

The Existence of Wayang Orang Ngesti Pandhawa in Economic Change

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Abstract—This research discusses the process of marginalization of traditional art that threatens its existence, represented by puppet group Ngesti Pandhawa (WO) in Semarang, Central Java. The study and discussion of the problem are carried out using an economic perspective, in its interrelated context. The methodological approach that is used in this study is a qualitative approach, with a single case study design. The study focuses on the WO group Ngesti Pandhawa and related parties, in the flow of development and its presence in the face of the changes taking place around it. The result of the study from an economic perspective shows that in the face of globalization era in the 21st century, WO Ngesti Pandhawa is in a position of "dead shrink, life is not willing". Although in recent years there has been a development effort to maintain its existence in the form of management restructuring, promotion in internet media and signing of cooperation with several institutions, but WO Ngesti Pandhawa group still applies traditional family management.

Keywords—Ngesti Pandhawa, wayang orang, management

I. INTRODUCTION

This study aims to explain how economic changes have a significant impact on the existence of traditional arts especially the art of *wayang orang*. The abandonment of traditional art from community life felt in many kinds of traditional art, such as *wayang kulit*, *ketoprak*, and *wayang orang* in Central Java, or *ludruk* and *reog* in East Java. This is because people choose modern arts when people organize wedding celebrations, circumcisions, thanksgiving, warnings, and so on rather than perceive traditional art performances. *Ketoprak* *tobong* and *Wayang Orang* stage have been very difficult to find. Dirjo Wiyono, from Agung Budiaji Yogyakarta group, justified the current *ketoprak* art getting more and more retreat. He had experienced the period of joy during 1984-1995 when the hype was still there it could take up to 4-5 times performances in each month [1].

Soedarsono explains that there is a positive correlation between economic growths of a region to the development of art. If economic quality increase, where the gross domestic product also increases and therefore the people can set aside some income for entertainment which one of them are performing arts and the development of the arts can increase[2]. History also shows how political conditions affect art. We remember the outbreak of World War II that caused *Wayang Orang* was no longer able to go on stage in the palace of Jogja. But ethical politics has grown the spirit of movement in society so that the association "*Kridha*

Beksa Wirama" continued to perform arts activities even spearhead puppet show outside the palace walls and begin daring to show female dancers for the role of princess (usually this *wayang orang* the dance is performed by male dancers only) and because the original *wayang* tradition can take up to two to four days, it is changed into two to four hours.

Brandon in Soedarsono shows that Indonesia has produced one-third of Asian art performances, a boom of commercial show art in the 1950s and 1960s. However, inflation reaching 900% in mid-1965 became the decline in the existence of *wayang orang*, especially with the presence of cheaper and accessible forms of entertainment, for instance, cinema, television, and video compact disk. [3].

In the late 1960s, a group of wayang people who survived only remained three groups which are WO *Sriwedhary* in Surakarta, WO *Ngesti Pandhawa* in Semarang and WO *Bharata* in Jakarta. Especially for in Semarang, there have been several groups of *wayang orang* such as *Sri Wanita*, *Sri Wijaya*, *Revelation of Culture*, *Dharma Muda* and *Ngesti Pandhawa*.

As the representation of traditional art, *Wayang Orang Ngesti Pandhawa* can explain how their existence is maintained. WO *Ngesti Pandhawa* was born on July 1, 1937, with *Tobongan* system (traveling from one city to another) as a form of stage for *wayang orang*, he has experienced three orders which are the old order, the new order, and the reform order. From the economic side, he has also experienced inflation, the monetary crisis and now the democratic economy towards liberal with globalization.

In addition, there is a uniqueness of the economic, political, social and cultural life of each group of *wayang orang*. WO *Sriwedhary* has long been the responsibility of the local government of Surakarta, meaning that all production financial and welfare of members guaranteed by the government, even the players become civil servants (PNS). Meanwhile, WO *Bharata*, also get a regular allocation from the

Provincial Government of DKI Jakarta which occupies *Gedung Kesenian* Jakarta which has good stage quality. The chosen performance management is professional, and indeed its economic, social and cultural life for Jakarta and Surakarta is more conducive to artistic growth, compared to Semarang. This means that compared to both groups,

WO *Ngesti Pandhawa* has many interesting factors of existence to be studied.

