

THE EXISTENCE OF *LUDRUK* SHOW BEHIND THE POPULAR ART INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT

The presence of popular art is described by the rapid growth and development of television medium influence the life of performing arts and the production activity in the show. Covid-19 and post-pandemic activity also have an impact on art performance. The creative activity of traditional theater community are stagnating now, so that affecting the existence of show and leaving many problems. The development of popular art in ludruk show as a traditional theater has created a transformation of space and time as well as the aesthetic value in it. When the institution as a "patron" no longer synergizes with the art community, there is a clash of artistic process. Aesthetic value present through the artistic process is used to get economic value only, in the end "beauty" is often interpreted as something that only produces commercial profit. Live ludruk show is difficult to find now, and many events are often commodified into show. Television medium, which grows rapidly and never leaves idle time, it has influence the growth of entertainment industry which is oriented toward commodity and financial gain. Gradually, the audiences of the people traditional theater begin to decrease, and this social phenomenon also gives an impact on the behavior of the audiences and the existence of traditional theater show on the stage, so that this issue is encouraging and interesting to be analyzed in a research.

This study wants to describe the supporting aspect, form of change, and the existence of traditional theater show in the context of popular art industry. In analyzing the result, the theory of popular art industry is used supporting by the concept of dramaturgy by Guffman and other concepts as well as the result of interview on the spot. This study uses qualitative descriptive method and popular art approach, it focuses on data collection technique, namely; observation, interview, literature study, documentation, and triangulation as data validation. The target of the study is to provide information to academics.

Keywords: entertainment industry; supporting aspect; form of change; the existence of show

PREFACE

Creative activity will lead to the show which is often related to the condition of society as the main

proponent. Because every change in the environment of society will also have an influence on the activity of art community in it. The coming of

popular art is marked by the rapid growth and development of television medium. It has initiated the birth of an entertainment industry that is oriented toward commodity and wholly financial gain. As the entertainment industry, various television medium shows are supported by artistic arrangement with technological sophistication and fast information. On the other hand, traditional theater show with communal packaging is considered out of date and it always depends on proponents of traditional theater show who do not give "market" benefit. Thus, the show that is held live rarely doing and find, moreover the existence of performance that runs in a *nobong* way, it is also very difficult to find. In order that the *ludruk* as a form of people traditional theater faces a lot of competition from art form or show that is commodified through television medium.

Event which is commodified through various television medium shows reflecting by *ludruk tobong* community till this day. According to Purnomo (2018), *Ludruk Irama Budaya Surabaya* group, although in

difficult condition, it is an art community that is able to survive, so that it can reflect on issue related to the existence of various traditional community shows. The social condition of Surabaya people can affect the behavior of the audience, which indirectly affects the show activity. This condition becomes a hard challenge for every art group to maintain the existence of the show which position of life and development is in the midst of Surabaya people, Purnomo (2015:264).

The performing arts life and the show production activity, in fact, it has been decrease by various needs, even as consideration that is not related to the people traditional theatrical show. In the last few decades, every show is held live less audience, and the fans are slowly starting to leave. The availability of infrastructure as a center of activity makes the traditional art community also do not have many spaces of expression. According to Purnomo (2019), the influence of the management system or THR complex condition that takes much time led to the fading and cessation

of the art community and the show production activity within it. Finally, people traditional arts become unpopular and easily forgotten. Furthermore, mention its name is starting to sound odd to its people themselves now.

The essence of *ludruk* show as traditional theater people based has begun to decline, moreover for the show which runs in a *nobong*, it is very difficult to find. Popular art-based entertainment show can distract the audience by artificially interacting through television medium. The audiences become consumers or passive audiences that is arranged on a two-dimensional stage, it means that television medium has the ability to produce and control audience behavior when it begins to recognize and starting the popular arts entertainment industry on television medium screen (Purnomo, 2019). According to Ratna Riantiarno, traditional show such as *ludruk* or folk art in the pre-pandemic period are difficult to survive because there are not many fans and less prestige from popular culture or from abroad. Additionally, they are in the pandemic situation, so

that they are getting worse (Henry, 2021). This fact becomes an interesting phenomenon to be analyzed through the focus: supporting aspect in traditional theater show; changing form of traditional theater show; and the existence of traditional theater show behind the popular arts industry.

Theoretical Basis: 1. *Popular Art Industry*, according to Sedyawati (2008) in modern society who dominates today's world life, placing and considering industry and trade as the main source supporting the welfare of human life, so that popular art is originally defined as the preference art, it goes into industry and commerce. Thus, an art, especially folk art becomes the most effective field and aspect of being creates and arranges as a commodity for the popular culture machine, namely the mass media of television. The most important product of the entertainment industry is a commodified *audience* who is then sold to advertisers. The development of popular art in the form of the popular art industry will give more narrow space for all kinds of cultures that cannot make money, and

something that cannot be mass production for the society, such as art and folk culture. The popular art phenomenon is part of popular culture development which uses television as a medium to commodify various arts that can get profit.² *Dramaturgy Goffman*, according to Jazuli (2014) a show is an appreciative activity that brings elements together in the performing art as an artwork and actor as a player who performs on stage. The audience acts as an appreciator using the stage as a place of appreciation.

