

The Whip Is Jerked, the Audience Is Jerked: The Hegemony of the Whip in Abdul Muluk's Theater

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Abstract

The whip is an important element in Abdul Muluk's Traditional Theater performance. The whip is made of rattan whose length is adjusted as desired. *Abdul Muluk* is a traditional theater that developed around the 1930s in Jambi Province, Indonesia. The story of Abdul Muluk comes from the poem Sultan Abdul Muluk written by King Ali Haji during the Malay Kingdom. This study aims to analyze how the whip plays a role in the performance and identify its influence so that it becomes hegemonic in Abdul Muluk's traditional theater performance. Using a qualitative method with an ethnographic approach to understand the perspectives of actors and audiences regarding *pecut*, and using a theoretical anthropological approach. Data were obtained through observation of video documentation of Abdul Muluk's traditional theater performances, through in-depth interviews with actors, art observers, audiences, and theater artists in Jambi. Data analysis used the Miles and Huberman Model, through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results is the whip shows the meaning of control, masculinity and patriarchy. These findings provide a deep understanding of how *pecut* can reflect the culture of Jambi society. Abdul Muluk's existence is not only important as a local heritage, but also as evidence of the history and identity of Malay culture that once triumphed in Jambi Province. Through a deep understanding of the whip, it can help artists, culturalists, tradition actors, and the government to maintain and preserve the whip in its originality and integrity of values.

Keywords: hegemony, whip, Abdul Muluk's traditional theater

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Introduction

The whip is an important part of the performance. The whip is one of the properties used in Abdul Muluk's traditional theater performances. The whip not only functions as a property, but has a significant role in controlling the storyline during the performance. The storyline refers to the relationship between elements in a narrative that can be found in oral productions or dialog that consists of a front plot and a back plot (Sánchez & Sunesson, 2023, p. 56). The whip is always present from the beginning to the last part of the performance. The presence of the whip is able to captivate the audience's attention to stay focused on the storytelling. The ability to captivate, immerse and engage the audience is a natural power of storytelling (Vanin et al., 2024, p. 3). Thus, *Pecut* is inseparable in Abdul Muluk's traditional theater performances.

Abdul Muluk is one of the traditional theaters that developed in *Muaro Jambi* Regency, Jambi Province. It is called traditional theater because it has the style and cultural elements of a particular region, and performances are formed by the habits of the community that are carried out continuously so that they are embedded in local culture (Juliastuty, 2014, p. 38). Local culture in Abdul Muluk's traditional theater gives it a free character, without being bound by rigid performance rules, spontaneous and improvisational (Sahrul N, 2015, p. 3). Improvisation is an important factor in the creation of theatre, part of experimentation and exploration; formally, improvisation as an acting technique; acting is understood as being oneself, not pretending to be someone else on stage with the aim of discovering and expressing emotions from within, which is often achieved through improvisation. (Szuster, 2019, pp. 376-378). This condition allows actors to act freely in response to dialog by other characters, taking into account the context of the dialog and the conditions of the audience. In this case, the actor expresses themselves and develops an awareness of themselves and others based on the situation at hand (Romanelli et al., 2017, p. 19).

Abdul Muluk is not just traditional theater, but a legacy that lives and dies over and over again. As a traditional theater it cannot be separated from its audience (Huang et al., 2022, p. 200). The audience is an essential element in theater. Abdul Muluk's dissemination process was done orally in the 1930s-1931 in *Muaro Jambi* Regency (Mulyani et al., 2020). A tradition in Greek times was theater used as a way to honor their gods (Asante, 2016, p. 14). The activity was passed down from generation to generation by the ancestors and is preserved by the community (Kora & Daryusti, 2024, p. 64). It had its heyday in 1968-1970, but was then swayed by the times, so it went into suspended animation in 1971-1982.

