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## Regeneration of Jatiduwur Mask Puppet Performance Artists at the Tri Purwo Budoyo Studio, Kesamben, Jombang.

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**Abstract:** Abstract Wayang Topeng Jatiduwur is one of the traditional performing arts with high historical and aesthetic value in East Java. The continuity of this art form is highly dependent on the success of its practitioners' regeneration. This study aims to examine the process of regenerating art practitioners at Sanggar Tri Purwo Budoyo, Kesamben, Jombang. Using a qualitative descriptive method, data was collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. Data validity was ensured through triangulation, while data analysis included reduction, presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results of the study indicate that the transmission of the Wayang Topeng Jatiduwur performance has undergone various eras, thereby the regeneration process has experienced vertical, horizontal, and diagonal transmission processes. These findings suggest that Sanggar Tri Purwo Budoyo applies an adaptive and contextual cultural preservation model.

**Keywords:** regeneration, Jatiduwur Mask Puppetry, art activists, Sanggar Tri Purwo Budoyo, cultural inheritance

## 1. INTRODUCTION

East Java is a region rich in diverse local arts, shaped by a blend of local, historical, religious, and social values that are alive and thriving within the community. Various forms of art, such as dance, traditional music, folk theater, and wayang, flourish and have become an integral part of the daily life of East Java's society. These arts serve not only as a form of entertainment but also carry ritual, social, and educational functions. For example, in wayang performances, moral messages, philosophies of life, and tales of heroism from the Ramayana, Mahabharata, and Panji epics are often conveyed symbolically and dramatically.

One form of art that reflects this cultural richness is Wayang Topeng Jatiduwur, a traditional performance art originating from the village of Jatiduwur, Kesamben Subdistrict, Jombang Regency. This performance has grown within an agrarian and religious community and has become an important part of local social and cultural rituals. Wayang Topeng Jatiduwur not only provides entertainment but also contains spiritual, educational, and philosophical values. The mask performance was originally intended to "summon the spirits of ancestors" to visit their living relatives and family members. By wearing specific masks and other adornments, the mask dancers temporarily serve as vessels or homes for the "spirits" of their ancestors (Murgiyanto



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& Munardi, n.d.). The masks used are considered sacred and can only be performed under certain conditions by those deemed worthy. In the context of cultural preservation, the sustainability of this performance art depends heavily on the success of regenerating artists, as many local traditions have faced extinction due to the failure to transmit knowledge and skills to younger generations.

The Tri Purwo Budoyo Mask Puppet Theater plays a central role in the preservation of Jatiduwur Mask Puppet Theater. Since 2000, this theater has undergone various changes, both in terms of its inheritance system and performance patterns. Before officially becoming a theater, this community was only a community association in Jatiduwur Village. Now, after several leadership changes, the studio not only teaches Wayang Topeng in the form of dramatics to children but also provides training access to the broader community. This is because most elements of Wayang Topeng performances also include dance or movement, making it suitable for development as a form of dramatics.

Wayang Topeng Jatiduwur has been recognized as a ritualistic form of Wayang Topeng (Yanuartuti, 2018). Initially, the art of Wayang Topeng Jatiduwur was exclusively passed down through the lineage of the Ki Purwo family. However, since the year 2000, this tradition has opened up to the general public. Now, the studio offers training to children outside the family, including those from outside Jatiduwur Village. Additionally, Wayang Topeng education has begun to be introduced in schools as part of a local cultural preservation program. Wayang Topeng Jatiduwur performances are also increasingly invited to perform in various cities, proving its presence on a broader stage. Nevertheless, challenges remain, particularly from the progression of time and the tide of globalization, which shifts the interests of the younger generation toward popular culture, such as modern music and social media. In this context, the regeneration of artistic practitioners becomes crucial to ensure the continuity of existing traditions, keeping them alive and relevant.

This research was conducted because Wayang Topeng Jatiduwur is one of the oldest forms of mask puppetry in East Java. The Tri Purwo Budoyo Studio has made efforts to preserve this art form through regeneration by conducting regular training and involving the younger generation in artistic activities. This preservation process reflects how culture is passed down from generation to generation through learning, both formally and informally.

