

Choreographing Matrilineal Archives: Feminist Emplacement in *Perempuan dan Rumah Gadang* by Loravianti

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ABSTRACT

This research examines the choreographic work of Susas Rita Loravianti, particularly Perempuan dan Rumah Gadang, as sites of feminist resistance and spatial emplacement within the Minangkabau village. While existing scholarship on Minangkabau often romanticizes its matrilineal system, this study identifies a gap in understanding how women's bodies actively negotiate the matrilineal paradox, the tension between symbolic female power in the ancestral home and formal male authority in public discourse. Drawing on a two-year ethnographic approach (2022–2024), the research employs participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and detailed gestural mapping to analyze the creative process. The study integrates Doreen Massey's concept of relational space with Gay McAuley's performance spatiality to argue that Loravianti's choreography transcends mere illustration, constituting a subversive critical perspective that reimagines the village (kampuang) as a dynamic arena of global social relations. The findings suggest that the performance functions as a subaltern counterpublic, empowering women to develop oppositional identities in opposition to the restrictive behavioral codes of the Sumbang Duo Baleh. Furthermore, the research considers the limitations of this artistic strategy, questioning the inclusivity of the performance space for non-elite women within the village and examining the potential for artistic abstraction to obscure pressing socio-political crises.

KEYWORDS

Kampuang
Emplacement
Minangkabau Dance
Feminist Choreography

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INTRODUCTION

To comprehend the implications of emplacement within Loravianti's choreography, it is imperative to initially examine the ideological history of the *kampuang-rantau*, hometown-migration dialectic. In contemporary Minangkabau discourse, this dichotomy is frequently regarded as an inherent cultural phenomenon: men migrate, or *merantau*, in pursuit of knowledge and wealth, whereas women remain in the *kampuang* to protect ancestral property, or *harato pusako*. Nevertheless, a genealogical critique reveals that this division has been historically and ideologically constructed to serve specific interests of power (Hadibroto et al., 2023; Rodgers, 2012).

During the late colonial and early revolutionary periods, popular literature and autobiographies began to depict the *rantau* as a domain of both personal and public liberation. It was regarded as the outside world, a multilingual, modern arena from which the unthinking traditionalism of the village could be transcended. Conversely, the *kampuang*

was discursively constructed as a space characterized by stability, stagnation, and feminine domesticity. This framing marginalized the village terrain, portraying its female inhabitants as static icons of tradition rather than active agents of change. (Hakam, 2021; Rodgers, 2012)

The dichotomy was further reinforced by Islamic reformist movements in the 19th and 20th centuries, which sought to reconcile matriliney with patriarchal religious norms by confining women's influence to the private sphere of the *Rumah Gadang* (traditional house) while centralizing male authority in the *Surau* (prayer house) and the *Pasa* (market). Consequently, the *kampung* became a secure space for tradition that also functioned as a disciplinary enclosure for the female body. Loravianti's work directly challenges this antiquated perception of the village, asserting that the *kampung* is a site of everydayness with inherent potential for seditious social thought (Arends, 1999; Hakam, 2021; Mackey & Whybrow, 2007; Saputri et al., 2024).

In this context, choreographer Susas Rita Loravianti emerges as a key case study. Unlike many contemporary Minangkabau female choreographers who choose to work in the *rantau*, diasporic, or external regions as spaces for creative expression, Loravianti, also an academic at the Indonesian Institute of the Arts, Padangpanjang, intentionally situates her artistic practice within the *kampung*. This decision is deliberate and represents a strategic, creative, and political stance. Her decision to stay and create from within the cultural heart directly challenges sociospatial dynamics. This is not a passive act, but a 'politics of staying' that rejects cultural escapism and seeks to transform the cultural center from within.

Previous analyses of Loravianti's work have primarily focused on its dramaturgical aspects or thematic content. (Roza Muliati, 2012; Varianda et al., 2021) This research aims to fill this gap by emphasizing the concept of emplacement, which centers on an active, political, and choreographic process of shaping, negotiating, and redefining space. The main finding of this article is that Loravianti's choreographic emplacement practice is a feminist approach that actively challenges and reconfigures the power dynamics within the *kampung*.

