



## The Relevance of Bedhaya Ketawang Values in Today's Society

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### ABSTRACT

*Surakarta, a city formerly under the rule of the New Mataram dynasty established by Paku Buwana II in 1746, inherited a wealth of arts, leading to its designation as a cultural center. Jumenengan is a cultural legacy in the form of a ceremony held annually in the Javanese month of Ruwah, on the day of Selasa Kliwon, or Anggara Kasih, to celebrate the anniversary of the coronation of the king of Kasunanan Surakarta. The primary prerequisite of the Jumenengan ceremony is the performance of the Bedhaya Ketawang dance, which provides legitimacy for the ceremony. The position of the Bedhaya Ketawang dance in the Jumenengan ceremony is as an heirloom with magical, sacred, and prestigious value. Its presence gives legitimacy and credibility to the continued power of the king. As a cultural legacy, the Bedhaya Ketawang dance contains life values to absorb both implicitly and explicitly. These include spiritual values, values of love for the natural environment, ethical values, aesthetic values, and love, all of which are relevant to society today. The relevance of these values provides encouragement and motivation to build and develop the character of the Indonesian nation today as a society of faith, devotion to God, noble character, healthy knowledge, skill, creativity, independence, democracy, and responsibility.*

### KEYWORDS

*Bedhaya Ketawang dance, Jumenengan, values of human life.*

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### 1. Introduction

Surakarta, or Solo city, is a municipality and a well-known cultural center situated at the easternmost point of Central Java province. Surakarta was originally one of the centers ruled by the New Mataram dynasty, established by Paku Buwana II in 1746. Surakarta replaced the previous Kartasura kingdom that was destroyed by the enemy (Darsiti, 1989:1). The government system of Kasunanan Surakarta was ruled by a line of kings who descended from Paku Buwana II, culminating in the golden era under the rule of Paku Buwana X (PB X). Being the center of government of the kingdom, which incidentally was also the center of activity in all aspects of life, Surakarta was also the center of cultural development, especially the arts.

Over a century, from 1830-1930, this royal government system continued to retain power, but politically it experienced a gradual decline. King PB X, who was known as *Ratu gung binathara*, the 'sacred-magical king,' had great authority in the eyes of the people. When he observed the king's declining power, PB X felt inspired to intensify symbols, refine civilizations of an involutive nature, and highlight baroque characteristics. During PBX's reign, the bureaucratic steps in the cultural life of the karaton (palace) demonstrated his responsibility as the protector and preserver of Javanese culture.

The end of the reign of PB X saw a transition from the royal government system with its absolute power to the more democratic government system of a republic. The monarchical system



implemented in Kasunanan Surakarta took on a more administrative form since the king's power had been taken over by the President as the head of state. Many of the Kasunanan Surakarta's royal ceremonies have been preserved up to the present era of PB XIII, including the *Jumenengan* ceremony. *Jumenengan* is the most prominent form of tradition, a meeting of important guests (*pisowan agung*) attended by the king, members of the royal family and court officials, *abdi dalem* (court servants), members of the public, and government officials. Other guests include those invited to receive a royal title or rank from Kasunanan Surakarta. The only performance in the *Jumenengan* ceremony, an essential and absolute requirement, is the Bedhaya Ketawang dance.

Bedhaya Ketawang is one of the classical *karaton* dances of Kasunanan Surakarta that has been preserved as a form of the legitimacy of the king's power. Socio-culturally, the presence of the Bedhaya Ketawang dance has a religious-magical quality that is closely associated with the myth surrounding the Queen of the South Sea. According to this myth, the Queen of the South Sea, more often referred to as "Nyi Roro Kidul," is the ruler of the spirit world who resides in the sea off the south coast of Java. She is willing to help protect the safety, fame, greatness, and power of all the kings of Kasunanan Surakarta on condition that the king agrees to become her husband.

The legacy of the Bedhaya Ketawang dance must be accepted in its original state by the king of Kasunanan Surakarta to ensure the continuation of the king's power. The presence of the Queen of the South Sea, as she safeguards the greatness and authority of the king's power, is believed to become one with the dancers during the performance of the Bedhaya Ketawang dance in the *Jumenengan* ceremony. The sacred nature of the Bedhaya Ketawang dance is also evident in the selection of nine female dancers who are still virgins and not menstruating at the time of the performance. The day chosen for Bedhaya Ketawang dance rehearsals is Selasa Kliwon, considered one of the most auspicious days in the 35-day cycle of the Javanese calendar. Thus, Bedhaya Ketawang dance rehearsals can only take place once a month. During the days leading up to the *Jumenengan* ceremony, all the dancers involved in the performance must enter a period of *pingitan*, where they are quarantined for three days and three nights in a particular room in the *karaton* while offering up fervent prayers.

One of the primary and most essential principles of dance is its human soul expression as a response to humanity's values, communicated in a beautiful form to gain the appreciation it deserves using the primary medium of movement (Maryono, 2010:7). This is also the case with the Bedhaya Ketawang dance in the *Jumenengan* ceremony, which serves as a medium of communication between the king and his people, and contains moral and spiritual messages, as well as messages of a more entertaining nature. The content of these messages is an essential requirement for human existence.

