

**COMBINATION TIMOGUN MURUT DANCE  
MOVEMENT AND MODERN DANCE TECHNIQUE  
IN MODERN DANCE CHOREOGRAPHY**

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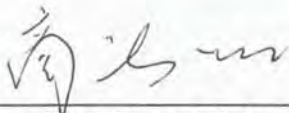
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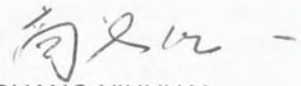
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## DECLARATION

The materials in this thesis are original except for quotations, excerpts, summaries and references, which have been duly acknowledged.



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## ABSTRAK

Dalam dunia moden, apabila budaya Barat bertembung dengan budaya Timur akan menyebabkan pertembungan unsur tradisional dan moden, seterusnya menghasilkan pembangunan artistik berbentuk multi-budaya. Tarian telah banyak dipengaruhi dalam keadaan social dan kebudayaan. Pelbagai bentuk dan gaya telah diharmonikan membentuk konsep baru dan telah digunakan dalam pengubahan tarian moden. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk menggabung tarian masyarakat Timogun Murut dengan pelbagai teknik tarian moden contohnya Martha Graham, Doris Humphrey, Merce Cunningham, Jose Limon dan Erik Hawkins. Kajian ini dijalankan melalui rekabentuk eksperimen yang merangkumi rujukan dan kompilasi daripada kajian literature dan kerja lapangan. Kajian ini berfokuskan penggabungan. Dalam kajian ini, penggabungan akan dianalisis dalam 2 aspek iaitu pergerakan dalam dan pergerakan luaran. Pergerakan dalaman merangkumi pergerakan semulajadi contohnya bernafas, plie, berdiri, gesture, kelancaran pergerakan dan lompatan. Pergerakan luaran pula merangkumi 4 elemen utama tarian moden. Elemen-elemen tersebut adalah udara, masa, dynamism dan metakinesis. Hasil penggabungan akan dijelaskan dengan terperinci dalam dua aspek iaitu kesesuaian penggabungan dan ketidaksesuaian penggabungan. Penggunaan dan halangan pergerakan tarian juga dijelaskan dan cara pengubahsuaian akan dikaji dalam kajian ini. Dengan cara ini, kajian ini akan memberi gambaran dan idea yang jelas dan bernas kepada pembaca. Hasil kajian akan digunakan secara praktikal dengan mengambil kira lain-lain elemen pengubahan dan dianalisa dengan spesifik. Pada akhir kajian, penggabungan tarian akan menghasilkan gubahan yang impresif dan menakjubkan pada masa yang sama membawa tarian kebudayaan etnik Malaysia yang unik, Timogun-Murut ke pentas antarabangsa.



## ABSTRACT

### COMBINATION TIMOGUN MURUT DANCE MOVEMENT AND MODERN DANCE TECHNIQUE IN MODERN DANCE CHOREOGRAPHY

*In modern world, when the culture from West and East meets, the traditional and modern collide, the artistic development tends to be multicultural. The dance is being influence by in the modern social environment and culture. Variety of form and style harmonized together forming a new conception that has been used widely in the modern dance choreography. The aim of the research is to combine the Malaysian ethnical dance movement derived from Timogun Murut with the modern dance techniques namely Martha Graham, Doris Humphrey, Merce Cunningham, Jose Limon and Erik Hawkins. This research is conducted through the experimental design. It also includes the reference and compilation from the literature review and the field work. The focus of the research is based on the combination. In this research, the combination is analyzed in two way namely the internal and the external movement. The internal movement is related with the natural movement such as breathing, plie, standing, gesture, flow of movement and jump. The external movement includes 4 four main modern dance element. The elements are space, time, dynamism, and metakinesis. The result of the combination is discussed in detail. The result is discussed in two aspect the such as suitable for combination and unsuitable for combination. The practical usage and restriction of dance is also being emphasized. Improvement methods are suggested in the research. The principle result of the research is drawn out from here. In this way, it gives clear and sufficient ideas to the reader. The result is used in the practical way. It also considered the other elements of choreography. The practical way is analyzed specifically. The result after the combination will be an enhancement and impressive result for the modern dance composition. At the same time, through the modern dance composition it could present the excellent local Malaysian ethnical Timogun Murut culture internationally.*