The theoretical framework used in this study refers to the theory of cultural inheritance systems proposed by (Cavalli-Sforza & Feldman, 1981), which identifies three types of inheritance: vertical, horizontal, and diagonal. This inheritance system is an important strategy in maintaining the existence of traditional arts in a society that is constantly changing. Cultural inheritance is seen as a process of transferring, passing on, and owning cultural values from one generation to the next in a continuous and simultaneous manner (Elvandari, 2020). The main objective is to preserve cultural values so that they remain alive, remembered, and do not become extinct.

Based on this description, this study aims to analyze the regeneration process of Wayang Topeng Jatiduwur practitioners at Sanggar Tri Purwo Budoyo, Jatiduwur, Kesamben, Jombang.

## 2. METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with the aim of gaining an in-depth understanding of social and cultural phenomena in the context of the regeneration of Wayang Topeng Jatiduwur puppeteers at the Tri Purwo Budoyo studio. In qualitative research, researchers are directly involved with their research subjects in order to gain deep insights into various aspects of human, social, or cultural life (Sugiyono, 2010). This approach was chosen because it is capable of exploring the meanings, experiences, and interpretations given by individuals or groups to an event or social reality (W. Creswell, 2013).

Qualitative research methods emphasize direct interaction between the researcher and the research object, as well as an in-depth understanding of the cultural context underlying the phenomenon being studied. Therefore, this study focuses on observation and comprehensive understanding of the practice of artistic inheritance in the studio environment.

Data collection techniques in this study were carried out through three main methods, namely participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Participatory observation was conducted through the researcher's direct involvement in activities taking place at the Tri Purwo Budoyo Studio, such as Wayang Topeng Jatiduwur rehearsals and performances. Through this method, the researcher was able to directly observe the patterns of interaction, the process of inheritance, and the dynamics that occur within the studio. Furthermore, in-depth interviews were conducted with key figures in the studio, young artists, and community leaders who have knowledge and involvement in the process of regenerating art activists. The purpose of these interviews is to explore more in-depth and authentic information about inheritance strategies and the challenges faced. Additionally, documentation techniques are used to collect various archives, photos, videos, and other supporting documents related to the sanggar's activities and the history of the development of Wayang Topeng Jatiduwur. This documentation serves as supplementary data to strengthen the results of observations and interviews. Collecting various archives, photos, videos, and supporting documents related to the activities of the studio and the history of Wayang Topeng inheritance.

Data validity is tested through triangulation of techniques and sources to ensure the accuracy and credibility of the data. The research results are valid if there is consistency between the collected data and the actual data occurring in the research object. The main purpose of data validation is to ensure that the research results reflect the actual reality of the phenomenon being studied (Sugiyono, 2010). Data analysis is conducted in stages, starting from data reduction, data presentation, to systematic conclusion drawing. This process allows researchers to understand the dynamics of regeneration in a contextual and in-depth manner.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Profile of Sanggar Tri Purwo Budoyo Jatiduwur

Sanggar Tri Purwo Budoyo is an arts center located in Jatiduwur Village, Kesamben District, Jombang Regency, East Java. This center plays a strategic role in the preservation and development of the traditional Wayang Topeng Jatiduwur performance art. According to historical records, this art form has been thriving since the 19th century, specifically around 1890, and is believed to have a strong connection to the culture of the Majapahit era. A distinctive feature of this center is its system of passing down artistic values and skills based on the lineage of Ki Purwo, the founder of Wayang Topeng Jatiduwur. Today, the center is managed by the fifth generation, who continue to uphold the traditional norms and philosophy of the art form.

In its activities, the studio serves as a learning and training space for children and teenagers to explore various aspects of Wayang Topeng Jatiduwur. They learn dance techniques with symbolic movements, play gamelan as the main accompaniment for performances, and understand the timeless stories that form part of the cultural heritage. Classic stories such as "Patah Kudanarawangsa" and "Wiruncana Murca" are still preserved, but the studio is also open to developing popular stories such as "Ande-Ande Lumut" and Islamic stories such as "Masjid Demak" (Yanuartuti, 2015). This reflects the studio's adaptation to the changing times without losing its traditional identity.

