

# The Effects of Globalization in Traditional Performing Arts in Indonesia

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## ABSTRACT

Traditional performing arts life was originally used to support traditional ceremonies in Indonesia. These ceremonies serve to maintain human relations with God / Gods and the social welfare. Therefore, traditional performing arts are fully presented. Today, traditional performing arts must face a big wave, the wave of globalization. In the body of globalization, there is a 'child' called industrialization. Traditional performing arts originally had no commercial value. But when traditional performing arts are confronted with the globalization flow, it will inevitably have commercial value. Through the industry process, traditional performing arts, which were previously fully presented, in the globalization era, are folded into the small form of VCD and DVD. People don't have to go far to watch traditional performing arts, they just stay at home watching traditional performing arts through VCD and DVD.

**Keywords:** traditional performing arts, globalization, industrialization, *wayang wong*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays there has been a cultural transformation in Indonesian society as a result of the globalization. This cultural transformation has brought the urban culture into rural areas. The flow of urban culture which is adorned with industry, and information and communication technology must inevitably be accepted by the rural communities. As a result, the lifestyle of individualistic urban communities is emulated by rural communities. This is what makes local wisdom barriers in rural communities begin to drift apart.

The presence of traditional performing arts was originally for the glory of human life in the form of providing a balance of nature. People who are members of traditional performing arts groups can build their social interactions neatly through practice and performances together. However, the traditional performing arts suddenly had to face a big wave in the current era, namely the influence of the globalization. People are worried about the fate of traditional performing arts life. The issue also has become a concern in other parts of the world. Children's traditional songs in Thailand, for instance, live a little. Though in fact they are cultural heritage that can provide encouragement to internalize the values of life and motivate children to hold social interactions. This raises the awareness of music teachers and parents to preserve, protect, and extend the age of children's songs as cultural heritage [8].

The similar case also occurs in Indonesia as we concern with whether traditional performing arts will be eroded or not due to the current of globalisation. The globalization that has been mentioned since the 1980s until now is worrying the public. This is due to the fact that globalization makes communication and information flow very swiftly from one place to another. It can be said that

there is no dividing line between one place and another. In other words, our world seems to be one.

However, that does not mean that each country can give information to each other or receive it from each other. It seems that developed countries are more dominant in providing information to developing countries than vice versa. This is because developed countries have more advanced scientific and technological devices (science and technology) than developing countries do. Toffler revealed that developing countries are the third poor countries of the underdeveloped countries that require information from developed countries that can be used as a reference for determining their development strategies [7].

As a result of globalization, many Indonesians are pragmatic, economical and materialistic. The tendency of people to behave like that is one of the effects of communication and due to the swift flow of information received as part of the effects of globalization. In addition, the influence of globalization provides hope for developing countries to catch up. However, what about the fate of traditional performing arts life in Indonesia? Is it also influenced by the increasing globalization?

Globalization seems to make the world narrower in which we can see how easily a society relates to other societies, or how easily a nation relates to other nations. This of course will bring its own influence for countries affected by globalization. The effects of globalization can be seen, for example in the social and cultural fields. Therefore, it will be seen how globalization can bring its own influence on traditional performing arts in Indonesia.

The presence of information and communication technology accelerates the process of globalization. Globalization touches all aspects of people's lives. Globalization also creates new challenges and problems that must be solved in order to use them for the benefit of human life. Information and communication technology is the biological child of globalization. Nowadays, the development of technology is so fast that all information in

various forms and with different interests can be spread widely throughout the community. Therefore, the flow of globalization cannot be avoided. The presence of globalization certainly has an influence on the life of Indonesian traditional performing arts.

## 2. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 2.1 *Facing the Flow of Globalization*

Since it was produced, traditional performing arts do not exhibit materialistic nature because the supporting community considers this to be used as a spiritualistic reflection media, consisting of symbolic meanings that radiate aesthetic, ethical, romantic, moral, and religious values. In addition, traditional performing arts also have sacred values. For example, in traditional performing arts 'kuda lumping', some dancers could be possessed and eating glass. This condition will return if mantras are recited by the spiritual masters.

Until now, many artists still live in an atmosphere of artistic life that is spiritualistic. They still look conservative in their attitude and have long been lulled by their creativity on a scale of abstractive symbols. The form of their works is based on the spirit of high idealism. The results of their works do not regard to material supply, but reflect the value of high artistic content. Traditional performing arts are usually used for worship to gods. Therefore, any people say that the traditional performing arts are referred to serious arts.

Considering that the arts have some serious values, it is not appropriate that traditional performing arts are associated with the influence of economic values because since their birth, they are used for public safety ceremonies. But at this time, the globalization poses a great influence on the cultural life in Indonesia. John Naisbitt and Patricia Aberdeen stated that the globalization of the economy, international politics and world information networks would also be followed by flows of cultural globalization [3]. This is inevitable because the globalization, which is a wave of transformation, has a very radical acceleration in all spheres of life.