This rationale that is used to see the existence of *Wayang Orang Ngesti Pandhawa* to face the changes in the economic situation in Indonesia which is raising the research question: How the existence of *Wayang Orang Ngesti Pandhawa* in facing the change of economic situation in Indonesia?

This research wants to see how the influence of the economic situation towards the existence of People puppet, especially WO *Ngesti Pandhawa* in Semarang City. Several research and studies related to the subject matter as follows:

No.	Previous Topic Research	Research Substance	Contribution
1.	Jamil, M. M., Anwar, K. and Kholiq, A. (2011) "Factors Affecting the Disintegration of Semarang Traditional Arts" (Study Exploration of Traditional Arts of Semarang) ". Journal of Riptek, 5 (II): 41-51[4].	The Factors that affect the traditional arts meltdown of Semarang is from the factors of art workers, low interest and government policy. More specifically for the puppets there are limited studios and venues and the lack of regenerations.	Giving a reference concept about the eternants of the existence of traditional arts of Semarang, especially People puppet in 2011.
2.	Bambang Pudjasworo. (2011) "Kebyar Dance in Political, Social, Economic, and Cultural Development in Bali XX Century". Dissertation. Gadjah Mada University. [5]	The development of the Kebyar culture and dance genre in the twentieth century, in the view of Bambang Pudjasworo is influenced by various politic, social, economic and cultural issues. The intended influence came from a colonial cultural the policy called Baliseering which is the struggle of a social class in Bali, an educational movement, a women's social movement, a cultural diplomacy of the Sukarno model, political propaganda by LEKRA and LKN, the development of the culture and the tourism industry in Bali.	Giving eference to political, social, conomic, and cultural studies in its influence on the performing arts.

3.	Haryono Rinardi, H. (2002). "Ngesti Pandhawa People's Puppet Society (1937-2001): Studies on Performing Arts Management. Research DIK Routine. Faculty of Literature. Diponegoro University. [6].	Since Sastrosabdo and Nartosabdo have passed away, WO Ngesti Pandhawa has been abandoned by its audiences and the owned assets have started to go on sale. This is the cause of the lack of knowledge regarding art performance management system by the managers of Ngesti Pandhawa, including the production process, the effort to capture the audience's taste, the use of technology and promotion.	Provides referrals about Art Performance Management of People's Puppet Association Ngesti Pandhawa (1937-2001)
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The public of art behavior of post-1970s that return to popular artistic tastes is certainly a matter of concern. The mass culture that is the product of the art industry in the era of capitalism today brings more of the negative side than the positive side. Mass culture is a cultural product that focuses more on economic value than culture. Uniformity in formatting is a particularly distinctive feature. The art products which are produced consist of low quality product and less sensitive to the issues of beauty, intellectuality, and morals; even it is very possible to have no intellectual rigidity, aesthetic validity, and high moral-cultural authority.

The development of communications technology and information systems controlled by Western countries poses a threat to the original culture of developing countries. We recognize globalization and industrialization presents modern art in the form of popular culture like cultural factories, it is so massive that traditional arts who are not ready to compete become overwhelmed.

Trade in cultural industry products, on the other hand, contributes to economic growth, but on the other side of the hand, it can be a cultural innocent that can undermine the cultural identity. Through the media, which in its main function is as a channel of cultural process, in its practical-political-commercial function can also become the channel of cultural colonization). The change in the life-style of society in Indonesia, compared with half a century ago due to the development of means of life and economic growth, has an inevitable impact especially on the social life of the young generation. On the one hand, of course, technology provides new knowledge but also eliminates existing social interactions and relationships. Sedyawati gives notes about the negative impact of new technology on the younger generation. "The loss of face-to-face life activity in the family and the surrounding environment, and switching to more individualized and professional patterns of activity makes the channel of cultural forwarding from the older generation to the young generation is cut off. As a replacement thanks to media mediation, the young

generation becomes more oriented to outside cultures than the culture of its own people" [9].