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## GLOSSARY

<b>Allegro</b>	Light or springy movements, such as leaps or skips.
<b>Attitude</b>	"pose". This position was named by Carlo Blasis and inspired by the statue of Mercury by Giovanni da Bologna. One leg is lifted in the back to 90 degrees and bent at the knee. The arms are in 4 <sup>th</sup> position in opposition to the front the leg. This pose is executed both in <i>croise</i> and <i>efface</i> . If in <i>croise</i> , the same as the front leg is in 5 <sup>th</sup> position and the position becomes <i>epaule</i> .
<b>Accent</b>	A display of different stress, often in contrast to what has gone before. The stress is different by its greater or lesser force.
<b>Accelerando</b>	Get faster using in time.
<b>Crescendo</b>	Gradually becoming louder using in dynamism.
<b>Contemporary dance</b>	Implies the "present" and the "here and now" of dance. Used in Britain to describe a dance genre which includes the techniques of the American and German modern dancers(e.g. <i>Graham, Cunningham, Leeder</i> ) and developments of the modern dance, Post-modernism, avant-garde dance, and the New Dance of British choreographers who use release-based techniques. The term "Contemporary dance" was coined following the setting-up, by Robin Howard, of the contemporary Ballet Trust in 1966, and later London Contemporary Dance Theatre.



As stated in the dictionary, contemporary simply means “belong to the present time” or “happening or existing in the same period of time.” In simpler terms, contemporary means “new” or “the latest”. In reference to dance, contemporary dance means the latest dance style which is able to portray the idea of the contemporaries.

Contemporary dance in Malaysia can be divided into traditional contemporary and modern contemporary.

Two groups: 1. The first group exhibits only western ideas and dance techniques. 2. The second group shows keen interest in emphasizing the importance of both the traditional and modern, east and west into their repertoire.

**Dance aesthetics** A term with varied meanings which deals inter alia with the “philosophy of art and dance ,”with concepts of “beauty” in dance, with “creative processes” in dance, with problem of “truths” in performance, with “criteria of excellence”, with “aesthetic attitude”. “[Philosophical] expertise alone is not enough, for the problems that require mental ingenuity also require a sense of physicality, a grasp of kinesthesia without which any theory of dance must remain hopelessly isolated from reality.” *Selma Jeanne Cohen*,1983.

**Decrescendo** Gradually becoming softer using in dynamism.

<b>Dynamics</b>	One of the elements of movement. The energy of movement, expressed in varying intensity, accent, and quality. The interaction of force and time ( <i>Blom and Chaplin, 1982</i> ); The loud and soft aspects of music ( <i>Teck, 1994</i> ).
<b>Demi plie</b>	Half –Bend of the knees.
<b>Developpe</b>	“To unfold.” The working leg is raised to a <i>retire</i> position ,then straightens to a full extension to 90 degrees or higher. The movement can be done in all directions.
<b>Degage</b>	“To disengage.” The working leg opens either to a <i>pointe tendue</i> position or to an <i>en l’air</i> position. The term is usually used to describe a preparatory movement. The motion can be performed in all direction.
<b>Ethnic dance</b>	The dance of a people of common cultural. Racial, or religious heritage. Essentially, such dance takes its time and place of performance from the culture of which it is a part; a display put on solely for tourists is ethnic in form but not in content.  The dance of group “which holds in common genetic, linguistic, and cultural ties with special emphasis on cultural tradition”.  <i>Joann Kealiinohomoku, 1969.</i>
<b>Ground plie</b>	Big bend of the knees.
<b>Ground pirouette</b>	<i>en dehors</i> -“Outward” A movement which brings the leg from the front to back .Also any turn which revolves toward the working

leg.