In the era of globalization, many electronic media such as television, video, CD, internet, and cellphones are found. The electronic media affects the forms of traditional performing arts that have to be summarized in terms of their presentation as they enter the recording industry. For example, if a 'kuda lumping' show usually last about six hours, it should be presented for just about one hour in the recording. This is the influence of the industry which forces traditional performing arts to become packaged goods.

As an influence of industry, traditional performing arts which were once serious arts tends to become pop arts now. It should be noted that the joint of pop culture is a materialistic nature of society, because its life patterns have entered the modern industrial level. Once the traditional performing arts enter the recording industry, it means that it should be ready for commercialization purposes at any time. This is very worrying, because the art forms presented in the media are no longer carry the

human values. The things that are essential are not seen. What is seen is multi-media and digital goods that are easily sold everywhere.

Traditional performing arts are now included as commodity goods that can be advertised, bought and sold all the time. This is because the media workers who advertise are ready, and buyers and sellers are now everywhere. On the other hand, artists sometimes admit that they must be realistic. At this stage, the artists are brought along by the tide of globalization because they already have a tendency to sell traditional performing arts.

### 2.2 *The Packaging of Traditional Performing Arts*

Before the era of globalization arrived, public support for traditional performing arts was comprehensive. For example, the community supports the sustainability of the arts by preparing family members to participate in traditional performing arts exercises and performances. In rural areas, the efforts to pass on knowledge about traditional performing arts from generation to generation have been done, for example by attending all forms of traditional performing arts activities, watching or listening to traditional performing arts broadcasts via radio as a form of art appreciation, and making them as a habit. The act of appreciating the traditional performing arts could be done intentionally or unintentionally, consciously or unconsciously, not permanently, and not selectively, and could be done by everyone without considering their age, gender, and social status as long as they join the community [1].

Joost Smiers revealed that we tend to appreciate the idea that traditional performing arts present the best times of our lives, as those harmonious, fun, and entertaining moments offer unique opportunities to reflect. Traditional performing arts are seen to be able to contribute to the life of the surrounding community, because they can relief, entertain, support daily activities, legitimize events, and make humans romantic [6].

After the globalization era, traditional performing arts that are prepared to entertain are presented by shortening the performance. For example, Baris Dance, Kecak Dance, Barong Dance, and Ramayana Ballet are shortened when presented on stage, with the aim that the audience will be more practical to enjoy it. Within the shortest possible time a variety of different shows can be presented. But behind that, in the environment of artists there is concern about the loss of certain segments of the traditional performing arts. This event worried some artists because traditional performing arts which were supposed to be presented according to the originals, were sold by shortening their performances.

Today's culture is influenced by the rapid development. The society that was originally agrarian-traditional in nature has shifted to a more modern society which is oriented towards the industry. With the influence of foreign cultures, a cultural transformation is happening in our country. Some who are aware of this know that cultural change will occur. This awareness is a sensitivity

that encourages human beings to critically evaluate the ongoing culture [4].

By anticipating this cultural change, the existence of traditional performing arts is in two contradictory ends. On the one hand, traditional performing arts must appear original. On the other hand, they must adapt the situation and condition in the era of globalization. The development of traditional performing arts is needed because fertile ideas and creative concepts are needed. This effort needs to be put in a place to place the proportion of traditional performing arts into current community development programs, such as tourism development. Thus, the traditions of the past need to be developed into present traditions (contemporary). This is one of the ways to develop traditional performing arts in Indonesia.

Along with this, the traditional performing arts presented to tourists have also been packed during the performance. The packaging method is based on the aspects of the development of traditional performing arts, for example through shortening the performance time. This method is justified by some artists with the condition that the work is aware of the intricacies of the art work, for example history or philosophy. The quality will still be guaranteed, if the shortened performance weights, techniques, and solutions are done carefully.

On the other hand, industrialism has encouraged many businesses to increase the productivity by establishing industrial sites that are considered to be able to improve people's lives. The increasing industrialization is considered to increase the economic growth. In industrialism, only industrial products, goods and services that are usually profit-oriented can be measured by economic category.

The existence of globalization puts the traditional performing arts into global pressure, as globalization is also a form of penetration of new values derived from outside based on information, communication, and technology which is often abbreviated to ICT which ultimately rests on industrialization which always leads to market orientation. ICT devices can be purchased in various forms such as radios, cellphones, cameras, tape recorders, videos, VCDs, DVDs, and so on. Even computer and internet tools can now be used to create sophisticated documentation. These devices make it very easy to make traditional performing arts documentation in the form of packaged good

### 2.3 *Wayang Wong Sekar Budaya Nusantara Packaging*

One of the traditional performing arts in Indonesia is Wayang Wong (Wong Puppet). Indonesian people consider it as a traditional theater. Wayang Wong is considered to have existed since the 8th century during the Hindu Mataram Kingdom. This can be seen in the traces of Prambanan Temple reliefs that illustrate the story of Ramayana accompanied by gamelan music. Wayang Wong has also existed since the era of the Kahuripan Kingdom, Majapahit Kingdom, and Islamic Mataram Kingdom until now.

