

## Aesthetic Concept - Choreography of Piso Surit Dance in Karo Community

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### Abstract

*Piso Surit dance in Karo community has distinctive characteristics in its movement techniques, floor patterns, environmental ethical norms, and symbolic-philosophical images. All of these characteristics grow and develop in line with aspects of the living environment that have been integrated in each form of art. This study aims to explain: 1) the basis and rules of Piso Surit dance; and 2) the concept of Piso Surit dance choreography. This study uses a choreographic-anthropological approach, which is to analyze the relationship of dance motion with the aesthetic choreographic concept of Piso Surit dance and Karo community's mindset. Observation, documentation, and interview techniques are used to collect data and then the triangulation data analysis process is carried out to obtain the credibility of the data. The results showed that the rules for the use and application of motive motives fall into two categories, namely for male dancers and female dancers. The application of the prevailing floor pattern is dealing with their partners, side by side, and encircling each other. The rules for the use and application of accompaniment patterns intend to create a unified nature that is subtle, gentle, and harmonious. In the concept of choreography, Piso Surit's dance movements are broken down into nine (9) sections. The movements use techniques such as: a) tiptoeing, b) rotating movements, c) stopping fingers, and d) up and down movements. The music used as accompaniment in the Piso Surit dance is a folk song in Karo area with the same title. This dance uses 'beautiful' make-up to emphasize the dancer's facial lines in a dance performance, while the fashion is a dress code as used by Karo community. As a pair dance, the floor pattern applied is to show or emphasize the story of how young Karo young people combine love.*

### Keywords

Piso Surit dance;  
aesthetic concept;  
choreography concept



## I. Introduction

Tradition is always interpreted as everything that is inherited from the past. As part of tradition, art is a series of activities from the culture of the people who cannot stand alone. Art life of each ethnic group is closely related to religious, linguistic, economic, and kinship aspects in which the arts live, grow and develop. In traditional societies, where the religious factors are very strong, art has a very important function and position and is a part of daily life. Harsoyo, (1967: 185) states that art, in addition to cultural, social and individual creativity, is also one of the essential factors for integration.

In traditional community life patterns, art shows the meaning of oneness or integration with its environment. The integration is manifested through the values of art as a binder of solidarity between citizens of their communities. In this context, traditional arts with various forms and motives, can not be seen as a part that is separated from the supporting community,

but become an integral part of the socio-cultural dynamics of the community. These cultural habits cover all aspects of culture, whether religion, language, customs, patterns of community regulation, kinship systems, or the arts.

Dance, as one form of art is inseparable from the context of the problem of art in the community. Traditional dance is the work of human creation and inventiveness which is passed on from one generation to the next. A traditional dance style does not remain in shape. He will always change when taught by the previous generation to the next generation, because the form of dance that is inherited must be interpreted. Traditional dance will continue to be preserved if there is continuous renewal and development by its supporters. Development and renewal can be done by individuals or groups, either in the form of internal perceptions or external perceptions.

Interested in understanding the background of life patterns and movement arrangements in the Piso Surit dance, this research will explore and describe with more aesthetic and choreographic concepts of Piso Surit dance in Karo community. Karo community is one of several Batak sub-tribes in North Sumatra. Karo is also a term for one administrative region of the Regency, namely Karo Regency, which covers the entire Karo plateau

The Piso Surit dance in Karo community has distinctive characteristics in its movement techniques, floor patterns, environmental ethical norms, and symbolic-philosophical images. All of these characteristics grow and develop in line with aspects of the living environment that have been integrated in each form of art. Thus, the Piso Surit dance in Karo community actually reflects the distinctive color of the environment, including philosophical, norms and ethical aspects, pedagogical elements, and ideologies that develop in the community. This study uses a Choreographic-Anthropological approach to the focus under study, namely the relationship of the aesthetic choreographic concept of Piso Surit dance that is related to the mindset of the Karo people. The use of this approach aims to have the data collected as valid data, while the method chosen is descriptive qualitative method.

## II. Review of Literature

Piso Surit dance is one of the traditional dances owned by Karo Batak people in North Sumatra. This dance is a welcome dance that is displayed in pairs in groups by dancers, both men and women or women and women. So far the creator of this dance has not been found, because it is owned communally by the community. From several sources, the name of the dance is taken from the word 'Piso Surit', which is the name of a type of bird in Karo language, which likes to sing. In terms of dance moves, this dance reflects a person's waiting for his lover. The wait is likened to a surit peso that sounds like calling out. This dance moves are characteristic and graceful, felt like done repeatedly, even though it is actually different. The movements or types of dance that can be found in this dance include: the movements of the feet on tiptoes, the rotating movements, stopping fingers, up and down movements, and other movements. The following will be explained in more detail.