**Gesture**

“is not a static position but a movement happening. This movement happening has inherent in it the various forms of polarity, such as stable or labile equilibrium, counter movements of body parts, symmetry and asymmetry, central and peripheral orientation. Growing and shrinking, gravitational pull and levitation, recurrence and free rhythmically, increase and decrease, relatedness and relationship.” *Sylvia Bodmer, 1962.*

**Intensity**

Presence of a greater or lesser degree of energy; relative level of energy concentration.

**Modern dance**

Dance since the 1920's which is expressionistic in a non-balletic, often idiosyncratic style. refers to 'serious' rather than 'commercial' works and primarily works of the twentieth and present century. Today's dance as an art form, serving to project the choreographer's intent through the medium of bodily movement, with no arbitrary restriction on the choice movement available to the choreographer. *Sall Adshead, 1988.*

**Metakinesis**

“Because of this [*metakinetic*] close relationship between movement and personal experience, temperament mental and emotional equipment, it is manifestly impossible for everyone to be taught to do the same type movement.” *John Martin, 1972(1933).*

<b>Movement</b>	<p>“One of man’s languages.” <i>Rudolf Laban</i>.1966(1939). “The primordial means of expression and communication early man revealed his ideas.” <i>Rody Lange</i>.1975. “A cluster of spatial and dynamic elements combined with a particular use of the body in action”. “What the dance work is made of”. <i>Janet Adshead</i>, 1988.</p>
<b>Movement phrase</b>	<p>A sequence of movements with a recognizable shape, having a beginning and an end and consisting of a variety of lengths of movement and with rises and falls in its dynamic composition. <i>Doris Humphrey</i>.1959.</p>
<b>Plie</b>	<p>Used interchangeably to mean either a <i>plie</i> on both feet or on one leg.(Sometimes call <i>fondue</i>). “Bending” of the knees. performed in 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>,3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> positions.</p>
<b>Pirouette</b>	<p>“A turn”. A spin on <i>Demi-</i> or full <i>pointe</i> of one leg while the other is raised to a specific position, in <i>retire</i> or one of big poses.</p>
<b>Pirouette a la seconde</b>	<p>Using the working leg to the side.</p>
<b>Passe</b>	<p>Standing on one leg, bend your other knee up and touch the inside knee of your standing leg with pointed toes in a passing through movement.</p>
<b>Posture</b>	<p>“Positions found in the hand and Weapon Forms, often with names connected with Chinese culture and mythology, e.g.</p>

Needle at Deep Sea Bottom, Embrace Tiger, Return to Mountain, Fair Lady Works, at Shuttle." *Katherine Allen*. 1993.

**Pulse**

"Pulse to a dancer is not only being in time with the music, not only syncopated beat. It is the source of energy and character because it represents the natural human reaction to the rhythmic qualities in music. Audiences react to it as strongly as dancers. Hence pulse is an expression of the primitive link between the community, music and dance." *Peggy van Praagh and Peter Brinson*, 1963.

**Rhythm**

A structure of movement patterns in time.

**Rallentando**

Meaning to "perform more and more slowly using in time.

**Staccato**

Detached.

**Space**

One of the elements of movements. The dancer moves in and through space. Dance movement takes up space, and a dance is performed in a space. Direction, level, size, focus, and pathway are the aspects of space described in here. An altered use of the aspects allows the choreographer to use space in different ways.

**Time**

One of the elements of movement a choreography develops a form through time. The aspects of time include movement speed, and rhythm etc. Altering the aspects of time provides changes in dance.

