



Universiteit
Leiden
The Netherlands

Producing the local: Javanese performance on Indonesian television

Bogaerts, E.M.

Citation

Bogaerts, E. M. (2017, December 20). *Producing the local: Javanese performance on Indonesian television*. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/58689>

Version: Not Applicable (or Unknown)

License: [Licence agreement concerning inclusion of doctoral thesis in the Institutional Repository of the University of Leiden](#)

Downloaded from: <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/58689>

Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

Cover Page



Universiteit Leiden



The handle <http://hdl.handle.net/1887/58689> holds various files of this Leiden University dissertation.

Author: Bogaerts, E.M.

Title: Producing the local: Javanese performance on Indonesian television

Issue Date: 2017-12-20

7 Indosiar is indeed for You: Narratives, messages and ideologies

Indonesian advertising is fascinating—it inadvertently reveals much about Indonesian cultural desires, in contrast to other Indonesian media that were heavily censored during Soeharto's regime. (Reynolds 1999:87)

Once attracted by a specific traditional performance programme presented by Indosiar, its audiences were available for further persuasion couched in various other narratives, messages and ideologies, including those of a commercial nature, culture preservation and other New Order narratives and the 'Indosiar' discourse.

To lay bare the complex interweaving of these multiple narratives, messages and ideologies that together shaped the Javanese programmes, I have based my analysis on a few examples. Leaning heavily on Indosiar's broadcasts of the kethoprak show *Dewi Sawitri*, the wayang kulit programme *Wahyu Kuncoro Jati* and *Tembang Laras*, a comic performance by Dhagelan Mayang Sari, I discuss the multiple persuasive discourses in Indosiar's broadcasts of traditional Javanese performing arts. The advertising of local products, Indosiar's rhetoric advocating the preservation of regional artistic genres as national cultural heritage and the commercialization of Javanese performances are all points to be examined. In the last section of this chapter, I shall explore the 'You' (*Anda*) Indosiar was targeting. The main points of attention will be the programme flow and the agents and their discourse.

The context offered by a broadcast schedule irrevocably has an effect on a programme. Williams' concept of *flow* that I introduced in the previous chapter is useful in this respect. Williams looks at examples of flow in television in three different orders of detail: The flow within a particular day's programming (long-range analysis of sequence and flow); the flow of the actual succession of items within and between the published sequence of units (medium-range analysis of flow and 'sequence'); and finally the really detailed flow within this general movement, meaning the actual succession of words and images (close-range analysis of flow) (Williams 1990:96). I return to this concept of flow in my analysis of the television programmes.

To give some idea of how the multiple narratives and discourses shaped the play, I begin by returning to the wayang kulit broadcast I introduced in the previous chapter: *Wayhu Kuncoro Jati*.

1 Shaping the broadcast: An example – Wahyu Kuncoro Jati

In Chapter 6 I sketched the performance context of the shadow puppet show *Wahyu Kuncara Jati* and described the campursari style that formed the basic framework of the show and the programme flow, and suited Indosiar's preference for popular entertainment. A closer look at the contributions of the multiple agents that shaped the broadcast and constructed its

polysemic character shows that Panca CU's presentation of Indosiar's broadcast of a wayang kulit show as a traditional performance transformed into modern entertainment without any other ideological mission had been too simple. These agents were: the performers, the sponsor of the performance, the local government of Malang represented by its mayor (Pak Haji Soesanto), who acted as the puppeteer of the show (Ki Soesanto), the audiences attending the performance and watching the television broadcast, the national government (supplying its ideology, policies, legislation, propaganda), advertisers and others economically interested and Indosiar (as a technology, as a media institute with an ideology, owners and networks, and as a commercial Indonesian broadcaster). These agents voiced their issues and messages that made up the programme flow as a rich composition of epistemologies. Operating in a complex field of forces, by means of the broadcast Indosiar was promoting the businesses of the station and its owner, and seducing both advertisers and audiences, not to mention the Indonesian government. Before analysing the main messages separately, I show how these had been woven in the programme as 'coexisting and contradicting ideologies' (White 1992:190) and added additional layers of meaning to the play on several levels.

What was on display was a performance of a Javanese wayang story by a puppeteer playing wayang kulit, with the co-operation with various guest stars from other artistic disciplines. The embedding of other genres made the shadow puppet theatre into a hybrid performance. The puppeteer, puppets, musicians, singers, dancers and comedians – on the level of performance – breathed life into the characters – on the level of the story. Regularly, they also stepped out of the play by referring to their activities beyond the performance and revealing their preoccupations in the jokes they made. The puppeteer talked about his function as mayor of the city of Malang and about his joint recording with Manthous of songs of the national Golkar party that had been distributed all over Indonesia, and engaged in a dialogue with a female singer about her three children. This switching of roles also took place on the level of the story. Petruk, one of the clowns, functioned as the alter ego of the puppeteer, when he introduced himself as Petruk from Malang in East Java, when he addressed the audiences and told them he was very honoured to meet them at the BPK building in Jakarta, and when he invited the performers to introduce themselves to the public. This was most apparent in his dirty jokes with the female vocalists, loaded with sexual innuendos. Petruk was also the character who brought Indosiar into the performance when he urged the pesindhen not to take too long to introduce themselves because the performance had to fit Indosiar's schedule and when he announced that Indosiar was going to broadcast the show all over Indonesia, as he had been told. In the discussion between the mayor-puppeteer-Petruk and a female singer who was a member of the Organization of the Wives of Civil Servants in Malang (Dharma Wanita Kodya Malang), Petruk admitted knowing her husband well. When he referred to Indosiar's crew who were smiling (*Iki tukang tivi nganti mesem, lho Ibu*) because the mayor was acting as the puppeteer in the role of Petruk who was flirting with the pesindhen (*dolanan karo sindhen*), the three roles of the main performer of the show and the several levels of the broadcast were turned topsy-turvy.

The sponsor of the performance, the Audit Board of the Republic of Indonesia (the Badan Pemeriksa Keuangan, BPK), enabled the show and provided the occasion, location and the public for the performance and the TV recording. Several times the puppeteer referred to the reason for the event, the fifty-first anniversary of the Audit Board (*dina iki mengeti Hari Jadi BPK sing kaping 51*), on which he and his troupe wanted to call down blessings (*ngaturake dirgahayu*). The fact that the live performance had taken place more than a fortnight earlier and was broadcast long after the actual anniversary on 1 January, seemed to matter little.



7.1 Audiences enjoying the comic skits



7.2 VIPs sitting in the first rows in the BPK Hall

Ki Soesanto welcomed the public in the BPK Hall (mentioning the names of the VIPs present), songs were sung (for the anniversary and the setting-up of BPK), and the Audit Board featured in the jokes. During a dialogue between Limbuk and Cangik about *pembangunan*, ‘the’ New Order term for the development of the country, the puppeteer listed the development tasks undertaken by the BPK, on both the physical level and on the level of human resources.



