



Maintaining the Existence of *Wayang Golek Punakawan Sunda* through Photography

Noviana Sabilla ^{a,1,*}, Maya Purnama Sari ^{a,2}

^a Multimedia Education Study Program, Indonesian Education University, Bandung, Indonesia

¹ novianaes@upi.edu, ² mayapurnama@upi.edu

* Corresponding Author

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ABSTRACT

Wayang Golek is one of the nation's cultural heritage that grows and develops in West Java, and its existence still exists today but is starting to decline. Photography is one part of the technology that can bridge the Punakawan Sundanese Wayang Golek Culture in maintaining its existence. The purpose of the research is to maintain the existence of the Punakawan Sundanese Wayang Golek Culture through the media of Photography. The research method uses a qualitative descriptive approach obtained through interviews, observations and is equipped with photographic works. The results of this study indicate that Photography can be one of the media in maintaining the existence of Wayang Golek, especially the Sundanese Punakawan group, through social media such as Instagram. Photography by researchers and other artists' works shared via Instagram can be spread worldwide and stored forever, with periodic and continuous stages, the existence of Wayang Golek, especially Punakawan Sundanese, will be maintained.

KEYWORDS

Art Fotografi;
Punakawan;
Culture Wayang
Golek

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1. Introduction

The decline in the existence of regional culture has become an undesirable consequence due to the development of the times as it is today's role with significant influence in the shifting of regional culture, including the arts. Technology becomes a bridge in the dissemination of information about foreign cultures that now dominate regional culture (Stephens et al. 2008). Foreign culture steals the hearts of the younger generation because it is considered more following the times, while regional culture is considered ancient and outdated (Creese 2001). In comparison, the art and culture of the region have a function that is not just entertainment but more complex than that, including social, cultural, to spiritual values. The Great Dictionary of Indonesian (KBBI) defines existence as a matter of existence or existence. Existence is a dynamic process, being, and existing. In accordance with the origin of the word in Latin, existence consists of two words, namely ex meaning out and sister with the meaning of appearing or arisen. Existence is flexible and always recognized because it follows the development that exists. If applied to the existence of culture, then the existence of culture is an effort to gain recognition of the existence of civilization (Friedman 1990). Following existing developments, the effort can be made by individuals and groups, both in the cultural environment that grows and from outside the cultural environment grows. In the study of anthropology, culture is a way of life formed from various elements, including religion, politics, customs, languages, art etc., which then develops in a group or society (Marcus 2021). Culture comes from the Sanskrit Buddhayah, which is the plural form of buddhi which means mind or reason (Susiani 2021). So the nature of culture has something to do with the human mind and reason. Culture is one way of life that has been determined by the descendants of the past (a group of people) and passed down from generation to generation present. Culture is formed from various elements, including clothing, food, buildings, ethics, and much more. So as it is known that the people of Indonesia hold tightly to indigenous cultures such as wearing traditional clothes, food that should not be eaten, to ethics in front of others (Bordo 2020).

Wayang Golek is one of the nation's growing and growing cultural heritage in West Java (Halimah et al. 2020). Its spread ranges from Cirebon to Banten. Currently, *Wayang Golek* has become an identity for Sundanese people (Sundanese people). *Wayang Golek* itself is a performance art that



combines ritual and entertainment dimensions. UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) implemented *Wayang Golek* as a Masterpiece of Oral and Intangible Human Cultural Heritage in 2003. The establishment of *Wayang Golek* by UNESCO makes *Wayang Golek* not only as a family heritage but a national heritage, even a human heritage (Azis, Komalasari, and Masyitoh 2020). *Wayang Golek* in the form of *trimatra* made of wood and look in such a way with a knife. The characters are adapted to the storyline. The story of this puppet *golek* show is diverse; some are derived from the story of Ramayana, *Mahabharata*, and other stories of the puppet universe. During the performance, *Wayang Golek* was accompanied by Sunda gamelan music. Tools that include Sunda gamelan include *kendang*, *gambang*, *rebab*, *gong*, *saron*, *peking*, *selenrem*, *kenong*, and *kempul*, also accompanied by beautiful singing sung by *Sinden* (Foley 2021).