People must fulfill their various needs on a universal level by developing lifestyles to improve living standards. The basic universal needs of human beings are both spiritual and physical, and both are primary needs that contribute naturally to human life. The problems surrounding people's spiritual needs and biological fulfillment include spiritual, ethical, aesthetic, moral, and safety values. Issues related to people's physical conditions require a place to live, food to provide nutrition for developing and sustaining the body's organs, clothes to cover the body, and the need to establish aesthetic perception and culture in a broader sense. Thus, human beings exist naturally as God's creations and are equipped with creativity, perception, and intent in a natural environment that provides flora and fauna to fulfill their various needs so that they can become civilized and cultured people.

Indonesian society today appears to have become the society aspired to in the Law on Education No. 22 of 2003, paragraph 3, which states that: National education functions to develop competence and shape the character and civilization of a nation that has dignity, in an endeavor to enrich the life of the nation, to develop the potential of students to become human beings with faith and devotion to Almighty God, noble morals, healthy knowledge, skills, creativity, and independence, and to become democratic and responsible citizens. The heterogeneity of society today, with its diversity of



ethnic groups, languages, cultures, and religions, is a social fact that provides a source of power and richness of cultural values in shaping a civilized and cultured society. Such heterogeneity is to create a national identity that plays a role in preserving peace and discipline in the international community.

## 2. Method

The research method is qualitative interpretative, based on data collected through a library study, observation, and interviews using an in-depth interactive analysis involving three main components: data reduction, data presentation, and verification, to discover the meaning behind the object of visual symbols. The predominant source of the analysis is interview data because the research object target is a sacred dance from karaton Kasunanan Surakarta, which is only performed yearly in the *Jumenengan* ritual. It is not allowed for any documentation making without any instruction from the karaton committee. The informants were the dancers, musicians, and makeup experts, including Hadawiyah Endah Utami (dancer), Sri Setyo Asih (dancer), Laras Ambika Resi (dancer), Giri Nanda (dancer), Novia Triana P (dancer), Kezia Putri (dancer), Dani Wulansari (dancer), Eka Prasetyaningsih (dancer), Anggun N (dancer), KRT Hartoyo Budaya Nagara (*Ampil-ampil* makeup expert), Iyeng (costume and makeup assistant), Warsena (musician-drummer), Wagimin (musician), Yasa (musician) and Mijah (singer).

## 3. Result and Discussion

### 3.1. Form of The Bedhaya Ketawang Dance

According to Maryono, form combines several physical elements or components interconnected and integrated within a single component. Dance forms consist of several essential components divided into two main groups: a) verbal components and b) nonverbal components (2015:24). The linguistic verbal components in the Bedhaya Ketawang dance are: the *suluk pathetan* text, which accompanies the dancers as they enter the stage, the *Ketawang Raka Pakenira* text, the *gendhing Semang-semang* text, and the *Ketawang Bebaguse* text. The nonverbal elements are: 1) theme, 2) movement, 3) dancers, 4) makeup, 5) costume, 6) accompaniment, 7) stage and 8) offerings (*sesajen*).

In dance, a theme is a story reference that can bring a person to an understanding of the essence of the dance. A theme can be from an event or story and subsequently expanded to become a storyline that serves as a framework for interpretation or treatment (Maryono, 2010:53). The types of themes chosen in dance performances are mainly from the Ramayana and Mahabharata stories, as well as chronicles, myths, legends, and history. A tale that has become legendary in the community of Central Java became the reference of the theme in the Bedhaya Ketawang dance. The Bedhaya Ketawang dance is a classical dance from Kasunanan Surakarta. It has various symbolic meanings closely related to the traditional *Jumenengan* ceremony of the *karaton*, with a sacred character and a theme of romance between the king of the *karaton* and the Queen of the spirit world and ruler of the South Sea, Nyi Roro Kidul.

To the artist, movement is a highly elementary medium for expressing the soul. In the art of dance, movement is the standard medium used as a communication tool to convey the message of the artist. As a communication medium, dance contains messages from the choreographer that they wish to communicate to the audience. Through the language of body movement, a dance performance carries a message with a meaning. The movements then will be captured as the essence of the communication activity between the choreographer and the audience. The message may be moral, spiritual, or entertainment (Maryono, 2015:138-139). Movements in a dance performance can be of two types: *Wantah* and *Tanwantah*. *Wantah* movements are everyday movements without much stylization. In contrast, *Tanwantah* movements are stylized movements used solely for aesthetic presentation.



