Wayang Gluthek: the Creativity and Innovation of Art Workers in Keeping Traditional Arts

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Abstract

Wayang Gluthek is one of the traditional arts from Malang Regency, East Java. Wayang Gluthek emerged because the conventional puppet show had ups and downs in its development due to advances in science and technology. This research aims to identify the wayang gluthek performance and examine the elements in the show. This type of research is a survey and development research conducted for five years. Research locations are in the Kalipare and Tumpang areas. Methods of data collection using interview methods, participatory observation methods, and methods of documentation. The data that has been obtained is then analyzed descriptively qualitatively. The results showed that Wayang Gluthek was born from various innovations and creative efforts made by art workers and the people’s need for cheap and efficient art without leaving essential points in the tradition of wayang purwa performances. From the Wayang Gluthek performance, we can understand that the intensive interaction between art workers and the community is an ongoing relationship and represents a mutually agreed upon phenomenon.

Keywords: Wayang Gluthek, Art Resistance, Creation

Abstrak

pekerja seni dan kebutuhan masyarakat akan seni yang murah dan efisien tanpa meninggalkan poin-poin penting dalam tradisi pertunjukan wayang purwa. Dari pementasan Wayang Gluthek, kita dapat memahami bahwa interaksi intensif antara pekerja seni dan masyarakat merupakan hubungan yang berkelanjutan dan merupakan fenomena yang disepakati bersama.

**Kata Kunci:** Wayang Gluthek, Kreasi, Perlawanan Seni
Introduction

Traditional arts are the wealth of the supporting community and a nation. Each region must have traditional art in all its uniqueness. Art is one of the cultural elements put forward by Klukshon (1952). The seven cultural elements, which means that these elements can be found in all cultures of the nations of the world. One of the elements of this universal culture is art. In the arts, it is further divided, namely sculpture/sculpture, relief, painting and drawing, make-up, vocals, drama, dance, and so on.

Every traditional art from all the nations of the world including dance, music, vocals, sculpture, make-up, and others must have its uniqueness. This art also has different functions and purposes in each region. An example is the traditional art of wayang kulit or shadow puppet art. Traditional shadow puppet arts have different functions and purposes, although in essence they are both an expression of gratitude to God as the creator of the universe and the gods. Such as the Purwa leather puppet which is performed as a means of education and an expression of public gratitude for certain successes, for example, good and abundant harvests.

In shadow puppet shows, especially as a means of ritual, the puppeteer usually acts as a shaman, namely a person who has the ability, skill, strength, and attractiveness that are very strong and enchanting so that spirits must be forced to fall on their knees before him. The puppeteer as a shaman is imaged as a carrier of blessings, prestige, and can treat sick people. Advances in science and technology and entering the era of globalization have had many impacts, both positive and negative impacts in all fields, including one of which is the traditional Wayang Kulit Purwa art. Wayang Kulit Purwa, which was successful until the 1970s, also experienced ups and downs in its development. In the era of globalization, local/traditional cultures and arts are outdated or unable to compete with arts that enter from outside through the media of TV, video, film, etc., which often causes the supporting community to lose their identity. The traditional art of wayang kulit is often used as a tool/medium to represent the identity of a society. Traditional arts are very important as a means of representing cultural identity and local communities.

The cultural identity of a nation can be represented by the traditional arts they have. Culture shows the nation, the sentence is very appropriate when we talk about identity. The existence of traditional arts can be maintained through various efforts. Apart from running the inheritance system from generation to generation, it is also possible to carry out innovations and creations with traditional arts that come from outside. Most of the traditional arts require innovation and creativity to maintain their existence.
In facing the era of globalization, art actors make efforts to survive, as well as the Wayang Purwa art in Malang. One of the ways this is done is to carry out artistic innovation and creativity. The theory that strengthens it is the theory of innovation and artistic creativity, one of which is from Rogers (1987) who argues that innovation is an idea, practice, or object that is perceived or considered as something new by individuals or other units that adopt it.

According to Munandar (1998) also, creativity is the ability to make new combinations, based on data, information, or elements that already exist. Csikszentmihalyi also states creativity as an action, idea, or product that replaces something old into something new (2008). Guilford (1998) states that creativity is the ability to think divergent or thought to explore various alternative answers to a problem. There is also Rogers (2002) who states that creativity is a human tendency to actualize himself according to his abilities.