The article's theoretical core synthesizes feminist geography and performance studies, advancing beyond the perception of theory as merely conceptual legitimation to employ it as a rigorous analytical instrument. Doreen Massey's contributions to the study of space and place are indispensable for deconstructing the perceived fixity of the Minangkabau village. Massey contends that a place is not a static boundary but rather a constellation of social relations constantly being reconstructed. This relational perspective enables us to view the *kampung* not as the opposite of the *rantau*, but as a node within a global network in which various influences converge and conflict. (McAuley & Others, 2012; Rogers, 2012)

Gay McAuley's conceptual framework for performance analysis provides a structured methodology for interpreting the physical and symbolic dimensions of the *Rumah Gadang*. McAuley identifies three levels of spatial significance: the presented space of the stage, the perceived space of the audience, and the social space of the theater building itself. In Loravianti's site-specific choreography, these levels converge. The *Rumah Gadang* functions both as a tangible social space, serving as an ancestral residence, and as an intangible domain of performance (McAuley & Others, 2012; 2000).

The integration of these theories is symmetrical: Massey emphasizes the political stakes associated with a specific place, whereas McAuley provides the semiotic instruments necessary to analyze how the body inhabits that space. For example, when a dancer performs a prohibited gesture from the *Sumbang Duo Baleh* within the confines of a household, she is not merely executing a movement; she is actively engaging in a practice that fosters self-reflexive consciousness of the distinction between the real and the unreal. This lived,

embodied experience of the site facilitates its performance as a catalyst for social change.

METHOD

This article employs a qualitative approach, based on ethnographic case study analysis, to provide a detailed examination of a specific artistic practice. The analysis is theoretical, applying an established framework from performance studies and feminist geography to interpret the work of choreographer Susas Rita Loravianti. The methodological rigor of this study is grounded in a two-year (2022–2024) ethnographic engagement with the Sikambang Manih arts community and the Indonesian Arts Institute of Padangpanjang. Unlike previous research that treats ethnography as a broad category, this analysis details the operational techniques used to validate the findings.

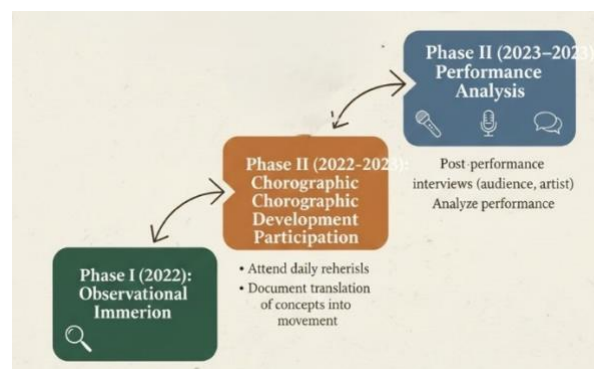


Figure 1. Fieldwork Phases Of Research

The observation extended beyond the front stage of the performance to encompass the backstage of community life. The researcher employed joking relationships to manage the heightened stress and political sensitivity associated with critiquing adat norms. Interviews were conducted in the *Minang* language to accurately capture the subtleties of cultural philosophy, with particular focus on the interpretation of Sumbang Duo Baleh and the personal politics of staying among the dancers (Barendregt, 2013; McAuley & Others, 2012).

The researcher's role as an academic observer within the rehearsal environment parallels that of an ethnographer in the field. Recognizing positionality is essential, as issues of emplacement and feminism necessitate transparency regarding the power dynamics between the researcher and the subjects. As an outsider endowed with academic privilege, the researcher possessed the authority to determine the research design and the representation of findings. To address this, the study employed a reflexive methodology, conceptualizing the knowledge generated as a relational construction between the artist and the analyst. Participants' perspectives were prioritized through extended quotations and collaborative editing of the movement descriptions (Clarke, 2018; Lindskov, 2025; Muhammad et al., 2015).

