



WAYANG GOLEK PERFORMANCE AS ONE OF THE VARIETIES OF PUPPETRY ARTS FOUND ON THE ISLAND OF JAVA

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Abstract

The Indonesian people have diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds. One form of cultural diversity that exists is wayang. The islands of Java and Bali became places for the development of traditional wayang arts. The UN oversees an institution called UNESCO as an institution that focuses on issues regarding education, culture and science, which then records wayang as a work of art and culture in the international world. By giving this award, the Indonesian people should protect and preserve wayang. This research aims to examine, identify and find out the meaning of cultural traditions and symbols found in wayang golek performances and their influence on the surrounding community and daily activities. In this research, the method used is the observation method, by collecting data from various journal and internet sources, while the analysis uses the phenomenological method. From the research that has been carried out, it was found that wayang golek performances contain teachings and good values conveyed by a puppeteer with his unique characteristics so that the messages to be conveyed can be easily accepted by the public who watch the wayang performance. Puppet shows have an impact on several aspects including social, political, economic and religious aspects.

Keywords: Wayang Golek, Symbols, Values

INTRODUCTION

Humans are called social creatures because of the attachment between one human being and another human being. Where both need each other and the need for information and communication with the aim of maintaining life because balance will occur if there is good communication between the personnel within it. With good communication, new ideas will emerge to create

something new too. Because they have similarities in that they have the same opinion, one habit and one place. This is what then gives rise to new forms of culture and art. Culture and art are the results of human creations that have existed or even been created since the time of our ancestors. Until then it is passed down from generation to generation following the development process that occurs. Of course, in the process of development, perhaps little by little changing a form of art or culture, the values contained in the art remain the same, remain meaningful. The value in a form of art does not only depend on its visuals, it does not only depend on what is seen, it does not only depend on its form. But also on the process and background of doing or creating this art.

Art reflects the personality of the people within it, becomes an identity, a sign of identification, and even a form of cultural wealth that should be made a matter of pride. Art in each place is different, this is because the habits and behavior of the people therein differ from one place to another. Human thinking tends to be complex and even one individual can sometimes have different points of view. But this should not be a debate. Because we are still human beings, we are still within the scope of a country that accepts diversity. This attitude of tolerance will ultimately create a lot of cultural wealth. One of them is wayang art.

Wayang stories are a form of story that originates from old literature and usually the language used is regional language. And the story is still being preserved to this day. The stories in circulation are usually in oral form because they are taken from wayang performances. However, nowadays many stories are also in written form because they are also a form of documentation. From writing wayang stories, we can still understand the plot of the story even if we are not watching a wayang performance. For Javanese people, wayang performances are something extraordinary. The process of growth and development of wayang has occurred since prehistoric times on the island of Java. Which then began to be developed by certain ethnic groups with a new form of culture. Stories in wayang usually have themes of heroism. Where usually the storyline is about how good characters face bad characters.

Puppetry has been developing for a long time, going through various forms of growth and development processes so that its performances can still be preserved and enjoyed by the current generation. This shows that the values contained in wayang stories are flexible because they can still be accepted even in a different era. Wayang itself has the meaning of shadow because in the show, what is shown is the shadow of the puppet. Even at that time, the wayang was still 2 dimensional. However, as time went by, wayang became better known as a performance. Because currently, the types of wayang are very diverse. And in the performance process, we don't just use shadows. But there are also wayang which are in 3 dimensions, there are also wayang orang which uses people in the performance process. Meanwhile, wayang golek itself is a 3-dimensional wooden puppet where the clothes still use cloth and the shape is like a doll.

Community members who maintain mutual interaction with their environment, with God, and also with fellow humans encourage the creation of good social relationships, of course inseparable from the norms that apply in society. Likewise with socio-cultural values that have existed for generations in the surrounding environment. However, there are still many people who do not understand these values. The use of symbols is an effective way to convey values to the public by using entertainment media so that they can attract a lot of public attention, one of which is by providing cultural performances of wayang golek. The way in which communication is delivered is not clear enough to have an impact on the absorption of values and poor understanding of meaning, which will cause social relations in society to become less good as well. Social phenomena in the political, economic, social and cultural fields that occur become life symptoms of social factors in life and become objects of sociological study.