Wayang Golek Sunda has several figures whose appearance is always awaited during the show. The group of figures is named *Punakawan* (Foley 2021). *Punakawan* is etymologically derived from the word Puna which has understanding, and friends, which means friends. *Punakawan* is not only servants or ordinary followers; they also understand what is happening to their employers, even as advisers to their employers (Magnis-Suseno 2020). *Punakawan* has a broad meaning; the position of the *Punakawan* is very honourable, namely as a life companion, friend, friend of the knights. The reason for the wait for the appearance of the *Punakawan* in the show is as a group of *humor* spreaders in the middle of the storyline. This character is Semar and his three children, *Cepot*, *Dawala*, and *Gareng*. *Cepot* has the real name Sastajingga (Gunawan 2020). *Cepot* has a funny and silly character, and it is through that character that the mastermind gives advice to life lessons. In addition to *Cepot*, there is *Dawala*, who is the younger brother of *Cepot*, a figure who accompanies *Cepot* wherever he goes. *Gareng*, a figure who prefers to stay at home. Furthermore, *Semar* who is the father of *Cepot*, *Dawala*, and *Gareng*. *Wayang Golek* achieved its glory during the reign of the Dutch East Indies, where at that time, the puppeteers and *padepokan* *Wayang Golek* many sprung up in various regions. Although this art began to be limited after the arrival of the Japanese, *Wayang Golek* again fluttered after independence. Until now, its existence still exists, but its existence began to exist. Although the existence of *golek* puppet performance art is weakened, research conducted by Risyadi, in his journal *Wayang Golek* from performing arts to kriya art (Study on the Development of *Golek* Puppet Function in Bobor City) shows data that *Wayang Golek* which was once only as a performing art with religious functions, entertainment functions, social functions, and information delivery functions now has an expansion of meaning as craft art. Over time and adjustments to the times, the creativity of craftsmen creates new opportunities in maintaining the existence of *Wayang Golek* where *Wayang Golek* is produced as souvenirs, not just for performances. The basis of the research does not rule out the possibility of whether the art of Photography can maintain the exclusivity of *Wayang Golek*.

Etymological Photography comes from the Greek language (Brodsky 2021). Photos which means light, and *Gafo* that meranti write. So it can be interpreted if Photography is a writing process carried out by light. The Great Dictionary of Indonesian (KBBI) defines Photography as art, and the result of the process of light and images on a film surface or surface made concentrated. Photography became a new communication tool used to convey messages ideas through the medium of photographs (Tomaž and Walanchalee 2020). This photo media can help also. It is used to document an important moment or event (Ali, Lodhia, and Narayan 2020). Photography provides works in the form of photos that allow the dissemination of information about culture to circulate quickly, one of which is through social media. Data on the internet and social media trends in 2020 in Indonesia, according to Hootsuite, shows there are 175.4 million internet users and 160 million active social media users out of 272.1 million Indonesians and as many as 79% of the population in Indonesia using Instagram Instagram itself is a photo and video sharing application where users can take photos or videos, apply digital filters, and share them to various digital media platforms including the Instagram application itself. In the research of Michael Hb Raditya, Institut Seni Indonesia (ISI) Yogyakarta 2014 (Selfies and Social Media on Art as a Form of Existence). Stating that ordinary society is a new receptor that has a strong role in the existence of art itself, and art becomes an existence for the lay community (Nieto Fernandez and Rubio Hernandez 2021). The presence of technology makes the commodification of art has the value of existence and technology. Supported by research workshops conducted by Daniel 2013 where the development of information media and the emergence of social media makes the commodification of art has the value of existence and technology—supported by