The innovations and creativity carried out by the puppet leather purwa art workers in Malang cover many things, one of which is to simplify the puppet show without losing the essence of the art. Even with this innovation, wayang performances can be accessed by many people because they only need a small fee for the puppeteer.

Based on the above explanations, the researcher is interested in researching the phenomenon of simplification of Wayang kulit performances with the article title "Wayang Gluthek: Creativity and Innovation of Art Workers in Maintaining Traditional Art"

**Method**

The theoretical study of creativity and artistic innovation is closely related to efforts to maintain traditional arts. To be able to continue to survive every traditional art has its way. Such as what was done by the art worker of wayang kulit purwa in Malang. Just like other traditional arts, they try various ways by making innovations and creations in traditional art performances. According to Munandar (1998), creativity is the ability to create new combinations, based on pre-existing data, information, or elements. This opinion is also strengthened by the opinion of Rogers (1987) who argues that innovation is an idea, practice, or object that is perceived or considered as something new by individuals or other units that adopt it. This theory reinforces that the effort to make innovation and creativity is one way to maintain traditional arts which are starting to be less attractive and unable to compete with other modern arts.

This research was conducted in Malang Raya with a research focus on the Wayang Gluthek performance in Malang. Information about Wayang Gluthek was
obtained from 40 respondents who were compatible with different ages and professions. Some are puppeteers, gamelan musicians, cultural observers, puppet show fans, and puppet observers in Malang.

Existing data were analysed using a qualitative descriptive method as follows. Information in Javanese was transcribed into Indonesian using the free translation model while still paying attention to the lexical and connotative meanings according to the data needed in the research problem. The categorized data were then analysed.

Results and Discussion

Traditional Leather Puppets

Traditional leather puppets are conventional theatre classification performances that use puppets as a medium for storytelling. Traditional wayang kulit always moves in tune with its elements (by classic wayang actors, this is called "PAKEM"). Traditional wayang kulit art is bound to a particular space and sometimes collides into other areas considered irrelevant by the artist's personality.

The concept of a traditional shadow puppet show is a show that is bound by rigid and rigid rules. For example, an artist from Bali who will give birth to Balinese wayang must be fixated with the regulations that apply in the art of Balinese wayang performance. He cannot freely express his desires because the basis for his foundation must be clear, where he is going, and some people will be happy to criticize or attack him if the work that is produced turns out to be far from the elements that must be present in a Balinese wayang performance.

That is certainly different from the world of popular art; there is no content of determination with universal artists, like ballet; it is also free to let go of the principles of ballet dance discipline if that form has meaning to it. That means that in terms of structure, popular art is very rich in choices, and it is not bound by just one form of footing or standard patrons; it can acculturate it. Popular art sometimes tends to give birth to cross-cultural or intercultural forms.

Besides that, popular art is always up to date. That means that the problems or ideas expressed in popular art are always new or contemporary, both stories, forms, and work patterns from a skill. The issues that famous artists always bring up are not only actual but also contextual. The problems that favourite artists always raise are humanistic or always revolve around contemporary life. Matters in the spotlight are motivated by humanitarian issues. A successful artist in the world of popular art can keep up with his time and is wise with the problems or phenomena around him. Popularity cannot be separated from the wishes of the audience, or popular art must be
tied to the taste of the community because if the public does not see the skill, it means that art is no longer popular.

That is certainly different from traditional wayang; traditional wayang art is often tied to an ideology of pseudo innovation that does not free individuals in creativity. He is always confined by traditional patrons, which results in his artists rarely doing actual contemplation according to the conditions of the surrounding tradition. Talking about traditional puppets, we also have to talk about geographic issues and certain ethnicities; we also have to talk about specific cultural problems or countries. Traditional puppets are rarely able to follow the conceptual basis according to the era and the community’s tastes where the show is enjoyed or talk about environmental issues, which are also momentary, continuing to roll in the form of innovation again.

