

Transformation of Ketoprak: from Folk-Arts into Academics-Arts

Budi Waluyo, Favorita Kurwidaria, Astiana Ajeng Rahadini, Dewi Pangestu Said,
Bagus Wahyu Setyawan

Pendidikan Bahasa Jawa FKIP UNS
Mas_bewe@yahoo.com; bagusws93@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Ketoprak is a kind of Javanese traditional arts. Ketoprak is include in one of traditional drama variety. The beginning of ketoprak art is the folks-art as an expression of the social life of the farmers. Focus of this research is to describe and explain about transformation ketoprak arts from folks-art into academics-art which have education values. This research is qualitative descriptive research with data resource take from some of ketoprak recordings. Data analysis using content analysis with the phase of analysis are data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Result of this research can be find that ketoprak already being transformation process. From the first, ketoprak art is a thanksgiving expression of the farmer, now become art performance which being in demand by the academics. This is proven by ketoprak performing arts be presenting in some college events. However, the academics-ketoprak still need process of provide guidance not to lose essence and spirit of ketoprak performing arts.

Key Words: transformation, ketoprak performing arts, folks-arts, academics-arts

INTRODUCTION

Art which is sourced from the Javanese culture is very diverse, whether it is art that is performed by individuals or group on stage. One of the arts that comes from the Javanese culture is *ketoprak*. *Ketoprak* is a form of traditional theater arts staged in groups and shown the story taken from the history of the Java kingdom (Setyawan, et al, 2017: 142). However, ketoprak is not an art that grows in the palace or called the term art with the *Seni Adiluhung*.

Ketoprak is a folk art created by people who do not belong to the noble class or royal class. Ketoprak as folk art was originally staged by a group of farmers as an expression of gratitude for the harvest season. Concerning ketoprak as folk art is also presented by Purwantoro (2014: 105) that "performances of ketoprak are not only a form of entertainment but also act as a medium for channeling the voices and ideas of the tobacco farming community" or ketoprak performances in the community not only serves as entertainment media but also used as a medium of delivering messages and aspirations of the community. As a popular art, ketoprak is inseparable with the value of mutual cooperation and togetherness. This can be seen from the dialogue in the form of songs in ketoprak represents it as a popular art because it inseparable motive with the value of mutual cooperation and togetherness. At the beginning of staging ketoprak players and the audience sing together songs that exist in staging ketoprak

At that time ketoprak art form was still very simple, the musical accompaniment was only tools rice mortar (*lesung*) so at that time ketoprak was termed as *ketoprak lesung*, (Hatley, 2010). The story originally sung was still about everyday social issues,

sometimes also interspersed with dance and singing. However, over the time ketoprak has been progressing, both in terms of performances, musical accompaniment, costumes, and story of song. Waryanti (2015: 6-7) categorizes ketoprak story into kejawen, Majapahit, hero, Egyptian, Chinese, heroics, romance, Indonesian self-defense art (silat), horror, humor, detective and popular folklore. Each story has a uniqueness in terms of the play and the costumes used.

Ketoprak arts enthusiasts were also growing, not only among the people and farmers, but some circles began to love and cultivate ketoprak art. Ketoprak also began to be developed by noble or royal people. In Solo, ketoprak began to be developed by RMT Wreksadiningrat in 1908.. At that time RMT Wreksadiningrat trained the youths in Widyataman village to practice ketoprak which was at the beginning of the show by using dances. If in 1908 coincided with RMT training period. Wreksadiningrat was behind of ketoprak existence, then the year 1909 was the first stage of ketoprak that coincided with the marriage of Kanjeng Pangeran Adipati Arya Paku Alam VII with Gusti Bendara Raden Ajeng Retna Puwasa, daughter of Sri Susuhan Paku Buwana in Surakarta which took place in Kepatihan Surakarta on the 5th January 1909 (Setyawan, 2016: 737).

Regarding the history of ketoprak Endraswara (2014: 176) said that art ketoprak as one form of folk art performance, did not escape the impact of cultural transformation. Since the birth of *ketoprak lesung* followed by *ketoprak barangan*, then *ketoprak semuwanan*, to *ketoprak tobong*, and now so now *ketoprak radio* (audio) and *ketoprak television* (audiovisual) shows that ketoprak continuously has been struggling with an increasingly modern culture. So, ketoprak art is a dynamic art, open and accept to the development and change.

Ketoprak art development has also reached education world. Ketoprak originally only as the entertainment art of the people, now has many functions. Some functions of ketoprak art such as as a performer of religious ceremonies, ceremonial commemoration, as a means of campaigning against a program, as a means of providing education to the community, as a place to train mental and speech skills, even ketoprak is also included in a commercial commodities commercialized.

In higher education, ketoprak art has also started to grow and favored by the academics. Academics, originally in reality struggle to develop science, are now beginning to study ketoprak. This is proved by the use of staging ketoprak as events organized by university. In addition, ketoprak art has also been in demand by the students. This is evidenced by the number of Student Activity Unit (UKM) which one of the activities is to practice and develop ketoprak. Therefore, this research will discuss deeply about the form of ketoprak transformation which was originally a folk art into academics art that much in demand by the academic community in university.