<b>Tension</b>	A force which appears in a variety of forms, i. e. ,a muscular activeness, perceptual alertness , feeling, readiness to move, resistance to pressure and the need to accelerate. " <i>Valerie Preston-Dunlop</i> , 1987.
<b>Tempo</b>	The pace or speed at which movement progresses; relatively slower or faster.
<b>Technique</b>	Movement skill.The stunning control and capacity to move which a dancer may possess and to which an audience will initially strongly respond, but which is surpassed in interest by what the dancer does with her techniques. <i>Judith Mackrell</i> , Interview."Through technique, one acquires the discipline that, in turn, allows total freedom and a sense of well being. "technique prepares your body to speak in dance". "To learn the craft," or "to acquire." proficiency in technique." Martha Graham in <i>Elinor Rogosin</i> , 1980.
<b>Working leg and Supporting leg</b>	The leg which is gesturing and the leg which is supporting the body's weight; the working leg bending, stretching, rotating, circling, in variety and combination, co-ordinated with the supporting leg, which rises and bends, in turn-out and parallel rotation. <i>Eds.</i>

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 Introduction

Cross-cultural elements in contemporary modern dance are evident in movements, theme and philosophy, music and other technical aspects such as costume and props (Mumtaz Backer, *in* Mohd Anis, 2003:73). The advantage of the contemporary modern dancers being trained with many dance forms has boost creativity to explore new dance forms. With this advantage, more creativity and variety of dance forms and movements can be assimilated and fused in producing contemporary modern dance. There, a multiethnic and multicultural country such as Malaysia has great potential in dance research. In the present, much research has been done on the traditional and ethnic dance forms and proven the perfect combination with the modern dance technique (Gonzales, 2004). From here, it will introduce the background *Timogun Murut* community, their behavior and lifestyle in general. Research object are referred in this part.

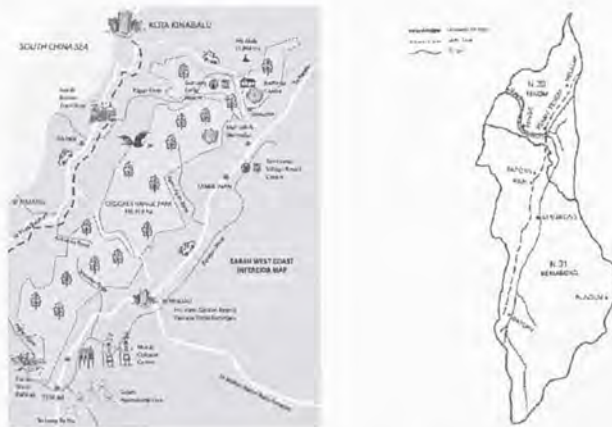
### 1.1 Statement of the Problem

The main concern of this study is to find out the various combinations of movements in choreography through the combination of the *Timogun Murut* dance movements with the modern dance techniques.



## 1.2 Tenom

Tenom is a small town in the Interior District of Sabah and it is also the centre of the Murut, a group of hill tribes (Murut means “Men of the Hills”), who have lived in this region for times immemorial (see Figure 1.1). Although many young people of the tribe have adopted the fast pace of a modern civilization creeping inland from the capital, some of them still prefer the life in the jungle, hunting with dog, a *parang* (machete) and may be even their traditional blowpipe. Other has turned to cultivating the countryside growing a variety the countryside growing a variety of crops, from rice over tobacco to coffee. (Zaini, 1969)



**Figure 1.1 Tenom Map**

Source(Left): <http://www.sabahtravelguide.com>

Source(Right): <http://www.sabah.gov.my>

In the heart of Tenom town, is the *Antonom* Memorial. This memorial is to commemorate the Murut warrior called *Ontoros Antonom* (see Figure1.2). It is believed that he possess exceptional leadership qualities, he was able to unite the Murut in Rundum and Pensiangan. His statue stands tall to signify the bravery of the hundreds of Murut warriors who together with *Ontoros Antonom* were killed in the great uprising against the British colonists in the Rundum District in 1915 (Zaini, 1969).



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