Two main analytical perspectives are used. The first is Doreen Massey's theory of space, place, and gender, which posits that space is not merely a neutral physical entity but a dynamic, gendered social construct shaped by power relations and social interactions. The second is Gay McAuley's model of the layers of performance space, as her work *Space in Performance* provides an analytical toolkit for examining a performance's physical, fictional, dramatic, and thematic elements. Combining these two theories enables a nuanced analysis of emplacement, particularly how Loravianti choreographically shapes and redefines the

kampung space. This analysis focuses primarily on her dance work, *Perempuan dan Rumah Gadang*.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Geometry of Power and Body Control in Minangkabau Culture

With its distinctive matrilineal system, the Minangkabau are often regarded as a society that deeply respects women. Symbolically, women are celebrated as the *limpapeh rumah nan gadang*, the central pillar of the house and the guardian of ancestral treasures, including land and Rumah Gadang. However, a closer examination reveals underlying tensions known as the matrilineal paradox. On one hand, women enjoy a high social status as heirs through the maternal line; on the other, their mobility, visibility, and bodily expressions in public spaces are frequently restricted by traditional interpretations that are quite patriarchal.

The choreography explicitly concentrates on the Sumbang Duo Baleh (the twelve behavioral prohibitions) as the central focus of this paradox. These codes of conduct function as common-sense norms that reinforce and normalize the prevailing patriarchal order. Loravianti's dancers undertake a detailed reading of gestures to subvert these codes critically. This ethical system, comprising twelve rules, serves as a guide to behavior and a spatial technology that shapes how women should move, speak, and interact in public. Rules such as Sumbang Duduak (sitting), Sumbang Tagak (standing), and Sumbang Jalan (walking) clearly regulate women's bodies, limiting their ability to display too much or what are considered inappropriate spatial expressions. (Astuti, 2011, 2013). These restrictions present real challenges for a female Minangkabau choreographer. Because dance is all about the body and movement, these rules directly restrict the primary means of self-expression. As a result, many artists choose between adhering to traditional, restrictive practices and venturing beyond the *kampung* to pursue artistic freedom. This ongoing tension gives important context to Loravianti's work, which is both significant and transformative. These restrictions also have deep historical roots, as seen in Minangkabau dance traditions, where dances such as Galombang Dance and Alang Sunti Panghulu Dance were once performed only by men, reflecting societal norms that limited women's presence in public events (Dewi et al., 2019; Nurman, 2019; Revita, 2021).

From the perspective of feminist geography, particularly Doreen Massey's concept of power geometry, the Minangkabau *kampung* is conceptualized not as a homogenous and neutral space but as an arena structured by inherently gendered power relations. (Massey, 2009). This geometry manifests distinctly in the matrilineal paradox that characterizes Minangkabau society. On one hand, women are symbolically elevated as inheritors of the lineage and guardians of the ancestral home, known as *limpapeh rumah nan gadang*. On the other hand, their mobility, visibility, and bodily expression in the public sphere are often curtailed by patriarchal interpretations of custom.

The code of conduct known as *Sumbang Duo Baleh* is among the most effective spatial technologies for reinforcing this power geometry. It operates not merely as a set of ethical guidelines, but as a disciplinary mechanism that prescribes how women should move, speak, and interact in public. This code effectively constructs the female body as an entity requiring surveillance and control, thereby limiting women's spatial agency.

These limitations have deep historical roots, which are reflected in Minangkabau performance traditions, such as the Tari Tanduak. This dance was traditionally performed exclusively by men because cultural prohibitions barred women from appearing in public gatherings. Consequently, the *kampung* becomes a contested space in which female identity

is continually negotiated amid a constant tension between high symbolic status and constrained practical freedom.

The choreographic work of Susas Rita Loravianti constitutes a deliberate intervention into the prevailing geometries of power. Drawing a conceptual distinction between embodiment and emplacement is essential to a full understanding of this intervention. While embodiment is typically understood as the process by which the body becomes a vessel or a representation of pre-existing meanings, identities, or ideologies (Spatz, 2017) Emplacement denotes the body's agency in creating, shaping, and transforming the signification of space. Thus, it is an active and relational praxis through which subjects and their environments are mutually constituted (Bailliard et al., 2023; Pink, 2011).