**Wayang Innovation and Creations: Wayang Gluthek**

Before we discuss the form of innovation and the creation of Wayang Gluthek, we need first to explain the history of Wayang Gluthek. Research on the history of Wayang Gluthek in Malang is inseparable from the research theory of art history in general. The study of art history is still relatively young, namely after Heinrich Wolf, a German scholar. He, in the early 20th century, began to discuss research methods of art history.

In the beginning, the starting point and scope of art history were limited to fine arts studies. In effect, scholars such as Winter Prins, James S. Ackerman, and Panofsky in the early 20th century tended to prioritize research on art history (Sedyawati, 1981, 138). The subsequent development is Arnold Hauser discussing research methods of art history in general. His book entitled The Philosophy of Art History (Sedyawati, 1981).

The history of Wayang Gluthek, based on any approach, can be ascertained by the existence of data contained in a series of time sequences from the past to the present. Wayang Gluthek, as a theatre, has the same characteristics as music and dance, which is lost in time and space. The main difficulty in obtaining accurate data regarding past Wayang Gluthek is due to the nature of folk theatre, which is bound by time and space, and the very limited data sources in the form of pictures, photographs or written descriptions (past Wayang Gluthek documents) which can explain the objective situation. the art of the past.

Based on the accounts of the community around the area where the researcher was researching. The term Wayang Gluthek appeared in the early 1990s. According to the narrative of the village elders, the residents were unable to respond to wayang ideally for the needs of traditional ceremonies, especially at the ruwatan traditional ceremony in a series of traditional wedding ceremonies. Knowing this, several elderly
puppeteers around the area initiated the emergence of Wayang Gluthek, a more minimalist wayang, as a response to the needs of society at that time.

Tracing the history of Wayang Gluthek in Malang is complicated. The main obstacle is the limited written data and documentation in pictures, which cannot be reconstructed because folk theatre is always lost in the dimensions of space and time. In connection with this fact, researchers can only convey a few things related to the history of Wayang Gluthek, namely:

1. Wayang Gluthek has been known since the 1990s.
2. Wayang Gluthek was born from the inability of society economically to respond to Wayang in an ideal way.
3. The community still needs to do ruwatan with wayang media because based on the community’s belief around the way Wayang was born, sukerta people (people who have not been diruwat) will encounter bad luck in their lives when they are married.
4. Wayang Gluthek was initiated and suppressed by the puppeteers in the area to help society.

Furthermore, the discussion regarding Wayang Gluthek will be focused on the form of Wayang Gluthek performance as a form of innovation carried out by wayang artists in the Malang area. Wayang Gluthek is a type of puppet show that can be interpreted as a form of performance close to the ngamen performance model, which is a performance accompanied by oral music or oral music. The puppeteer performs a monologue action to tell a story that is essentially a message related to building house relationships. Good stairs.

The popularity of the performing arts of ngamen has presented a new habit. People holding wedding celebrations have begun to choose their hearts to use the services of these puppet artists. Thus, there was a change in the way of holding performances, namely from a simple ngamen show changing to a shamanic style performance pattern, which is a spiritual practice where in addition to telling the tales of the dalang, the show also recites certain mantras, besides that there are also a variety of complementary rituals commonly called by the Javanese as offerors.

Based on the researcher’s tracking, the offerings in the Wayang Gluthek performance did not have a standard composition, considering that the initiative to procure the offerings was born from the perceptions of each puppeteer in the Wayang Gluthek performing arts. The puppeteers believe that what they are asking to the respondent is a request from Dang Hyang (danyang village), a power outside the dalang whose figures are born from local beliefs. Usually, the offerings in Wayang Gluthek
performances can be in the form of fun from Dang Hyang, for example, in the village of A Dang Hyang who likes Raja Banana food, when someone will use the services of a puppeteer to perform Wayang Gluthek, the puppeteer will ask for an offering in the form of Pisang Raja.

In general, the offerings in Wayang Gluthek can be described simply as follows:

1. Tell Ayu and Kinangan (yellow betel, and complete betel nut)
2. Pisang Ayu (one tundun yellow banana, or plantain)
3. White cloth (in Javanese it is called Lawe)
4. Coin (in Javanese Seren)
5. Complete Nasi Tumpeng
6. White water setakir, and badhek (water tapai black glutinous rice)
7. Kelapa Gading (yellow coconut) and sugar cane decoration
8. Yellow janur decoration (symbol of intention to obtain light from the Divine).