The types of movements in the Bedhaya Ketawang dance are dominated by *Tanwantah* movements from traditional female Surakarta style dance. The dramatic plot of the Bedhaya Ketawang dance is divided into three main sections: *maju beksan*, *beksan*, and *mundur beksan*. In the *maju beksan* section, the vocabulary of movement, or *sekarang*, consists of: *sembahan*, *lembehan*, *laras trap cethik*, *sindheth*, *laras*, *srisik*, and ends with *nikelwanti*. The first part of the *beksan* consists of: *sembahan*, *mandhe sampur*, *srisik*, *inguk-inguk*, *laras tawing*, *lung mangklung*, *pendhapan ngolong sampur*, *sindheth*, *laras trap cethik*, *pendhapan*, and ends with *nikelwanti*. The second part of the *beksan* consists of: *sembahan laras*, *pendhapan ngolong sampur*, *jangkung*, *srisik*, *lung mangklung*, *panahan*, *jeplak-jeplak*, *laras ridhong*, *manglung ridhong*, *sindheth*, *pendhapan*, and ends with *nikelwanti*. The *mundur beksan* section includes the *sekarang*: *sembahan*, upright stance followed by *gejug samparan* to form a three-three formation, moving forward in *kapang-kapang* pose towards *Ndalem Prabasuyoso*.

Dancers are artists who function as a presenter in a dance performance. The dancer's presence in a dance performance is the essential element that serves as a source of expression of the soul and simultaneously acts as a medium of expression or a medium of delivery (Maryono, 2015:56-57). The physical condition or body of the dancer, as a system of presentation, must be healthy and fresh to display the best possible flexibility, balance, skill, agility, movement precision, and rhythm. In terms of quantity, the Bedhaya Ketawang dance performers are nine unmarried females. The dancers are each given a name: *batak*, *endhel ajeg*, *gulu*, *dhadha*, *apit ngarep*, *apit mburi*, *endhel weton*, *apit meneng*, and *buncit*. All nine dancers represent various symbols, including the organs of the human body. *Batak* represents the head, *endhel ajeg* is for the heart, *gulu* represents the neck, *dhadha* means the chest, *apit ngarep* is the right arm, *apit mburi* represents the left arm, *endhel weton* represents the right leg, *apit meneng* represents the left leg, and *buncit* means the vital organs or sexual organs. The nine dancers also symbolize the directions of the wind or points of the compass: north, northeast, east, southeast, south, southwest, west, northwest, and the middle point as the center.

According to Maryono, makeup can be three types: (1) formal makeup, (2) informal makeup, and (3) role or character makeup. The nine dancers in the Bedhaya Ketawang all use a kind of role makeup (*paesan*), the same as the makeup usually worn by the bride in a Surakarta-style wedding. The dancers' costumes follow a *dodot ageng* design, which is also similar to that worn by the bride in a Surakarta-style wedding ceremony. The form of makeup and costumes worn by the Bedhaya Ketawang dancers represents a symbol of love portrayed through the Bedhaya Ketawang dance and a presentation of the mystic re-actualization between Panembahan Senopati and Nyi Roro Kidul, the supernatural ruler of the South Sea of Java.

The musical accompaniment for the Bedhaya Ketawang dance uses *gamelan laras pelog*. The use of the *kemanak* instrument dominates the treatment of the gamelan music struck rhythmically to accompany the unison singing of the vocalists. It creates an atmosphere that is grand, authoritative, magical, and sacred. The complete repertoire of *gendhing* for the Bedhaya Ketawang dance consists of *pathetan pelog lima* for the *maju beksan*, *gendhing Semang-semang pelog lima*, *ketawang Pakenira pelog lima*, and *ketawang Bebaguse pelog lima* for the *beksan* section; and *pathetan pelog lima* to accompany the *mundur beksan* at the end of the performance.

The stage for the performance of the Bedhaya Ketawang dance is none other than the *Pendhapa Sasonosewaka*. The Bedhaya Ketawang dance is performed right in the center of the *pendhapa* (outdoor pavilion), with the dancers facing the king, Sri Sunan Paku Buwana. Behind the dancers, facing the king, is the area where the king's sons and daughters (*putra dalem*), family members (*sentana dalem*), guests, and court servants (*abdi dalem*) sit cross-legged on the floor around the *pendhapa*. They are wearing full traditional Javanese dress, complete with a dagger (*keris*) - known as *kejawen jangkep*. The *Jumenengan* ceremony celebrating the anniversary of the king's coronation is a large-scale meeting (*pisowan agung*) between the king, Sri Susuhunan Paku Buwana, and the ordinary people (*para kawula*). It symbolizes the physical and spiritual union between the king and his people - *manunggaling kawula lan gusti*.



