

## The Existence and Change of Wayang Potehi in Gudo, Jombang

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### Abstract

*Wayang Potehi is a traditional puppet show art performance originating from Southern China. Performing arts in the form of Chinese puppets that entered the archipelago along with Chinese ethnic immigration from mainland China. There are estimates that the roots of Wayang Potehi have evolved more than 3000 years. Stronger historical evidence showing the existence of the Wayang Potehi in China has existed since the Jin dynasty (265-420 AD). Wayang Potehi in Indonesia at the time had experienced the glory and helped colour the cultural diversity that existed in Indonesia. The political phenomenon of 1965, namely China or communist ideology, was associated with the tragedy of the G30 S / PKI. Governmental policies that forbid everything that smells of Tioghoa also contributed to the existence of Wayang Potehi in Indonesia. Wayang Potehi has been suspended because of this political policy. The reformation era in 1998 with the lifting of the ban on all things Chinese, opened a new faucet for the revival of cultural arts including Wayang Potehi. An exciting development also occurred in Wayang Potehi in Gudo, Jombang, East Java. Wayang Potehi is essentially an example of a work that is equated with a traditional drama. Based on its essence, Wayang Potehi is basically a puppet show, because the performance and structure of the show can be said to be almost the same as puppet performance art in general. Some phenomena and indicators in the Wayang Potehi performance art that show this include: (1) using puppet puppets; (2) played by the dalang as a narrator or storyteller; (3) accompanied by music; (4) performed or displayed in a particular place, (5) has a clear duration of performance; (5) presenting certain stories or stories; (6) has a bangesresem aesthetics which includes jokes, nges, gregret and sem as well as the aesthetics that exist in wayang kulit purwa in Java. The existence or existence of Wayang Potehi in Indonesia, is part of the performing arts that is transformed so that this art can still exist and be part of the performing arts in the archipelago. The application of the principle of adaptation in terms of the plays played, the place and time of the performance of the show is one of the strategies for the continuity of the Wayang Potehi performance art to be re-accepted by the wider community. This will certainly support the understanding of multiculturalism which in general can be used to prevent national desintegration.*

**Keywords:** wayang potehi, existence, change

## INTRODUCTION

Chinese peranakan community, has become an inseparable part of the Indonesian nation. Even traditional Chinese art, also coloring in the culture of the archipelago. The composition of cultural elements from mainland China with local cultural

characteristics presents its uniqueness in the traditions of the Indonesian Chinese peranakan community.

Cheng Ho's voyage was at least one of the opening factors for the entry of Chinese culture in the Javanese pantura port cities (including Semarang) with large junk so they were called boat people. After the death of Cheng Ho, more and more Chinese people came to Indonesia. The emergence of rapidly developing Chinese settlements in almost all of the northern Javanese pantura port cities is evidence of how this ethnic group has helped drive the local economy and participated in enlivening trade in the region (R. Hantoro. 2007)

The Javanese pantura region where most of the ethnic inhabitants eventually led to the emergence of hybridity or intermarriage which gave birth to offspring which later became known as Chinese descent or Chinese descent. Not only that, the culture they brought from their native land in China eventually also occurred cultural marriage or what is known as acculturation. It is reflected in a variety of cultural products that are widely known to Indonesian people, such as culinary (noodles, meatballs, meatballs, soto, dumplings, capjay, fuyunghay, lomie, ifumie, etc.), Lasem batik, batik Semarangan, kebaya encim, umbrella dance, peranakan literature, coastal batik with dragon or hong birds, barongsay, liong, and also wayang potehi (Wuryandari. 2018)

Wayang Potehi, an art performance of puppet puppets originating from South China. This art performance was brought by Chinese migrants to the archipelago around the 16th century. Hybrid culture crossing or cultural acculturation because of the existence of this ethnic that is quite long in the archipelago occurred in the cultural field, especially in the Wayang Potehi performance art. Wayang Potehi later became part of the face of diverse cultures in Indonesia (Rosiana. 2018).

The problem set forth in this article is about Wayang Potehi in Gudo, Jombang. The problem includes two things, namely about the factors that cause the existence of Wayang Potehi Gudo Jombang, and how changes occur in Wayang Potehi Gudo Jombang. The purpose of writing this article also includes two things. First, try to explain the factors that cause the existence of Wayang Potehi Gudo Jombang. Secondly, they try to elaborate changes in Wayang Potehi Gudo Jombang.

## METHOD

The method used is the field research and library research methods. Field research is data retrieval done by looking directly at the performances of Wayang Potehi Gudo and library research is done by searching libraries, books, and references that are appropriate to support the content analysis process.