There is symbolic interactionism in sociological studies, some of the principles include: 1) the position of humans is not like lower animals, humans are given reason and thoughts to be able to think logically, 2) the existence of social interaction helps the formation of this thinking ability, 3) humans in using

their ability to think allows them to learn and understand meanings and symbols, 4) typical interactions between humans can be formed by the presence of meanings and symbols, 5) symbols and meanings can be changed and modified by humans in interpreting a situation, 6) changes and modifications as part of the ability to interact with oneself, examine and assess the benefits and losses obtained in return, and then choose one of them, can be done by humans, 7) community groups can be formed based on patterns of action and interaction. (Ritzer 2012)

Several important points can be taken from the 7 principles of interactionism, namely meaning, people, symbols and interaction. A puppeteer has the unique ability to think when playing wayang which is shown to the wider community as entertainment. The puppeteer conveys socio-cultural meanings related to cultural values through wayang golek performances so that it is easy for the audience to understand them. Wayang golek is used as an artistic medium which is used as a means of disseminating good values and teachings which can provide benefits for the survival of society. Wayang golek is a result of human creation made of wood and played like a puppet. In each performance, a puppeteer plays his wayang puppets with different characters and adaptations to everyday social life.

Communication is an important thing in living in society as a form of social interaction. However, humans have limitations in conveying the meaning they want to convey, which can cause misunderstandings, so the effort needed is to use symbols as a medium to communicate and convey messages. Social interaction can occur if there is communication between communities. Sociologically, human limitations in conveying messages and meaning through communication can be minimized with symbolic interactionism.

According to Herbert Blumer, there are three types of thinking that are based on symbolic interactionism, namely: Existing meanings become a reference for humans in carrying out an action, Social interactions carried out by someone with other people then give rise to these meanings, The process of refining the meanings that exist. therein is perfected when social interaction

takes place. Herbert Blumer's rationale explains the position of the puppeteer when conveying hidden messages and meanings through wayang performances that are shown to the public. When a role player chooses, thinks, groups meanings, and adapts to attitudes and actions according to the situation in which he is placed. Interpretation should not only be understood as the application of meaning, but also as a process of forming meaning which is then refined in directing an action (Poloma, 2000). Humans are also often referred to as homosymbolicum, where humans throughout their lives use symbols that continue to be developed. The symbolic interactions that humans use in everyday interactions become an art (Nalan, 2016). Culture is the result of art that is general and conceptualized with a broad scope, usually having certain difficulties when explained in a real and rational way. However, these characteristics make cultural values emotionally absorbed by the people and take root in their souls (Koentjaraningrat, 2009).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Descriptive and observational methods were chosen in this research, where in English the word descriptive means describing meaning. Qualitative research techniques are used in this research to interpret and assist in understanding the implied meanings of events and human behavior in certain conditions and situations. Researchers make observations and collect the necessary data through reading sources from the internet and written sources from books and journals, so that researchers can understand the meaning of wayang golek performances.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Wayang golek is the art of wayang performance, where the wayang itself is shaped like a puppet made of wood. The story of wayang golek itself mostly comes from the Ramayana and Mahabarata stories, some of the plots of which may have undergone slight changes. There are 3 types of wayang golek, namely ancient wayang golek, papak wayang, and modern wayang golek.

Purwa wayang golek itself usually has a story line about characters from the Mahabharata and Ramayana. Wayang golek papak is a wayang that developed in West Java. Especially Cirebon, the stories presented are usually in Sundanese. Meanwhile, modern wayang golek is a wayang golek that has undergone development. In the performance process, effects are usually added such as lighting settings, backgrounds and sound. This is intended to add a dramatic impression during the performance.

Background and History

Previously, Sunan Kudus made puppets using wood. With the intention that it can be seen and watched during the day. From here, wayang golek began to develop. The beginning of the appearance of wayang golek itself is known to have come from Java during the reign of the Demak kingdom led by Raden Patu. Until then it began to be spread widely by the walisanga. Including Sunan Gunung Jati, who at one time ruled the Cirebon Sultanate. The performance process at that time still used Javanese.