From the above explanation, given the fact that globalization is a necessity and the impact is inevitable, then as a representation of local art, People puppet should consider the way the industry thinks. Sedyawati explains that in order to determine the strategy to survive and face the popular culture, it is very much needs to increase production in order to improve the quality of cultural products. Quality improvement should be supported by, first, professionals who are also associated with training, regeneration, and evaluation by the critic's board. Second, the packaging or the form of good performances, related to the Puppet Market of People as a cultural product, must still develop its competitive competence to face popular culture without losing its comparative advantage in the peculiarities of substantive cultural contents presented therein.

Hersapandi added that this condition was getting worsened when the management of puppet show was taken over by the tourism office, as happened at WO *Sriweddhari* in 1980 until the early 21st century. This is because the tourism show requires some things that resulted into the degradation of the art quality, simplify the packaging by shortening, ruling out magical value, sacred and symbolic, full of variety and low cost production costs [10]. In an economic perspective, Soedarsono gave his notes on the existence of people puppet, he said, if the performed art does not consider the tastes of the audience, and still insist on prioritizing the storytelling and dialogue that only the Java community understands, it will be difficult to compete with other modern entertainment.

Meanwhile, management according to Taslan can be understood as the process of organizing, managing and controlling something. The management of performing arts is a necessity in responding to economic, social and cultural changes. Sal Murgiyanto explains that there are three weaknesses of traditional art management: The fragile organization system, inadequate social security and wages, and the absence of professional organizations that protect artists. Here are the elements of the art management of *wayang* performances:

A. Organizational Structure

Performance management in an art organization is closely related to its organizational structure. Organizational structure is a system or a way to organize the implementation of a particular activity. The organization itself can be seen as a network or pattern of work or social form [11]. The most important things associated with organizational operations are the ways of tasks would be set, the requirements that are demanded by organizations, and relationships among members within the organization. The organization system of People puppet Ngesti Pandhawa associations until 2015 is the familial system), which means there is no measured organizational structure with the articles of association and the household budget.

B. Production Process

The production process in the people puppet show art includes three things, namely financing, presentation and marketing.

C. Financing

The wheel to run the performance is financing. During this time WO Ngesti Pandhawa as a group of art based solely on the perennial fund interest and ticket sales staging. Financing in puppet show activities includes building maintenance, electricity, water supply, equipment procurement, and player fee.

D. Marketing

Marketing plays an important role in introducing a product offered to the public. Good marketing will increase the selling power of the product. The marketing used by *Ngesti Pandhawa* is used to be the traditional system, but now there are efforts to use social media but not yet maximally works out. The signboards about the upcoming performances and the story are posted on the front page of Raden Saleh Culture Complex (TBRS) where *Ngesti Pandhawa* performs once a week on Saturdays.

E. Play

The play that will be performed is divided into two things which are *Pakem* and *Carangan* play. The *Pakem* play is the play based on *Mahabharata*, *Ramayana* and *Panji* stories. Meanwhile, the *Carangan* play is the new play that improvised, for instance, *Pergiwa-Pergiwati*, *Gatutkaca Lahir*, *Petrak Dadi Ratu* and et cetera.

F. The Dance Characters

There are 21 types of characters in People puppet which can be divided based on the details of the move's quality. Among the 21 characters, 9 of them are considered as the main character and the other 12 are considered as additional characters.

G. Fashion and Cosmetics

The fashion in People puppet follows a physical form of *Wayang Kulit* iconography except for the face color which is already simplified. The transformation of the fashion happens really slow and just reached its default form in the regime of Sultan Hamengku Buwono VIII [2].

H. Accompaniment

The accompaniment of People puppet especially *Ngesti Pandhawa* refers to the arable *Karawitan* with Surakarta style

I. Prosperity

The last management factor People puppet art performances are the matter of prosperity, well management that can make sure all the members get decent life where at the very least they can afford basic needs, education and health

II. METHODOLOGY

Ngesti Pandhawa Semarang as the subject of observation seen in the context of economic development. Data which is used in this research are primary data and secondary data. Primary data is the result of interviews with various resource persons who have competence. Secondary data utilize the results of previous research either already booked or still in the form of a research report. Data collection in the field is done through interviews, observations, and documentation of the show.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The globalization that is characterized by industrialization that changes all aspects of community life, especially it is believed it plays a strong role to change the culture of society, including art. The rapid transformation of society because of the impact of new media convergence in the era of globalization directly affects the development and expansion of cultural identity.