The whip is not just a prop; it is the driver of destiny in the performance. Every time the whip hits the table and makes a sound, it's not just the actors who are in action, but the entire story seems to be subject to the whip. The whip has complete authority in controlling the storyline, the actors on stage, and organizing each scene. Its presence encourages the audience to stay awake and wait for the next scene. The whip invites a deeper meaning, driving the destiny of all the elements involved in the performance, with the magical power carried in every beat. In every beat, the whip seems to be the voice of destiny that controls the fate of the characters on stage.

The stomping sound that echoes on stage is not just a sound, but it seems to control all elements in Abdul Muluk's theater performances and even the audience. This analysis is important to answer the problem of how the whip forms a hegemony that affects the structure and dynamics of Abdul Muluk's traditional theater performances. The purpose of the research

is to analyze how the whip plays a role in the performance and identify its influence so that it becomes hegemony in Abdul Muluk's traditional theater performance. This research will also present a new contribution by approaching Antonio Gramsci's theory of hegemony. This research also seeks to reveal how audiences receive and interpret the symbolization of power contained therein. Thus, this research is expected to provide a deeper understanding of the dynamics of hegemony in the context of performing arts.

Literature Review

There are various literatures that discuss the historical aspects, performance structure, and revitalization efforts of Abdul Muluk theatre. Extensively examines the relationship between Abdul Muluk's theater and the theater of the Malay aristocracy in Southeast Asia (Suboh, 2023). Examines the history and spread of Abdul Muluk theater in *Muaro Jambi* Regency, explaining how the influence of aristocratic theater from Malaysia helped shape the characteristics of the performance. Examines the development of Abdul Muluk theater in *Sembubuk* Village, one of the villages in *Muaro Jambi* Regency (Mulyani et al., 2020). Furthermore, in the context of revitalization, Lubis discusses how the *Pancarona* Theater group attempts to revive Abdul Muluk's traditional theater through more modern performances (Lubis, 2023). Then, Bahar highlighting how performing arts around the *Muaro Jambi* Temple National Cultural Heritage area can be developed as a tourism attraction (Bahar, 2022). Then, Notosutanto and Ilham examined the function of Abdul Muluk or Dul Muluk Theater in Palembang (Ilham et al., 2023; Notosutanto et al., 2023). The results of his research state that Abdul Muluk Theater or commonly called *Dul Muluk* functions as a means of entertainment, education, and a medium of cultural expression.

Furthermore, a number of studies discuss whips in various performance contexts. Zacek, explores the role and perception of female slave owners in history and popular culture. The author explains the whip in this context as a symbol of the power of female slave owners in controlling and oppressing their slaves (Zacek, 2021). Duin discusses the history and meaning of the whip dance in the culture of the *Wayana* people in the East Guiana Highlands. In his writing, the whip is not only a legal tool but it also has ritual meaning. The whip in the ritual is used in performance to imitate *Tamok* (an evil spirit in *Wayana* mythology), where the loud sound of the whip creates a dramatic effect in the ritual (Duin, 2014). Edmonds & Maxwell-Stewart, highlighting the whip in the history of colonial theater, showing how it was used as a symbol of power and oppression (Edmonds & Maxwell-Stewart, 2016). Dutta et al., examines the use of whips in social contexts highlighting the role of whips in rituals and as a tool of punishment and control across cultures (Dutta et al., 2021). Heldman et al., discuss the image of the whip in popular culture and the media, which is often associated with domination and control (Heldman et al., 2016).

Then researchers who discuss hegemony include Fariyah, examining the history and development of Antonio Gramsci's concept of hegemony (Fariyah, 2013). Then, Lears explores the concept of cultural hegemony and discusses its problems and possible applications in analysis. According to Lears, hegemony is often regarded as people's spontaneous consent to the leadership of the dominant group, which is gained through their prestige and position in the world of production (Lears, 1985). Siswati, further analyzes hegemony theory as a critique of reductionist thinking in Marxism and non-Marxism. Based on the literature review above, over all there is no study that specifically discusses the hegemony of whips in Abdul Muluk's traditional theater performances (Siswati, 2018).

