



The Comparison of Mise-En-Scène in Indonesia Wayang Kulit and Animation

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Abstract. The existence of animation is often compared with wayang, which has existed in Indonesia for a long time. Wayang is considered a representation of animation in its traditional form in Indonesia. At the same time, animation is regarded as a form of wayang in the modern version. However, no research has examined the similarities and differences between wayang and animation. It can be seen by comparing the two media's mise-en-scene elements. This research used a comparative study method focusing on looking deeply at the differences and similarities between wayang kulit in Indonesia and animation. The data analysis process is carried out by analyzing the mise en-scene form of animation & wayang kulit on five primary elements: setting & props, costume, hair & makeup, facial expressions & body language, lighting & colour, and positioning of characters/objects within the frame. In the identification of mise en-scene in wayang kulit and animation, it is found that both media are built by critical components that are used to form a narrative that will be told to the audience. The use of settings, character visualization, facial expressions & body language, light & colour, as well as the positioning of characters on stage, are arranged in such a way as to suit the needs of the dalang or director. The forms of mise-en-scene from wayang and animation differ in using technology in the production process. The results of this research can be used to see how the relationship between the history of traditional motion-based arts, such as wayang, influences the development of modern animation in Indonesia.

Keywords: Mise En-Scene · Animation · Wayang Kulit · Indonesia

1 Introduction

Wayang is one of the pinnacles of Indonesian art and culture, which stands out among many other works of art. The international community recognizes wayang as a product of indigenous Indonesian culture and art with noble values. The wayang existed for centuries before Hinduism entered Java and grew more advanced and popular with the community until it continued in the era of Islamic civilization in the archipelago [1]. The word “wayang” itself is thought to have come from the word “wewayangan”, which

means shadow. The assumption follows the form of a wayang kulit show that uses a screen (kelir) as a barrier between the dalang (the wayang director) and the audience behind the screen [2]. Now, wayang is no longer just a spectacle of shadow play or a puppet show but a reflection of Indonesian society's "wewayangane urip" (the shadow of human life). Although it has essential rules that have existed for centuries, wayang continues to evolve following the changing times, from philosophical values to artistic aspects.

Animation is one of the contemporary art forms that was born since the invention of photography and film technology in the 19th century [3]. The animation itself can be interpreted as creating a moving illusion and having a lively impression on the images. In its development, animation developed a lot in the western world, especially in America and Europe. Animation began to spread all over the world and was able to become a vast entertainment industry since the era of "the golden age of cartoons." This era was born when technology was invented to unite visual and sound elements in animation, making animated films no longer mute. The development of television in the 1950s marked a new era of animation that was previously long-lived and aired in theatres to be short-lived and can be seen in serial form. The invention of computer-based digital technology in the 1980s also changed the animation production process differently from previous eras. It can be said that the form of animation developed along with the discovery of new technologies used in the animation production process [4].

In Indonesia, animation began to be known when Dukut Hendronoto learned the animation production process at the Disney studio in 1953 by the order of President Soekarno [5]. From then on, animation became one of the modern entertainment media that the people of Indonesia widely consumed. More than 150 animation studios in Indonesia produced animation works for various needs every day in 2020 [6]. The ecosystem of the Indonesian animation industry is also maturing with the proliferation of animation education. It is marked by the large number of animated series that air on national television and long-duration animated films in Indonesian cinemas.

The existence of animation is often compared to wayang, which has existed in Indonesia for a long time. Both are also considered part of the performing arts. Wayang was considered a form of original Indonesian animation when it was introduced to the outside world by Dwi Koendoro at the International Animation Festival in Hiroshima, Japan, in 1994 [7]. Since then, many academics and practitioners in animation have been researching and developing traditional wayang into modern forms, such as in animation [8–10]. This effort is carried out so that wayang kulit can adapt to the era and not be abandoned due to the emergence of new entertainment media in the current digital era. However, no studies have tried comparing similarities and differences between wayang and animations. This research is vital because comparing the form of wayang with animations can be used as one of the considerations in transforming wayang into more modern forms. The similarities and differences between wayang and animation can be seen by comparing the elements of the mise-en-scene in the two media.