This study uses the theory of transformation used to find out what changes have taken place in Wayang Potehi Gudo, Jombang, East Java. Transformation theory is used to recognize the essence and existence that exists in Wayang Potehi Gudo, Jombang, East Java. Analysis of the essence and existence of Wayang Potehi Gudo will be seen based on the phenomenon of change and adaptation of the play. Aesthetic theory is used to reveal the aesthetic content of Bangsresem in Wayang Potehi, Gudo, Jombang, East Java. Analysis was carried out on jokester, nges, greret, and sem in the Wayang Potehi play in Gudo, Jombang, East Java

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Wayang Potehi Gudo Jombang

Discussing wayang in Indonesia, wayang potehi and wayang thithi or Javanese Chinese wayang, are not included in the inventory of wayang types. This is most likely because Chinese puppets (thithi and potehi) only develop in temples, also puppet shows are usually performed in temples, performances are performed even without spectators, because these types of puppets are sacred puppets, performed as one of the offerings. to their gods and staged at certain times, for example, on the anniversary of the temple or on Chinese New Year (Muljana, 1997)

Wayang Potehi began to be known by the people of Java more or less 3 centuries ago. Its development experienced a receding period after the events of the G30 S / PKI of 1965. Two years later (1967) the New Order government banned all Chinese things, including Wayang Potehi. This prohibition caused the performing art to go into near death, even though during the New Order era, Wayang Potehi was still performed even though it was clandestine.

The reform era brought a breath of fresh air to the re-emergence of the Wayang Potehi performance art. This happened because President Abdurrahman restored the rights of ethnic Chinese citizens, including efforts to preserve their arts and culture. Since then, many efforts have been made to revive Wayang Potehi, which has been suspended for 30 years.

Gudo District, Jombang Regency, East Java, although geographically located far from the cultural center (Surakarta and Yogyakarta-considered as the center of Javanese culture), this area can be said to be the center of Chinese culture. Chinese culture in this place is still strong, especially in matters of traditional culture, including the Wayang Potehi performance art.

Wayang Potehi Gudo, until now still exists, even the performance art of Wayang Potehi Gudo often gets responses outside Jombang. Puppet dolls used for performances, some are old collections from generation to generation, some are made by new works of contemporary Gudo artists.

The existence of Wayang Potehi Gudo is still maintained, one of them is because of Toni Harsono or Tok Hong Lay who is one who is diligently caring for and reviving Wayang Potehi. Efforts made by Toni Harsono to support the existence of this Puppet Potehi Gudo, among others: (1) gathering the remnants of the artists members Fu He An; (2) Looking for an expert in tatah sungging from Jepara, to renew Puppet Potehi puppets, because Puppet Potehi puppets stored in the temple warehouse have been damaged; (3) the regeneration of puppeteers and assten dalang without regard to them coming from descendant Chinese communities or indigenous communities; (4) implementing new performing arts management, fare shows and paid artists according to the task or job desk that they do (Harsono. 2018)

As the leader of the Hon San Kiong temple, Toni Harsono who works as a gold businessman in Pare Kediri feels challenged to participate in caring for and preserving this performance art. Toni Harsono is the 3rd generation who is trying to revive Wayang Potehi as an effort to care for intangible cultural heritage. This idea was inherited from his predecessor, his grandfather and father Toni Harsono was also the leader of the Hon San Kiong temple and was the leader of the artist who was named the Fu En Han

association. For his efforts in 2017 Toni Harsono was awarded 35 Bentara Budaya for his active role in caring for culture and reviving the arts (Harsono. 2018)

Based on its history, in Gudo there was once a popular puppeteer Potehi namely Tok Su Khwei (Toni Harsono's grandfather), whose expertise was passed on to Tok Hng Kie (Toni Harsono's father). The 3 generations have been passed down for more than 100 years to bring the Wayang Potehi to life. Thanks to their diligence and love, Wayang Potehi was able to survive in the midst of historical storms and the changing times. Today's generation can recognize Wayang Potehi as part of the performing arts that have grown in this country for hundreds of years.

## 2. Performing Arts Structure

Wayang Potehi is equated with drama because the performance art has dramaturgy elements such as plot or story frame, characterization and characterization, dialogue, setting or setting (time, place, atmosphere), theme (themes in Wayang Potehi are distinguished according to the location of the performance), mandate and relevance between elements. Three stages retained are: (1) Suluk (2) opening music (3) The theme being played. How to play Wayang Potehi can be said to be fixed. Potehi means puppet cloth bag, played by playing 5 fingers. 3 middle fingers control the head, thumb and pinkie control the puppet hand.

The structure of the show is as follows:

- a. The opening music marks the start of the performance, followed by the puppeteer in singing Mandarin speech,
- b. The trail or narration tells the setting according to the story presented, for example the story of Shun Pin Ban Kwan who is in a position to learn, so in this jejer scene is told about the compound where he studied
- c. The opening monologue scene conveyed by one of the characters in Wayang Potehi.
- d. Dialogue between characters on the subject matter as in the story.
- e. War scenes, and closing scenes

Transformation and adaptation are carried out in the interest of the essence and existence of Wayang Potehi, namely so that Wayang Potehi can be accepted by the Indonesian people in general by maintaining its essence as a wayang performance art as well as the performance of wayang kulit purwa in Java.