The structure of the Wayang Gluthek performance begins with the opening; usually, at this prefix scene, the puppeteer reads one of the Malang Macapat styles or can also be the lyric verse of the Gandakusuma gending (a common gending in Wayang Jawatimuran performances). Furthermore, the scene continues with the Janturan scene, a prologue that describes the story presented and the characters involved in it. Moreover, the scene is continued with a pattern of opening, conflict, and closing scenes without being decorated with too many artistic patterns of wayang (Sabet Javanese) movements. After that, the dalang closes the story with advice related to the story being told; usually, advice is also added to married life. As a closing, the puppeteer then closes the Wayang Gluthek performance with a recitation of a mantra/prayer together, followed by the Kembul Bujana (eating together) event.

The relevance of Wayang Gluthek with Malang Culture

Wayang Gluthek in the Malang area, starting from the late 1990s to this millennium, is not at all far removed from the cultural roots of Malang. Many Wayang Gluthek performances were performed. Malang people who enjoy it still see the cultural face of Malang in the show.

The presence of Wayang Gluthek in Malang is still relevant to Malang culture. However, several stories are featured in the Wayang Gluthek performance that are less relevant to Malang culture. However, there are still many stories raised in the show that depart from traditional stories developed in the Malang region. Regarding the
development of the story in the Wayang Gluthek performance, according to the source, this was due to a request from the respondent to perform a certain play.

The presence of Wayang Gluthek in the wayang scene in Malang can be a means of preserving traditional puppet shows in a new form. That means that Wayang Gluthek has opened a contemporary discourse on the preservation of Traditional Wayang in Malang. Protection is in the sense of development, so that puppet shows are increasingly developing from the order and packaging in the presentation. Even so, the old traditional puppets should still be exposed in the corridor of events that smell like custom.

So far, Wayang Gluthek has become a new culture for people in the Malang region, either in the city or in areas at the regency level. Maybe someday the form of Wayang Gluthek will be in turn because it has been a tradition in the life of Malang people, such as the Wayang Jek Dong and Wayang Topeng Malang performances will be considered as Malang puppets or traditional Malang puppets for the people of Malang itself, especially for people outside of Malang.

**Wayang Gluthek as a continuation of Malang Culture**

The presence of the Wayang Gluthek performance with the source of the traditional Malang wayang has made the existence of the show a continuation of the existence of conventional Malang puppets. As explained in the previous Alinea, new wayang forms can be another form of Malang traditional puppet preservation because the concept of conservation is developing, apart from maintaining.

The more types of new Wayang performances born and rooted in the vocabulary of traditional Malang puppets, the more conventional Malang puppet arts will continue in today’s performing arts scene. Besides being a creative arena for individual artists, the new wayang is also a place to develop traditional Malang arts. Traditional wayang performances in Malang have a new form that is fresher and has a selling value for the Malang area. Besides that, Wayang Gluthek is also promoting Malang culture, which is a tradition of safe children. Because Wayang Gluthek, however, still has its roots in the traditional wayang art in Malang. However, the difference with conventional puppet shows is the number of instruments used, the costumes used, the free musical rhythm patterns, and the various storytelling styles. In addition, in the Wayang Gluthek performance, it is possible to have acculturation and the process of adopting other regional arts into the show, even though the majority is the root of the traditional Malang wayang culture because the limits of the aesthetic and artistic experience of the artists are limited to Malang culture.

**Conclusion**
Apart from being a nation’s heritage, traditional arts are also tools/media to represent the identity of a society. In this case, wayang kulit purwa, traditional arts must be preserved or preserved even though many modern arts have entered and have made the current generation lose interest in traditional arts. Maintaining traditional arts must be pursued in various ways, for example, by innovating and being creative and collaborating with other arts to produce a new art without losing the essence of each of these arts. Wayang Gluthek is a new form of innovation from wayang performances in Malang. This Wayang Gluthek is the result of the intensive interaction between the puppeteer and the community. Wayang Gluthek can coexist peacefully and continues to be used in the community in Malang through the interactions that the puppeteer and the community have built.
References


