

# Wayang Golek Menak: Wayang Puppet Show as Visualization Media of Javanese Literature

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**Abstract.** Puppet shows developing in Javanese culture is definitely various, including wayang kulit, wayang kancil, wayang suket, wayang krucil, wayang klithik, and wayang golek. This study was a developmental research, that developed Wayang Golek Ménak Sentolo with using theatre and cinematography approaches. Its aims to develop and create the new form of wayang golek sentolo show, Yogyakarta. The stages included conducting the orientation of wayang golek sentolo show, perfecting the concept, conducting FGD on the development concept, conducting the stage orientation, making wayang puppet prototype, testing the developmental product, and disseminating it in the show. After doing these stages, Wayang Golek Ménak Sentolo show gets developed from the original one, in terms of duration that become shorter, language using other languages than Javanese, show techniques that use theatre approach with modern blocking and lighting, voice acting of wayang figure with using dubbing techniques as in animation films, stage developed into portable to ease the movement as needed, as well as the form of wayang created differently from the original in terms of size and materials used. It is expected that the development and new form of wayang golek menak will get more acceptance from the modern community.

**Keywords:** *wayang golek menak, development, puppet show, visualization media, Javanese literature, serat menak.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Discussing about puppet shows in Java, there are two types of puppet shows, namely *wayang golek* and *wayang krucil*. Many people name *wayang krucil* as *wayang klithik* while *wayang golek* is called as *wayang théling*, *wayang thengul*, and *wayang klithik* is also occasionally known as *wayang krucil* and *wayang thimlong* [1]. These wayang are made from woods as the main material. *Wayang golek* is made from wooden blocks and *wayang klithik* is made from wooden boards. Their forms are similar to *wayang kulit*, but have the smaller size, and their hands are made from animal leathers. Moreover, *wayang golek* uses epic stories of Mahabarata, Ramayana, *Serat Menak*, *Babad*, and indigeneous fictions. Meanwhile, *wayang klithik* uses stories of *Babad Majapahit*, *Serat Panji*, and *Serat Menak*.

Puppet shows or *wayang boneka* also exist in some countries. In China, there is a puppet show combined with television broadcast and modern staging [2]. As a traditional art show, this

puppet show is modified with modern stuff to make it being new and more attractive for the audiences. In United State of America, puppet shows are well known as Sesame Street [3]. The shows with using puppet are reflected as conventional art shows because they only rely on puppeteer's ability as the single artist in the show [4] [5]. It is due to that puppet shows are only popular between the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, which is between in year of 2000–2005. Moreover, puppet shows then started to be shifted by modern arts, such as films, soap operas, cinemas, and some shows with using more modern technologies.

In Javanese community arts, especially Central Java, East Java, and Yogyakarta, there are puppet shows called as wayang with various types, such as *wayang golek* and *wayang klithik*. *Wayang golek* is developed in Bandung, Yogyakarta, Cirebon, Tegal, Pekalongan, Kebumen, Bojonegoro, and Lamongan, while *wayang klithik* is found in Blitar, Kediri, Nganjuk, Blora, and Klaten [6]. To stand wayang puppet on the stage, wayang golek show uses banana stems similar to *wayang kulit* show. Meanwhile, *wayang klithik* is place in the bamboo which have been punched. Besides, the other similar thing of *wayang klithik* and *wayang kulit* shows is not to use *kelir* or screen background. However, the height of banana stems for standing on *wayang golek* is higher than *wayang kulit*.

Moreover, *wayang golek* is the developmental type of puppet theatre with more complex form. The philosophical and aesthetic values of *wayang golek* show is connected to the ones in *wayang kulit purwa* [8] [9]. The absolute difference between the shows is the form of wayang puppets. *Wayang golek* show uses three-dimensional puppets while *wayang kulit* uses flat or two-dimensional puppets. Besides, wayang golek show uses stories from *serat Menak*. Nevertheless, the use of *serat Menak* story is not absolute, *wayang golek* show occasionally uses Ramayana and Mahabharata stories.

Henceforth, this study deeply investigates *wayang golek menak* that obtains the story from *Serat Menak* by Yasadipura. *Wayang golek menak* is the development of *wayang golek* show and can be used as a medium to visualize and introduce Javanese literary works, particularly *Serat Menak* to the public. This is due to the current condition of Javanese literature becoming increasingly lack of people interest. Consequently, the reactualization effort is required to do to sincerely reintroduce Javanese literature to the community.