METHODS

This research is qualitative descriptive. The main focus in this research is to describe and explain in depth about the transformation of ketoprak which was originally a popular art to becoming an academic art interested by the academic community of college. The data were taken from several stages of ketoprak organized by students. Techniques of data collection was by using techniques refer and recorded some transformation points in

ketoprak performances among students. In addition, the authors also conducted interviews with several students who became ketoprak players. Data analysis used flow models of analysis, with stages of data analysis are data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. To test the validity of data, triangulation technique data was used, namely triangulation of data sources and triangulation theory.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Ketoprak art transformation from folk art to an academics art certainly there are some changes and developments. The changes are caused by several factors, including the different artists, function and purpose of performances and also adjusting with ketoprak performances staging. Perpetrators of ketoprak art originally were ordinary people of the farmers who in fact never plunged in the world of education, would be different if the artist ketoprak is among students. The difference between ketoprak as folk art with ketoprak as the academics art is of course triggered by several factors, such as the difference of background of the player or ketoprak player, audience of ketoprak performances, the form of the staging presentation, the purpose or the vision brought in the performance of ketoprak, the charge in the staging is also different. In the next discussion the transformation contained in art ketoprak academics that distinguishes it with the art of ketoprak as folk art will be discussed which is viewed from the form of staging presentation, directing techniques, vision or performance goals, and the variety of language used in the performances. The explanation of the transformation of ketoprak art from popular art into an art of academics is as follows:

Form of Staging Presentation

At the beginning of the development of ketoprak art, the performance used a form of dialogue in the form of songs. The songs frequently used were *Kuputarung*, *Megamendung*, *Simak-simak*, *Bluluktiba*, and *Randhangangsu*. At first, Ketoprak staging was in form of singing sung by ketoprak players, the audience also sing along so that togetherness bond was very visible here. In early stage, the story told about farmers working in rice fields. Wife who brought food. The tool he carried was basket and hoe. Performed with dancing. The costume or clothing was still very simple. The dialogue of the ketoprak players was partly in the form of singing (Waryanti, 2015: 2).

At the time of its development, ketoprak art had been progressing in terms of staging presentation. From what was originally called ketoprak lesung, the staging ketoprak with the main tool was a mortar or wood pounder tool. Furthermore, it developed into ketoprak ongkek or barangan, which was already using gamelan device but incomplete. Until now called the term ketoprak gamelan has been using the complete gamelan as music musical accompanied (Setyawan, et al, 2017: 143).

The staging package of academic ketoprak held by the students had been very different from ketoprak development. Ketoprak students had started using the latest staging techniques. At the beginning, the stage of ketoprak was held in the yard, now the stage of ketoprak had been staged in several buildings. This writer found ketoprak group of students in Universitas Sebelas Maret Surakarta they are ketoprak group UPKD FKIP and Wiswakarman. Both groups of ketoprak usually hold a stage at the Theater Arena Surakarta Arts Park, Wayang Orang Sriwedari building, and at Balekambang Arts Building.

In addition to a staging place that has been developed. Ketoprak group of academics also began to use the latest technology in staging ketoprak. The technology used is the lighting, staging techniques, sound system, costumes, and some other supporting elements of staging already using cutting edge technology.

Directing Techniques

Ketoprak directing techniques as folk art did not use the conceptual directing techniques. The players were free to express and interact with the audience, because at the beginning of the staging ketoprak only a song by ketoprak players sung together with the audience. Furthermore, known as casting technique. The term 'casting', which is the elaboration of the story from beginning to end, by ketoprak director who performed before ketoprak staging. At the time of casting is also done roles and scenes distribution (Endraswara, 2014: 176). Here the ability and experience ketoprak players in improvisation is completely needed.

Along with the development of the era, ketoprak art has started using the script. Ketoprak script was written by the director ketoprak to facilitate the player in choosing the language used in the dialog, interpret the nature and characters, and used to create a dramatic flow in ketoprak performances. Script play or ketoprak script by Satoto (2012: 7) is said as source of stories that must be interpreted by the entire worker of theater before the performance. Directing techniques in academic ketoprak mostly use the script. With the script, ketoprak players who in fact are still in the learning phase can easily understand the story in ketoprak script.

In the staging preparation stage there are also differences. Conventional ketoprak that still uses casting technique does not take long preparation. The players just come a few hours before the performance and follow casting activities (Lanjari, 2016: 165). After the casting is finished and the players already know the task and role in the staging, then the staging is done. Make up and costumes done alone by professional ketoprak players. Ketoprak academics whose players are still in the stage of learning, require a long preparation time. Usually, the preparation time for exercise approximately 1 month before the staged ketoprak. For make-up and costumes, the students still need help from makeup and makeup experts.

Vision or Purpose of Staging

As already noted in the previous discussion, the performance of ketoprak is held when the farmers are carrying out the harvest season. The farmers held a staging of ketoprak as an expression of gratitude for the harvest he obtained. The role of ketoprak as folk art is very visible from the value of mutual cooperation and togetherness between players ketoprak with the audience who mostly come from the farmers. The next development, ketoprak art has entered the industry and has many fans. The function and purpose of staging ketoprak which was originally as the entertainment art of the people into art that can be commercialized to generate profits.