The offerings, or *sesajen*, are among the physical properties that support the ceremony and are in the form of rice, vegetables, and fruits placed in sacred spots, including the dance stage, since the Bedhaya Ketawang dance is itself sacred. The various kinds of offerings used for a Bedhaya Ketawang performance include offerings of *pepak ageng*, offerings of *pepak alit*, offerings of *bekakak*, and offerings of burning incense. The *pepak ageng* offerings consist of: various kinds of rice dishes (*nasi tumpeng*, *nasi asahan*, *nasi golong*), side dishes, vegetables, and bananas, in large quantities. The *pepak ageng* offerings are placed around the edges of the *Pendhapa Sasonosewaka*. The *pepak alit* offerings consist of smaller rice dishes (*nasi tumpeng*), side dishes, vegetables, fruits, and traditional snacks, including various tubers, in smaller quantities. The *pepak alit* offerings are placed where the Bedhaya Ketawang dancers prepare their makeup for the dance. The *bekakak* offerings are a pair of male and female figures made of rice. The inclusion of these various kinds of offerings is a vital part of the *karaton* tradition, which is intended to ward off misfortune and disturbance from evil spirits and to serve as a medium to pray to the Creator for safety, peace, comfort, ease, and success in all the activities of the *Jumenengan* ceremony. In addition, incense is burned to build a magical, sacred, and powerful aura to help create a magical atmosphere before the Bedhaya dancers enter the *Pendhapa Sasonosewaka* stage.

### 3.2. Values of The Bedhaya Ketawang Dance

In principle, a value is the concept of an idea or notion about something considered good, beneficial, dignified, valuable, and approved and desired by all levels of society as worthy of being manifested in people's lives. Art is a medium to convey the artist's ideas or thoughts, laden with explicit values. It is an expression, a statement serving as a declaration of a particular meaning, feeling, or thought using a sensory medium that can be re-experienced by the one expressing to be communicated to other people (Parker, 1980:21). An art form is a result of the expression of the artist's soul which is formulated as an artistic, physical object in such a way that it has the power to excite the senses. Art forms play a highly significant role as communication media for conveying the content of messages and ideas of the artist. Based on this explanation, it appears that from the form of the Bedhaya Ketawang dance, we can draw conclusively on several different values contained therein, including spiritual values, love for the natural environment, ethical values, aesthetic values, and values of love.

### 3.3. Spiritual Values

Dances from the *karaton* belong to the realm of tradition and culture of the *karaton*. They are associated with the position of the king in Javanese society, often functioning as a medium for religious ceremonies. One of these dances that continues to exist today, performed in a religious ceremony containing spiritual values, is the Bedhaya Ketawang dance. Evidence of the spiritual values contained in the Bedhaya Ketawang dance can be seen in the meaning of the verbal elements, especially in the words of the text in the verses of the song *Ketawang Bebaguse*:

..... *ana tangis, temengeng tawang,*  
*dhe, kadya lintang pakertine, panembahan,*  
*dhe, kadya lintang pakertine, panembahan,*  
*tanuastra, la-ela, kadita agni,*  
*dhe urube akantar-kantar, kiyai,*  
*dhe urube akantar-kantar, kiyai,*  
*dhe yen mati pundi surupe, kiyai,*  
*dhe yen mati pundi surupe, kiyai.*

The translation of this text is as follows: When I cry, I look upward to the sky. Your heart is genuinely like the star of *sang Panembahan*. Is not this life like the burning fire of the *kiyai*? All this time has not the fire blazed bright, *kiyai*. If the fire dies, where will the fire burn, *kiyai*? The meaning of the words in this verse of *Ketawang Bebaguse* is that when sadness engulfs a person's soul, they respond by kneeling and surrendering to Almighty God by looking up to the heavens



while praying and extending both arms, asking for God's protection. It truly creates an awareness about the meaning of human life, compared to a burning fire that blazes bright, dies, and disappears into the unknown. The Javanese believe this life journey is a high spiritual concept known as "*sangkan paraning dumadi*," which means "our origin, our existence, and our destination."

Metaphysically, human existence comes from the Almighty God, destined to be born from a mother's womb through marriage to a father. This basic understanding of human life is none other than the Word of God, who created human beings from an extract of clay. God then transformed this essence into sperm stored in the womb. Then, God turned the sperm into a clot of blood, which became a flesh lump, forming bones. Then the bones were covered with flesh and developed into human beings (Al-Quran, surat Al-Mukminun: verses 12-14). It is also stressed in verse 15 of surat Al-Mukminun that afterlife, all of you (human beings) will die.

The way people live is such a burning fire, blazing bright, which means they should live their lives full of passion in every action, attitude, and behavior. Every step is filled with a zest for life and living with others in society. The final question of where we go after our lives is fundamental to the entire series of events throughout our lives. Not to remember the matter of what comes after life means to be unaware of the meaning of death. In truth, death is not simply the release of the soul from the physical body so that the body's organs no longer function and all activities cease. It is to understand that the event of death is the beginning of our accountability for life in the world where we, as human beings, have carried out our actions in the sight of God. Wrongdoings, destruction, oppression, paganism, gambling, infidelity, and despotism are all immoral human acts that fail to understand and do not want to understand the meaning of death. Religious teachings believe good deeds will attract goodness in people's lives, and bad things people do will meet the responsibility they have to deal with.

### 3.4. Values of Love for The Natural Environment

The costumes worn by the nine Bedhaya Ketawang dancers have a "*Dodot Ageng*" design with an "*Alas-alasan*" motif. First, the dancers dress in a basic *jaritan* cloth with a *samparan* design in a red *cinde cakar* pattern. On top of this, they wrap around a long piece of fabric using a "*Dodot Ageng*" design. The "*Alas-alasan*" motif represents the forest and all the living creatures that make up its ecosystem. The picture of life in the forest includes various flora and fauna and the natural springs that provide water, visualized through the *blumbangan*.