Methodology

The method used in this research is qualitative method. Through qualitative methods, researchers are able to see phenomena more broadly and deeply according to what happens and develops in society (Sugiyono, 2013, p. 206). The research uses primary data and secondary data. Primary data are videos of Abdul Muluk's traditional theater performances, interviews with the community, theater artists, traditional actors of sources related to Abdul Muluk's theater. While secondary data is data obtained from, writings, and previous research results. Data collection techniques are done through literature study, observation, interviews and documentation (Creswell, 2019).

This research process began with observation of the Art in Revolt Jambi theater community which initiated the *Dul Muluk* Festival. This festival was the starting point for the rediscovery of two Abdul Muluk traditional theater groups that still survive in Muaro Jambi Regency, namely the *Mekar Kembali* group from *Sembubuk* Village and *Sereh Serai Serumpun* in *Muaro Jambi* Village. After analyzing performance recordings and compiling interview questions, researchers met directly with the head of Art in Revolt Jambi theatre and the head of the Dul Muluk Festival to understand the dynamics of the performance and the challenges in revitalizing this theatre. Then direct observation was carried out in *Muaro Jambi* Village, by interviewing the oldest generation of theater actors.

This research uses the Miles and Huberman Model data analysis technique. Miles and Huberman said that qualitative data analysis is carried out continuously until the data is complete and saturated (Sugiyono, 2013, p. 246). The data analysis technique is data reduction, all data obtained from observations, interviews, literature studies are sorted based on their relevance to the research focus. After being reduced is the presentation of data in descriptive narrative form. Data is presented by linking empirical findings in the field. Then present the data by interpreting and analyzing the data based on empirical and data findings. The data was further analyzed by approaching Antonio Gramsci's theory of hegemony.

Result and Discussion

The results and discussion are based on data analysis and their relevance to the theoretical references used. The theory used by researchers is hegemony proposed by Antonio Gramsci. The concept of hegemony was first introduced by Russian Marxist Plekhanov as a strategy to overthrow Tsarism in Russia in 1883-1884 (Fariyah, 2013, p. 99). Antonio Gramsci later developed this concept to analyze how modern capitalist societies are organized, both in the past and present (Fariyah, 2013, p. 100). Gramsci explained that class supremacy occurs through two mechanisms, namely domination and intellectual and moral leadership (Gramsci, 1976, p. 57 in Fariyah, 2013, p. 102). In achieving hegemony, the ruling class does not only rely on violence, but also builds leadership that allows them to gain the approval of the people they control (Fariyah, 2013, p. 103).

Hegemony is not just coercive domination, but a consensus mechanism built through dominant ideology (Siswati, 2018, p. 21). Thus, hegemonized people tend to accept and imitate the dominant group's way of thinking and worldview without questioning it critically (Siswati, 2018, p. 26). Furthermore, cultural hegemony also reflects how a dominant group gains spontaneous approval from society through the prestige and legitimacy they build in the social structure (Lears, 1985, p. 568). Approaching Gramsci's theory of hegemony, helps to understand ideology works invisibly. Hence, hegemony is not just a process of domination,

but an ongoing process of consciousness creation through the interaction between hegemonic ideology and resistance to it (Lears, 1985, p. 571).