Differences in the arts ketoprak academics derived from the Student Activity Unit, ketoprak performances not only as an entertainment, but have another vision. Among the goals of academic ketoprak performances is as a follow-up of the work program of each group ketoprak students. The group of academic ketoprak mostly under the

auspices of the Student Activity Unit and one of its work programs is performing regular performances every year or within a specified time (Cawthon, et al, 2011: 45).

Besides as a form of self-actualization of the work program of the organization that shadows, staging ketoprak students are also conducted in the framework of socialization and ingestion of Student Activity Unit that shelter. Some organizations require a member to keep the organization's activities running. One member recruitment is performed by staging a ketoprak whose players are members of the organization.

In its development, ketoprak academics consisting of students are also often told to hold a staging ketoprak to fill important events in college. Such as, if there is inauguration of a building and to welcome important guests from off-campus agencies. In fact, at the Universitas Sebelas Maret will be held a staging ketoprak that players not only consists of students, but also involves the ranks of lecturers and even rector of Sebelas Maret University also participated as a ketoprak player.

Variety of Languages

Ketoprak is one of a variety of traditional drama that uses a variety of Javanese language in the dialogue. It is as proposed by Lisbijanto that dialogue in ketoprak script using Java language. The Javanese language used in the Ketoprak arts is more likely to use the Java language variety of *basa kedhaton* by using a variety of clear base-uploading (2013: 5). The use of the Java language variety of kedhaton base in staging ketoprak because the story is staged in the staging ketoprak background story from the Javanese royal period. Therefore, the use of various *basa kedhaton* is intended so that ketoprak performances can represent the social situation contained in the palace.

In staging ketoprak academics, the language used also still use the Java language variety of *basa kedhaton*. In various scenes that are important, such as scenes set in the kingdom, the language used is the Java language variety of *basa kedhaton*. However, in staging academics ketoprak also used some variety of languages such as Indonesian and English. This is adapted to the audience who watch the performance of academic ketoprak mostly from academicians in the college.

CONCLUSION

Ketoprak art was originally a folk art that was staged by the farmers as a form of gratitude for the harvests that he obtained. The beginning of ketoprak performances is still simple, that is only telling the matter of everyday life and dialogue only in the form of songs. In its development ketoprak art has begun to spread not only as a popular art which is in demand by ordinary people. Ketoprak arts enthusiasts have begun to reach up to academics on campus. Many groups ketoprak the players and the perpetrators are academics and students. It makes ketoprak art undergo transformation process. Transformation in the art of ketoprak academics that make different with ketoprak as folk art can be seen from the aspect of staging packaging, directing techniques, vision and performance goals, and the variety of language used. Although ketoprak academic art has undergone a process of transformation and there is a difference with ketoprak as folk art, but the art of ketoprak academics still keep the essence and spirit of ketoprak art itself.

REFERENCES

- Cawthon, Stephanie W. Dawson, Katie. & Ihorn, Shasta. 2011. "Activating Student Engagement Through Drama-Based Instruction" dalam *Journal for Learning through the Arts*, Vol. 7, No. 1. University of Texas at Austin, United States.
- Endraswara, Suwardi. 2014. *Metode Pembelajaran Drama: Apresiasi, Ekspresi, dan Pengkajian*. Yogyakarta: Penerbit Caps.
- Hatley, Barbara. 2010. "Javanese Performances on an Indonesia StageL. Contesting Culture, Embracing Change" on *Asian Theatre Journal*, 27 (1), pp. 185-187.
- Lanjari, Restu. 2016. " Political Practice and Its Implication on Folk Art Marginalization (Case Study of Wayang Orang/ Human Puppet Ngesti Pandhowo)" on *JURNAL HARMONIA*, Vol. 16, No. 2, tahun 2016.
- Lisbijanto, Herry. 2013. *Ketoprak*. Yogyakarta: Graha Ilmu.
- Purwantoro, Agus. 2014. "Wayang Godhonk: The Transgressive Resistance in Fine Art." *Asian Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities*, 3 (3), August 2014.
- Satoto, Soediro. 2012. *Analisis Drama & Teater: Jilid I*. Yogyakarta: Penerbit Ombak.
- Setyawan, Bagus W. 2016. "Membaca Sejarah melalui Kegiatan Membaca Naskah Ketoprak (Literasi pada Ranah Sastra Jawa)" on Prosiding Seminar Internasional RIKSA BAHASA X, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia.
- Setyawan, Bagus W; Saddhono, Kundharu; & Rakhmawati, Ani. 2017. "Sociological Aspect and Local Specificity in the Classical Ketoprak Script of Surakarta Style" on *Journal Language and Literature*, Vol. 17, No. 2, October 2017.
- Waryanti, Endang. 2015. "Sejarah Perkembangan Kethoprak Siswo Budoyo" on *Jurnal IKADBUDI*, Vol. 4, No. 10, Oktober 2015.