Dramaturgy theory discusses something related to the problems surrounding the actor as a person who has a duty in the show. While interacting, the actor wants to show a sense of himself or herself that can be accepted by others. But when presenting himself or herself, the actor realizes that the *audience* can interfere his / her performance.

Methodology, Data source is acquired through data collection technique with several steps: (a) *observation* of subject and object of study as a data collection technique used to observe several participants. Observation is done in order to be

able to observe the show directly along with the supporting elements; (b) *interviews* done to informant as a data collection technique that refers to the implication of the study; and (c) *literature study* to obtain reference data regarding the existence of show, and documents to obtain data through *audio-visual* recording. *Data Analysis Research*, on the existence of the show involves arranging and solving in various parts. Then summarize and looking for patterns, discovering what is important and what needs to be learned, and making decision about what to say to others. *Data Validity Research* is done through "triangulation" which is mostly related to data collection and analysis methods at the same time, including using informant as a tool for validity testing and analysis of study result by prioritizing the effectiveness of the process and the wanted result.

SUPPORTING ASPECT OF TRADITIONAL THEATERSHOW

Traditional theater show is inseparable from various supporting aspects that are interrelated and

bound to maintain the existence of the show. People based performing art often experiences to compete with the popular art based entertainment industry. In *ludruk* show, it involves many artists and economically they continue to depend on staging activities for their livelihood. Since the popular art industry has come together with the current pandemic situation, it has caused less contribution, and even paralyzed the production activity of the show for performer. This is because of the impact of various aspects that becomes a support of the *ludruk* show having problem.

1. The packaging of show

The packaging for the show or *ludruk* story from the past until now has not changed, unless there is a specific request related to the theme of the event. The hope is to preserve the form of packaging, so that the presentation structure of *ludruk* has never changed by maintaining the old patterns, including: opening (*ngremo dance, bedhayan*), humour (*dagelan*), and entering the main story. To determine the packaging of the show that people are interested in, it must really understand and

know the "story" and the audience interest.

2. Performer

Actor or performer is an artist who manifests the role of a play into the reality of performing arts, as an artist he/she cannot be separated from the common elements of humanity, as well as from his/her function as a human being in the environment and culture value in which he/she lives and works. Personal attractiveness/charisma will appear and become very important related to his/her appearance and the way he/she solves the problems faced (Anirun, 1998). The current actor of *ludruk* show is a collaboration between senior player and young player. The issue of player regeneration is indeed very difficult and dealing with all communities, especially entertainment such as *ludruk* which has different player character. It is rare for player to have good ability like their senior.

3. Audience of the show

The audience is a very decisive aspect in *ludruk* show, and it often becomes the final target of every show. Whenever it has less audience, the show will fade away. The

problem is in the difference situation and condition of the show, the audience now is not the audience when *ludruk* show is in its heyday. The audiences have been formed by their respective eras, so they have different tastes and behaviors, and have been nurtured and raised on the glory of television medium which is vulnerable to being influenced by environmental condition.

4. Artistic arrangement of the show

Artistic is an inseparable part in the structure of *ludruk* presentation, and it becomes a very decisive support for visual and audio show. Artistic is a link that binds each other, including arrangement: setting/*kelir* - decoration, makeup - wardrobe, light, sound, and equipment. The artistic arrangement in *ludruk* show is usually directly related to the structure of the play/story being performed, and it has function to bring the characters who are played like in a real life and in *ludruk* scene completely

5. Management of the show

Management as *ludruk* managing system, is run based on two fields that always complement and strengthen each other, namely the aspect management of *art community* and the aspect management

of *show activity*. The success of managing these two aspects can determine the existence of the community and *ludrukshow*. Management in the performing arts community, in fact, is more complex in its management than other issues. This is based on the purpose in maintaining the survival of the community which leads to the welfare of members, and production activity that lead to show activity.

6. Patron Show

Patron is institution or figure who can "protect" or provide various material and spiritual support for community activity and *ludrukshow*. Community or traditional theater show, people based are facing competition with the popular arts based entertainment industry. In order to maintain the survival of the community and the existence of *ludrukshow*, both fields often rely on *patron* as their protector or protectors.