Abdul Muluk's Tradition Theater Journey

The Abdul Muluk theater tradition originated from a literary work known as *Syair Abdul Muluk*. It was written by Raja Saleha and Raja Ali Haji, who hailed from *Penyengat* Island, Riau Islands, Indonesia. However, people mostly recognize *Syair Abdul Muluk* as the work of Raja Ali Haji, because he was a famous Malay writer, scholar, and scientist in the 19th century. The spread of *Syair Abdul Muluk* is in various Malay regions, known to include South Sumatra and Jambi (Azhar et al., 2011, p. 1). In South Sumatra, it is referred to as *Dulmuluk* Theater, which at that time was still in the form of a poem recitation performed by a trader of Arab descent named Sheikh Achmad Bakar or Wan Bakar (Nandang Sunandar & Bustomi, 2023, p. 40). While in Jambi, the spread of Abdul Muluk traditional theater has various versions. According to Mulyani et al., the spread in Jambi was carried out orally in 1930-1931 in Muaro Jambi Regency. In line with Wati's opinion, the spread of a culture through oral media is a function of tradition itself (Wati, 2023). From 1968 to 1970 was the heyday of Abdul Muluk's traditional theater. However, it experienced a state of suspended animation in 1971-1982. Then, it was resurrected by one of the Abdul Muluk Tradition Theater groups in *Muaro Jambi Regency*, but still could not last long so that it experienced suspended animation again, until it rose again at the time of the Art in Theater Community.

In 2021, Abdul Muluk's traditional theater group performed a special performance at the Dul Muluk Festival entitled "*Kecik sakti Gedang Betuah*" which was also initiated by Art in Revolt theatre. The festival was organized to showcase and regenerate the awareness of the local community to maintain and preserve the Dul Muluk traditional theater. On this occasion, Teater Art in Revolt also made a recording to immortalize Abdul Muluk's traditional theater performances, which have long been missed by theater artists and the community. The Dul Muluk Festival is the beginning of the revival of the Abdul Muluk traditional theater group that developed in *Muaro Jambi Regency*, Jambi Province, Indonesia. According to the head of Teater Art in Revolt Jambi, this event was held to minimize mistakes in the performance of Abdul Muluk's traditional theatre so far or in the form of creations by the younger generation in the future.

Then, another version of the spread of Abdul Muluk traditional theater in Jambi according to Darius, the development of Abdul Muluk traditional theater in *Muaro Jambi Regency*, Jambi, Indonesia, was influenced by theater expeditions that developed in Penang and Johor, Malaysia. The spread of Abdul Muluk's theater is believed to have originated from the *Wayang Parsi* Pushi Indera Bangsawan of Penang theater group founded by Mamak Pushi and his son-in-law Bai Kassim in Penang. *Wayang Parsi* was a theater performance for the upper class or aristocrats at that time who were then often called *Indera Bangsawan*. The success of Indera Bangsawan in the Malay regions led to the emergence of other theater groups, namely the Bangsawan Theater from Johor called *Abdoel Moeloek*. Later, *Abdoel Moeloek's* theater from Johor spread to Batavia, attracting audiences in Sumatra and Malaysia. Jambi Province is part of the Sumatra region. Jambi Province, which at that time was also a trade route through the Batanghari River, did not rule out the possibility that the *Abdoel Moeloek* theater group from Johor also spread there.

Their presence in Jambi inspired similar theater groups, including the Abdul Muluk theater that developed in Muaro Jambi Regency. This is in line with the opinion of Suboh, that the


term noble theater comes from the Parsi puppet show. Then, the Dul Muluk or Abdul Muluk theater is one form of noble theater. Thus, the story of Dul Muluk or Abdul Muluk is one part of the Wayang Parsi performance. Meanwhile, according to the local community, especially the old people, they knew Abdul Muluk's poem through the radio, then they adapted it into a performance. Abdul Muluk at that time was passed down from generation to generation and orally, such as one of the traditional theater actors Abdul Muluk Sambawi who learned from his uncle and Budiman from his father.