7.3 The puppeteer, Limbuk and Cangik



7.4 Karen Elisabeth from Chicago alias Sekar Arum from Malang

The audiences in the BPK auditorium entered the broadcast in several ways: shots show the VIPs sitting in the first rows in the BPK Hall; other shots focused on the women, *ibu-ibu*, partly formally dressed in the ‘traditional’ ‘national dress’ *kain-kebaya* (Figures 7.1 and 7.2). Audience participation and interaction with the performers was made both visible and audible: the spectators were shown applauding, talking to each other and laughing in response

to the performance. Their reactions to the comic skits were audible when the camera focused on the comedians. Finally, there was the public at home watching the broadcast, interpreting the performance and the multiple narratives.

Typical New Order Government rhetoric occurs in the dialogues about family planning (with the singer who was mother of three children), the development of the country or *pembangunan*, already mentioned, the preservation of the culture of the nation, a reference to the national Golkar party and so on. When the propaganda on *pembangunan* drew to a close, the puppeteer entered into a dialogue with the pesindhen Karen Elisabeth from Chicago alias Sekar Arum from Malang, first in English, then in Javanese, to the surprise of the laughing audience – shown in several shots quietly alternated with shots of the dhalang and the singer – particularly when the singer began speaking Javanese with a Malang accent (*niku wah*). The spectators were clearly impressed with her versatility in the Javanese language (and dialects) and humour, wordplays and puns. They were shown clapping their hands, talking to each other while nodding approvingly. Beginning the dialogue in a typically Javanese, but also typically wayang kulit-like way, by asking the name of a person/character, their place of origin and other whens and hows, in his encounter with the pesindhen the dhalang gradually highlighted the actual topic of discourse: the preservation of traditional cultures, a most favourite topic of discussion in the New Order period.¹⁶¹ National strength was within reach by fostering the cultures of the nation. A country needed an identity to shape unity and union (*mujudake persatuan dan kesatuan*), and this should be more than just a slogan. Furthermore, traditional culture was not inferior to art from abroad. The defence of Indonesian cultures against negative foreign influences, and the urge to preserve traditional cultures, as a representation of Indonesian nationalist ideology had by then become the ideological priority of Indosiar as it proliferated itself to the audiences – hence the long sequence in the programme devoted to these themes.

Issues discussed during the show had to do with Javanese culture (for instance, in the remark about the Indonesianizing of wayang, to make the genre known to non-Javanese-speaking people) and contemporary political issues (in references to the possible resignation of the Indonesian president, when Hanuman suggests the time has come for him to resign as he is sixty-five years old, President Soeharto's age at the time of the performance).¹⁶² References to other extra-performative circumstances included the dhalang's reference to the beginning of the fasting month that coincided with BPK's anniversary on 1 January 1998, wishing the Muslim public success in observing the fast. Petruk greeted the audiences with the Arabic Assalamu alaikum [...] wa barokatuh). Moreover, there were plenty of references to the economic crisis (*krismon*, referred to as *jaman moneter*, the monetary era).

The commercial sponsors of the programme advertised their products in four slots: the analgesic Mixagrip, a product of Dankos, and Susu Indomilk, a product of the Salim Group; the logos of the companies were shown on the screen, without sound. Indosiar presented its

¹⁶¹ See Clara van Groenendael 1985 on the use of foreigners studying traditional performing arts to stress the need to preserve one's own culture.

¹⁶² 'Yuswaku wis swidak lima [sic] tahun. Aku kok ki lagi wae lengser keprabon, ta, ngger.'

forthcoming programmes, from soap series, *Srimulat* and *Dangdut Ria*, to Walt Disney movies, Indian films and films with Asian stars, and World Boxing Matches in the many trailers. The entire show was framed within a text, in Indonesian, that appeared on screen at the beginning of the programme, explaining the meaning of *Wahyu Kuncoro Jati*.

The campursari character of this show allowed abundant leeway for the presence of ‘issues, voices, positions and messages’ (White 1992:191) that were extraneous to the actual story (the *lakon*) but had been integrated into it, becoming part of the programme flow. In the following sequences I shall analyse the commercial and New Order rhetoric represented by Indosiar, and, finally, Indosiar’s proper ‘narrative’.

2 Tradition for sale: Advertising local products

From its beginning, Indosiar stated its commercial ideology and its competitive stance towards the other private TV stations in Indonesia. As part of a conglomerate of ‘established capital interests’ (Williams 1990:37), profit-making was Indosiar’s primary goal and the broadcasting of commercials its main source of income ((ely) 1995a). It was this discourse of commerce that initially caught the eye of the public – and elicited critical remarks.

In this section I view advertising as ‘a deeply cultural process’ (Reynolds 1999:85), simultaneously connecting products to local cultures and reflecting these cultures. Catherine Reynolds, who studied tobacco advertising in Indonesia, noticed the inextricable link between product branding and popular culture. ‘Each brand’s image’, she writes, ‘is meticulously designed and crafted to connect with the prevailing popular cultural values and desires of the day’ (Reynolds 1999:85). Reynolds states that

indigenous Indonesian cigarette advertisements appeal to, and reflect, a fascinating collage of specifically Indonesian cultural values and desires. Indigenous advertising exploits and manipulates the traditional cultural associations of tobacco, and exacerbates the smoking ‘culture’ by creating quite new cultural references and themes associated with smoking. Although some of these indigenous advertisements may seem superficially similar to Western multinational cigarette advertisements, such a reading misses the subtleties of Indonesian culture. (Reynolds 1999:85)

The ways to appeal to and reflect ‘specifically Indonesian cultural values and desires’ (Reynolds 1999:85) in television advertisements are manifold. The identities represented in the advertisements are much more dynamic than can be covered by the denominations local and indigenous and, apart from a few exceptions, the local is never homogeneous. Besides, the advertisements are influenced by their televisual context (as they are part of Williams’ *flow*), the advertisement category to which they belong and the ways they are presented: either as ad-lib or product placement, in a sequence of commercials, or unmarked, as part of the performance; in the form of a trailer and as self-references. As White (1992:171) has argued

The position and functioning of advertising is a crucial aspect of ideological analysis, because it is the place within television’s textual system where the economics of the system are made manifest. With the prominent and regular display of commercials on television, the source of the network and

station income is not hidden but becomes, on the contrary, an integral part of the television program flow.

Developing a strategy to address linguistically and ethnically based markets, Indosiar adapted its advertisements to these markets and to the programmes that formed the pretext for the commercials. The questions that need to be answered here are how Indosiar localized these advertisements and how they were positioned in the programme flow. I shall go into the few instances in which advertisements catered to specific ethnic audience groups, using the Oskadon commercial as an example. I begin by putting these issues in the context of the Indonesian Broadcasting Law.

Regulating television advertising

The 1997 Broadcasting Law regulated television advertising. The Broadcasting Law differentiated between commercial advertisements (*iklan niaga*) and public service advertisements (*iklan layanan masyarakat*) (UUP 1997 Pasal 41). The private television stations were allowed to allocate a maximum of 20 percent of their total airtime to commercials. Commercial advertisements should not be used for propaganda supporting religion, ideology, politics or the promotion of the individual or a specific group (UUP 1997 Pasal 2a). Advertisements must not be offensive and/or undermine religious faiths, moral ethics, tradition, culture, or be slanted towards any racial or ethnic group (*Media Scene* 1996-1997:26). Advertisements for products like tobacco or alcohol were restricted.¹⁶³ Furthermore, all local and foreign television programmes and commercial content were subject to the approval of the Ministry of Information's Film Censorship Board (Lembaga Sensor Film, LSF). The content of commercials should be produced by enterprises licensed by the government or by the broadcasting institution itself (UUP 24 1997 Pasal 42-1). The commercials should have an Indonesian setting, feature Indonesian artists and be produced by an Indonesian crew (UUP 1997 Pasal 42-3). The legislation decreed all advertising should use Indonesian as the language of communication. As I demonstrate later, this was not always the case, although commercials spoken entirely in Javanese were rare.