The value of love for the environment represented in the dance costumes rests on a re-actualization of the visual image of animals and plants and the embodiment of the *blumbangan*. The animal patterns on the nine-meter-long "*Dodot Ageng*" cloth include images of fish, snakes, deer, wild boar, and elephants. Besides the animal ornaments inhabiting the forest, the situation in "*Alas-alasan*," or life in the woods, is visualized through images of plants with massive foliage that fill and decorate the spaces between the animal images. The embodiment of imagination from the *blumbangan* ornament in the center of the cloth represents the natural spring of water that provides life for the forest.

The illustration of "*Alas-alasan*" or forest life, with all diversity of its inhabitants, and the *blumbangan* representing the water source of life, all drawn on the single piece of "*Dodot Ageng*" cloth worn by the Bedhaya Ketawang dancers, is a form of expression of the artist (choreographer), and an implicit message of love for the natural environment. Bearing in mind that the Bedhaya Ketawang dance belongs to the king, simultaneously and holistically representing all the aspects of life under his control, it is not an exaggeration to say that the natural environment is also one of the aspects for which he is responsible. The forest is a source of life for human beings, providing clean air, animals, and plants, as well as freshwater that is source of life for all living creatures. It means that the king has the full responsibility to safeguard the conservation of the forest as part of the natural environment to ensure humankind's continued survival and well-being.



### 3.5. Ethical Values

The reference to ethical values could be from the performance of the Bedhaya Ketawang dance, primarily in the form of a declaration of love symbolized symbolically by two of the dancers, specifically the *Batak* and *Endhel Weton* dancers. The personification of the *Batak* dancer and the *Endhel Weton* dancer among the other seven dancers can be seen as a symbol of the love between the Susuhunan, the king of the Kasunanan Surakarta, and Nyi Roro Kidul, the ruler of the South Sea. Although visually, they are not holding hands, nor do they kiss or show any other vulgar affective acts, their love feeling is intuitive. The conception of love is implicit in line after line of the song text of *gendhing Semang-semang*, which makes it impossible to deny that the Bedhaya Ketawang dance portrays love. Furthermore, when the *Batak* and *Endhel Weton* dancers come together, accompanied by intense, suspenseful music, this symbolizes the climactic pleasure of lovemaking. The meaning of such an illustration represents an ethical value about the privacy of lovemaking, taught by the king to his people, symbolized in the Bedhaya Ketawang dance. The artistic visualization of the Bedhaya Ketawang dance performance is a highly symbolic form full of meaning.

The presence of the Bedhaya Ketawang dance in the *Jumenengan* ceremony, a form of "Pisowanan Agung" has become a formal celebration of the anniversary of the coronation of the king of Kasunanan Surakarta. It contains ethical values as a guideline for understanding the structural arrangement or position of the king, whom his people highly venerate. The different levels of the seats indicate the official level or status of the people sitting in other areas following the culture of Kasunanan Surakarta. The *Jumenengan* ceremony begins with the arrival of the *abdi dalem* or *karaton* employees, who sit cross-legged on the floor at the lowest level, facing and to the king's left. Behind them are the invited government officials who sit to the left on chairs with a backrest. Next come members of the nobility and the king's sons and daughters, who sit cross-legged on the upper floor facing the king. Finally, the king, *kanjeng Susuhanan*, enters and sits by himself in the *Dampar Kencana*, a chair covered with gold without a backrest. The *Jumenengan* ceremony only begins when the nine Bedhaya Ketawang dancers enter, accompanied by two female *abdi dalem* who help to get the Bedhaya Ketawang performance underway.

### 3.6. Aesthetic Values

A work of art is essentially a medium of aesthetic life. In the arts, a sensory medium of expression gains the attention of the senses and has significant meaning that is not present in other forms of expression. Artistic expression is to have its value, and for this reason, it is intentionally created in such a way as to attract and arouse a response and pleasure. In itself, an object alone is never beautiful; instead, the beauty is found in the soul of the observer, the appreciator. Beauty is a certain essential quality contained in an object. Some crucial qualities often mentioned include unity, harmony, equivalence, balance, and contrast (Liang Gie, 1976:35). The general theory about value is that the understanding of beauty is regarded as one type of value. A value connected to everything that encompasses beauty refers to as an aesthetic value. A work of art would appear to have aesthetic value if it is intrinsically of value to itself and extrinsically helpful for other purposes outside itself, where these extended values are an impact of an artistic experience. The intrinsic values referred to here are truth, goodness, and beauty.

The expression of a work of art has its intrinsic values based on the pleasure which occurs spontaneously in the artist or the art lover. Intrinsically, the value of the Bedhaya Ketawang dance comes directly from an artistic experience from the pleasure provided by a medium of expression consisting of movement, costume design, makeup lines, tonal sounds, and musical rhythms, all interconnected harmoniously. Artistic value is an imaginary object and event that usually generates pleasure. Likewise, the drawn value from the Bedhaya Ketawang dance is an illusion of the connection and integration of treatment of different dance elements and the construction of the ambiance presented by the nine beautiful female dancers wearing costumes like those of a bride to create an aesthetic pleasure or beauty.