Within this theoretical framework, Loravianti's work transcends the mere embodiment of a static identity, such as that of a repressed or empowered Minangkabau woman. Instead, she actively emplaces a counter-narrative concerning this identity upon the theatrical stage. Under her direction, the stage is transformed into a site where the *kampung* is not simply represented but is fundamentally reconstructed. This choreographic practice can be analyzed as a politics of affirmation. It is an assertive political act that seeks to generate new spatial and agential possibilities from within a context of limitation. By consciously grounding her practice within the *kampung* and utilizing its rich cultural materials, Loravianti engages in a political act of reclaiming and redefining the meaning of this space from an internal, situated perspective.

The Creative Process as an Embalming Practice

To understand Loravianti's choreography intervention, it is important to distinguish between embodiment and emplacement. Embodiment is the process by which the body becomes a vessel or representation of existing meaning, identity, or ideology. Conversely, emplacement is a more proactive and relational practice in which the body has the agency to create, shape, and transform the meaning of a space. Through emplacement, the subject and their environment mutually shape one another, producing knowledge shaped by social, ecological, economic, and political contexts (Bailliard et al., 2023; Pink, 2006, 2011).

Loravianti's decision to stay and create in her hometown is a tangible embodiment of a settling policy that rejects cultural escapism. Rather than fleeing traditional boundaries, she confronts them and transforms the cultural center from within. Her ability to do this is closely related to her intersectional identity: she is a Minang woman with insider knowledge and life experience, an artist skilled in expressive media, and an academic equipped with a critical framework. This multidimensional position gives her 'situated knowledge' that uniquely allows her to understand tradition from an emic (insider) perspective while also analyzing it critically from an etic (outsider) perspective. This combination gives her the cultural and intellectual capital to challenge existing power structures through art. This practice is clearly visible in her creative process, which begins in the domestic realm (Pink, 2006, 2011).



Figure 2. Creative discussion involving choreographers, dancers, and mentors inside Rumah Gadang.
(Doc. Muhamad Rifki, 2022)

As shown in Figure 2, the creative process begins inside the Rumah Gadang, a central symbol of Minangkabau culture and the domestic realm. Here, Loravianti, her performers, and their mentor figure discuss and collaborate. Traditionally known as an area governed by customary law and supervision, the space has now been transformed into a laboratory for exploring identity and feminist ideas. This marks the first step in emplacement, reinterpreting the initially passive space into an active and productive environment.



Figure 3. The dancers practice in the yard, shifting creative practice from domestic to semi-public spaces.
(Doc. Muhamad Rifki, 2022)

The creative practice then shifted from the interior of Rumah Gadang to the yard, as seen in Figure 3. This movement is a physical manifestation of Loravianti's expansion of women's space. Actions considered inappropriate in formal public spaces are now collectively practiced in a more open yet still controlled environment. This marks an expansion of women's spatial agency, as they reclaim communal space within the *kampung*.

Loravianti's strategy of staying risks romanticizing the village as a safe space while ignoring the fear and violence that reside within the individual. Furthermore, the persistence

of memory through the *Rumah Gadang* may unintentionally validate the exclusionary norms of the bourgeois public sphere if it does not address how the state uses matriliney as a tourist brand while dismantling women's actual economic power through nation-state projection. The analysis of *Perempuan dan Rumah Gadang* is solid. Still, it must specifically address the limitations of Loravianti's artistic strategy: the performance cannot substitute for the systemic social inequality that remains outside the theatre's walls (Fraser, 2021; Merlo et al., 2024).