2 Method

This research used a comparative study method to examine the differences and similarities between wayang and animations. The data analysis process is carried out by analyzing the mise-en-scene of animation & wayang kulit on five main elements: setting & props, costumes, hair & makeup, facial expressions & body language, lighting & colour, and positioning of characters/objects within the frame. The research object used in this study is the Javanese wayang kulit with animation works. Mise en-scene itself is a terminology from the French language used to describe all the elements seen in the film controlled by the director [11]. Mise-en-scene refers to all the elements visible to the audience consisting of five main elements: setting & props, costumes, hair & makeup, facial expressions & body language, lighting & colour, and positioning of characters/objects within the frame. Although this terminology was initially used in theatre art in Europe, in its development, mise en-scene can also be applied to other performing arts such as film, animation to virtual reality [12]. It is hoped that by identifying the essential elements of the mise-en-scene in wayang and animation, it can see the similarities and differences between the two entertainment media.

3 Result and Discussion

3.1 Setting and Props

The setting is an essential element in the storytelling process in animation. Settings and properties affect how the character acts or can be used as additional elements in its narrative aspects. So that both the characters, backgrounds and properties will have the same context because they are in a specific world/universe setting [13]. In animation, the visual style of the background and environment is an essential element in building the atmosphere or scene scenario that will integrate with the characters involved in the animation [14]. The environment also plays a vital role in storytelling [15]. The scene environment may tend to be static and not as dynamic as the characters who are always in motion and directly convey the message to the audience through gestures, gestures, mimic facial expressions, and word expressions. However, a great environment design will be able to build an impression that is tipped to captivate the hearts of the audience so that it can bring them to be swept away and even feel like they are in the scene of the film scene. To build this kind of atmosphere, creators often conduct studies by visiting certain locations related to the setting in the animated story to get the same feeling when writing a story and describing the visualization of the environment. So it is not surprising that classic Disney animated films are famous for their use of spectacular backgrounds and their ability to set the atmosphere and theme through their visual style to immerse the audience in the animated story [16].

The animation settings can be shown in two forms: the background and the foreground [17]. These two settings will show the location of the story being told. The difference is that the background has a border on the farthest vanishing point (horizon line) visible to the camera. At the same time, the foreground shows the closest side of the camera, making it often look blurred. The properties in the animation are not limited in number. Because it can be made and displayed as needed in the camera frame, the

details of the items and objects appearing in the animation can emphasize the location of the setting and show the genre of the animation. For example, animation in the horror genre will show many properties related to the genre, such as blood, knives, uninhabited old houses, damaged furniture, and so on.

Jagad wayang, in the world of wayang, is a space to store wayang symbolized as earth, land, sky, and simultaneously as the meaning of the cosmos [18]. The background in wayang is limited by the existence of a kelir, a white screen used as a place/stage for the wayang master to play the wayang. The existence of kelir is also beneficial in achieving visual optical illusions when viewed from the back due to the formation of shadow projections produced by lights (blencong). Meanwhile, the wayang is not known for the background & foreground as in the animation. The absence of background & foreground also makes the audience more focused on wayang storytelling.

In addition to the screen, banana fronds (debog) are also needed as a place to plug the wayang arranged into two different positions, namely those in front-down and back-up [19]. In the example of Fig. 1, we can see that the area of the kelir limits the mastermind stage. So it is impossible to replace the background and foreground as in the animation periodically. Debog is only used as a place to plug wayang characters. The debog at the top is used to plug wayang characters into a high position. On the contrary, the debog at the bottom is intended for the wayang group whose position is lower.

As a sign of scene/place movement, the dalang (the wayang player/director) will usually use Gunungan (kayon) [20]. The gunungan is found in every wayang kulit show and used as a symbol. It is called a gunungan because its shape resembles a gunungan that sticks high upwards. In addition, gunungan is also used to describe atmospheres such as sad and joyful atmospheres, water, fire, and wind. Like when the wayang show has not started, the gunungan will be placed in the middle of the kelir. The gunungan sign will be unplugged when the performance starts and placed on the right and left sides.