The first person to introduce wayang made of wood was Sunan Kudus. Until then it was called wayang golek. Wayang golek itself is the result of the development of wayang kulit. Another purpose for creating this wayang golek is as a means of spreading the Islamic religion. Because wayang golek is made so that it can be watched during the day, the distribution process can be better because most people are active during the day.

Until finally the wayang golek developed and was accepted by the public, slowly the wayang golek began to spread and Sundanese language wayang golek began to appear in the 17th century during the expansion of the Mataram Sultanate's territory. At the beginning of its development, the wayang golek performance still contained Hindu culture because of the former influence of the Padjadjaran kingdom in Sundanese. Until then the storyline begins to develop with Javanese culture and the names of the characters have been changed.

The development of Sundanese wayang golek has led to the emergence of a new type of wayang golek called wayang golek purwa. When West Java

was still under the reign of the Mataram kingdom, which at that time was led by Sultan Agung, wayang golek began to be popular with various groups. Not only Sundanese people, but there were also nobles who were willing to come just to learn Javanese. Of course, with certain goals such as politics and government. In its development, the language used in wayang golek performances began to be liberated by the use of languages in each region. This is why wayang golek can spread to all corners of West Java.

During the Panembahan Queen of Cirebon, the puppets used were wayang golek papak. Namely a puppet show with a flat or flat head. Until finally, wayang papak itself began to develop during the time of the girilaya prince. Where at that time, wayang shows were used as a medium for spreading Islam. After the postal highway construction project led by Daendels. Wayang golek is starting to develop throughout West Java and is becoming increasingly popular among the people. Until its peak occurred during the reign of the Dutch East Indies. At that time, many puppeteers and wayang golek hermitages emerged in areas in West Java. Until finally puppet shows began to be restricted when Japan entered Indonesia. It was deliberately made difficult for people to hold puppet shows all night because at that time the Japanese government prohibited people from holding parties after 12 at night. Until finally the community asked the Japanese government to broadcast wayang golek performances via radio. And this request was approved by the Japanese government. At that time, the puppeteer who was the first to be willing to broadcast wayang art via radio was R.U. Partasuwanda. The process of broadcasting wayang golek art on radio is still limited. Where the maximum duration allowed is only 3 hours. From here, Partasuwanda tried to make a wayang show that lasted no more than 3 hours. Until then a new wayang golek was created which is known as modern wayang golek.

From Dr. Th. Pigeaud, explained that at that time a regent in Sumedang got the idea to make wayang which was similar to the wayang characters in the Mahabharata and Ramayana stories using wayang golek. The development of leather puppetry into a wayang golek form occurred around the 18th to 19th

centuries. Until then news emerged that the regent of Bandung at that time assigned Ki Darman, a wayang maker from Tegal, who was asked to make a wayang golek purwa.

Until then, in the 20th century, changes in the form of wayang golek that were getting better can be seen from the development of wayang golek that is occurring at this time, which is a form that has been perfected from the form of Sundanese wayang. In its development, wayang golek was only performed by nobles and rulers. At the beginning of the appearance of wayang golek, it was only performed by Sundanese nobles who were in the palace or government environment with the aim of fulfilling personal or public interests. At that time, the function of wayang still depended on the nobles who wanted to hold wayang golek performances. Because basically holding puppet shows themselves usually has various purposes, such as as a medium for spreading religion, entertainment, or even as a ritual which is held side by side with certain traditional processions. And nowadays, wayang performances are aimed more as entertainment in commemorating and enlivening certain events.

In the development of wayang golek in the 70s century. Puppet shows began to develop again, at that time a puppeteer invited a sinden who was very famous at that time. Until the popularity of sinden surpassed the popularity of the puppeteer himself. It was at this time that until now sinden was used or became mandatory in a wayang performance.

The Specifics Of The Performance And Its Function

In the beginning, wayang golek was created so that it could be watched during the day. Its first appearance was by Sunan Kudus with the aim of being a medium for da'wah in spreading the Islamic religion. As time went by, the art of wayang golek continued to develop and be perfected until it reached West Java and began to spread to all corners of the West Java region. In the end, many nobles came to West Java just to learn Javanese, which is the language used in wayang golek performances. The arrival of these nobles of course also had other purposes, such as for politics and government.