Figure 4. Loravianti discusses with public figures, demonstrating the political dimension of her work.
(Doc. Muhamad Rifki, 2022)

Figure 4 illustrates the public and political aspects of Loravianti's emplacement practice. She appears to be engaged in a discussion with a public figure. This photograph demonstrates that her work is not limited to the stage but also engages with a broader cultural ecosystem, in which she, in her dual roles as artist and academic, negotiates with authorities and disseminates her transformative ideas. Rooted in the values of local wisdom, Loravianti presents a model that differs from that of many other contemporary choreographers, who tend to prioritize technical or commercial considerations. Her practice is a clever negotiation, showing that change can be achieved through dialogue and reconstruction, rather than rupture.

The politics of staying is presented as a strategy of resistance; however, it must acknowledge its contradictions. Remaining in the *kampung* is not merely a choice; it is a dilemma shaped by literary works, customary norms, and the pressures of globalization. While men migrate to enhance their status, women who stay are often caught in a blood bias, in which their value is strictly tied to their ability to reproduce and maintain the matrilineal line (Hadibroto et al., 2023; Nadia et al., 2022).

Women and *Rumah Gadang*: Spatial and Symbolic Reconstruction

Loravianti's work, *Perempuan dan Rumah Gadang*, which is part of the trilogy *Balega di Tanah Manang*, is a prime example of her practice of emplacement. McAuley's layered analysis shows how she methodically reconstructs the meaning of *Rumah Gadang* and the role of women within it. At the level of physical space, Loravianti strategically isolates the *Rumah Gadang* symbol on stage, separating it from the strict social surveillance context of the *kampung*. The performance, set against the backdrop of the iconic Minangkabau cultural area of Seribu *Rumah Gadang*, cleverly utilizes this symbol. This act transforms

Rumah Gadang from a site governed by customary law into a laboratory for exploring identity, a space free from the panopticon-like gaze of adat (Rahman AS, 2021).

The layer of dramaturgical space in the interaction between dancers in this work does not depict the ideal harmony often projected into the domestic realm of Minangkabau. Instead, this choreography presents a complex dynamic of power, solidarity, and conflict among women within the Rumah Gadang. This effectively politicizes the domestic sphere, revealing it as an arena of negotiation and hidden struggle. Women are portrayed as pillars of support or unifiers and as subjects continually negotiating with their limitations (Asriati et al., 2019; Wahyono & Hutahayan, 2020).

Through her choreography, Loravianti constructs a narrative in which Rumah Gadang is not merely a building, but a mythological space, a repository of collective memory, and a site of intergenerational women's struggle. This work creates a heterotopia, an alternative space, where history and women's roles can be reimagined beyond normative boundaries. Traditional symbols such as plates and silek are reinterpreted within a new narrative, imparting deeper and transformative meanings. The thematic spatial layer is where Loravianti performs her most powerful subversion. She reclaims physical and symbolic power by integrating movements from silek, a martial art traditionally regarded as a male domain (Asriati et al., 2019; Pielichaty, 2015).



Figure 5. The female dancer performed powerful, expressive movements in the open space, incorporating elements of silek. (Doc. Yuli Hendra Multi Akbar, 2022)

As seen in Figure 5, these movements visually and thematically challenge the rules of *Sumbang Duo Baleh*, which restrict women's movements, particularly *Sumbang Jalan* and *Sumbang Karajo*. This act is not merely an aesthetic addition but a political statement that reclaims the female body as a strong, empowered entity rather than simply an object requiring supervision.

In the work *Perempuan dan Rumah Gadang*, the choreography is segmented into three sections: the depiction of village life, the interaction of memory spanning past and present, and the portrayal of female behavioral patterns. Notably, the body composition within the third segment is particularly significant. Dancers frequently perform beneath the rafters or near the central pillars, utilizing their bodies to trace the architecture of the Rumah Gadang. This spatial arrangement transcends mere illustration; it critically examines how the house itself functions as a metaphorical sanctuary, while paradoxically, the violence of

exclusion resides within the individual. A notable gesture involves the dancer mimicking the act of holding the keys (*pagangan kunci*), a traditional emblem of female authority. However, rather than executing a graceful hold, the hand is clenched and trembles, implying the burden and weight of being the sole bearer of the matriline. This gestural interpretation transitions the analysis from narrative description to analytical insight, illustrating how the perpetuation of memory is enacted through the performer's muscular engagement and skeletal structure (Mackey & Whybrow, 2007; Saputri et al., 2024; Varianda et al., 2021).