### 2.1 Basic and Rules

#### Rules of Use and Application of Motion Motives



In general, the basic patterns of Karo dance have their respective movements, both for male dancers and female dancers. The following is an explanation of these rules.




For male dancers have the following rules of motion:




- Both hands on the face are shoulder level with palms facing the sky.

- Both hands are parallel to the shoulders, palms facing towards the face to the dancing opponent.
- Every change of pattern is done picking, i.e., the position of the fist in chest face.
- Left hand above shoulder with palm position towards the sky, while the right hand is parallel to the hip.  
 For female dancers, have the following rules of motion:
  - Both hands in front of the shoulders are parallel to the position of the palms towards the dancing opponent.
  - Both hands are parallel to the hips while the palms are pointing down.
  - Every change of pattern is done picking, that is, arms crossed on the face stomach / center.
  - Both hands are parallel to the hips with palms pointing toward the sky.
 The whole variety can be seen in more detail in the table below.

**Table 1. Karo Dance Rules of Procedure**

MALE DANCER		
No	Motion Rules	Photo
1	Both hands in front of the shoulders are parallel to the shoulders with the palms towards the sky.	Photo 1  (doc. Inggit)
2	Both hands in front of the shoulders are parallel to the shoulders, palms pointing towards the dance opponent.	Photo 2  (doc. Inggit)
3	Every change of pattern is done picking, namely the position of the fist in the face of the chest.	Photo 3

		 <p>(dok. Inggit)</p>
4	The left hand is above the shoulder with the palm position towards the sky, while the right hand is aligned with the hip.	<p>Photo 4</p>  <p>(dok. Inggit)</p>
<b>FEMALE DANCER</b>		
1	Both hands in front of the shoulders are parallel to the position of the palms towards the dancing opponent.	<p>Photo 5</p>  <p>(doc. Inggit)</p>
2	Both hands are parallel to the hips while the palms are pointing down.	<p>Photo 6</p>

		 <p>(doc. Inggit)</p>
3	Every change of pattern is done picking, namely the hands crossed on the face of the stomach / center.	<p>Photo 7</p>  <p>(doc. Inggit)</p>
4	Both hands are parallel to the hips with palms towards the sky.	<p>Photo 8</p>  <p>(doc. Inggit)</p>




## 2.2 Rules for the Implementation of Floor Patterns


The rules in the form of normative provisions in the use and application of floor patterns in the composition of the Piso Surit dance are still valid, such as dealing with a partner, side by side, and encircling each other which is then repeated. These habits and provisions are still maintained in the preparation of new dance patterns in Karo community.

In the Piso Surit dance, the rules of the floor pattern are the principle. Some repetition of floor patterns can be analogous to understanding the repetition of Bedhaya dance floor patterns in Java. This understanding conveys that, the repetition of floor patterns is because

philosophically the patterns of human thought are not always permanent, but repeatedly or constantly changing. The following will be explained in more detail in the table below.

**Table 2.** Application of the Piso Surit Dance Floor Pattern

No	Floor pattern shape	Photo
1	Face to face	<p data-bbox="1018 488 1102 517">Photo 9</p>  <p data-bbox="991 999 1129 1028">(doc. Inggit)</p>
2	Side by side	<p data-bbox="1010 1052 1114 1081">Photo 10</p>  <p data-bbox="991 1473 1129 1503">(dok. Inggit)</p>
3	Side by side opposite	<p data-bbox="1010 1534 1114 1563">Photo 11</p>  <p data-bbox="991 1960 1129 1989">(dok. Inggit)</p>

4	Circle each other	<p style="text-align: center;">Photo 12</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">(dok. Inggit)</p>
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As a cycle, the application of the Piso Surit dance floor pattern depicts the story to be conveyed to the audience, namely how a person waits for his lover who is shown through his song poetry, succeeding with happiness. Beginning togetherness that presents a sense of love, continued with the achievement of harmony, and ended with oneness.

### 2.3 Rules for the Use and Application of Accompaniment Patterns

In dance, 'rhythm of motion' and 'rhythm of motion' store important meanings. The rhythm of motion and rhythm of motion have a close relationship with the technique of performing dance movements and patterns of motion. In other words, all movements in dance are patterned and arranged in attachment to the rhythm of the movements and the rhythm of the movements. This attachment will be seen and felt in every use of movement speed, intensity of motion, force of motion, principle of balance, and use of energy in motion. Thus, the rhythm of motion and rhythm of motion have a close understanding.