The aesthetics of *Bangesresem* are explored from the aesthetics of the Surakarta puppet theater which are acronyms of: *Banyol*, *Nges*, *Greget* and *Sem*. This was stated by Sapardi Djoko Damono, a literary expert who explored and found this aesthetic and applied it to Javanese novels in the 1950s. This aesthetic can be applied in Wayang Potehi. *Bangesresem* actually departs from the aesthetics of the Surakarta puppet theater as an acronym: Spanish, *Nges*, *Greget* and *Sem*. In addition there are also spells, gendhing, slash, anthevana, udanagari and tutug.

Jokes means jokes, jokes, jokes, jokes and banter. *Banyol* is an aesthetic element that forms the atmosphere and innuendo or the irony and a play on words. for example: humorous poetry, humorous poetry, skit, humorous ketoprak. *Nges* means good, impressive, captivating and pleasing, aesthetic elements that give rise to renewed or moody, sad, sad, sorrow, mourning. *Nges* evokes the dynamics of creative meaning, eg heroic situations, gripping and making carried away. *Greget* means passion, lust, willingness to do. The Sun Pin figure is well described, the Ban Kwan figure portrayed is

cunning. *Sem* means lust, love, attract attention, and the like. *Sem* is an aesthetic element to create a romantic atmosphere, arouse erotic sensitivity, captivate the audience for example in a love scene.

### 3. Transformation Form of Wayang Potehi

Along with the times, Wayang Potehi Gudo also underwent a transformation. Even signs are developing towards the process of cultural assimilation. Changes that occur for example: regeneration of puppeteers, the language used, the use of speech media, new management in the performing arts, and puppet crafters Potehi puppets.

The forms of change in Wayang Potehi include the following:

#### a. Change of Dalang and Assistant Dalang

Initially, the puppeteer Potehi came from ethnic Chinese, because the performances use Mandarin. Puppet Potehi Gudo has given birth to the regeneration of puppeteers and assistant puppeteers from the native population. & puppeteers Potehi are native citizens, namely: Ki Purwanto, Sonny Frans Asmara, Ki Subur, Ki Mujiono, Ki Slamet, Ki Pardi, and Ki Widodo Santoso. They joined the Fu Ho An group (the Wayang Potehi artist group founded by grandfather Toni Harsono). The Fu Ho, An group, is currently led by Toni Harsono (Harsono. 2018).

#### b. Language Change

Initially, Wayang Potehi was held in Mandarin because the puppeteers came from the descendant Chinese ethnicity. At the moment, the Wayang Potehi stage is held using Mixed languages (Indonesian and Javanese).

#### c. Musicians

Originally a musician from a descendant of Chinese society (Huaren) at this time a musician from a Javanese (native) community, there was even a musician who was a Muslim woman wearing a headscarf

#### d. Forms of Narrative Pedalangan, Performance Venues and Performances

The form and narrative of Wayang Potehi puppetry also depend on the location where the Wayang Potehi was held.

(1) (1) Performing inside the Temple: puppet form and narration using Chinese standard, duration 3 hours

(2) Performing outside the Temple: forms and narratives of free puppetry, the language used is a mixture of Indonesian and Javanese, 2 hours duration

#### e. Music accompaniment

Initially the Wayang Potehi performance used a traditional Chinese musical accompaniment, but the current development of the musical accompaniment is modified between traditional Chinese music and Javanese gamelan.

#### f. *Gunungan*

Initially, the Wayang Potehi show did not use the gunungan as in the wayang kulit purwa, but in its current development the Wayang Potehi performance uses gunungan to initiate the show and also to mark transitions between scenes.

g. Jokes

Initially, the Wayang Potehi show had no jokes, but a famous puppeteer from Semarang created jokes in the Javanese wayang thithi or wayang puppets by displaying figures dressed as security officers, so jokes were not performed by punakawan figures like in Javanese purwa puppets.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the things that have been described previously, it can be concluded that the positive things with the revival of Puppet Potehi Gudo, among others: moving the community's economy with the birth of puppets / puppets Potehi puppet puppets in Gudo and surrounding areas; puppeteer regeneration, puppeteer assistants and musicians from indigenous communities can help revive their economy as artists. Puppet Potehi Gudo has undergone cultural transformation and acculturation. The Bangesresem aesthetics in the Wayang Potehi Gudo Jombang performance art is one of the adaptation strategies for the sustainability of this art and as a marker of the development of this performance art in Indonesia. Puppet Potehi is no longer synonymous with Chinese ethnic culture, so it should develop multicultural awareness that can prevent negative things in other tombs or negative assumptions about the revival of Wayang Potehi.

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