## 2. METHODS

This study was a developmental research, referring to the development of *Wayang Golek Ménak Sentolo* with using theatre and cinematography approaches. It aims to develop and to create the new form of *wayang golek sentolo* show, Yogyakarta. The stages of *Wayang Golek Ménak Sentolo* development adopted Gray & Malins's theory [10]. They consist of the orientation of *Wayang Golek Ménak Sentolo* show, perfection of the concept, FGD on the development concept, orientation of the stage, creation of the *wayang* puppet prototype, developmental product test, and dissemination through the show, held in Gedung Teater Kecil, Insitut Seni Indonesia. After that, the seminar and FGD on the result of the new version of *Wayang Golek Ménak Sentolo* show involving some experts in *wayang golek sentolo*, staging, art show, and traditional art are conducted.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

*Wayang golek menak* is a new breakthrough for previous dalang (puppeteers) to keep delivering guidance in the show with a new style, but still using old equipments that are attributed to dalang in that era between 1950–1980<sup>th</sup> [11]. The most notable thing of *wayang golek* show in Yogyakarta is reflected as a means of Islamic religion dissemination [12]. From

the content of the story, *dalang* always suggest people to believe in Islamic lesson or the Prophet's religion. However, these shows have never been performed by *dalang* who are obedient to the Islamic Shari'a. *Wayang golek dalang* are similar to the ones of *wayang kulit* who still adhere the mixed lesson of Hinduism and Islam [13].

### 3.1. Wayang Golek Menak Show Structure

As one of the Javanese traditional arts, *wayang golek* show has a standard concensus, frequently called as 'pakem'. *Pakem* become the reference or guide that has to be followed by *dalang* in every Javaneses traditional art show. If this *pakem* is not followed, the Javanese traditional art showed is considered to breach *pakem* or not merely the pure Javanese traditional art because it contains some development and innovations [14]. In fact, *wayang golek menak* show has *pakem* or some rules.

Similar to *wayang kulit purwa*, *wayang golek menak* is a puppet theatre developmental type with another form. This indicates that philosophical and aesthetic values reflected in *wayang golek menak* show originally refers the *wayang kulit* show ones. The significant differences between *wayang kulit purwa* and *wayang golek menak* is represented by *wayang* puppet [15] and story. *Wayang golek* show uses three-dimensional puppet while *wayang kulit* use the flat or two-dimensional one, and *wayang golek* stories are taken from *serat menak*. Moreover, how *wayang golek* of *serat menak* show is performed is slightly similar to *wayang kulit purwa* show.

*Wayang golek* show also uses Javanese *gamelan* offbeat and various *gending*, *ladrang*, *ketawang*, *srepeg*, *palaran*, *gangsaran*, *kemuda*, etc., which is similar to *wayang kulit* show [16]. The show is strated with *Talu gendhing*. In addition, the structure of scenes in *wayang golek* show is not considerably different from *wayang kulit* show. The differences of the scene structure in *wayang kulit* and *wayang golek menak* shows are explained in the following table.

**Table 1.**  
Wayang Kulit Purwa and Wayang Golek Menak Show Structure

No	Wayang Kulit Purwa	Wayang Golek Menak
1.	Jejer Kraton scene	Jejer Kraton scene
2.	Dayohan	Dayohan
3.	Bedholan Jejer scene	Bedholan Jejer scene
4.	Paseban Njawi scene	Paseban Njawi scene
5.	Perang Kembang scene	War scene
6.	Second Jejer scene	Second Jejer scene
7.	Budhalan Sabrang scene	Budhalan Sabrang scene
8.	Second War scene	Second War scene
9.	Gara-gara scene	Pathet Sanga scene
10.	Uluk-uluk scene	Perang Tandingan scene
11.	Perang Tandingan scene	Perang Brubuh scene
12.	Perang Brubuh scene	-

In general, *wayang golek menak* show refers to the consensus of the show in *wayang kulit*. Scenes in *wayang kulit* show divide into some parts, known as 'pathet'. There are three *pathet* used, namely *pathet nem*, *pathet sanga*, and *pathet manyura*. These *pathet* are used as references to increase the emotional level and conflicts in the story [17]. *Gending* or music

accompaniment used in each pathet is also different. When *dalang* will change *pathet*, *dalang* will give sign and code with using 'suluk' or 'janturan' directly received by musicians [18].

The scene structure of *wayang golek menak* show is slightly similar to *wayang kulit* show. The initial scene in *wayang golek menak* show uses *jejeran* scene. *Jejer* scene in *ringgit purwa* is an initial performance because its function is to start the story. The initial scene of both *wayang kulit purwa* and *wayang golek menak* is ended by *paseban njawi* scene. *Paseban njawi* scene is signified by *punggawa*'s (court official) meeting whom discussed about the King's instructions after the first *jejer* scene [19]. The difference is *gara-gara* scene. In *wayang kulit purwa* show, changing *pathet sanga* to *pathet manyura* is marked by *gara-gara* scene or the present of *punakawan* servants. In *wayang golek menak* show, *gara-gara* scene does not exist. This is because of that the background of story performed in *wayang golek menak* is originally from *Serat Menak* in which *punakawan* figures do not exist.

### 3.2. Wayang Golek Menak Story

The source of *wayang golek menak* stories is *Kitab Menak*, written by Ki Carik Narawita, Waladana's son-in-law, in the name of Kanjeng Ratu Mas Blitar's will, the queen of Sunan Paku Buwana I, in 1717. It is written on Friday, Rajab, 17th, tahun Dal, wuku Marakeh, *mangsa Kasa*, with *sengkalan: Lenging welut rasa purun* (1639 AJ or 1717 AD) [20]. Therefore, it can be concluded that *wayang golek menak* exists between the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. *Wayang golek menak* investigated and used as research source is *wayang golek menak* with Yogyakarta style developing in Sentolo area, Gunung Kidul.