Rhythm can be interpreted as fast or slow beats. In this case the speed or delay is fixed, and is determined by the grace period (tempo) used in each beat. Thus, what is meant by dance rhythm is the speed or slowness of a fixed-distance beat, to 'provide a limit' in using the intensity of the motion, the force of motion, the principle of balance, and the use of energy in motion.

The use of rhythmic motion will always be different in each form, style, and type of dance. In the normative provisions of the Piso Surit dance, the rhythm of the motion used is in harmony with the singing of the song that expresses the meaning of the words in this song, the song Piso Surit.

The principle of the Piso Surit dance movement is always done right at the beat, or under pressure. The application of this rhythm intends to realize a unified nature that is subtle, gentle, and harmonious. Thus, the intensity of the motion, the force of motion, the principle of balance, and the use of energy in motion become more organized and consistent.

### III. Discussion

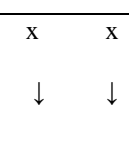
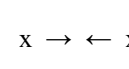
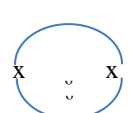

#### 3.1 Choreography Concepts

In general, what is meant by the concept of choreography are thoughts that are applied to realize the 'shape' and 'style' in a dance arrangement. These thoughts relate to many things in producing the composition of a dance. In this connection, this research will only explain the form of 'piso surit' dance through its dance movements, dance accompaniment, floor patterns, and fashion make-up.

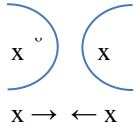

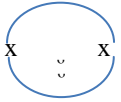
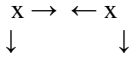
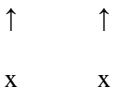
##### a. Piso Surit Dance Forms

Overall, the Piso Surit dance movements are solved in nine (9) sections. Although in some parts there are repetitions, but if you look closely, you will find differences, but they will confirm the content of the story being told. These movements include: a) tiptoeing, b) rotating movements, c) stopping fingers, d) up and down movements, and other movements. If you pay close attention every movement in the dance certainly has a special meaning in it. To facilitate understanding of the range of motion contained in Piso Surit dance, the researchers arranged it in tabular form like the following:

**Table 3.** Description of Piso Surit Dance Movements

No	Variety of Motion	The count	Motion Engineering				Floor pattern
			Feet	Hand	Body	Head	
1	Starting a Movement	3 x 8	Walking into the dancing arena, starting with the right foot	Left hand on shoulder, right hand on the side / side of the body	Facing forward	Facing forward	
2	Rotate Right and Rotate Left	1 x 8 in place 1 x 8 rotate left and right	Right foot starts to move	Hands are lifted from the bottom, rotated and placed on the shoulder	Left and right	Look forward, look at the hands, and follow the direction of the body	
3	Move to the right and left	3 x 8	The first foot goes forward and is pushed back and forward to the left, the right foot is on, and the forward foot is tiptoed to the left foot back	The right hand is rotated from under the left hand also 5-8, advancing to the left, the hand is swung.	Forward to the right, body pointing forward and towards the pair	Looking to a partner	
4	Move around, then back	3 x 8	Move to the couple's place, then return to the original	Right hand rotated down and sideways. Both are	The body leads to the pair, then moves to the right,	Head in one direction	



			place. Starting with the right foot, turning left	parallel.	and back again		
5	Move to a low position (like crouching)	4 x 8 Left and right	Both feet on tiptoe when crouching, then slowly go back up	Right hand on the shoulder, left hand on the side of the body	The body follows the direction of the foot, left and right, upright position	Head in one direction	
6	Move to the right side, and left, and backward	1 – 4 right 5 – 8 left Be repeated 3 x 8	Legs move right, left, and backward starting with the right foot	Right hand rotated down and sideways. Both are parallel.	Follow the direction of the foot, then face the pair	In the direction of the body, and facing the front	
7	Piso moves right and left	1 – 4 right 5 – 8 left Be repeated 3 x 8	Legs move right, left, and backward starting with the right foot	Right hand rotated down and sideways. Both are parallel.	Follow the direction of the foot, then face the pair	In the direction of the body, and facing the front	
8	Rotate, return to original place, then right and left	1 – 4 right 5 – 8 left	Moving places.	Right hand rotated down and sideways. Both are parallel.	Follow the direction of the foot, then face the pair	In the direction of the body, and facing the front	
9	Exit (go home)	1 x 8	Starting with the right foot, walking while being driven	Right hand rotated down and sideways. Both are parallel.	Follow the direction of the foot, then face the pair	In the direction of the body, and facing the front	