From this, it can be said that the use of settings and properties on wayang is very limited. The properties of characters, such as sword weapons, arrows, or knives, have usually been made into one in the character's wayang. Each wayang character can no longer be given a new property that can be changed directly unless the wayang master

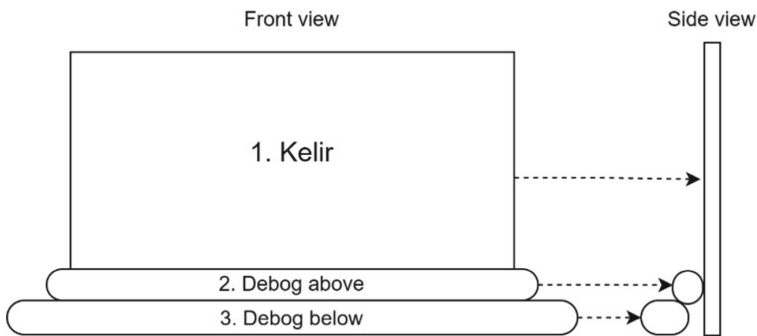


Fig. 1. Jagad wayang model.

makes the same wayang but with a different property. There is also a dalang who distinguishes the properties used by wayang from their characters. This method will make various kinds of properties their wayang.

3.2 Costume, Hair and Makeup

This subchapter is closely related to the animated and wayang characters' visual aspects. Animation has flexibility in depicting each character's costumes, hairstyles, and makeup. In animation, the visual style of the character depends on the taste or image style of the animation creator. Each animation title will have different characteristics from other creators' animations. There is no specific emphasis on depicting animated characters' visual aspects. However, in general, the visual style in animation can be categorized as the visual style of cartoons, anime, realists, and abstracts. Even in some cases, some animated titles combine various visual techniques on the characters. For example, in *The Amazing World of Gumball* animation, each character has a different visual style due to differences in production techniques. In this animated title, each character is made with a 2D vector image, stop motion, paper, and 3D character, to combine these techniques into one character.

Because the theme of the story in the wayang is standard, it also affects who are the characters who will fill the story at a wayang show. Unlike animation, wayang kulit has a reasonably rigid style/rules and has been embraced for centuries. A wayang maker already has rules passed down for generations, from the shape of the form to the character's colour. The artist of the wayang character must also meet the rules that apply, especially in Java. These rules; such as the colour palette, the shape of the body proportions, the anatomy of the wayang (eyes, nose, and mouth, even the finger gripping poses and accessories), imply certain symbolizations related to the cosmological mindset in Java in particular. [21]. The aesthetic concept of Nusantara refers more to the aspect of taste and is transcendent. This aesthetic contrasts with the global aesthetic concepts used in animation, which are oriented toward ethics (good) and logic (proper).

The shape of the wayang is still basically mimetic, distorted in such a way, and ideoplastic, that is, not based on what is visible (visioplasic) but on what is known



Fig. 2. Character design of Gumball animation.

and imagined about humans as a whole covering physical aspects to representation. This is done to avoid the prohibition of depicting human forms in Islamic law and as an expression of traditional Javanese practical-aesthetic functions to achieve clarity of form, character, the face of representation, and flexibility of movement (Sabet) ergonomically. Deformation or distortion of shapes with a noticeable difference in size can create a character's visual identity [22]. An example is the wayang character of a king's daughter has a slender shape. In contrast, the significant Bima wayang character is visualized in a form twice as large as the princess, or the character who is giant and fat, to the punakawan character who has a very distinctive body and face shape and is easy to recognize.

In particular, there are visual forms of wayang characters such as those found in the eye shape (such as plerengan, thelengan, kedhelen, kedhohongan, gabahan), coil shape/hair cover (gelung supit urang, ngore polos, ngore gembel, gimbal, udhalan, udhatan gimbal, songkok, mekutha, topong), mouth shape (ngeket, mrenges, ndingis, ndhamis, gusen) and nose shape (nyanthik boat, pangotan, wali tilt, nerong glathik, nyempaluk). There are also additional accessories that symbolize the position or position of the character in wayang stories, such as necklaces on the wayang chest, bracelets, belts, accessories on the upper hands, and the form of illustrations of luxurious lower-part clothing [23].