Figure 6. For musicians who perform on traditional instruments, this work strengthens cultural roots.
(Doc. Yuli Hendra Multi Akbar, 2022)

Figure 6 illustrates the importance of the collective element in Loravianti's work. Traditional music, performed by musicians, not only serves as an accompaniment but also reinforces deep cultural roots, demonstrating that this work is a product of broad community collaboration, rather than merely an individual expression.

Loravianti's work, *Perempuan dan Rumah Gadang*, part of the *Balega di Tanah Manang* trilogy, is a prime example of this practice of emplacement. Using Gay McAuley's theoretical framework of spatial layers, one can analyze how Loravianti systematically redefines the meaning of the *Rumah Gadang*, a central symbol of the Minangkabau *kampung*, and the role of women within it. This layered analysis shows how careful artistic choices, from scenography to movement vocabulary, contribute to a larger political message.

At the level of physical space, Loravianti isolates the *Rumah Gadang* symbol on stage, detaching it from the context of social surveillance within the *kampung*. This act transforms the *Rumah Gadang* from a domestic space governed by customary law (*adat*) into a laboratory for identity exploration. Subsequently, within the dramaturgical space, the interactions among the dancers do not depict an idealized harmony but rather the complex dynamics of power relations, solidarity, and conflict among women. This effectively politicizes the domestic sphere, revealing it as a covert arena of negotiation and struggle.

On the plane of fictional space, the choreography constructs a narrative in which the *Rumah Gadang* is no longer merely a building but a mythological space, a repository of collective memory, and a site of intergenerational female struggle. This creates a heterotopia, another space where women's history and roles can be re-imagined beyond the confines of existing norms. The culmination of this process occurs in the thematic space, where Loravianti executes her most potent subversion. She reclaims physical and symbolic power

by incorporating movements from silek, a martial art traditionally considered masculine, into the repertoire of female dancers. This directly challenges the rigid, gender-based division of space and roles prevalent in the *kampung*.

Table 1. Analysis of Performance Space Layers in *Perempuan dan Rumah Gadang*

Spatial Layer McAuley	Manifestation in the Choreography	Feminist Implication
Physical Space	The stage represents the <i>Rumah Gadang</i> , perhaps with minimalist props that abstract its iconic <i>gonjong</i> roof shape.	Isolates the <i>Rumah Gadang</i> from its social context, transforming it from a supervised domestic space into a laboratory for identity exploration.
Dramaturgical Space	Dancer interactions portray power relations, solidarity, and conflict among women within the <i>Rumah Gadang</i> .	Politicises the domestic sphere, showing the <i>Rumah Gadang</i> not as a harmonious space but as an arena of negotiation and struggle.
Fictional Space	A narrative of the <i>Rumah Gadang</i> is constructed not merely as a house, but as a mythological space, a site of collective memory, and struggle.	It creates a heterotopia (other space) in which women's history and roles can be reimagined beyond existing norms.
Thematic Space	Female dancers incorporate silek (traditionally a male martial art) movements; themes of resistance and resilience are central.	Subverts traditional gender roles and constitutes a reclamation of physical and symbolic power by women.

The synthesis of this practice of emplacement is the transformation of the stage into what feminist theorist Nancy Fraser terms a subaltern counterpublic. The performance space Loravianti creates functions as a parallel discursive arena where a subordinate group, in this case, Minang women, whose positions are negotiated within the patriarchal structures of adat, can withdraw, regroup, and formulate counter-discourses. It is a provisionally safe space, insulated from the panoptic gaze of the *kampung*, where oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests, and needs can be articulated through the choreographic medium.