Ripana Puntarasa, the cultural observer, asserted that the sociology perspective, there is a process of the murder of traditional art slowly. There are two factors that become the cause, which is, first, the process of industrialization and telecommunications is growing. The murder of the character of the spectacle of art starts from the cassette, then the television, so that people no longer need to look for entertainment out of the house. The idea of the cultural industry is proposed by Adorno and Horkheimer explain how culture now affects the interests of the political economy and the cultural production process that are undertaken by corporations. Adorno and Horkheimer see cultural products as commodities produced by cultural industries that appear to be democratic, individualistic, heterogeneous, but in fact authoritarian, homogeneous, and standardized.

Some traditional cultural products do not have strong competitiveness, they are eroded and increasingly difficult to find again because activator does not earn enough income to support creativity. *Wayang orang* is a testament to the harsh competition in the era of globalization, until the end of the 60s recorded 30 groups of puppets that exist on the island of Java, entering the 2000s, only WO *Bharata* left in Jakarta, WO *Sriwedhara* in Surakarta and WO *Ngesti Pandhawa* in Semarang. In Semarang itself, there was still WO *Sri Wanita* who tried to survive but eventually broke up in the 90s. The less traditional art performances because no more artist groups are working on it, it does not allow cultural inheritance, it becomes natural that in the end, this will lead to loss generation.

Ripana explains that traditional art, with the presence of globalization forced to struggle to survive in free market space, "please play, economy, sponsorship and so forth". In the case of Ngesti Pandhawa, according to Ripana, it becomes complicated when it finally turns from free-air art to a state-owned, government-owned art, as he explains, "Well, here as *Ngesti* is split, paid and eventually accepted, want it so ". Traditional art such as Ngesti Pandhawa in the free market (entertainment industry) is forced to be ready to compete with not only other traditional arts but also modern art (read: popular art). A contemporary art-like art, with the pop-pack of the entertainment industry, this is what Ngesti Pandhawa will find difficult to adapt as both arts and as a group that manages the show. The cultural industrialization that can be seen is the birth of *Ketoprak Humor*, *Ketoprak Canda*, *Ketoprak Jampi Stress*, and *Opera Van Java*. The four are examples of cultural products, the work of the entertainment industry, Javanese arts that have undergone value transformation in order to be selling value with much reduction of meaning from the original art. We also know the term *wayang mbeling* as a form of "adaptation" to the needs of market tastes, on the Net Tv there was a program

"*Wayang Kampung Sebelah*" which still using the puppet standard but combined with the contemporary elements.

Why do these adaptive forms make traditional art last longer? The answer is, nowadays industrialization of culture is considered more promising in terms of making a profit so it has more chance to be "saved". *Ketoprak Humor* in the fame on television is able to turn on a number of artists who are there, not only able to pay the player's fee, some players, such as Ki Slamet can manage the rental of puppet clothes as ketoprak clothes. Born the rotation of capital, emerging new players, new market land. *Kabiro Net Tv*, Noviaar sees that working with industry, especially the media, is more profitable, not just a matter of survival but also developing the art itself.

The packaging that accentuates the high-value sides becomes the main prerequisite to survive and becomes a necessity when it wants to be scaled down. As an industry, commercial television only sees potentials that can be exploited to generate maximum profit. Traditional art in the face of cultural industrialization as if to get out of the grip to survive, in the world of entertainment, the audience is the king who should be prioritized. Audience tastes become the criteria of art production, improvisation; innovation and interaction are things that are usually favored by the audience.