Localizing advertisements

Indosiar broadcast commercials for global and local products, local both in the sense of Indonesian and sub-national. In conformity with the Broadcasting Law and suited to the context of the Javanese performances in which the commercials were embedded, the station localized the advertisements.

In his study on advertising in Sri Lanka, Kemper (2001:14) argues that the practice of advertising in post-colonial markets is pulled in two directions: one following trans-national campaigns, the other one catering to and creating local preferences by advertising in the local idiom. Both directions can be discerned in advertising on Indonesian television. Loven's analysis confirms Kemper's second argument when she states that in the mid-1990s the

¹⁶³ For detailed information about this restriction, see the advertising code of ethics of the Indonesian Association of Advertising Agencies as published in *Media Scene* (1996-1997).

Indonesian advertising industry and local advertising agencies began using ‘an increasingly local idiom – literally and metaphorically – to promote local as well as foreign products’ (Loven 2008:237). In their discussion of foreign television content, Sen and Hill (2000:121) stress the continuing dominance of trans-national advertising agencies in the local advertising business; ‘even when advertisements are domestically produced in Indonesian language, their creative control is largely in the hands of foreigners’ (Sen and Hill 2000: 121). Their findings reflect Kemper’s first argument and correspond to Appadurai’s conclusion that ‘[t]he locality [...] disguises the globally dispersed forces that actually drive the production process’ (Appadurai 1998:42). This also applies to Indosiar as part of a large international conglomerate.

How Indosiar presented and represented this local idiom is the theme of this and the following sections. The reasons Indosiar broadcast local(ized) advertisements were many. Its strongest argument was commercial, viewing ‘Java’ as a potential gold-mine. As Anthony Salim explains, the advertisements broadcast in the Indosiar programmes revealed consumer trends. The synergy between retail claim, Indofood (one of the Salim Group companies) and television helped the company to understand the market, he said (Dieleman 2007:74) – a market dominated by ratings. In order to promote the sale of its instant noodles and other products of the Salim groups even better, it fostered its traditional performance broadcasts, ‘not to get rid of its Hongkong orientated image, but rather to obtain the highest ratings’ (Wardhana 1997:133). Government regulations and legislation will also have played a role, bolstered by audience preference for ‘locally produced programs in local languages’ (McDaniel 2002:81).

The preference for local advertising can be explained by the fact that it enables audiences ‘to identify with the style, values, beliefs, institutions and behavioral patterns of the material in question’ (Chen 2004:173). Chen quotes Hoskins and Mirus (1988:500), who call this phenomenon ‘cultural discount’. In Chapter 1 I commented critically on the validity of this cultural preference view. As I argued in the introduction to my dissertation, an important factor for identification is the language use – for instance, Javanese-spoken commercials broadcast in the context of Javanese programmes targeting Javanese audiences. However, although Indosiar selected linguistically and ethnically based markets for its persuasive purposes, most of the advertisements broadcast during programmes targeting specific groups of audiences were local in the sense of national. They used Indonesian as the language of communication and identity markers referring to ‘Indonesia’, and addressed and reflected an urban middle-class environment. Instances that exemplify how these advertisements appealed to and reflected Indonesian cultural values and desires include advertisements for local products and calendar-dependent commercials.

The first category includes advertisements for local products like clove cigarettes (although some of these show an Indonesian cowboy in the setting of a Western), soya sauce (*kecap*), energy drinks, hygiene (tooth-paste, shampoo) and beauty products; and localized global products (like Sunlight soap). Government campaigns and Indosiar programme trailers persuading audiences to watch forthcoming broadcasts can also be slotted into this category.

They promoted both Indonesian and foreign products; as the Indonesian products were often produced by international conglomerates or an Indonesian branch of such a conglomerate, the precise origin of many of these products and/or the production ownership was often not clear to the consumers.

Another category of persuasive messages that represented aspects of Indonesian identity were advertisements that were linked to calendar-dependent events. An instance of a religious calendar-dependent event that has a strong impact on Indonesian businesses and is omnipresent in the media is the Fasting Month. Indosiar turned its all-day Srimulat broadcasts at the end of the Fasting Month (Idul Fitri/Lebaran) into a new tradition. The commercials drew attention to special food (breaking the fast with Indomie noodles) and Islamic attire; the station announced its religiously oriented programmes in trailers. This strategy connected its products to the context of Ramadan, at the same time as it was reflecting the culture of its audiences, a large percentage of whom was Muslim. These Lebaran broadcasts were a perfect environment for the advertisements, offering a blend of national, local and Muslim identity markers. Trailers announcing programming for Indonesian Independence Day or the fifty-first anniversary of the Indonesian military ABRI, that sponsored a Srimulat performance, belong to the politically oriented calendar-dependent events. In June 1996, in the commercial time slots, Indosiar announced a programme that was about to be aired to celebrate President Soeharto's seventy-sixth birthday on June 8. The trailer consisted of footage of Soeharto's life and career, pictures and symbols (like the Garuda Pancasila). Trailers of this type were a celebration of nationalism.

Some of Indosiar's local(ized) advertisements targeted specific ethnolinguistic groups of audiences. The sense of local in this case was determined by linguistic and cultural markers that differed from the national ones, for instance, Javanese, Sundanese and Balinese. But, in contrast to private radio stations, from which plenty of advertisements in local languages were disseminated (as they targeted specific – smaller – groups of audiences and therefore needed a sharper distinction of image/identity), advertisements on television featured local languages relatively rarely. Often, the local was connected to interpretations of tradition.¹⁶⁴ Most often, there was a mixture between Indonesian and a local language, or Indonesian with, for instance, heavy Javanese prosody and ditto accent, or Indonesian in a 'characteristic' 'local' setting, like a *pendhapa*. The advertising techniques, however, were usually global techniques.

Advertisements and programme flow

My examples of the localized advertisements reveal that these commercials were a concert of persuasive voices.¹⁶⁵ As part of the programme flow, in combination with the Javanese traditional performance genres, they addressed various identities that were not necessarily Javanese. Contrary to what might have been expected, more often than not they appealed to expressions of national rather than ethnic culture, and in most cases represented urban middle-class identities. Localizing in the sense of Javanizing (or Sundanizing for that matter) did

¹⁶⁴ See Mazzearella's auto-orientalist advertising (2003:138-141).

¹⁶⁵ Inspired by White's 'concert of voices' (1992:190).

occur, but much less frequently. Nevertheless, an advertisement like that for Oskadon became very popular, confirming Kemper's conclusion that '[t]he advertisements that always win are those that were generated locally, in a particular community' (Kemper 2001:31).

