangkabau traditional ceremonies, such as the coronation of Penghulu (chieftain), wedding, bathing descent, and alek nagari (Nerosti, 2013). Galombang dance becomes a symbol in waiting for the bride and groom before ascending to the wedding (Putri, 2019). Each region is invited to use galombang dance as a form of respect for the bride and groom with the meaning that the person concerned has been welcomed happily by the family.

Galombang in linguistic terms is defined as a 'wave' which is interpreted to be a beauty of agile movement in dancing that uses the wave principle of regular descent and ascension. The regular movement that follows the galombang rhythm is strengthened by the technique and development of the silek technique that is deeply rooted in the Minangkabau culture. Silek is a basis for movement that symbolizes an escort or adjutant for guarding at a party held.



Figure 1: Galombang dance at wedding in Minangkabau (dos. Riki Lepe, January 1, 2022)

Silek in galombang dance movements is developed by following the meaning of the movement like a galombang form. The Bungo-bungo Silek attached to the basic movement of Silek is synchronized with the rhythm of the music so that the movement that is born follows the tempo of the music. The faster the tempo of the music, the tighter the movement presented and vice versa. Every hand movement that resembles a galombang still maintains the technique of hand position in Silek to be an aesthetic movement (Yuda et al., 2020).

Galombang dance is generally performed by you men of ten or more people. All dancers will be formed into two groups facing each other. The parallel position forms a walking space in the middle for the bride and groom to be protected, this puts the dancer's position as well as a fence to protect the bride and groom towards the pelaminan. When the bride and groom are ready in a position to go to the pelaminan then the dancers will take a silek step before starting the dance.

Galombang dance centered on the basic movements of Silek always features a very interesting form attraction. Every viewer is always amazed by sharp movements and well-developed ilek steps (Rosalina, 2021). In the galombang dance, there are also attractions such



as fights in Silek. These attractions sometimes also use sharp weapons and of course this is done by people who have been professionals.

In addition to being the opening ceremony at weddings, galombang dance is also often performed at welcoming important guests, such as state officials, special invited guests, celebrities, niniak mamak and other important guests. The existence of galombang dance as a form of hospitality of the host in welcoming invited guests.

#### b. Pasambahan Dance

Pasambahan dance is a dance that is set as a tribute to invited guests. Not much different in function from galombang dance, pasambahan dance is also used as a dance to welcome important guests in an event in Minangkabau. As explained by Afiffah Asriati "Pasambahan dance is often performed at ceremonial events opening official government events and other official events" (Asriati, 2012). Pasambahan dance is included in one of the popular dances at every traditional event as well as official occasion. Every Ceremonial event doesn't feel like it if there's no Pasambahan dance.

Pasambahan dance uses a silek movement technique that is developed into a softer movement. The movements performed on the pasambahan are silek movements such as sambah, tagak itiak, step and ready position in silek. Each movement is developed with the aim of an offering or tribute accompanied by a sense of airiness in welcoming the invitees present. Unlike the male movement, the women in the pasambahan dance stand at a distance into two banded groups that line up like forming a path and at the end of the formation there are three people standing facing the guest in a carano in their hands.



Figure 2: Pasambahan dance at the International On Language and Art (ICLA) at Padang State University. (Doc. Heldi, September 21, 2022)

Pasambahan dance performances are complemented by several positions and props. When the guest has arrived, it will immediately be covered as a symbol of the guest of honor at the event. Furthermore, when the dance takes place, a carano will be presented containing betel nut and betel nut which becomes a symbol of receiving arrival. Each invited guest will be presented with betel nut and betel nut and they are welcome to make the offering as a form of respect for the host.

#### c. Piriang Dance

Piriang dance is a dance that is quite popular in Minangkabau even through out Indonesia people are very familiar with Piriang dance. Piriang dance is a traditional dance danced using two plates as its property which is placed on the dancer's hand, and on the tip of the index finger is attached a ring made of pecan (Sheth, 2018) (Pol et al., 2018). Then Syahrial

also added that "As the name suggests, Piriang dance is a dance that uses the plate as a property in dancing and is complemented by silek steps as a development of movement" (Syahrial, 2013). Visually the Piriang dance dances by holding the plates in both palms with quite aesthetic movements. The uniqueness of the dance becomes a very interesting form of attraction when performed because the audience is carried away with the condition of the plate which seems to be a terror for the audience. In addition, Piriang dance also uses the attractions of trampling dishes, sleeping on plates and jumping on broken plates.