Since the days of the Islamic Mataram Kingdom, Wayang Wong has been turned on livelier. Moreover, after the Islamic Mataram Kingdom was split into four regions with their respective centers, namely Surakarta Palace, Yogyakarta Palace, Pura Mangkunegaran, and Pakualaman Temple. The four palaces still preserve Wayang Wong.

The life of Wayang Wong in Yogyakarta Palace experienced a peak of development and reached its perfect form during the reign of Sultan Hamengku Buwana VIII (1912-1939). During this time, Yogyakarta Palace produced 15 Wayang Wong performances, some of which originated from the Mahabharata epic. There is a puppet show in Yogyakarta Palace which lasts for four days in a row with one-episode play. The performance starts at 06:00 until 23:00, then continues the next day at the same hours [5].

The frequency of Wayang Wong performances after the reign of Sultan Hamengku Buwana VIII gradually decrease. In the early 1950s, Wayang Wong Sri Wedari had a duration of five hours, between 20.30 to 01.00 [2]. Currently, this performance only lasts an average of two hours. Sometimes it even depends on the request of the community, because the duration of the show can take place 2, 3, 4, 5, and so on.

The existence of electronic media as a result of industrial processes such as tape recorders, TV, video, VCD, DVD, and internet has an impact on the forms of traditional performing arts. Wayang Wong that is usually performed for five hours from 20.00 to 01.00, is now presented within one hour in the recording. One hour of audio-visual recording is packaged in the form of VCD and DVD. The results of this live recording have been sold in stores, markets, and on the edges of the road at a low price of 10,000 rupiahs.

The effort of preserving the traditional performing arts comes from a traditional performing arts group that has just been established namely Wayang Wong Sekar Budaya Nusantara. The group was founded by Mrs. Nani Soedarsono on September 11, 2002. They tried to re-explore the grandeur of the values behind traditional performing arts which became the local wisdom of the Indonesian people, then preserved the values of grandeur. This is to become the identity of the Indonesian people who are able to distinguish the Indonesian nation among other nations in the world. Besides that, it also develops the values that have existed in the culture of the Indonesian people in accordance with the times, so that they can become a wealth for human civilization.

To maintain and develop the creative philosophical values of the nation's culture, as well as in the context of providing character education and human behavior in accordance with Indonesian identity, the group launched a preservation movement of traditional culture throughout Indonesia which has been carried out since 2002 until now. To preserve Wayang Wong Sekar Budaya Nusantara for a long time and to make it accessible for the next generation to study the arts, a movement was directed towards the cultural industry with a documentation production system. It means that whenever Wayang Wong Sekar Budaya Nusantara holds a performance, it always is recorded. The recording is produced in the form of VCD and DVD. During the period of 2002 until present, more than 75 episodes of Wayang Wong Sekar Budaya Nusantara have

been recorded and have been successfully released in the form of VCDs and DVDs. All creative industry efforts in the form of television shows, VCDs and DVDs are more dedicated to Wayang Wong Sekar Budaya Nusantara as a salvage and documentation of art from the nation's masterpieces on their own without a helping hand from the government.

The VCDs and DVDs of Wayang Wong Sekar Budaya Nusantara have been sold to regions throughout Indonesia and even abroad. Everyone can buy the tape to be played at home, the office, the market, or while traveling on a bus. More than 10,000 CDs have been sold. If every VCD round is watched by three people, it means that the total of 2,750,000 people ( $3 \times 75 \times 10,000 = 2,750,000$ ) have been seen this Wayang Wong Sekar Budaya Nusantara. The number could be more if people who saw Wayang Wong Sekar Budaya Nusantara performance through the internet were also counted.

In this globalization era, people do not need to go far to watch Wayang Wong Sekar Budaya Nusantara. People do not have to go to some big cities like Jakarta, Semarang and Surabaya, for example, to watch wayang wong. People just need to stay home while playing the VCDs. In one day, people can play VCDs up to 5 times with various play episodes. In a sense, people do not need to watch the performance directly for up to 5 days. It has become so easy in the era of globalization, as people play traditional performing arts just by choosing the type of art. From any place, like Indonesia, Australia, Europe, America, we can play the VCDs with the same episode. We, our neighbors next door, our cousins outside the island can play the Wayang Wong Sekar Budaya Nusantara show easily through the internet.

### 3. CONCLUSION

The traditional performing arts that were once spiritualistic suddenly had to face a big wave of globalization. Traditional performing arts groups such as Wayang Wong Sekar Budaya Nusantara that involves hundreds of people in the staging production is forced to present the arts into VCDs and DVDs that can be easily carried and sold everywhere. As a result, traditional performing arts are only a form of commodity that are easily found in stores, supermarkets, and on the roadside.

To remain submissive to the current of globalization, traditional performing arts are produced in a package. People use packaging methods, so that traditional performing arts still attract Indonesian people. Packaged within a short performing time, the arts can still be called traditional performing arts that present the full stories.

This is one of the effects of globalization, as people do not have much time to see traditional performing arts for a long time anymore.

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