Indosiar used to group its commercial advertisements in separate blocks (in Indosiar's early years this was four times in one programme broadcast). Sometimes the blocks were marked in a specific way, or closed with a full screen logo of Indosiar; sometimes they were unmarked, and it was up to the audience – aware of the codes – to distinguish the dramatic genre(s) used for the commercials from the dramatic performance itself. Often a trailer announcing an Indosiar programme preceded the commercials, followed by the text 'This programme is presented to you by' (*Acara ini dipersembahkan oleh*), as an introduction to the commercials/the sponsors of the shows.

The organic relationship between various types of programme materials (Williams 1974:70) is stretched even farther when a blurring of genres occurred or when the content of the play and the advertisement concurred (see the Oskadon commercial as an illustration of both possibilities, later in this chapter). As both the plays and most of the advertisements belonged to the realm of performance, the creation of this blurring was a frequently adopted strategy. Particularly when the advertisement took the form of a mini-drama (Esslin 1982), genre blurring was played with. Kaplan, who investigated the link between advertisements and soaps, argues that advertisements continue the narrative flow of soap opera rather than disrupting it (Kaplan 1992:265-266). This is also true of the narratives of the traditional performance genres that '[c]ommercials prolong and maintain' (Kaplan 1992:266). This happens especially in cases of unmarked transitions from show to advertisement. This can be achieved in several ways. In the broadcast of the kethoprak play *Dewi Sawitri*, in one instance the block of commercials was presented as part of a flash-back in the story: during the audience at the court of King Atswapati, the father of Dewi Sawitri, the god Naradha is about to explain what had happened to King Dyumatsena, the father of Setyawan, Sawitri's husband-to-be. Upon uttering the words 'The story is as follows, Your Majesty' (*Critane mengkene Prabu*), the next scene was immediately overtaken by the commercial sequence, beginning with 'Minum Sanaflu', an advertisement promoting the anti-influenza drug Sanaflu. Another unmarked transition was realized by having actors/television celebrities of traditional performance genres play a role in commercials. In the same show, Srimulat actors appeared in a commercial for a lottery in a money-saving project (Simpedes, Simpanan Pedesaan) of the Bank Rakyat Indonesia.

Product placement (within the play) was often linked to a specific community and or place, known to the audiences. The same applied to enterprises mentioned within a play. The 'advertisements', not framed as such, addressed the audiences of the show, while referring to the performance context and the local enterprise. The advertising procedure itself adopted a characteristic feature of kethoprak performances, the throwing of parcels of cigarettes and letters onto the stage, to request a song and disseminate a message to the audience, the performers and/or the Indosiar crew. This custom enabled a specific form of interaction and enhanced the proximity between the public and the actors on stage and generated comic skits.

A significant part of Indosiar advertising was devoted to products of the Salim group, like Indosemen and Indofood (including the Indomie instant noodles), and, of course, Indosiar itself. Similar examples of cross-reference between products of Salim groups were to be found in other media. Most advertisers wishing Indosiar success with its third anniversary in newspaper *Kompas* (11 January 1998:15), for instance, represented companies of the Salim Group. This kind of advertising reflected the ‘local-for-local business model’ that characterized the Salim group, according to Dieleman. During the Soeharto period, the Salim group evolved into a major player, developing businesses that produced goods for the domestic market (Dieleman 2007:124). These products achieved high market shares.¹⁶⁶

Indosiar also advertised itself. In the traditional performance genres references were made to the station in various ways. Another type of self-reference was ‘inside advertising’, as Anthony Salim called it (Dieleman 2007:74). It was used to fill the free seconds left over in the advertising slots. This internal publicity (Williams 1994:81) using trailers consisted of Indosiar’s announcement of in-house productions to be broadcast in the near future, like sinetron, and external productions, both Indonesian and foreign. Announcements of performance broadcasts that were classified as traditional, and broadcasts of programmes framed within the ‘preserving of the culture(s) of the nation’ ideology also belonged to this category. I shall reflect on these references and the self-references that as a whole formed the ‘Indosiar’ narrative in the section entitled *Indosiar is Indeed for You*.

*The new gold-mine is called tradition*¹⁶⁷

The advertising of products specifically tailored to Javanese audiences as imagined by Indosiar and its sponsors, made use of identity markers that invoked Javaneseness. However, only a few of these advertisements actually presented their persuasive message in Javanese, and often the language use switched between Javanese and Indonesian. Possibly broadcasting legislation made itself felt here – the compulsory use of Indonesian in all media broadcasts – , as well as the intention of the advertisers to reach as large a public as possible. This shows the difference between private radio and television advertising in the mid-1990s.

Often, explicit references were made to tradition. Consequently tradition acquired a commercial value, from which performance/performers and advertisement/advertisers mutually benefited. Tradition was covered by referring to traditional performing arts in the commercials, usually to advertise products that carried a traditional connotation, such as ‘over-the-counter-market’ products, like analgesics and traditional medicine that could be sold without prescription, and food. This kind of advertising was considered to be appealing to the main target groups of the broadcasts: rural audiences, and people working as farmers and market vendors, or as taxi-drivers in large cities, who did not buy medicines with a doctor’s prescription. The advertisements were usually constructed as miniature dramas of a restricted length (between thirty and fifty seconds) (Esslin 1982:263) and functioned as a

¹⁶⁶ ‘In 1995, the Salim group reached market shares of 90% for instant noodles and 89% for flour. In cement the market share was 38% in Indonesia, but 71% in Java where about 60% of the Indonesian population lives’ (Dieleman 2007:69-70).

¹⁶⁷ ‘Tambang emas baru itu bernama tradisional’ (Herusangh 1997:118-119).

performance within a performance. They were structured according to a fixed scheme: an exposition of a problem, conflict or threat, followed by advice and a solution leading to a happy conclusion (Esslin 1982:263). Famous kethoprak and Srimulat actors and puppeteers bridged the world of the performance and the world of the mini-performance/advertisement when they promoted products to the target audiences/their fans (for the pain-relieving ointment Remasal,¹⁶⁸ the traditional digestive remedy Puyer Waisan¹⁶⁹ and a rural money-saving programme (Simpedes)), moving back and forth between two make-believe worlds.

Oskadon Oye

Probably Indosiar's most famous advertisement in this category at the time was the Oskadon commercial.¹⁷⁰ The analgesic Oskadon was promoted in a series of mini-performances, all similarly structured. They all played on the same topic and approach and were centred on the protagonist and television star Ki Manteb Soedharsono. Ki Manteb had to interrupt his wayang kulit performance because of a sudden headache, just after his recitation of the dramatic phrase 'The earth trembled heavily' (*Bumi gonjang-ganjing*) (Figure 7.5). One of his female singers advised him to take Oskadon (Figure 7.6). The puppeteer did so and his pain was immediately relieved. He energetically resumes his performance, showing the *sabetan*, his virtuosic technique of manipulating the shadow puppets, for which he had become famous as a dhalang. The famous lines in this advertisement recurred in the different versions: When perceiving that the dhalang suddenly had a headache, the principal female singer asked him, 'Wait a minute, which story are you going to perform, Pak Manteb?' (*Sik sik, lakone napa Pak Manteb?*) (Figure 7.7), to which the answer was: 'The story will be Oskadon Oye' (Figure 7.8). To which the pesindhen choir confirmed: 'Oskadon is indeed oye' (*Oskadon pancen oye*). Within each commercial slot, the advertisement was shown three times, alternating with other persuasive messages. The second appearance was usually a slightly more elaborate version of the first and third ones, showing a few extra, very short shots.