### 3.7. Values of Love

The costumes and makeup of the Bedhaya Ketawang dancers are essentially the same as those worn by a bride in a Surakarta or Yogyakarta-style wedding. The dancers' costumes are in the "Dodot Ageng" style, a model often used by brides in Surakarta and Yogyakarta, often referred to as the "Basahan" style. The makeup of the Bedhaya Ketawang dancers, which includes "Paesan" makeup, is also similar to the makeup worn by the bride in a traditional Surakarta and Yogyakarta-style wedding. Overall, the "Dodot Ageng" costumes consist of the *samparan* cloth and a hairstyle of *Sanggul Bokor Mengkurep*, which is woven and decorated with *Tiba ndhandha* jasmine flowers, and the "Paesan" makeup. Worn by the dancers, the overall costumes have many similarities with the costume and makeup of a traditional Surakarta and Yogyakarta bride, which indicates the implicit meaning of the Bedhaya Ketawang dance.

The primary reference underlying the reason for validating the assumption that there is an implicit meaning in the Bedhaya Ketawang dance is that the dance is a form of symbolic expression in an aesthetic form with both intrinsic and extrinsic values. It would seem that no artistic expression contains no value at all (see Parker, 1980:43-44). The value of love implied in the Bedhaya Ketawang dance is one of the values that explicitly become a phenomenon associated with the myth of the marriage between the Queen of the South Sea and Susuhunan, king of Kasunanan Surakarta. The value of love implied in the Bedhaya Ketawang dance is one of its extrinsic values. Essentially, the extrinsic values in the Bedhaya Ketawang dance are the extended values resulting from the artistic experience or the values placed in the dance as a message from the choreographer to the audience. In Javanese society, a bride is the figure of a woman ready to engage in a loving relationship with the bridegroom. The romantic relationship that has developed leading up to the wedding day is the long journey of a love life for the bride and bridegroom. After the wedding procession has finished, it is time for the bride to move towards a closer encounter, to make love with the bridegroom. The Bedhaya Ketawang dancers are all dressed and made up to look like traditional Surakarta or Yogyakarta brides to express values associated with love. Therefore, it is no exaggeration to say that the Bedhaya Ketawang dance is a re-actualization of the mystical relationship between Panembahan Senapati, king of Kasunanan Surakarta, and Nyi Roro Kidul, Queen of the South Sea.

The values of love in the Bedhaya Ketawang dance are in the verbal components contained in the text of the verses of *gendhing Semang-semang*. A few lines of the song text of *gendhing Semang-semang* are below.

.....ning Wong Agungmu Susuhunan,  
Kadrawasan geguling aglar ing jogan,  
Sapa baya, sapa baya,  
Kang awelasa ing brangti, dhuh  
Ning wong Agung Susuhunan,  
Ning wong Agung Susuhunan,  
Pandaming rat dhuh, kusuma dinanurwenda  
Pandaming rat dhuh, kusuma dinanurwenda  
Ning Wong Agungmu Susuhunan,  
Kawastara nanging sira, ing papremaning wong agung Susuhunan,  
Kawastara nanging sira, ing papreman.  
Danu madya, dhuh amba ra lila sih jiwa,  
Danu madya, dhuh amba ra lila sih jiwa,  
Ning wong Agung Susuhunan,.....





Translation:

.....You are my idol, Susuhunan  
I lie outspread on the floor  
Who can I hope for, Who can I hope for,  
Who will love me, so deeply afflicted by love, oh...  
You are my idol, Susuhunan  
You are my idol, Susuhunan  
You light up the world  
You light up the world  
You are my idol, Susuhunan  
I long only for you in this encounter  
I long only for you in this encounter  
Who do you forget to love me  
You are my idol,.....

The meaning of the statements implied in the verbal components of line 1: .....*ning Wong Agungmu Susuhunan*, line 3: *sapa baya, sapa baya*, and line 4: *kang awelasa ing brangti, dhuh*, is the woman showering flattery on the man, the Susuhunan (king), and hoping sincerely (repeated twice) to earn his affection because she is so profoundly afflicted by love. It is stated explicitly that the Susuhunan is the man who is the object of the woman's flattery and whose love she longs for. Another follows one expression of praise in lines 5 and 6: *ning wong Agung Susuhunan, ning wong Agung Susuhunan*, continuing into lines 7,8 and 9: *pandaming rat dhuh, kusuma dinanurwenda, pandaming rat dhuh, kusuma dinanurwenda*, and *ning Wong Agungmu Susuhunan*, showing the heartfelt expression of a woman in love with the Susuhunan. The peak of her declaration of love for the Susuhunan is in lines 10 and 11: *Kawastara nanging sira, ing papremaning wong agung Susuhunan, Kawastara nanging sira, ing papreman*, where she directly expresses her longing to make love with the Susuhunan. It means the woman longs with all her heart to stand side by side and share her love with the Susuhunan. The meaning derived from the text of *gendhing Semang-semang* is an expression of the value of the woman's love for the king, the Susuhunan. The myth that has developed in the Javanese community, assumingly, is that the woman implied in the text of this verbal component of *gendhing Semang-semang* is Nyi Roro Kidul, Queen of the South Sea. The love affair between Nyi Roro Kidul and the king of Kasunanan Surakarta, from one generation to another, is rewarded by the Queen of the South Sea by helping to protect the safety, security, and grandeur of Kasunanan Surakarta.