Until the peak occurred during the Dutch East Indies period, where the storyline had changed slightly and mixed with Javanese culture. Where wayang golek is only performed by nobles in the palace or in government with the aim of fulfilling personal and public interests. As time goes by until now, wayang golek performances are only used at certain times. At this time, puppet shows can be held by anyone who is able to organize them. Because the cost of holding a wayang show is not small. Especially nowadays, wayang functions more as an entertainment medium which is held when commemorating or celebrating certain events. Sometimes it is also used as entertainment or more as performing arts after traditional cultural procession events such as sea alms. Not only that, currently the characters in wayang golek puppetry are also used as crafts, decorations and decorations which can be used as souvenirs or as collections.

The meaning and cultural values conveyed by the Wayang Golek performance

The meaning of wayang golek performances is conveyed through symbols. The concept of something that exists in the human mind that is considered valuable, important and valuable for their lives and can function as a guide and guidance for life in society is part of cultural values. People who have long lived and lived on the Sundanese mainland have their own understanding of what they think is important and valuable, which then becomes their guide to life and influences their perspective on life.

Resilience, *silih asih*, and *silih nurturing* are one of the cultural values that exist in Sundanese culture. Reciprocity, namely giving each other advice, encouragement, on things that smell good so as to create good relationships between individuals. *Silih asih*, which is a form of expression of affection by caring for and embracing each other, which is carried out by an individual towards those closest to them, is called mutual care because it is nurturing.

Things in the form of habits that have been carried out since ancient times and are still preserved today are what are called culture. Wayang golek

lives and develops on the island of Java and is still preserved today in Sundanese land, starting from the creators, players and performers who are still loyal to the existing culture. For this reason, wayang golek has an influence on the surrounding community as a form of cultural output and the content of cultural values contained in it. The audience comes from various groups of people, from officials to ordinary people.

The messages of goodness conveyed in wayang golek performances always look at the reality of existing life and flashbacks of human life so that the messages conveyed are easy to understand and accepted by people from various circles because they are oriented to real life and everyday events. experienced by humans.

Plays in Wayang Golek and Reflections on Their Cultural Meanings

The division of characterization in wayang golek is divided into 4 parts, namely: The Satria group, with a flexible, calm, brave, intelligent and full of gentleness. Some figures include Sumantri, Arjuna, Setyaki, Anoman, Wibisana, etc, Ponggawa group, with a strong depiction of characters with thick eyebrows, big eyes, big noses and mustaches. Some figures who fall into this group are Duryudana, Gatotkaca, Bima, The Blind Group, with a large, tall body, big nose, fangs, bulging eyes and thick eyebrows. The character who falls into this group is Ravana, Punakawan group, with depictions of ugly, deformed, short and disproportionate humans. Some puppet characters who fall into this group are Cepot, Semar, Gareng, and Dawala.

The categories mentioned above are not only for wayang golek but also apply to shadow puppets whose stories originate from the stories of the Ramayana and Mahabrata characters. The puppet characters of the Punakawan group are the result of the creation of Indonesian poets. The difference in shape between shadow puppets and wayang golek is very striking, starting from the thin form of leather puppets, while the wayang golek has a 3-dimensional shape like a wayang puppet with carvings made according to the depiction of each character.

The interpretation of meaning carried out by the puppeteer so that it is easily absorbed and understood by the audience in wayang golek performances usually relies on existing characters as a form of social interaction carried out through symbols in the form of existing wayang figures. It is performed in its entirety so that the audience can get involved in the puppet show that is being performed.