At this time WO *Ngesti Pandhawa* indeed collaborate with TVRI Central Java in several times puppet performances of people who cooperate with the local government, but this also leaves a number of issues, namely about who the audience wayang on TVRI, how much percentage of audience, this is because TVRI also does not have a system of audience evaluation, then how about the regeneration of tastes related to TVRI segmentation. If you want to grow more, one step higher than just survive, Ngesti Pandhawa should start entering the media sphere favored by the new generation. Given the elements of the puppet show management - organizational structure, production (financing, presentation, marketing), plays, dance, makeup, and fashion and welfare - is strengthened by observations of WO *Ngesti Pandhawa*, as an arts group, WO *Ngesti Pandhawa* is still categorized traditional family performance management. This is especially evidenced by the organizational structure and production patterns as well as the management of the welfare of its members. In terms of organizational structure, the level of performance management is familial, and there are dual positions. If such a management model is continued, then WO *Ngesti Pandhawa's* downfall is just a matter of time. This is because the production management focus is still on the presentation with the position of the head section, puppeteer and director and decoration, there is no specifically responsible for financing the production and marketing of production, which has been directly held at the level of leadership *Ngesti Pandhawa*. As a group of art *Ngesti Pandhawa* should not only think internally but also externally, which in this case has not been optimally done.

Financing and Marketing are not taboo in show management, nor does it reduce the value of art. The aspect of financing and marketing, on the one hand, is the breath of the show, should also be a management priority. External cooperation strategies, both to increase revenue,

save on expenses, increase selling points and attract investors are some of the work goals of the financing team. Meanwhile, marketing is also the basis of production, because art without appreciation will also die, appreciation comes also known art existence and recognized its quality. This means that the arts need the means to get recognition from the community, this is where the marketing team works, i.e disseminating information, managing information, expanding markets, improving and maintaining a positive image, also strengthen the brand *WO Ngesti Pandhawa*. The strategy is certainly the easiest is to cooperate with conventional mass media and new media (internet including social media). Why? because now is the era of information and technological developments move the daily activities of society through new media, all consumer decisions tend to be placed on information available on the internet, including looking for entertainment, one of them watching the art of *wayang orang*. In the information era, thinking strategically to maintain and develop existence, traditional arts must begin to seriously prepare about the financing and marketing of its cultural products. Financing *WO Ngesti Pandhawa* has been dependent on the ticket sales income once a week with a maximum of 300 seats, although on average only up to 50 viewers per week, and Dana Abadi (from the disbursement of deposits), which according to his leadership is still need to cover three million rupiah per stage.

Financing of endowment interest and ticket sales is not able to cover the lack of funds for staging. "Every month, we receive Rp5 million from endowment funds (Rp 500 million) and Central Java Governor's assistance amounting to Rp5 million per month. But that amount is not enough to cover operating costs of about Rp12 million to Rp13 million ". However, it can maintain its existence until 2017, certainly, *Wayang Orang Ngesti Pandhawa group* has also made many efforts to keep production. Various survival strategies have been implemented in collaboration with various institutions, ranging from business institutions, education, culture, and government. For example, in terms of cooperation with business institutions, *WO Ngesti Pandhawa* is in cooperation with PT Federal International Finance (FIF). In addition, cooperation is also done in the form of a common stage, *WO Ngesti Pandhawa* also cooperates with a stylist in Semarang City to hold the stage. This joint performance is also conducted several times in cooperation with educational institutions or local government. One of the performances in collaboration with Central Java regional government, featuring Central Java Governor, Ganjar Pranowo, who acted as Sang Hyang Wenang in the "Semar Mbangun Khayangan" Seminar on February 27, 2016. Further cooperation in addition to the joint stage is the financing of the wholesale system of *WO Ngesti Pandhawa* contracted exclusively for a particular institution. Like the Semarang City Government program, during the Mayor of Sukawati enough to give a considerable share of cash for the organization *Ngesti Pandhawa*. The program of "Fond School Children Watching Wayang" for elementary school students (SD) become a fresh breeze for *Ngesti Pandhawa*. Wholesale system for watching puppet show for elementary students ia Rp.6.000.000, - once performances. Elementary students are required to watch

puppets in turns every night of the week. But the program is only temporary and not forwarded to the next leadership.