Through various versions about the spread of Abdul Muluk in Jambi, Indonesia, it can be concluded that the spread of Abdul Muluk's play in Jambi, shows how dynamic and rich the process of cultural transmission in the Malay region at that time. Starting from oral transmission since the 1930s, the influence of Bangsawan theater expeditions from Penang and Johor that strengthened cross-country cultural networks, to the role of modern media such as radio in the 1960s, Abdul Muluk's traditional theater journey reflects the dynamics of Malay culture that spread and developed in various regions in Malaysia-Indonesia. This shows that Abdul Muluk's traditional theater is not just an ordinary performance used as entertainment, but is part of the Malay cultural heritage in Indonesia which has historical value and identity representation for the Malay community. This cultural art continues to develop and adapt throughout its history.

Whip in the Narrative Structure of Performance

Table 1

Analysis of the Function of the Whip in Abdul Muluk's Traditional Theater Performance

Visual	Verbal	Function
	<p><i>Adindo, apo pemikiran adindo</i></p>	<p>Start a conversation</p>
<p>Narrator 1 Moving the whip and hitting it against the table</p>		

**Narrator 1**

Raising the Whip and Pointing it at the Back of the Stage while Singing (*Bekisah*)

-

Accompanying the singing (*bekisaj*) and giving codes and commands to the actors and actresses backstage

**Narrator 1**

Moving the whip and hitting it against the table

Mengapo berani memanggil sanak sodaro yang ado di relung sari?

Start a conversation

**Narrator 1**

Singing (*Beladon*) is punctuated by beating the table after each verse. The number of beatings is up to 23 times

-

Accompany singing and emphasize lyrics



Narrator 2

Whipping the table before dialoguing

*kakando lebih baik kito
pulang ke balairung
sari*

Start a conversation while
emphasizing the
invitation



Harapan 2

Whipping the table before dialoguing

*Adindo apo pemikiran
adindo kito di dalam
negeri*

Starting the question



Mamando

Whipping the table before dialoguing

*Menjadi Mamando di
Negeri Bari-Bari, lebih
baik Mamando
menanyakan duo
Harapan, Harapan
yang pertama yang
kedua, Mamando
diperintah Anando
untuk menanyakan duo
Harapan tentang tahta
siding Kerajaan sudah
siap atau bagaimana?*

Initiate questions and
confirm orders from the
King



Sultan Abdul Hamisyah
Whipping the table before
dialoguing

*Mamandoku tuan apo
pemikiran Mamando?*

Starting the question



Mael/Tuan Kobi
Whipping the table before
mentioning the character being
played

*Tersebut siaponyo namo
Mael*

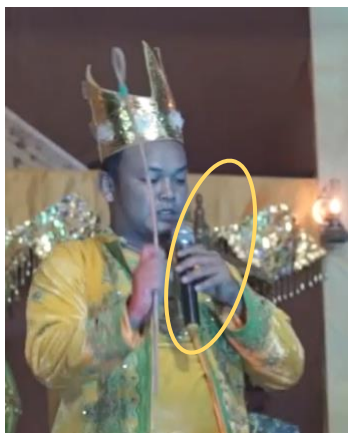
Self-introduction



Asisten Tuan Kobi/Resat
Whipping the table before
mentioning the character being
played

Tersebut namo Resat

Self-introduction



Abdul Muluk

Whipping the table before mentioning the character being played

*Mentri Hulubalang
Harapan sekalian,
bolehkan beta bersebut
nama dalam kita punya
Negeri?
Sebut saya punya nama
Abdul Muluk*

Initiate questions and introduce yourself



Abdul Muluk

Whipping before giving orders to Harapan 1 and Harapan 2 to pick up his future wife, the daughter of Saudagar Sulaiman.

*Harapan pertama dan
yang kedua, jangan
sampai tidak tahu, beta
utus untuk menjemput
Saudagar di ujung
Negeri*

Giving Orders



Saudagar Sulaiman

Saudagar Sulaiman whips the table before asking his assistant Karani a question, also when mentioning his character, besides that, the whip is also often used by the character to point to his son when talking to him.