3.3 Facial Expressions and Body Language

In animation, facial expressions and body language can appear with the help of rigging in 3D animation and can be drawn directly in 2D animation. What distinguishes animation from media such as comics and conventional films lies in the elements of motion consisting of 3 elements, namely gestures or body language, facial mimics, and voice tones [24]. We often find adaptations of stories from comics to animation. Even though they have the same story, this motion element animation will provide more experience for the audience because they can see how the characters in the comic story move. Each character must have their characteristics, including how gestures form their gestures, and this is what the audience does not get when reading comics.

In animation, we often see a movement that never occurs in the real world, such as eyeball movements that pop out when glaring at a scene of fear or in the movement of the legs spinning before running fast in a scene being chased by a fierce dog. What distinguishes the movement of characters in animation and film also lies in the advantages of animation media in creating an exaggerated impression (exaggeration) in body language, voice tone, or facial mimics. The three elements will be intertwined to form a manifestation of the emotional side of a character that will be seen by the audience [24].

The movements of the character are influenced by the characterization he has. This means that each character in the animation may have different movements from one another because of the background differences accompanying the character. For example, if a character comes from India, he will have different movements from characters from Java. Characters from India have a habit of moving their heads when talking to others, as is the custom of Indians. In addition, he also has a strong Indian accent, although he speaks using English or Indonesian. Meanwhile, when speaking, his typical Javanese "medok" accent never disappears, even though he speaks using English or Indonesian.

On the other hand, characters from Java can have calm and calm gestures in their body language.

The relationship with other animation elements is that this element of character movement will eventually bring the plot of the story to be conveyed (narrative element) through body gestures and character face mimics. On the other hand, the voice lipsync in the character's movements will bring up dialogue (audio elements) which will bring the animation story with their respective characteristics possessed by the characters [25]. From this, we can conclude that the movement of a character in the animation will not be separated from the character's background. The character's entire movements, both in the form of acting and emotions, represent the character's origin. It means that a character's cultural background brings out characteristics and identities that are different from other characters. So we can see the connection between the character culture and the form of the acting movements displayed in front of the screen animators.

If facial expressions and body language can be created directly with images or rigging in animation, then in wayang kulit, this is not the case. Dalang has limitations in moving the wayang characters' facial expressions and body language. Suppose the creation of an atmosphere in wayang performance through the sound of pocapan, keyyakan, and dhodhongan to the karawitan. In that case, the wayang character's inner attitude towards the atmosphere is visualized by his body, hands, and facial expressions. The posture and hands of wayang can be moved, but this is not the case for facial expressions. The facial expression on the wayang was already set before the wayang was even staged.

The conception of facial expressions in wayang is known as Wanda. Not all wayang artists can make Wanda; few people have been involved in wayang making for years or have been classified as "wayang masters." This type of wanda is based on specific considerations such as aesthetic challenges, adjustments to a play, symbolism, favouritism, and pasemon or as a medium of criticism/innuendo. These motivations poured into the shape of the eyes, the nose, and the mouth shape of each wayang character. The facial expression of wayang is also determined by other aspects that exist in the anatomy of the character's body, such as the slope of the shoulders, the shape of the abdomen, the length of the legs, the shape of the palms, the location of the head against the shoulders, the fatness of the body, the colour of the face, and others.

Each wayang character has a fundamental character. Based on this primary character, the creation of various types depends on the mental state he is experiencing (joys, sorrows, relief, fear, etc.), as well as his physical condition (wredha, cadet, roga, etc.). Meanwhile, the shape of the head should not be too thin but made thick enough to show the characteristics of the wanda clearly.

The movement (Sabet) can be seen from the length of the arm, which is also deformed (tends to be thin) as the only part of the wayang body that can be moved [26]. This position is also supported by broad shoulders so that it can be distinguished which is the front or back shoulder. Even though it is flat, the wayang still includes the perspective aspect shown in the position of the shoulder. In addition, the shape of the legs is made shorter to make it easier for the wayang master to move the wayang. The cut part of the hand will be held together with a *gegel* or joint point and *teteg* or bone.

Meanwhile, the wayang body will be supported by a cempurit or arm rod, a composition, and an antub or the central part attached to the debog. Due to the limited gestures of the wayang character's body, the role of the wayang master becomes very central in the storytelling process during the wayang performance. The dalang have a lot of ideas for displaying wayang characters. How a wayang figure speaks words, behaves, and acts when communicating with other figures is regulated in the udanegara, namely the ordinances, manners, or ethics of the figures in the wayang character.