A puppeteer must animate the characters he presents according to the storyline so that the wishes of the public as an audience can be fulfilled and understood to be applied in everyday life. The Meaning of Sundanese Cultural Values in Wayang Golek Performances. Puppet shows are not only used as an entertainment medium that is watched by many people but also as a guide that can provide benefits to many people. Through the existing characters, the puppeteer can provide the moral values of life. In each performance, wayang golek always has themes that are closely related to real life phenomena such as leadership, property rights, marriage, birth, learning, etc. The theme raised will be presented in symbolic form in the form of wayang characters containing life values that can be used as learning for the audience who witness it. Spectators can emulate the good things that have been shown in wayang golek performances and reflect on the events that happen to the wayang characters shown. The unique ability of a puppeteer is to provide responses to the audience so that it can attract attention and make it easier to understand the values conveyed. The hardness of a person's nature and character sometimes beats the hardness of a rock. Wayang golek as a medium that also provides guidance to the community, there are messages conveyed by means of satire, symbols, sasmita and iloka so that they indirectly provide teachings of goodness. The real influence is given to wayang golek performances in the form of messages and teachings of goodness for social life and teachings that have been received since childhood and continue to be used in everyday life in order to obtain salvation in this world and the hereafter. Wayang Golek performances have an impact on several aspects of human life, including:

1. Social Aspect

Good social relations are depicted in the characterization of wayang golek which teaches about the good values that exist in society such as the value of mutual cooperation so that good social relations can be established. The teachings of goodness, Sundanese cultural values, can be realized by puppeteers competing to convey messages of goodness. The application of silib and siloka in wayang performances is supported by the unique abilities of a puppeteer so that the message of the performance can be conveyed well. Silib has the meaning of a figurative word or not the actual meaning of the word being conveyed, while silaoka is a form of presupposition or description of things that are almost similar.

2. Political Aspects

The Punakawan wayang group makes contributions to the political field. Like the depiction of the plot of the play which bravely and courageously opposes injustice and openly criticizes the wayang characters in the warrior group. The wayang cepot character always decorates the plot with his distinctive jokes and indirectly contains allusions to existing phenomena such as political issues.

Another wayang character who likes to oppose is Dawala because in his country injustice often occurs by conveying criticism of promises made by state officials to the public. Tolok Dawala and Cepot belong to the punakawan wayang group which provides balance with the warrior group whose storyline only revolves around war. The presence of figures from the clown group acts as an icebreaker, reducing the tension that occurs. Just as the phenomenon of deep-rooted corruption can be used as an additional story by the mastermind so that it can be used as a lesson for the public to be careful in choosing leaders.

3. Economic Aspect

Puppet shows also have an impact on economic aspects. The enthusiasm of the public when watching a wayang show provides its own fortune, such as parking attendants who get jobs because they help arrange the placement of vehicles for people who want to watch a wayang performance. Food traders, traders of accessories related to wayang, and people who want to be involved in wayang golek performances can become art promoters who earn income by maximizing their abilities. Puppet shows run the economy of local residents and communities.

4. Religious Aspects

The socio-cultural approach was the approach chosen for the spread of Islam at the beginning of its emergence. Sunan Kalijaga carried out wayang performances as a medium for spreading religious teachings so that they could attract more public attention. Meanwhile, wayang golek itself was introduced and began to develop in Cirebon by Sunan Gunung Jati. The spread of religion using wayang as a medium is filled with Islamic morals and teachings, from the initial story line which was thick with Hindu religious teachings it was changed to a plot which has an Islamic nuance, telling the story of the prophethood and the obligations of a Muslim.

CONCLUSION

Wayang golek is a form of development of shadow puppetry. In wayang golek itself, it started from simple to continuously refined and is now known as wayang golek. There can be various types of wayang golek, depending on the form and story or accompaniment. At the beginning of its development, wayang golek was created as a medium for conveying religious teachings. Until then wayang golek developed again with changes in form, storyline, language, and function as a tool for politics. Until now, wayang golek performances have also

undergone changes to new, more diverse forms, including the addition of sinden to accompany wayang performances, and the addition of certain effects and properties to add a dramatic impression. Its function also changes according to needs. Currently, wayang golek performances are more of a means of entertainment and education. The art of wayang golek grows and develops following the changes that occur. Its functions can vary according to community needs. Wayang golek itself is a form of art that should be preserved because it is a trace of historical heritage. Although currently wayang golek shows are rarely shown, this may be due to shifts in technological developments. However, the existence of wayang golek must still be maintained. Because the values contained in each story in a wayang golek performance also contain deep meaning for life.

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