*Serat menak* was later composed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, during *kapujanggan* period in Surakarta, Yasadipura composed the composition of *Serat Menak* from *Menak Kartasura* [21]. Sources of the story in the composed *Serat Menak* by Yasadipura (then known as Menak Yasadipura), are expanded. It is then compiled in terms of *tembang macapat* because in Kraton Surakarta period, literary works were frequently written in terms of *serat*, which contains the collection of *tembang macapat*. This *Serat Menak* told about Amir Hamzah, a story from Turkey [22]. Figures performed in *wayang golek menak* are Wong Agung Jayengrana, Umarmaya, Umarmadi, Adaningsgar, Kelaswara, Patih Bestak, dan others. Each part of the story delivered, become readers' and audiences' reflection to be able to get life values, which are useful for an effort to construct and develop their personalities.

### 3.3. Development of Golek Menak with Yogyakarta Style

The duration of *wayang golek menak* shows has developed many times. At first, the show needs six to seven hours. In 1975s, the show with the duration of two hours appeared, performed for foreign tourists. Another development is the existence of 60–120 minutes duration show, adjusted to tourists' requests who will watch the show. Meanwhile, this study compiles *Wayang Golek Menak* show with applying *pakeliran garap padat* concept in terms of scene structure *garap*, accompanied *garap*, *garap sabet*, and *garap singgit* with 60 menit show duration.

The stage of the show is made so *dalang* can move as needed in the scene by building portable stage that can be moved with using wheels. This stage is more than one. They are organized to be changeable and adjusted to the need of certain scene that represent the imaginative parts of the show. This staging concept is selected because this study intends to combine conventional *wayang golek* show staging and contemporary *wayang golek menak* show staging as the development of the original *wayang golek* show [24] [25]. It is expected that this study can introduce general staging of *wayang golek* show and the special one in *Wayang Golek Menak* show, so their differences will be recognized. This study also carries out the innovation of language use. In general, *Wayang Golek Menak Sentolo* uses Javanese language with

*pedalangan* (puppetry) Yogyakarta. In this study, *Wayang Golek Menak* chooses Indonesian language. Besides, it represents two sizes of *wayang golek* puppet, namely conventional size changed with new clothes, and large size with average height of 75 cm and weight of 750 gram to make audiences's sight clear in watching the figures showed. The main material of puppet head is Chinese albizzia due to its lightness. The material for puppet body is a second-hand paper from cement wrap, molded in hollows, so that gives cheaper production, produce lightweight puppet, and decrease paper waste [26].

From the staging, there is the change of *Wayang Golek Menak* play technique. *Wayang Golek Ménak Sentolo* can be played by sitting down and facing the stage, in which the show can be watched from both the front and behind *dalang* [13]. *Wayang Golek Menak* shows are deliberately planned to only be watched in front of *dalang*. *Dalang* plays a role in moving puppets, either sitting down or standing position, adjusted to scene needs. Each figure of wayang puppets are played by a *dalang* or two, depending on the needed atmosphere in the scene.

The cinematography approach is also applied in *wayang golek menak* show by using dubbing technique as figures' voice acting. Dialogues and narration are performed by voice actors, consisting of some persons play certain figures with reference to the need of figures performed [27]. To decrease the number of voice actors, a person probably plays more than one figure, depending on his/her ability in voice acting. Voice actors play figures with reference to sexes, female figures are played by female voice actors, and vise versa.

Music elements also important parts in wholly building the show staging [28]. Music accompaniment used with reference to traditional music by selecting some instruments or *ricikan gamelan* collaborated with wind and string instruments, and non-traditional string instruments. To accompany wayang golek menak, the instruments needed are *Bonang Penembung*, *Bonang Barung*, *Gendèr*, *Gendèr Penerus*, *Demung*, *Saron*, *Kempul*, dan *Gong* as well as non-traditional wind instrument, guitar, fiddle, and some *kendang*.

Lighting technique in *wayang golek menak* show used stage lamp with 5.000 W located in some spots that can give appropriate lighting for the scenes performed, and more focus on some stage blocking needed. This lighting technique adopts the one for theatre [29]. The selection of this technique aims to limit the space of the show so that do not occupy the wider space that make wayang puppets unclear.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Puppet arts developing in community are widely varied, including *wayang kulit purwa*, *wayang klithik*, and *wayang golek*. *Wayang golek* is considered as a conventional art because it developed in 1990 – 2000s. The development of *wayang golek* is required to attract audiences' interest and attention. It has been done by changing stories performed, from Ramayana and Mahabarata epic stories to stories from Serat Menak. *Wayang golek menak* is also a visualization media of *Serat Menak*. It has been developed from the original one, in terms of shorter duration, different language use, performance technique with using theater approach through modern blocking and lighting, dubbing technique for figure voice acting as animation films, portable stange to be easily moved, and different form of wayang golek in terms of size and materials. This development and new form of wayang golek menak is expected to be more acceptable in modern community.

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