3.4 Lighting and Color

In a wayang performance, a kelir will always be paired with a blencong, a lamp that is the only source of wayang lighting. Blencong, in its original form, is a container containing coconut oil and a wick that can emit fire light [27]. This blencong wayang with a yellow to golden base colour will look alive. Similarly, when viewed from behind the kelir, the effect of the blencong fire exposed to the wind and the position of the wayang bridge on the debog will form an artistic shadow effect. In modern times, the traditional blencong was replaced by electronic lamps.

The colouring on wayang, especially on the face and body, is dominated by golden yellow, red, black, white, and green/blue colours, also called *pancamaya* or foreign. These colours have associations with the cosmological symbolism of the *pancer limo*. The symbol is that white (*seta*) is the colour of water, a symbol of *mutmainah* lust that symbolizes purity. Black (*kresna*) is the colour of the earth, a symbol of lust, and a sign of evil or power. Yellow (*jenar*) symbolizes the colour of the wind, a symbol of *sufliyyah* lust. Red (*dice*) is the colour of fire, the epitome of the lust of anger, and a sign of numerals. Green (*wilis*) is the colour of nature, a symbol of *mulhimah* lust foreshadowing direction. These colours can be said to embody the reflection of human thought on nature and its cosmology in works of wayang art. Colour is not only used to distinguish characters from one another but also has profound symbolic meanings.

Lighting for animation is its art, and it's a very subtle one. When we look at an animated work, it's easy to see how many people worked on it. The audience can see all the objects in the scene and knows that a modeller must have put them there. The animator's work can be seen in how the characters move. Lighting works deeper, more psychologically, just like music does. Lighting doesn't have to stand out as a part of a scene; it's more about how it makes people feel. Most of the time, the audience can't name each light or even pay much attention to what time of day is being shown. Instead, people feel the effect of the lighting and respond to it without even realizing it.

Lighting artists in an animated movie are used for three main things. These goals will be discussed in more depth as the book continues, but they will be explained now [28]. The first goal is to guide the eye of the viewer. The scenes lighter will use brightness, contrast, colour, and anything else needed to make the action stand out. Settings can get very complicated, and the lighter's job is to ensure that the audience's attention is on the story's most crucial screen part. This job is also essential when a shot is very short, and the audience doesn't have much time to focus on the shot's main point.

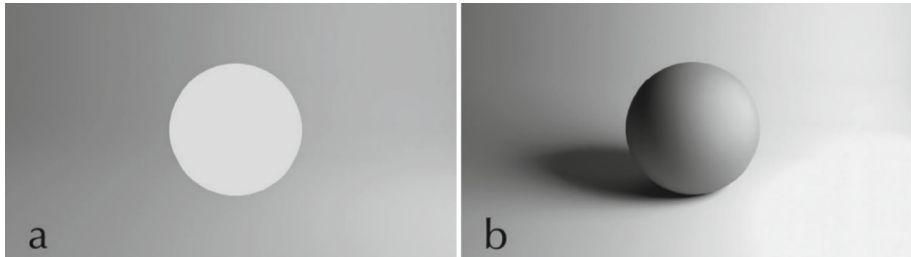


Fig. 3. Objects with light and shadow reflections will produce different shapes even though they have the same size [28].

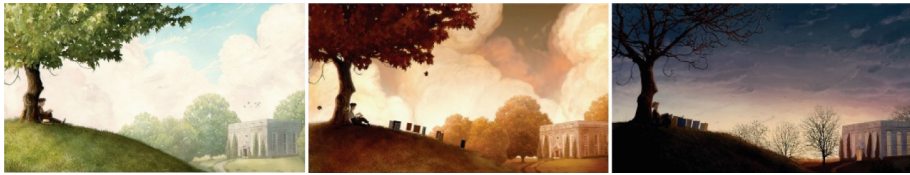


Fig. 4. Whether it is the crisp, clean daylight, the warm orange glow of the evening’s “magic hour,” or the cooler evening lighting, the colour palette dramatically influences the mood of each of these shots [28].