Nancy Fraser's concept of the subaltern counterpublic is employed to argue that Loravianti's performance space constitutes a parallel discursive arena where marginalized voices are expressed. Fraser characterizes these spaces as sites where subordinated social groups invent and circulate counterdiscourses to develop oppositional interpretations of their identities. By staging *Perempuan dan Rumah Gadang* on the village ground, Loravianti establishes a plethora of publics that embody the diversity of perspectives within Minangkabau society. This represents a weak public in Fraser's terminology; it emphasizes opinion formation and identity construction rather than direct decision-making. The performance enables the village women to invent different terms for their social reality, thereby transcending the binary of *kampung* and *rantau*. (Ioannis, 2016; Ringrose & Regehr, 2020)

Nevertheless, a thorough investigation must ascertain whether this performance space is genuinely inclusive or confined to a particular artistic community. Fraser cautions that the discourse surrounding accessibility and rationality can itself function as a strategy of differentiation. Loravianti, as a university-educated choreographer, introduces an avant-garde aesthetic that may distinguish her from the village women she portrays, who are considered plebeian. The research indicates that, although the performance is accessible to the village, participatory equality remains limited. General spectators often possess a superficial understanding of the show compared with the performers, who have engaged in extensive theoretical analysis of the work. Consequently, an initially unbridgeable gap exists between the performance as an ideal of emancipation and its actual role as an instrument in the formation of a hegemony upheld by artistic elites. The work presents an affirmative feminist message but does not consistently address the structural inequalities, such as class and educational disparities, that separate the performers from the audience. (Ioannis, 2016; Ringrose & Regehr, 2020)

Loravianti's capacity to construct this counterpublic is inextricably linked to her intersectional identity. Her multifaceted positionality as a Minang woman (with lived experience and embodied knowledge), an artist (mastering a medium of expression), and an academic (wielding critical frameworks and intellectual legitimacy) confers on her a unique form of situated knowledge. This knowledge is the primary capital for her intervention. Therefore, her work transcends art's function as mere entertainment or representation. It becomes a political act, transforming the stage into an alternative public sphere. On this site, a Minangkabau feminist discourse can be produced, negotiated, and disseminated, affirming that art can function as a potent counterpublic.

CONCLUSIONS

This research concludes that Susas Rita Loravianti's choreography practice exemplifies an advanced and dynamic form of feminist resistance. Unlike many contemporary Minangkabau female choreographers who migrate abroad in pursuit of creative freedom, Loravianti intentionally situates her practice within her homeland. Through her work *Perempuan dan Rumah Gadang*, she demonstrates that choreography is a spatial practice that enables her to shape and redefine space actively. She transforms the *Rumah Gadang* from a symbol of domestic limitations into a vibrant public platform for women's empowerment and agency. This political strategy of staying (politics of staying) enables Loravianti to generate new possibilities within cultural constraints, thereby positioning her work as a subaltern counterpublic in which Minangkabau women can articulate oppositional interpretations of their identity.

More broadly, Loravianti's practice demonstrates that choreography is an experience of place that is realised in a tangible way: an active, embodied experience of place, capable of producing real impacts within a simulacra society. However, this research also acknowledges certain limitations, particularly regarding the ethnographic approach, which remains rooted in cognitive academic analysis practices. There is a risk of asymmetric integration, whereby established theories, such as those by Massey or McAuley, might be used solely to legitimise the work rather than being critically tested against the complex realities of village life. Therefore, future studies should pursue multi-site ethnography following dancers' journeys from their hometowns to distant places, to observe how the meaning of place shifts across different geographies.

The principal methodological contribution of this research lies in the transition from solely narrative illustration to the use of gestures and corporeal configurations as analytical

data. This framework facilitates a performance analysis that challenges traditional spectator practices, which predominantly involve consuming visual images. For scholars in feminist dance studies, this underscores the significance of considering locations as active participants examining how architecture influences or resists bodily movement and operationalising reflexivity by articulating the researcher's authority and privileges. Ultimately, Loravianti's work illustrates that substantive feminist change can transpire within cultural boundaries, where the emancipatory potential of the counterpublic remains a crucial impetus for social transformation in the contemporary Minangkabau society.

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