Figure 3:Piriang Dance Performance in a formal event at Padang State University (Doc. Fabio, July 23, 2022)

The movement in Piriang dance is very clearly based on the silek step, starting from pitunggua, balabeh, simpia and several other silek techniques. Basically, the silek movement developed in Piriang dance is based on resilience and balance in playing the silek attraction. Concentration on footsteps, hands and body balance is the key to the success of this dance. The existence of attractions that step on the plate is also carried out with the silek step technique which symbolizes concentration and caution so that there are no accidents in stepping on broken glass or plates.

Piriang dance among the minangkabau community is currently an entertainment dance in certain events such as: baralek events, spectacles for formal guests and for the general public. The existence of Piriang dance is currently still maintained among its owners as a form of cultural pride that it has. Piriang dance in Minangkabau has always developed in studios and even today every studio has made efforts to develop Piriang dance according to the needs and concepts of today.

### **Silek in Modern Minangkabau dance**

Every Modern dance or what is commonly called contemporary dance in West Sumatra on average departs from silek movements, as a strong marker of Minangkabau dance (Yuliza, 2020). Silek is the main source of every movement created by current Minangkabau choreographers, as well as young and also young choreographers. The presentation of contemporary works in a contemporary style is based on the basik silek developed by following the rhythm of the music. Many young Minangkabau choreographers have created dance works up to the National and International event with the development of silek as the basic movement. The popularization of dance movements that use contemporary concepts adopts the shape of silek and combines it with modern movements and technology.

Basically, minangkabau modern dance works are based on the basic movements of silek as the method of its creation. Although at first it sometimes begins to lose shape, but in spirit it

is still felt that the basic basic is the motion of the silek. Silek has often been used as the basis for the creation of contemporary dance works. Gusmiati Suid explained that silek processes the dimensions of space accompanied by a vigilance and suspicion. At each creation of motion there is no cavity at each transition. Movement is perfectly balanced between forward and backward, front and back and the angle of view that leads to forward focus.

Modern Minangkabau dance has a silek spirit into a special method or technique in locking every joint of body movement, so that the audience is carried away to a spectacle that must be watched out for its magnetic power. The first movement in any modern dance created is a step, this position is an attitude or rendition of the basic technique of silek. The next position is also a development from a fruitful initial step to a motion that grooves to the rhythm of the music.

A contemporary dance work that has been performed at national and international events is the dance work "Geometry". The process of creating Geometry dance works begins with providing an understanding of silek movements to dancers, so that the abilities are equal to each other. The silek training process takes about 2 months to meet expectations (Rosalina & Yuda, 2022). The work that was last performed in 2019 in Padang is a minangkabau contemporary dance work with contemporary issues. As witnessed that at first the motion displayed on the stage looks like a pitunggua technique or what is known as resistance in silek. Despite using zinc as a prop, this work does not give up the idiom of silek mastered by dancers. There is vigilance, suspicion and garagak-garagak silek which becomes a symbol to express the meaning of Geometry works.



Figure 4: Karya tari Geometri pada Pekan Nan Tumpah di Padang (Doc. Fabio, 16 November 2019)

## CONCLUSION

The existence of Minangkabau dance until now is a sign that people really love their cultural background. This is a value for cultural connoisseurs and cultural stakeholders who still love and use the function of dance today. The Minangkabau community agrees that every formal cultural event must use minangkabau traditional dance and should not be changed to another dance. The togetherness of the community in supporting and supporting cultural values makes dance have an important role in social life.

Silek as a form of bala diri art that has grown into an entertainment art is always developing with the times. The idiom silek as a foundation in the creation of Minangkabau dance is a cultural potential that is maintained by the community. Armed with silek knowledge, it can give birth to Minangkabau dances that use cultural elements and modern elements in every birth.

Current conditions allow every Minangkabau dance to develop the potential of silek movement using the latest technology. Starting from costumes, motion arrangements that combine west floor pattern techniques, makeup arrangements, stage art, lighting, video mapping, props, and this is one way to make Minangkabau dance always actual until now. Currently, Minangkabau dance is still a significant one among the supporting community. As a form of dance function for the supporting community and making the value of dance always attached to every formal and non-formal event.

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