*-Kerani apo pemikiran
di tengah musibah?*

*-Sebut sayo punyo
namo Saudagar
Sulaiman*

*-Cubo tengok dalam tas
tu, optimalkan
pemasukan kito tu
jangan macam ko
miskin terus*

Asking for opinions
Introducing yourself
Giving an order

Based on the analysis of the video of Abdul Muluk's traditional theater performance in Muaro Jambi Village, which lasts two hours eleven minutes and twenty seconds, the whip scene when whipping the table is counted 68 times. It can be seen that the pattern of using the whip in the performance is done consistently before verbal actions such as asking questions, giving orders, and introducing themselves. In general, the first function of the whip is to mark the beginning of the dialog. The movement of whipping the table before speaking becomes a visual marker for the audience that the conversation will begin. Secondly, *pecut* is predominantly used in performance when singing (*beladon* or *bekisah*). *Beladon* is intended to invite other players to play on stage such as doing a movement around while singing together.

While *bekisah* is about introducing characters and storylines like a prologue that is sung or chanted, the character who directs the story is called the narrator. *Bekisah* is performed before the performance begins, is narrative and informative, while *beladon* is performed after *bekisah* before the character in *ladon* can enter or plays on stage. In this case, the *pecut* serves to emphasize the verses of the song and provide emotional pressure.

Not only that, but the whip also serves as a self-introduction or character transition. Some characters, such as *Mael* and *Resat*, whip before saying the name of the character they are playing. Indirectly, this becomes a theatrical technique to quickly establish the character's identity to the audience. Sometimes, the whip is used by powerful characters like the merchant Sulaiman who actively plays with the whip as he talks to his co-stars. This reinforces the character as having power or a higher status that must be obeyed in the scene.

Thus, the use of the whip in Abdul Muluk's traditional theater performance is not only as a property or artistic element, but as a symbol with multiple meanings and interpretations. The combination of visual (whip movement) and verbal (dialog or singing) actions indicates a harmonious interaction between the narrative and performative dimensions. Its existence has a significant role in strengthening dialogue, emphasizing roles, and being integrated in Abdul Muluk's traditional theater performances.

Whips in Gramsci's Hegemony Perspective

The concept of hegemony developed by Antonio Gramsci is one theory that understands how conditions are not always run violently or coercively, but can be instilled through cultural approval mechanisms. In this case, domination becomes hegemonic when the ruling class succeeds in making its values, norms and views voluntarily accepted by other groups in society, so that the power structure no longer appears as coercion, but rather as something natural and voluntarily accepted (Gramsci in Fariyah, 2013, p. 104).

In the context of Abdul Muluk's traditional theater performances, the whip not only functions as a dramatic property, but acts as a tool of cultural hegemony that regulates, directs, and disciplines the structure of the performance as well as the actors and audience. The whip becomes a symbol of institutionalized power in the narrative, where the highest status character, the King, uses the whip as a representation of authority. The whip becomes an important element that creates an agreement between the actors and the audience about “who is in charge” and “when the story begins and ends”.

Figure 1*The Table of Alah Tahta Sidang Kerajaan*

Source: <https://www.youtube.com/@TeaterAiRJambi>

Then, the whip does not stand alone but there is a table that the whip strikes which is referred to as the Table of *Alah Tahta Sidang Kerajaan*. There is no special table shape or color, which is used in the performance. It is just an ordinary wooden table covered with yellow cloth. Hadi mentioned that the whip always hits the table, which symbolizes the royal throne in the performance. This means that the whip does not stand alone as a symbol, but is part of the royal system represented on the theater stage.

Based on interviews with several interviewees, it shows that the whip occupies a central position as a symbol of authority in the performance. Akbar and Hadi stated that the whip is used as a marker of the King's decision and a tool for affirming orders in dialog. Gramsci's perspective, this shows that power is not only political, but also symbolic and ideological, instilled through cultural performances. The whip becomes a representation of "power" not only as symbolic in the story, but as a cultural power structure that is accepted without resistance by the audience. Audiences no longer question the authority of the whip. The stomping of the whip that starts a dialog or marks the King's order is accepted as normal. This shows how the dominance of the whip in the performance is accepted voluntarily through artistic symbolics that are structured over generations and passed down as tradition. This domination is a tangible form of cultural hegemony.