During the reign of Paku Buwana X, some of the dance forms that presented a theme of love included Tayub, Bedhya Ketawang, Bedhaya Kadukmanis, and Wayang Wong. In its performance, the Bedhaya Ketawang dance functions as a medium in the king's ceremony to portray the love (sexual relationship) between the king (descendants of Susuhunan Panembahan Senopati) and the Queen of the South Sea (*Ratu Kidul*) (Nora, 1994;10). The nine female Bedhaya Ketawang dancers embody a form of classical dance filled with symbolic meaning. The nine dancers are given the names: *Endhel Ajeg, Batak, Apit ngarep, Apit mburi, endhel weton, Apit meneng, Gulu, Dhadha*, and *Buncit*, with the two leading dancers playing the roles of *Endhel Ajeg* and *Batak*, symbolizing the manifestation of the King of Kasunanan Surakarta and the Queen of the South Sea. When all the dancers enter the *Pendhapa Sasono Sewoko*, where the performance takes place, the *Endhel Ajeg* and *Batak* dancers walk at the front, followed by the other seven dancers, like in a bridal procession where the bride is walking towards the bridegroom. An atmosphere of peace, grandeur, and authority surrounds the performance of the Bedhaya Ketawang dance right from the beginning, enhancing the rhythm, tones, and tempo of the gamelan music. The mood reaches a climax when the music's rhythms, tones, and tempo become faster and louder as the *Endhel Ajeg* and *Batak* dancers move towards a formation in the center of the stage. They are facing one another and



stretching out their arms with a movement known as *penthangan*, followed by the other seven accompanying dancers performing fast *srisik* movements, building the tension to a climax. The rhythms, tones, and tempo of the gamelan music and the movements of all nine dancers suddenly cease as they reach a climax, leaving only the resonating echo of the gamelan music. At the same time, there is a brief pause in the performance. Looking carefully at the indications in the performance, from the costumes and makeup, which resemble those of a Javanese bride, to the meaning contained in the text of *gendhing Semang-semang*, there is a clear expression of the value of a woman's love, personified by the Queen of the South Sea, for the king, Susuhunan Paku Buwana.

### **3.8. Relevance Of The Values Of The Bedhaya Ketawang Dance In The Life Of Society Today**

The spiritual values implied in the Bedhaya Ketawang dance are a reminder that human beings should not only seek worldly pleasure, enjoyment, and happiness, which are only temporary, but must also pay attention to preparing for the afterlife. The relevance of the spiritual values implied in the Bedhaya Ketawang dance for society today is in the warning they provide about how people should live in the temporary world in preparation for the eternity of the afterlife. All the activities that people carry out to make themselves useful both for themselves and the environment, and to protect and develop their existence as civilized human beings, need to be based on sincerity, goodwill, responsibility, and passion. Today, spiritual values are a form of self-control to prevent people from blindly seeking worldly pleasure, enjoyment, and happiness, which can drag them down into an immoral chasm. Every step a person decides to take requires careful consideration to achieve the result of good deeds, which will become a value of virtue desired by God, the Creator of the world and all that it contains. A civilized society will give rise to the constructive idea that life in this world is essentially understood as a place to do good deeds with the hope of reaping the rewards that bring happiness in the afterlife.

For people living in today's society with its high civilization, the spiritual values found in the Bedhaya Ketawang dance can be a source of encouragement to choose a religious standpoint that can serve as a medium for both vertical and horizontal relationships. Vertical relationships reflect people's connection with the Creator through which they worship according to God's laws. It means that in addition to developing a relationship with God, people can also follow what God has instructed through the holy book as a guideline for distinguishing between good and evil. Meanwhile, horizontal relationships involve communication with other people, learning to know, respect, and understand each other to live together as a society and as a nation.

Keeping in mind that eternal life exists only in the hereafter, throughout their lives, people must constantly seek God's blessing as a doorway to enter into the heavenly realm provided for people of faith who have performed a multitude of good deeds. In religious teaching, God created human beings in their best form, then he returned them to hell, except those of faith who have done good deeds and will earn an eternal reward. People today ultimately become aware that their life in the world is temporary. As such, all their activities are founded on sincerity, goodwill, responsibility, and passion for doing good, worshiping, and serving God to gain the key to heaven and enjoy eternal happiness in the hereafter.