THE FORM OF CHANGE IN TRADITIONAL THEATER SHOW

Ludrukshow and audience are commodified by television medium, so that it has an impact in *the form of*

art performance and the behavior of the audience. The effect and the impact influence the change which gradually also affected in the production of artworks. The making of *liveshow* turned into virtual show (*online*) on television, causing a change in audience behavior in traditional theater show.

1. The Change of Staging Form

In the beginning, traditional theater show is always held *live* in a theater or arena that has been prepared before. This activity gives a form of staging that brings emotion together as a direct interaction between the player and the audience. The presence of popular art which is marked by the growth and development of television medium has created a *hegemony* to influence and control the public space. So that the entertainment industry presented by television medium can do show virtually (*online*) in order to attract the audience. However, the show which is done live on the stage, it is no longer easy to find, and it turns into a form of staging which does virtually on television medium.

2. The Change of Audience

Behavior

Through the power that is owned and run by the television medium, it can cause a change to the mindset and behavior of the audience. The sophistication of technology and the fast network information that is owned with its various broadcasting programs, it has transformed into a powerful force and it is able to influence and control through message which conveys to the public or the audience.

THE EXISTENCE OF TRADITIONAL THEATERSHOW

Wherever *Ludruk* show, it is closely related to the interest and audience support who watches the show (*performance*). However, audience satisfaction is also closely related to art communication that is built through visual play on the *stage*. So that the existence of the show internally can be achieved through the implementation of various supporting aspects of the show. The implementation of the supporting aspects of the performance has a relationship with one another. Thus, the practice must be done

comprehensively, this is because the existence of the show can be influenced by external factor, such as the development of popular art which is marked by the growth of television medium and the pandemic situation.

1. The Phenomenon of the Popular Art Industry in the Pandemic Situation

The pandemic situation which is currently infect the world, it has not only affected the economic system and various other important aspects, but also infected traditional theater show by destroying performance activity, meanwhile it has been a place for artists to earn money for their lives. Many shows are eventually postponed, and even the production of the show is canceled by holding it virtually through the entertainment industry on various television media. Although in essence, it cannot replace the interaction that is built through live performance between player and the audience.

2. The Transformation of Space and Time

Traditional theater show that is performed *live*, it is used as a reference to read the audience

behavior. So that the managers of the popular arts industry often use the capability of television medium to commodify various events into performances that gets profit "financial" and "market".



Picture 1: The event of Liga Dangdut (LIDA) IV Indonesia 2021, Ratna's performance on Jakarta, with technological

Although the method used has created a transformation of space and time in the show of performing arts. The audience is used as a consumer or passive *audience* now, this is because the audience in television medium show can be set through various situations, such as : clapping, laughing, sad or crying. This means that television medium has the ability to produce and control the show and the audience behavior in the form of change.

3. Analogy in Dramaturgy of Ervind Goffman

Goffman theatrical concept of

performance that distinguishes between the *front stage* and *back stage*, in fact, its implementation is in the community and traditional theater performance (*tobong*). This is as a place where the arts community regularly performs the show, as a place for daily activity, and moreover, as a permanent *base camp*. Goffman theatrical analogy is also used to implement various "social phenomena" that occurs in traditional theater show. On this pandemic situation, *ludruk* show as a traditional theater is closely related to the popular arts industry. Social phenomenon is reflected in two fields: 1) the front stage as a place where traditional theater show can be held *live* or *virtual*; and 2) backstage as a place where the popular art industry creates commodification through television medium. If the *audience* appears on the back stage (popular arts industry), then traditional theater show becomes unattractive and it seems decrease. In this case, there is an issue that should be kept secret in front of the audience, but it has been known, namely about things that are set to gain financial or market benefits.

CONCLUSION

The situation of Covid-19 pandemic is a different issue from the popular art development which is marked by the growth of television medium, and finally the entertainment industry is born. The pandemic situation is presence at the time of popular art development or the entertainment industry in television medium. Its implementation depends on how each "need" or "interest" in it that can be implemented. Traditional theater show is held *live* (*live*) or through virtual show (*online*), of course, it depends on how the performer and the audience apprehend it. The management of the show has a different character, but the important thing is how it can make "the existence of traditional theater show" better and guaranteed. The decline of the existence *ludruk* show which performs *live* also due to the lack of "space" for traditional theatrical process and performance.

Artist and audience are expected to be wise to comprehend and adapting to the impact of the pandemic situation and the popular art

development. Art performer must be creative in looking for new opportunity to maintain the existence of the performing arts community and the existence of traditional theatrical show. It is needed to find the way to revive traditional art show people based by establishing facility and infrastructure as activity centers in order to attract the audience. The way to revive traditional art show can be done by coaching the player and manager, in this case, the institution can do as a patron of the performing arts community. It is still needed for a "new model" of *nobong* concept, and various *events* describing the glory of traditional art which presents in a new form according to the demand of the era.

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