In Gramsci's perspective, the structure of hegemony is also seen in everyday practices, including forms of cultural expression such as theater performances. The whip in Abdul Muluk has a very strong structural function in determining the rhythm and flow of the story. It marks the beginning of the scene, the transition between scenes, the whip becomes a timer, which regulates the tempo and course of a narrative. In line with what Budiman said, the whip also functions as a tone marker in *beladon*. This confirms that the whip also regulates the relationship between narrative, actors and music. In other words, the whip not only organizes the story, but directs how the story is received and interpreted.

Figure 2*Part of the Scene Actors Using Whips*

Source: Wulandari (2025)

Another important aspect of Gramsci's perspective is the consent of the dominated. In this study, the audience accepted the function of the whip not with resistance, but with enthusiasm and curiosity. Iswari, an audience member of Abdul Muluk's traditional theater, mentioned that when the whip hits the table, her focus is immediately drawn and she is curious about what happens next. In this case, the performing arts become a tool for spreading the dominant ideology that has been successfully shaped by the whip. Another statement from Rani Iswari emphasized that the whip is even the main character in the performance, not just a property, and without the whip the story would not continue. This statement clearly illustrates how the whip becomes an accepted symbol of domination, even positioned superiorly in the storytelling structure. This is a concrete form of hegemony, a domination that is accepted as inevitable, not forced.

Figure 3*Abdul Muluk's Traditional Theater Performance*Source: <https://www.youtube.com/@TeaterAiRJambi>

Moreover, the whip also works as an “organic intellectual” in Gramsci's sense, that is, an entity (whip) that mediates the ideology of the dominant class to society through performing arts (Gramsci in Fariyah, 2013, p. 104). Thus, the whip also reinforces the value structure of society regarding hierarchy, authority and command. At the symbolic level, the whip symbolizes control, masculinity and patriarchy. Control, because others must respect the character who holds and uses the whip. For example, the lower classes must accept power as

something that cannot be denied. Meanwhile, masculinity and patriarchy because all of Abdul Muluk's traditional theater performers are male. In this case, the idea that only men can hold power and control social structures is reinforced by the idea of patriarchy which links the male gender to a dominating role. This myth states that the leading role in conventional society belongs to men.

Conclusion

This research shows that the whip in Abdul Muluk's traditional theater is not just a performance property, but a symbol of strong cultural hegemony. Dramaturgically, the whip functions to control the flow of the performance, to mark the beginning of dialog, and to mark orders. More than that, the whip is a symbol of power that is voluntarily accepted by the audience and the theater actors themselves. In Gramsci's perspective of hegemony, the whip is a representation of power that is not coercive, but accepted as a natural part of the tradition inherent in the performance.

More broadly, Abdul Muluk's traditional theater is also a manifestation of Malay culture that comes to life through performance and is passed down orally. Abdul Muluk's existence is not only important as a local heritage, but also as evidence of the history and identity of Malay culture that once triumphed in Jambi Province. strong. Dramaturgically, the whip functions to control the flow of the performance, to mark the beginning of dialog, and to mark orders. More than that, the whip is a symbol of power that is voluntarily accepted by the audience and the theater actors themselves. In Gramsci's perspective of hegemony, the whip is a representation of power that is not coercive, but accepted as a natural part of the tradition inherent in the performance.

The implications of this study are very important for the preservation of traditional theater. Through a deep understanding of the whip, it can help artists, culturalists, traditional actors, and the government to maintain and preserve the whip in its originality and integrity of values. It is also a new discourse in performative studies and cultural studies, especially connecting local symbols with critical theories such as hegemony.

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