Significant transformation is also evident in the change in the inheritance system. Before 2000, inheritance was exclusively carried out within the extended family of Ki Purwo. This process involves an individual learning and adapting their mindset and attitudes to the customs, norms, and regulations embedded in the culture, and through repeated imitation, an action becomes a stable pattern, and the norms governing it are "cultivated" (Wulansari & Hartono, 2021). However, Sanggar Tri Purwo Budoyo has now opened up more inclusive access by involving the general public through open training. The regeneration of art practitioners is carried out through three main patterns:

First, vertical inheritance, which is the transfer of knowledge and skills from parents to children in a direct line of descent. This pattern ensures the authentic continuity of artistic values and techniques within the family. Second, horizontal inheritance, which is the process of training individuals from the same generation without family ties. This allows people outside the Ki Purwo family to participate in the preservation of art. Third, diagonal inheritance, which is the process of transmission from senior art practitioners to younger generations who are not related by blood, for example through extracurricular programs at schools or intensive informal training.

The training conducted by the studio takes place regularly every week and is open to children from elementary school age to teenagers. These activities not only train technical skills such as dance and music but also instill philosophy, spiritual values, and performance ethics in the participants. With an educational and participatory approach, Sanggar Tri Purwo Budoyo has successfully created an adaptive, inclusive, and relevant regeneration system in line with current socio-cultural conditions. These efforts ensure that Wayang Topeng Jatiduwur remains alive as a dynamic and sustainable cultural heritage.

### **Vertical Transmission Regeneration System**

Vertical inheritance is one of the main forms of cultural regeneration that occurs through direct kinship relationships, generally from parents to children. In the context of performing arts, this inheritance involves not only the transfer of technical skills, but also the values, norms, and symbolic meanings inherent in tradition. This mechanism resembles social genetic inheritance, in which cultural knowledge and practices are preserved through informal education, early childhood upbringing, and imitation within the family environment.

At Sanggar Tri Purwo Budoyo, the form of vertical inheritance is clearly evident in the transmission patterns carried out by the founding family, especially by Ki Purwo as the central figure in the history of Wayang Topeng Jatiduwur. The children of Ki Purwo's family are educated directly from an early age on various aspects of the performance—from dance techniques and staging, mask making, mastery of Panji stories, to an understanding of the spiritual and philosophical values contained in each play.

This pattern of inheritance demonstrates how the art of Wayang Topeng Jatiduwur initially developed exclusively within the family. This tradition is hereditary and passed down from one generation to the next within the Ki Purwo family lineage. This system serves to preserve the noble values that form the core of the performance, while ensuring that the technical quality and symbolic meaning remain authentically intact.

The connection to the research title is evident in the crucial role of vertical inheritance in the regeneration of artists at the Sanggar Tri Purwo Budoyo. Regeneration in this context is not merely technical training but the continuation of a cultural identity inherited internally and deeply. This pattern serves as the foundational basis before the sanggar opens itself to cross-community inheritance. Therefore, the success of the regeneration of Wayang Topeng Jatiduwur artists cannot be separated from the strength of vertical cultural transmission as an effort to maintain the continuity of tradition within the family, while also inspiring the expansion of transmission beyond the core community.

### **Horizontal Transmission Regeneration System**

Horizontal inheritance refers to the process of transferring cultural values, skills, and knowledge between individuals within the same generation, without kinship ties. In the context of performing arts, this pattern generally occurs through social interaction within the community, shared practices, and collective learning that takes place informally or semi-formally.

At Sanggar Tri Purwo Budoyo, horizontal inheritance has flourished as the sanggar has transformed into an open space for the general public. This process allows anyone who is interested in Wayang Topeng Jatiduwur—regardless of family background—to learn and participate in performances. The community around Jatiduwur, including children and teenagers from outside Ki Purwo's family, actively participate in regular training sessions held by the studio every week.