The values of love for the environment implied in the Bedhaya Ketawang dance indicate the king's responsibility for preserving the forest and the rest of the natural environment to sustain his people's life and prosperity. The relevance of the values of love for the natural environment implied in the Bedhaya Ketawang dance for society today is to set an example for people to follow. The king's love for the environment, demonstrated by protecting and preserving the forest and the rest of the natural environment, is symbolized in the Bedhaya Ketawang dancers' costumes. It serves as an example and a reminder for society today. The land available for residential areas has become



narrower due to the rising population. Space for recreation is becoming harder to find. Water sources are often polluted by factory waste. Air pollution has become harder to control due to the construction of new factories that fail to follow the rules about environmental impact. Therefore, the steps to take include growing more plants in our own houses to create an environment with fresher air, fresher soil resulting from better rain absorption, and fresher natural scenery.

Today, people can show their love for the forest environment by joining reforestation efforts in areas where the number of trees is declining due to illegal logging practices that are business oriented and concerned only with personal profit. Forests are the lungs of the world. However, this concept is no longer of concern to those in power or capitalist business people, who do not think of forest areas as the primary source of oxygen for the whole world but only as hoarding their wealth acquired from underhand forest business deals. There is a need to educate communities living in and around forest areas, so they do not participate in logging activities. They also need to restructure these communities so that they have a better life and become forest protectors and conservationists. Forest products are not only wood but also include a variety of plants and animals that live in the forest, providing a wealth of flora and fauna that produce a source of oxygen, a source of water and ensure the continued existence of these plants and animals for the continuation of human life. Therefore, it is essential for people today to look after and preserve protected forests, nature reserve forests, production forests, and tourist forests.

The ethical values to absorb from the illustration of ethics in love are shown in symbolic form in the Bedhaya Ketawang dance. Artistically, the structure of love is virtually unseen in this dance despite its theme of love. The relevance of this for society today is to show that it is not necessary for an outward display of love or a demonstration of amorous behavior in public. The government has issued laws on pornoaction, which strictly forbid people from engaging in a public display of romantic or sexual behavior. In connection with the ethical values in the *Jumenengan* ceremony, the different levels for the seating of the king, Susuhunan Paku Buwana, the nobility, and the general public show respect for the group or official status of a person following the culture of Kasunanan Surakarta. The relevance of these ethical values for society today is the need to manage an attitude and behavior that always shows honor and respect. It proportionally positions our elders, officials, public figures, and leaders.

The aesthetic values that can be absorbed by society today from the performance of the Bedhaya Ketawang dance are aesthetic or artistic beauty, how to position oneself in every public appearance to maintain one's image, as well as in activities of a domestic nature. In today's society, aesthetic or artistic beauty is vital to balance physical work. The increasing workload and higher mobility of society today create an urgent need for aesthetic entertainment that provides oxygen for the soul. For this reason, society today must preserve and develop art forms with moral and spiritual values, which also provide entertainment as a source of aesthetic energy to build a nation with an independent character. One of the ways the aesthetics or beauty value is understood by people today in how they present themselves is by how people adorn or decorate themselves - the way they use makeup or jewelry, the way they arrange their hair according to their needs. There are numerous occasions when people need to pay attention to their appearance in various ways, for working in an office, working in a factory, going to a party, or for other ceremonial events. The domestic activities of people today colored by aesthetic values include arranging the house, gardening, organizing the yard, and restructuring the environment. To a certain extent, human beings have a sense of aesthetics in their behavior. Therefore, it is not an exaggeration to say that people's lives today are covered and colored with aesthetic values or beauty values to fulfill their spiritual needs.



The values of love contained in the Bedhaya Ketawang dance are a re-actualization of the mystical relationship between Panembahan Senapati, king of Kasunanan Surakarta, and Nyi Roro Kidul, Queen of the South Sea, which can be understood or explained by people today as a love for the South Sea. It means that in their love for the South Sea, people will take care, preserve, and protect the ocean from pollution, garbage, factory waste, damage to coral, and blast fishing. Some of the appropriate actions that are able to show people's love of the sea include planting mangrove trees along the coast, restoring coral, releasing turtles from breeders, and keeping beaches clean from the garbage left behind by visitors. Hopefully, with these actions, fish and other sea creatures can live and thrive as a source of protein to support human life.

#### 4. Conclusion

The Bedhaya Ketawang dance is the oldest classical Surakarta-style dance that is still performed today in an annual *Jumenengan* ceremony to celebrate the anniversary of the king's coronation. The essence of the Bedhaya Ketawang dance in the *Jumenengan* ceremony is a legacy of Kasunanan Surakarta, which gives legitimacy and credibility to the continued power of the king. As a legacy of the *karaton*, the Bedhaya Ketawang dance contains life values that can be absorbed both implicitly and explicitly, including spiritual values, love for the natural environment, ethical values, aesthetic values, and values of love that are relevant to the life of society today. The relevance of these values provides encouragement and motivation to build and develop the character of the Indonesian nation today as a society of faith, devotion to God, noble character, healthy knowledge, skill, creativity, independence, democracy, and responsibility.

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