The Oskadon commercial exemplified 'the use of television performers, as themselves or in their character parts, to recommend products, or to be shown using them' (Williams 1990:69), a well-known technique in advertising. Here, the puppeteer Manteb is both himself and 'acts Manteb on television in a typically televisual manner' (Mrázek 2000:166).

When the advertisement was broadcast in an environment that was mirrored in the advertisement, a shadow puppet play, the distinction between the world of the wayang kulit show and the world of the advertisement was blurred. The use of the Javanese vernacular in both the puppet play and the commercial reinforced the blur. Loven (2008:37, 254-256), who

¹⁶⁸ Remasal commercial with Asmuni and Betet Srimulat, Indosiar 1996:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BE7l8nSrF8A> [Last accessed January 2016]

¹⁶⁹ Broadcast in 1998 in the programme *Kuntilanak* by Kethoprak Wahyu Budoyo from Pare, Kediri. The drug is a product of Bintang Toedjoe (*Dari Bintang Toedjoe yang terpercaya*), a trustworthy producer, as it claims, and part of the Consumer Health Division of PT Kalbe Farma.

¹⁷⁰ One of the 1996 versions of the Oskadon advertisement: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ESqht1TIJIU> [Last accessed January 2016].

discusses a similar phenomenon found in Doel commercials, says that this blurring rarely occurred on Indonesian television in the 1990s.



7.5 Ow, my head is throbbing with pain.



7.6 Pak Manteb, you are having a headache, aren't you?



7.7 Wait a minute, which story are you going to perform, Pak Manteb?



7.8 The story will be Oskadon Oye

If broadcast in a kethoprak or dhagelan show, there was no genre blurring, although the link to 'tradition' and the (Javanese) linguistic context in both the performance and the advertisement remained. In the commercial slots, the advertisement was placed among internal Indosiar publicity and commercials advertising products addressing a more modern, metropolitan public, those who used handphones and Indovision hotline, Pepsodent toothpaste and Nuvo health soap.

Just as other advertisements remained connected to *sinetron laga* and *sandiwara radio*, the Oskadon advertisement captured a place in the collective memory of the Indosiar audiences in various ways. Oskadon seemed to take on an eternal life: in the variations on the advertisement, in the life of the puppeteer-celebrity-Oskadon dhalang Ki Manteb Soedharsono, and as a reference in other performances. As Mazzarella argues,

An advertisement, taken as a kind of commodity, is never finished; its elements are sources from an existing repertoire of resonances and meanings, and after being “produced,” it continues to be made and remade throughout its public career. This career [...] sometimes far exceeds the formal span of the advertisement itself. (Mazzarella 2003:21)

In a later variant from 1998, it was puppeteer Ki Manteb Soedharsono who advised the musician with a headache to use Oskadon. In a 2001 variant, the setting had changed. Ki Manteb Soedharsono still played the protagonist, wearing a traditional Javanese costume, but no longer performed the wayang kulit. For his role in the Oskadon advertisements Ki Manteb Soedharsono, the ‘Maestro sabet’ (Abbas dan Subro 1995:173ff.), earned the epithets ‘Puppeteer O Ye’ (*Dalang O Ye*), and, the ‘Puppeteer Selling *Jamu*’ (*Dalang Adol Jamu*, a traditional herbal medicine) (Abbas dan Subro 1995:310). Manteb himself used to refer to the commercial in his professional life as a puppeteer, on his website and emblazoned on his van. The Oskadon advertisement occurred in intertextual references and therefore became a reference point itself (White 1992:163) and part of metanarration (Bauman 1986:98). The following fragment of the comedy *Tembang Laras* illustrates this well.¹⁷¹ *Tembang Laras* featured the well-known female traditional vocalist and kethoprak and wayang wong actress Nanik Ramini, and famous kethoprak actor and singer Joleno, both in their roles as protagonists and referring to themselves as Nanik Ramini and Joleno. The dialogue refers to Nanik Ramini playing the role of the vocalist in some versions of the Oskadon commercial. In the fragment, Joleno’s father-in-law recognizes her, is surprised and says:

Just because you appear on the television screen every day with the puppeteer Manteb!¹⁷²

You are the most stupid woman I have ever encountered!

Stupid, what do you mean?, she asks.

The father-in-law: Every day they tell you the title of the story, but you keep on asking: ‘Wait a minute, which story are you going to perform?’¹⁷³

Judging from Indosiar’s position as one of the private Indonesian broadcasters, its image as a commercial competitor in the media market and its advertising, at first sight it is not immediately apparent how closely the station approximated government rhetoric. Only by bringing all the agents involved in the broadcast to the fore, as I have done in the case of Wahyu Kuncoro Jati, do the messages, issues and ideologies other than the purely commercial clearly emerge. In the following section I shall elaborate on this link. By framing the broadcasts of traditional performance genres in the context of ‘preserving the nation’s culture’, Indosiar introduced a new discourse into the rhetoric of private Indonesian television.

¹⁷¹ By Dhagelan Mayang Sari (Indosiar 1 November 1996).

¹⁷² ‘Dupeh kowe saben dina metu neng nggon TV karo dhalang Manteb kuwi lho!’

¹⁷³ ‘Saben dina dikandhani lakone kowe kok takon terus: “Sik sik lakone napa?”’

3 Mouthpiece of the government?

New Order policy about the promotion of traditional cultures was strongly present in the 1990s and in TVRI's rhetoric, hence it was also tackled by private television stations. If so, as the two discourses seemed to be incompatible and even paradoxical, how did Indosiar make this culture preservation discourse consonant with its commercial messages? Kitley (2004:141) argues that 'The commercial stations supported the government's political and cultural aspirations in return for access to the lucrative advertising market.' And so did Indosiar.

Culture preservation discourse

After the success of its first broadcasts of traditional Javanese performance genres in August 1995, Indosiar scheduled regular broadcasts of some of these genres, as it claimed, at the request of its audiences.¹⁷⁴ In trailers, the station announced the broadcasts, framing them with the slogan 'preserving the culture of the nation' (*melestarikan budaya bangsa*). This slogan very quickly helped to shape Indosiar's branding, that initially had been rather indistinct. For a few years Indosiar's involvement in traditional performing arts genres became part of the station's ideology. The slogan also added a persuasive message to each broadcast. In trailers, this message consisted of an invitation, spoken in Indonesian by a male voice, to spend the weekend together with Indosiar, 24 hours non-stop, to inculcate a personal love for traditional culture, a true reconciliation that would preserve the culture(s) of the nation. After this claim had been made, the genre of the forthcoming broadcast was mentioned (and visualized on the screen), with the title of the performance and the name(s) of the performer(s). A final appeal summoned the viewers to preserve the nation's culture(s), alongside, for instance, the West-Javanese genre *wayang golek*.

The broadcasts of traditional performance genres combined with Indosiar's rhetoric surrounding these broadcasts, corresponded with the national government's cultural policy of the preservation of national culture(s) (*melestarikan kebudayaan nasional*). The 1997 Broadcasting Legislation supported this government policy. Broadcasters were required to prioritize domestic programmes, produced either by the broadcasters themselves or by domestic production houses. Domestic programming, 70 percent of the total programming, had to focus on themes drawn from the national character and cultural roots. The co-operation between broadcasters and these production houses was meant to heighten the appreciation of the cultures of the nation, perceived as an eternal source of media programmes. The legislation affirmed that this was consonant with the aim of the broadcasters to develop and foster the values of the cultures of the nation while strengthening national resilience.¹⁷⁵ By embedding the traditional genres in the culture-preservation slogan, Indosiar embraced New

¹⁷⁴ Personal communication Panca CU, Jakarta, December 1997.