Another issue in show production management is Mulyo Hadi, Head of Semarang Arts Council (DKS) for the period of 2011-2015, stating the lack of information about *WO Ngesti Pandhawa* in mass media including internet, even in Semarang society, both indigenous and also immigrants, "All this time some people in Semarang thought *Ngesti* was already dispersed. Some people ask us where the stage is, indeed we have to acknowledge the promotion is lacking. "This is because in the era of information society is moving through what is in the mass media, even the generation of Z as a digital native that is a generation born in digital technology, searching almost all the information they need from the internet. If so far as recognized *Ngesti* leader Djoko Muljono, *Ngesti Pandhawa* no longer advertise in print and electronic media, and only spread leaflets also rely on words of mouth (WOM), it is likely *WO Ngesti Pandhawa* will lose with modern art. In fact, in the final quarter of 2017, *WO group Ngesti Pandhawa* has also started to learn to drive marketing activities especially to the young generation, which is a new generation of *Wayang Orang* viewers, using promotions in outdoor media and social media in collaboration with Soegijapranata Catholic University. Referring to the exposure of Unika Soegijapranata community service activities, there are nine online media, such as facebook, instagram, twitter, youtube, wikipedia, googlemap, tripadvisor, website www.ngestipandawa.com and *Ngesti Pandawa* android apps which can be downloaded through GooglePlay, *Wayang Orang* activities of *Ngesti Pandhawa*. Through social media, it is hoped that information about *Ngesti Pandhawa* puppet activity can be more accessible to the public. For example about the schedule of staging and the play is displayed, location and ticket reservations can now be accessed online. This program is part of Unika Soegijapranata lecturer research funded by Kemenristekdikti in searching for the right model of artistic and cultural creative industry for the present. The adaptation of traditional arts management to technological developments and growing market tastes shows the existence of awareness to maintain and develop its existence, in this case, the existence of *Wayang Orang Ngesti Pandhawa*. If promotion in social media is well managed, then *WO Ngesti Pandhawa* will get more space to reach the society so that will bring more audiences and simultaneously rebuild artistic existence among young people.

What the researcher notes about the production marketing in *WO group Ngesti Pandhawa* on an organizational structure is the need for a new division that deals specifically with marketing activities. Given the complexity of integrated marketing activities, for the sake of building the image and product brand, *WO Ngesti Pandhawa* needs to prioritize professional divisions professionally in show management. It aims to enable its members to focus on artistic activities only. Lastly, in the economic assessment, there needs to be a welfare orientation for *WO Ngesti Pandhawa* members. The most basic thing is the division of honorarium, according to the informant named Dewi Wulandari (26 years), the honor of the puppet player *Ngesti Pandhawa* as follows: "I am a new

person, outsiders have not become core members. For me once performances can be given honorarium of Rp.50 thousand. If it is said to be impossible for life, it's only for gasoline" WO *Ngesti Pandhawa* up till now still accommodates the elderly players, from 49 fixed players, only 8 people in their 20s, and all honorariums are evenly distributed . There are two issues in management: there is no player regeneration which implies a threat to the quality of the show, and the lack of appreciation for artistic activity, resulting in no one else interested in participating in the traditional arts industry because it does not promise a welfare guarantee. This is a decline in the performance of *Ngesti Pandhawa* because, in 1960-1970, *Ngesti Pandhawa* was able to finance, support and educate the children of *Ngesti Pandhawa* members to the equivalent high school level. All *Ngesti Pandhawa* members are given housing or dormitories for residences. In the end, the players have to work beyond *Ngesti Pandhawa* to earn extra income, the effect is the lack of art.

Based on the above explanation, can be seen from the side of the organizational structure, production patterns and welfare, WO *Ngesti Pandhawa* is in the position of "life shy of death do not want". There needs to be a mental revolution from *Ngesti Pandhawa* internally to transform the traditional family management perspective into a professional by adopting an integrated marketing strategy and openness to technological developments.

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, from an economic perspective facing globalization in the 21st century, WO *Ngesti Pandhawa* is in a position of "dead reluctantly, life does not want". They only appear once a week with a duration of approximately three hours. Financing every stage that always backs up the financial and rely on external "aid" and "endowment", and marketing that has not been integrated, reinforce the assumption. In recent years there

have been some changes as an effort to exist in the economic field of management restructuring, promotion in internet media and signing of cooperation with several institutions. But from an economic perspective to date WO *Ngesti Pandhawa* still uses traditional family management. If this continues the existence of WO *Ngesti Pandhawa* will be threatened to weaken.

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