The second goal is to make the scene look interesting by giving all the objects suitable shapes. Visual shaping in computer graphics (CG) is like painting in that the artist makes value differences so that two-dimensional things on a flat-screen look like they are in three-dimensional space. Figure 3: By making light, both pictures are made up of the same shapes. Image B’s sphere has more volume, weight, and visual interest because of how the different tones were made with light and shadow.

Artists can make CG objects look more attractive by changing their shape, size, colour, or value to give them more depth. The third most important job of the lighter is to set the mood and help tell the story. Again, all the artists working on an animated project are trying to say the same level, and every part of the movie must try to tell the best story. A lighter has many tools at its disposal to help set the mood. Colour design is an essential tool. Using colour and light, a lighter can change how the viewer’s subconscious reacts to the scene when they first see it. In Fig. 4, each shot’s set and camera angle are almost identical.

Lighters can draw the eye of the audience in any way they can, using light, contrast, colour, or anything else. Most of the time, the brightest thing on the screen draws the viewer’s attention. If darker values surround this bright part of the screen, it will stand out even more. People often say that this is “light over dark.” in the examples in Fig. 5, the main character is the first thing you notice, and everything else is less important.

3.5 Positioning of Characters/Objects Within the Frame

In wayang kulit, there is a package that regulates the position of characters or objects in the wayang universe or wayang performance stage. In wayang performances, the



Fig. 5. Concept Art from *Song of the Sea* animation.

gunungan or kayon has several essential functions: (1) to start the wayang performance with the sign of the kayon being removed and then placed on the right and left sides. (2) as a sign of scene/location change. (3) to describe an atmosphere such as a sad atmosphere or great joy or to describe something for which there is no wayang (only the dalang himself will speak). (4) to describe water, fire, and wind. And (5) as a sign of the end of wayang kulit show performance, namely by re-enumerating kayon in the middle of kelir.

Meanwhile, the wayang position is probably one of the things that are rarely noticed by the audience, especially when the wayang master puts the wayang position. If you look carefully, there are differences in the symbolic meaning of the position/location of the wayang on the kelir. In Fig. 1, it is stuck in the debog in a perpendicular position. In Fig. 2, the position of the wayang is at a particular slope where its head is attached to the screen while its feet are stuck to the lower debog. This position is a symbol that the wayang has a sizeable physical height. The position of the attached wayang seems firm and meaningful to be in the room (if the scene is in the palace/palace).

While the sitting pattern of wayang in debog is divided into three main patterns: smooth/delicate, dashing, and rough, the gesture is displayed with different hand postures and body positions. The problem now is, what if the wayang is watched behind and not in front of the screen? This difference in how to see the wayang will also indirectly distort the wayang show's symbolic meaning. The relationship between staging, cinematography, and mise-en-scène is intimate. Staging in animation is concerned mainly with the spatial organization of people and items within the set but also involves the sequential ordering of character actions such that only one thing occurs at a time. It requires the animator to consider the overall composition of the shot with the camera and guide the audience's focus accordingly (Fig. 6).



Fig. 6. Wayang animation from the Cak Rye Animation youtube channel tries to combine wayang kulit forms into modern animated forms.

4 Conclusion

In the results of the identification of mise en scenes on wayang kulit and animations, it was found that the two media was built by the essential elements used to form a narrative that would be told to the audience. In general, both wayang kulit and animations have similarities in their essential constituent elements. The use of settings, character visualization, facial expressions & body language, light & colour, as well as the placement of the character's position on the stage, are arranged in such a way as to adjust the needs of the mastermind or director. The mise-en-scene forms of wayang and animation differ from the point of view of the technology used in production. The shape of the wayang is felt to be in its best form after undergoing a transformation process for centuries.

Meanwhile, the animation will continue to develop according to new technologies found in supporting the production process. Therefore, even though it has the same elements, the wayang and animations will still be separated by the intensity of technology use. Animations are more flexible in arranging/shaping en-scene mise than wayang. Wayang is limited by the packages the culprits have agreed upon for generations. Meanwhile, animation gives the director freedom to set the mise-en-scene. But that doesn't mean wayang kulit can't transform into a modern form like animation. The similarity of the mise-en-scene elements provides an opportunity for creators to transform traditional wayang forms into more flexible forms outside existing models (Fig. 7). This process requires time and effort to realize the modern wayang form in a perfect form like a traditional wayang.

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