### 3.2 Dance Accompaniment

Piso Surit dance is accompanied by a set of traditional Karo musical instruments, but in its development, this dance often uses a modern musical instrument, the 'keyboard', which is now part of the traditional music played in Karo. The inclusion of the 'keyboard' instrument became part of the Karo traditional musical instrument, causing a change to the title 'Karo keyboard drum' to describe the modern Karo music used to accompany Karo songs. The music used as an accompaniment in the Piso Surit dance was originally a folk song in the Karo area, which was then used as a dance accompaniment. So that as a people's property, the dance movements are not standard, but still meet Karo regional dance standard.

The song Piso Surit, composed by national composer Djaga Depari from Seberaya Village, is the personification of the 'pincala' bird sound. The chirping of the loud 'pincala' and the bear-bear during the evening became Djaga Depari's inspiration to compose the song Piso Surit, the lyrics of which tell about the waiting of a Karo girl for her lover, and at the

same time illustrate how young Karo young people combined love in earlier times . Here are the poems of the song Piso Surit.

Piso Surit Piso Surit  
Terdilo-dilo terpingko-pingko  
lalap la jumpa ras atena ngena  
Piso Surit Piso Surit  
terdilo-dilo terpingko-pingko  
lalap la jumpa ras atena ngena  
i ja kel kena tengahna gundari  
siangna menda turang atena wari  
entabeh naring mata kena tertunduh  
kami nimaisa turang tangis teriluh  
nggo nggo me darena mulih me gelah kena  
bage me nindu rupa ari agi kakana  
tengah kesain keru lengetna  
remang mekapal turang seh kel bergehna  
tekuak manuk ibabo geligar  
enggo me selpat turang kite-kite ku lepar  
Piso Surit Piso Surit  
terdilo-dilo terpingko-pingko  
lalap la jumpa ras atena ngena  
nggo nggo me darena mulih me gelah kena  
bage me nindu rupa ari agi kakana  
nggo nggo me darena mulih me gelah kena  
bage me nindu rupa ari agi kakana

The use of the rhythm of motion in the Piso Surit dance, is performed precisely on the beat, which in dance terms is often referred to as 'on the beat'. The use of the rhythm of this movement is intended to show that the content is intended to realize the unity of gentle and lutut traits in the Karo dance movement, especially in the Piso Surit dance.

### 3.3 Makeup and Clothing

The make up and fashion applied in the Piso Surit dance are not fixed. This is because this dance is a folk dance, so the form of fashion and makeup depends on the will of the culprit. However, in general, this dance uses 'beautiful' make up which is used to emphasize the dancer's facial lines for a dance performance, while the fashion is the fashion as used by the Karo people, as follows:

a. Female Dancers:

- Using kebaya (usually red)
- 'Uis' is a typical Karo cloth used as an 'abit' or long bottom cloth
- 'Hood' or head cover, and
- Shawl

b. Male Dancers:

- Using a shirt (usually white)
- Using trousers (usually black)
- 'Uis' as a gonje or sheath, and a bow or waist strap

- Shawl from uis Nipes
- Head cover

### 3.4 Piso Surit Dance Floor Pattern

The floor pattern used in this dance is generally the same for each show, although it is carried out by different regions. As a paired dance that depicts couples who are making love, the floor pattern applied is to show or confirm the story of how young Karo youths are making love.

The use of non-binding performance spaces, such as the proscenium stage or arena performances, shows the harmony between the dance moves and the form of the performance space. The combination of floor patterns that often confront and use straight lines, gives the impression of a firm stand for the choice of heart. The soft and supple motion of dancers, with the solid space of the proscenium stage, shows the balance of life, as well as its integration with an open arena space, which implies the extent and magnitude of outside influences, increasingly showing that determination will be stronger by opening up opportunities for receive input from various sources.

## IV. Conclusion

The results of the research so far are the availability of documents about one of the Karo traditional dances, Piso Surit dance. Although writing about this dance has been found with a variety of topics, but this study chose a topic that had never been written before, namely the study of the aesthetic choreographic concepts in Piso surit dance. This document is important, especially for dance study programs to be used as a data bank on traditional dance owned by the people of North Sumatra, especially Karo community. In addition, through this research written documents about dance owned by the Karo community, specifically Piso Surit dance, are getting richer in various study topics.

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