¹⁷⁵ UUP 1997 Pasal 34 (1) and UUP 1997 Penjelasan Pasal 34 (1).

Order rhetoric. While in the trailers it was national culture that should be preserved, in the Javanese programmes it was *kabudayan Jawi*, Javanese culture.

The preservation of Javanese culture (*ngleluri kabudayan Jawi*) was a recurring topic and a source of reflection. Not confined to the inside advertising during the commercial slots, it was also mentioned in the traditional performance programmes themselves. During the clowns' (*banyolan*) scene in *Kuntilanak* by Kethoprak Wahyu Budoyo from Pare, Kediri, the comedians – acting as television presenters – reported that on Friday and Saturday nights Indosiar broadcast Javanese performance genres that flew the banner of Javanese cultural preservation. Later in the programme, after having read a letter from a member of the audience (encountered in a carton of cigarettes, thrown onto the stage) that mentions Indosiar's slogan (*Indosiar memang untuk Anda*), the clowns discussed the development of the broadcaster and its goal of fostering Javanese culture by broadcasting kethoprak, wayang wong and wayang kulit.

The persuasive character of the messages tended to be very explicit. Another fragment of the earlier-mentioned comedy *Tembang Laras* is an example. Seeking knowledge (*ngangsuw kawruh*) for the purpose of keeping traditional artistic genres and expertise alive for future generations, is the theme of the following dialogue. The story goes as follows:

The male protagonist Joleno is seeking distraction. He visits Javanese singer Nanik Ramini and explains his goal: he very much would like to understand the Javanese singing style characteristic of the female vocalists in a gamelan ensemble, called *nembang* in Javanese. He cannot perform this Javanese singing style, but can sing popular songs, for which he uses the Indonesian word *nyanyi*. The singer: 'Oh, so you can sing in the pop style (*nyanyi*), but you cannot manage the Javanese style (*nembang*).'¹⁷⁶ The discussion continues, playing on the difference between *nyanyi* and *nembang*. The female singer reacts with surprise, suggesting she does not know the difference between the two.¹⁷⁷ An illustration follows. While courting her, Joleno impressively imitates Ebiet G. Ade, a famous Indonesian pop singer, singing Ebiet's song *Camellia*. Then, much to the delight of the audiences, he adapts it to the 'Madurese' style, whereupon the female singer begins performing the popular Javanese *tembang Caping Gunung*. If he really wants to understand Javanese culture, the legacy of the ancestors,¹⁷⁸ declares Nanik Ramini, she will be happy to teach him, emphasizing that children especially need to be taught how to understand their culture from a young age.¹⁷⁹

Voicing New Order rhetoric

Indosiar's proximity to the Indonesian government was apparent not only in its approach to the traditional cultures and its rhetoric about preserving them. New Order propaganda was given abundant room in the broadcasts of the traditional performance genres. Favourite propaganda themes were the building of the nation and the country and family planning.

¹⁷⁶ J: Awit kula niku kepengin ngerti tetembangan Jawa sebab nika iku kula boten isa nembang.

N: Hmm ...

J: Nek nyanyi kula saged.

N: Ooh, yen nyanyi saged, yen nembang boten saged.

¹⁷⁷ Oh ya beda, kok ya. Oh dados carane nyanyi kaliyan nembang meniku beda?

¹⁷⁸ Nek pancen panjenengan tenan-tenan kepengin ngerteni kesenian Jawa iki rak tinggalane nenek moyang [...].

¹⁷⁹ Perlu putra putri ingkang tasih alit-alit menika perlu dipunsinauni kersanipun mangertosi kabudayanipun piyambak.

Before the arrival of television, these used to be disseminated in live performances and in radio broadcasts, by performers who had received special government training. Once disseminated by television the narratives, messages and ideologies had a much wider reach, but whether they had the same impact is questionable.

Some programmes were entirely framed within the parameters of New Order rhetoric and referred to contemporary conditions. The broadcast of the wayang kulit performance *Wahyu Kuncoro Jati*, for instance, began with an Indonesian text on the screen, explaining the meaning of the Wahyu Kuncoro Jati, a divine revelation. The *wahyu* would guard the peace of the nation and protect it from greed. The protagonist of the story needs this *wahyu* to succeed in life and in his service to the country and the nation. In other instances, government campaigns were inserted in the storyline and in the dialogues. In the broadcast of the kethoprak play *Dewi Sawitri*, family planning is discussed at length in two sequences; once during the clowns' scene, once in the final scene. The first instance occurs in a session of riddles. In a pun on words, playing on the differences and similarities of the pil KB (birth control pills) and PILKADES (Pemilihan Kepala Desa, the election of the village head), both terms beginning with 'PilKa', the clowns turn to comedy, explicitly referring to the Pil KB as part of a government programme to promote family planning. At the end of the show, when all evil has been banished and the equilibrium restored, Sawitri expresses her wish to give birth to a hundred children. Setyawan's father Dyumatsena advises her to follow the government's call in a campaign to raise the living standard of the poorest people and have just two children. In response to the government campaign, two children are enough, their gender is irrelevant. Sawitri agrees.¹⁸⁰

These examples show that New Order cultural policy and development propaganda were part and parcel of the performance genres programmed by Indosiar. Although a private broadcasting service, by transmitting them and by framing them within the national rhetoric of culture preservation and of development, Indosiar functioned as a mouthpiece for the New Order government.

In order to have its persuasive messages work, Indosiar needed audiences. In the following section, I discuss a third persuasive voice: the 'Indosiar' rhetoric. I concentrate on how Indosiar positioned itself in the broadcast flow, on its identity building within the broadcasts and its relationship with the audiences.

4 'Indosiar is indeed for You' – Who is You?

In presenting the 'Indosiar' voice, the station made ample use of proximity, played with co-presence and applied concepts like belonging and locality as markers of identity.

¹⁸⁰ Dyumatsena: Loro, lanang wadon padha wae. Manuta adan-adan pamarintah sing saiki lagi wae bakal ngentasake uriping kawula ana ing garising kemiskinan. Lha nek kowe nduwe anak satus, mangka kowe ora bisa ngopeni, ha ya jenenge kowe mung bakal nyithak kere ana ing sajroning praja, he!
Sawitri: Nggestokaken, nggestokaken.

The station constantly reminded television viewers that they were watching Indosiar. It did so using several techniques to present itself, refer to itself and create the ‘Indosiar branding’. The Indosiar logo was shown throughout the entire broadcast in the left upper corner of the screen. In trailers of other programmes to be broadcast by the station, the logo and the slogan ‘Indosiar memang untuk Anda’ were often used, either spoken or written (or both). Other instances of self-reference have been discussed in the section ‘Tradition for sale’.