Figure 1 Regular practice at Sanggar Tri Purwo Budoyo (Source: Arina, 2024)

The pattern of horizontal inheritance is an important turning point in the regeneration of art activists, as it opens up wider access to cultural transfer. Through interactions among workshop participants, skills such as puppetry, dance, gamelan playing, and understanding classical narratives like “Patah Kudanarawangsa” or “Wiruncana Murca” are disseminated in a participatory manner. Additionally, ethical values of performance and philosophical understanding are instilled through collective practice.

Its relevance to the article's title is evident in the crucial role of horizontal inheritance as part of the regeneration process of Wayang Topeng Jatiduwur performers. This model positions Sanggar Tri Purwo Budoyo as an open learning center, expanding the scope of regeneration beyond family circles. Thus, regeneration is not merely about inheritance but also about expanding an inclusive and adaptive artistic community.

### **Diagonal Transmission Regeneration System**

Diagonal inheritance is a form of cultural inheritance that involves individuals from different generations without any blood relationship. This system usually takes place in the context of formal education or non-formal training programs that bridge the gap between senior artists and younger generations from outside the family community.

In practice at Sanggar Tri Purwo Budoyo, diagonal inheritance is carried out through collaboration with schools around Jatiduwur Village. Wayang Topeng art is introduced as part of extracurricular activities or structured local cultural training. Children without an artistic family background still have access to intensive learning through direct guidance from the sanggar's artists.

This inheritance model makes an important contribution to the regeneration of art practitioners, as it not only expands the participant base but also creates cultural sustainability through educational channels. The role of mentors—in this case, senior art practitioners from the studio—is key in transferring knowledge, work ethic, and the spiritual values inherent in the Wayang Topeng Jatiduwur performance art.

The connection to the research title is very strong, as the regeneration process through the diagonal pattern shows how Sanggar Tri Purwo Budoyo not only preserves tradition but also initiates the systematic training of artists across generations. This pattern makes regeneration a broader and more strategic cultural movement, addressing the challenges of the times amid declining interest among young people in traditional arts.



Figure 2 Extracurricular Activities at School (Source: Yayak, 2024)

Figure 2 above shows evidence that the art of Jatiduwur Mask Puppetry has been passed down diagonally or indirectly to extracurricular institutions in several schools around the village of Jatiduwur. This art form was spread by Yayak, who is also a trainer at the mask puppet theater that was established by his family lineage or vertical inheritance. Yayak is also the son of Ki Yaud, who has been trusted as the puppeteer from 2015 until the present.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The regeneration of Jatiduwur Mask Puppet performers at the Tri Purwo Budoyo Studio is a systematic and contextual process of cultural preservation. Based on the results of the study, the regeneration process is carried out through three patterns of cultural inheritance, namely vertical, horizontal, and diagonal inheritance. These three patterns indicate that the studio not only preserves traditional values within the family context but also develops open strategies to reach a broader audience and younger generations outside the core community.

Vertical transmission serves as the foundation for the continuity of tradition through direct kinship ties, while horizontal transmission enables peer-to-peer training and learning among individuals not bound by blood relations. Diagonal inheritance strengthens the continuity of traditions through formal education and training institutions, so that the regeneration of art practitioners is not limited to the family or local community alone.

Sanggar Tri Purwo Budoyo has successfully positioned itself as a training center and guardian of the traditional values of Wayang Topeng Jatiduwur that is responsive to social and temporal changes. These preservation efforts are carried out through educational, spiritual,

and participatory approaches that make the regeneration of art practitioners not only sustainable but also relevant and inclusive. As such, this studio can serve as an effective model for the regeneration of traditional performing arts practitioners for other art communities in Indonesia.

#### AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The author was directly involved in all stages of the research, from planning, field data collection, data analysis, to article writing. Observations and interviews were conducted by the author to obtain in-depth and authentic data related to the regeneration process of art activists at Sanggar Tri Purwo Budoyo. The author is also fully responsible for data collection regarding the analysis of the regeneration of Wayang Topeng Jatiduwur art activists at Sanggar Tri Purwo Budoyo Jatiduwur Kesamben Jombang.

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