Direct references to Indosiar occurred within the programmes themselves. Indosiar’s slogan was frequently inserted in the dialogues, as in the following example from the comedy *Tembang Laras*, in the dialogue between the two protagonists:

N: Rather than taking an afternoon nap

J: Yes

N: Let’s amuse ourselves in Tugu Square, in front of the Town Hall of Malang

J: Yes

N: Watching Indosiar

N & J: Which is indeed for You!¹⁸¹

The reference to Indosiar in the performance played on the familiarity of the Javanese audiences with the famous actors and singers who regularly appeared live on stage and on television – in this case Nanik Ramini and Joleno. The following happened: Entering the (empty) stage, representing Nanik’s house, RM Sosro Joleno asks her servant (*batur*) whether she is indeed the vocalist with the beautiful voice he knows from the Indosiar television station. The servant confirms this, and the vocalist, after entering, answers ‘hesitatingly’ that, if she is not mistaken, probably she is the one to whom the man is referring:

J: Is it correct that this is the house of the person who claims to sing so well [in the Javanese style]?

B: Is this correct? Yes, indeed it is.

J: Whose beautiful voice I have heard on the television station Indosiar? Are you she?

N: If I am not mistaken [...] that is me, I think.¹⁸²

The sequence refers to the station, its programming of traditional art forms featuring Nanik Ramini as a singer and to the Oskadon advertisement (in which she played the role of the traditional singer who recommended the analgesic Oskadon to the puppeteer, stricken by a sudden headache).

Often, the crew and the technological devices used during the recordings (like cameras) and the constraints of the medium were mentioned. These references were usually made during a comic scene, often by the clowns. Each time this happened, a shift occurred between the idea of liveness and the idea of being televised. The references revealed the presence of

¹⁸¹ N: Eh timbang sare sore-sore

J: Yak

N: Mangga dolan dhateng Lapangan Tugu, ngajeng Bale Kota Malang

J: Yak

N: Sinambi mriksani Indosiar

N & J: Memang untuk Anda!

(Dhagelan Mayang Sari)

¹⁸² J: Menapa leres niki daleme sing sok pinter nyindheni?

B: Menapa leres? Lha injih leres.

J: Sing suwantene sae menika ingkang kula pirengaken wonten tipi Indosiar menika menapa sampeyan niku?

N: Menawi boten klentu menika [...] kula kinten-kinten.

the media, and the character of the programme as a media genre.¹⁸³ Hence, not only were those who watched the show on television made conscious of the media's presence; the audiences attending the live performance and the recording of the programme were also continuously reminded of Indosiar's presence and the coming into being of the television programme during the live performance. For example, in a letter employees of the Toeloengredja Hospital who were watching the live performance *Dewi Sawitri*, requested the clowns to sing the popular Javanese song *Gethuk* and dedicate it to the Indosiar crew, wishing them luck with their work and with their encounter with the performing troupe, Kethoprak Siswo Budoyo. In *Wahyu Kuncoro Jati*, when Petruk urged the vocalists not to take too long to introduce themselves because the performance has to fit the Indosiar time schedule, he was referring to the constraints of the medium.

By leaning on its continuous self-reference and self-presentation on all possible levels – in its branding, the programme flow, the trailers, the products of the Salim Group and the references to the media constraints –, Indosiar itself had become part of the show.

Multiple audiences

The entertainment business needs both live audiences and 'those hypothesized by audience researchers' (Frith 2000:203). Mediated performance must refer to 'unmediated sociability', since it is the real spectacle with a real crowd that is appealing to both audiences and sponsors (Frith 2003:211). If 'Indosiar is indeed for you', the question then is: Who is the 'You' (*Anda*) Indosiar was targeting? Becker (1979:49) discerns two separate types of audience at every wayang performance. There is an essential audience, without whom the play is pointless, he writes, and an immediate, non-essential audience, 'who may or may not be present and who in some sense overhear much of the drama'. Spirits, demons and creatures, gods, and ancestors form the essential audience of a wayang show and are normally unseen. In an analogy to Becker's view, in my investigation of Indosiar's spectators, I use the terms visible and invisible (rather than Scannell's absent) audiences.

There are several ways in which live audiences are present during a broadcast. Usually every now and again Indosiar cameras focused on the people who were physically present in the performance space during the show. Therefore the audience was visible to those watching the television broadcast – as such, they became part of the programme and hence performers – a tactic that might enhance the 'live' character of the broadcast (Auslander 1996:202-203). Appadurai calls them props 'in a grander performance staged for the benefit of television viewers'. In this role, the live audience provides the television audience with evidence of the spectacle (Appadurai 1998:101), engendering a sense of proximity between those at home and those attending the performance and visibly present in the programme. These audiences themselves underwent a collective experience of attending the performance, participating in and reacting to it, and interacting with the performers. They also witnessed and experienced the recording by Indosiar: the presence of cameras, cameramen and other crew members, the lighting and the sound amplification devices, to name but a few. In sequences not visually

¹⁸³ See Jurriëns (2004:151) who discusses this phenomenon in the Sundanese radio programme *Dongpless*.

focusing on the audiences, their presence could become obvious from an audible response like laughter or screaming, especially during the clowns' scenes, and from the parcels containing money, cigarettes and/or letters with requests for songs and dedications they threw onto the stage during the performance. Often these letters were written in Indonesian, not Javanese. The comedians/clowns read them aloud made joking comments. In this way they put members of the public on stage, not physically but by reacting to them, by reading their letters and mentioning their names, and by addressing them directly.

Nevertheless, the largest part of the audiences consisted of invisible spectators: those who were watching the television broadcast. They watched in small communities (family, friends) in separate spaces (their living-rooms, a collective room in the village) and were separated from the actual performance space. These invisible audiences, wherever they were, were also addressed directly during the performance, for example by a spectator's letter, thrown onto the stage, sometimes revealing glimpses of their identity.

While the live performance was held in a specific location, for instance, in Pare, Kediri, the TV audiences were composed of people living in Java and Javanese-speaking people elsewhere in Indonesia. Those who watched the programme at home did not enjoy the same collective experience as those who attended the performance in Pare. However, they did possibly identify themselves with the audiences who attended the unmediated performance. Since the broadcast was not a direct transmission of the performance in Pare, the audience was also separated in time from the performance in Pare.

Invisible spectators were definitely very important to Indosiar. Commercially speaking they were the most valuable since they were the potential purchasers of the products presented in the commercials. As they watched the broadcast, because they were physically invisible, the TV station assumed the audience role and analysed their habits and needs as target groups.¹⁸⁴ They were the ones who were addressed by the actors and products of the commercials. Although invisible, they represented the essential audiences of the performance, as potential customers, the 'market'.

Conclusions

For more than thirty years, the broadcasting of Javanese performance genres had been the monopoly of TVRI, in particular the regional TVRI stations of Yogyakarta and Surabaya (later also Semarang). TVRI's broadcasts of regional cultural expressions were part of the New Order cultural policy to build an Indonesian identity and culture on the basis of the apices of regional cultures. But also, and this point is often overlooked by media researchers, they were part of the policy of the regional stations that advocated the representation of regional/local cultures in which they were embedded and with which they identified. Initially, none of the Jakarta-based private television stations had been interested in broadcasting these genres with any frequency, and the public's call for more local programming had been

¹⁸⁴ See Baudrillard (1990:30): 'TV is watching us, TV alienates us, TV manipulates us, TV informs us'

shelved. Local content consisted mainly of locally produced soap serials and battle dramas with a local touch. In 1995, Indosiar, the then last of the five private television stations that was granted a licence, began the regular broadcasting of performance genres in vernaculars. Tantalized by the sheer number of ethnic Javanese inhabitants – a huge business opportunity – Indosiar was the first private station to begin to address these potential viewers by nation-wide broadcasting performance genres it categorized as traditional. The requirements set down in media legislation must have been another incentive behind Indosiar's decision, as the government had summoned the industry to expand the amount of local content in its programming. Another perhaps influential consideration was the success of TVRI Yogyakarta's broadcasts of kethoprak sayembara in the early 1990s. Now, the broadcasting of genres like wayang kulit and kethoprak was no longer the prerogative of the national and regional TVRI stations, but also became part of the private entertainment industry.

The moment Indosiar entered the market and decided to broadcast the traditional performance genres – at the request of its audiences, Indosiar claimed – it disseminated Javanese culture on a much larger scale and to a much wider audience than the regional government stations. Nevertheless, on the creative level, it was surpassed by TVRI Yogyakarta. Indosiar exuded an aura of modernity, glamour and glitter and an image of a cosmopolitan station based in the commercial centre of Indonesia. This contrasted with its conservative choice of broadcast material, that was easily available, and the equally conservative presentation of the material, produced at low cost. Although Indosiar owned the most advanced equipment, most of the producers were engineers or technicians, ill informed about performing arts. This ignorance was reflected in the way the performances were televised. TVRI Yogyakarta, on the other hand, suffering under the image of being oldfashioned and hampered by a restricted budget and the inadequate equipment at its disposal, succeeded in creating new genres inspired by traditional performance genres. Kethoprak sayembara is a good example of such an innovative development.

The traditional genres that Indosiar broadcast had been detached from their original context, they were de-regionalized and de-localized (see Thompson 1996:94), but simultaneously re-embedded in new contexts and spaces. There is a second sense in which the genres were partly de-localized: as they were broadcast in a commercial environment, they provided a context for and supported commercials that promoted the local (in all senses) and foreign products, many of which were presented according to global advertising conventions and style. In short, instead of being embedded in ritual or ceremony, the performances were embedded in commercials. To an increasing degree, the world of the traditional Javanese performing arts became part of the television industry. They functioned as the common ground between producers and audiences, in which 'a common cultural-linguistic competence, shared knowledges and understandings' (Scannell 1995:13) created proximity between the programme and the viewers. Because of their repeated exposure, not only the performance genres themselves, also the advertisements and the government messages belonged to the common ground. Indosiar's presentation of multiple persuasive messages and ideologies resembled the presentation of this rhetoric in the past. Examples like *Tanah*

Sabrang and *Mas Soema Bojong* had proven the efficacy of deploying common ground to make the viewers sensitive to persuasion. Conversely, because of this common ground, more and more television and references to television became part of the world of the mediatized Javanese theatre. Javanese culture had become business, a commodity, bound by the constraints of commercial television.

When applied to the commercializing of Javanese traditional performing arts by the Jakarta-based private television industry, Thompson's idea that traditions 'were refashioned in ways that enabled them to be re-embedded in a multiplicity of locales and re-connected to territorial units that exceed the limits of face-to-face interaction' (1996:99) can be interpreted in a less literal sense. As I have shown in this chapter, Indosiar was operating in a complex field of forces. It simultaneously accommodated multiple persuasive narratives in its broadcasts of traditional performing arts programmes, thereby re-embedding the performance genres in a multiplicity of ideological layers. Actually, this concert of persuasive voices had always been a characteristic of these performance genres that therefore offered fertile ground for the incorporation of messages from the televisual (and other) context(s). When re-discovering Java, Indosiar accommodated apparently paradoxical narratives, serving both commercial and New Order government needs. However, for pragmatic reasons, Indosiar succeeded very well in navigating smoothly between these multiple narratives.

The station broadcast regional, in particular Javanese, performing arts for commercial purposes, to promote the businesses of the Salim group (and hence also Indosiar) and other advertisers. However, it presented the shows of traditional Javanese performance in the framework of the culture preservation narrative. Its also disseminated government development messages. In short, the private station that was regularly reproached in public discourse for its overly commercial stance, accommodated government ideology and approximated the ways in which national and regional TVRI stations broadcast regional performance genres, just as Yampolsky (1995:716-717) had predicted. With the preservation discourse and especially the persuasive messages about government policy, Indosiar moved into the field of government television. At the same time, the framework of 'preserving the culture of the nation' contributed to the strengthening of Indosiar's initially vague branding.

The concert of persuasive voices is also reflected in the advertisements, in Indosiar's self-representation and in the representation of the local. Java was perceived as a potential gold-mine, precisely the argument needed to begin broadcasting traditional Javanese performance genres. The messages and narratives of the commercials mingled with the narratives of the stories performed. Most of the commercials displayed a contemporary Indonesian setting and were spoken in Indonesian. Only in a few instances were the advertisements entirely conceived with reference to the cultural environment in which they were broadcast and the audiences they targeted, the ethnic Javanese market. Some of the advertisements adopted the style and conventions of the performance genres, as well as using the Javanese language, and/or were enacted by star performers of the traditional genres, blurring the borders between the narrative of the traditional performance and the commercial.

Because of the limited choice of cultural genres – just a few icons of traditional performance – that Indosiar broadcast on a regular basis, the station's concept of the 'nation's culture(s)' (*budaya bangsa*) to be preserved was narrow and did not permit any representation of Indonesia's multicultural society. In the hands of Indosiar, this concept had been narrowed down to some specific performance genres by some specific ethnic groups. Indosiar's choice tied in with the New Order's ideas about the contributory role of regional cultures to the national culture, and was determined by fixed ideas on Javanese aesthetics (see Chapter 2) bolstered by presuppositions about the taste of Javanese audiences. At the other hand, precisely because of these genres, the station created a bond of proximity with its fans, seducing them and making them malleable to further persuasion. The framing of traditional performance broadcasts in the *budaya bangsa* concept functioned as an appeal to the audiences to endeavour to make the culture preservation project a success in a partnership with Indosiar.

By their continuous exposure of 'Java', the private TV stations were said to support Javacentrism, while actually – by playing a role in the development of the traditional cultures that were to be found in Indonesia, not only the Javanese – they would be able to and should decentralize (Garin Nugroho in Wijaya 1997:114-5). The representation of the Javanese local through performance genres, limited and stereotyped as it was, followed New Order views on regional cultures and their representation in the media (see Chapter 1). Because of this limited scope, somewhat exoticizing Javanese culture, Indosiar was accused of Javanizing (*men-Jawa*). In fact, the total amount of Javanese programming was very small compared to the overall programming of the station. Nevertheless, exactly because of this focus, Indosiar had set the trend for other broadcasters who copied the formula or developed new TV genres inspired by traditional Javanese performances like kethoprak humor.

However, for Indosiar, the success of its Javanese programming was not reflected in the ratings or in an equal profit from advertising revenues. After the monetary and economic crisis, private broadcasters abandoned the regular broadcasting of the more traditional regional performances. What they did keep in their programming – even up to the present – was comedy based on traditional performance genres.