research workshops conducted by Daniel 2013 where the development of information media and the emergence of social media make Radical changes in the social conditions of society. Communication patterns turn into virtual communication (Farzai, Shirvani, and Rabbani 2020). These phenomena, facts, and data are the main factors behind the research on "Maintaining the Existence of Puppet *Golek Punakawan* Sunda through Photography". This research is intended as one form of caring and effort in preserving and maintaining the culture of *Wayang Golek* Sunda. With customized photography techniques. The second stage is to conduct interview data and complete supporting evidence if Photography is able to maintain the existence of a culture. Then sort out the results of the photos that have been obtained and do the photo editing stage if needed. The last stage is to share the results of *Wayang Golek* photos on Instagram media as an effort to maintain the existence of *Wayang Golek* Sunda equipped with a caption explaining the photo of *Wayang Golek* shared.

2. Method

This research is focused on *Wayang Golek* Punakwan in the context of Kriya art which is then packaged through Photography. In this study, researchers used qualitative approaches as the main procedure of the study. The resulting data is descriptive data in the form of words or oral words from people and behaviours that can be observed. Qualitative descriptive methods in this design are obtained by means of interviews and observations. Researchers have three stages of research as a research flow. The first stage is to conduct Library Studies and field observation to the *Golek* *Wayang* Sales Place on Jl. Braga then conducted an interview process on the owner and craftsman of *Wayang Golek* on Jalan Braga and finally did *Golek* Puppet Shooting sold on Jl. Braga with customized photography techniques. The second stage is to conduct interview data and complete supporting evidence if Photography is able to maintain the existence of a culture. Then sort out the results of the photos that have been obtained and do the photo editing stage if needed. The last stage is to share the results of *Wayang Golek* photos on Instagram media as an effort to maintain the existence of *Wayang Golek* Sunda equipped with a caption explaining the photo of *Wayang Golek* shared.

3. Results and Discussion

Father Ramdan a craftsman and seller of *Wayang Golek* on Jalan Braga mentioned that the most recognized and desirable Sundanese *Wayang Golek* is *Wayang Golek Punakawan*. *Wayang Golek Punakawan* is widely purchased by local tourists and foreign tourists as souvenirs or for mere displays. (Interview, June 5, 2021). As the only seller of *Wayang Golek* in the middle of the city, Father Ramdan has been widely known by local and foreign tourists; even many media have raised the name of the Father and souvenirs of *Wayang Golek* his work. During the observation process and interview of the Bandros, Bus tour guide always greets Father Ramdan as well as introduces them (Figure 1). Puppets *Golek* as a Sundanese cultural heritage. The results of these observations show that the Existence of Puppet *Golek* still exists and must continue to be maintained. Through souvenirs, Father Ramdan did it, and through photography, this research was done.



Fig. 1. Father Ramdan and Souvenir *Wayang Golek* which he sold on Jalan Braga *Wayang Golek Punakawan* Sunda Photography



Researchers conducted a photoshoot of *Wayang Golek* by Father Ramdan Kosasih and her Family on June 5, 2021, Braga Street, and a photoshoot conducted at home on June 7, 2021. Researchers used a DSLR-type camera with the Canon 700D brand with an 18-55mm kit lens. Researchers applied several composition techniques in photography to the selection of *Wayang Golek Punakawan*. The composition here is very helpful to produce good photo work so that the message you want to convey can be conveyed to viewers. The composition technique applied to the photo above (Figure 2) is the Golden Triangle. This technique is suitable for use with photo objects that contain strong diagonal line elements. In the photo above, the triangle is separated between the height of each puppet's shirt and the wooden stick that leads to the lower left side.



Fig. 2. *Wayang Golek Punakawan*

The object is placed downhill from the top left to the bottom right according to its pedigree. It starts with *Semar*, the father of the three puppet characters, *Cepot*, the first child, *Dawala*, the second child, and *Gareng*, who is the third child or the last child. The message becomes an implied message if only viewed through the photo only. In Figure 2, the composition technique applied is Full of Frame with flat lay photo taking. With this technique, viewers are directed to focus on the main subject, namely *Wayang Punakawan*, without anything else disturbing. The placement of equal or parallel objects gives the impression of emotional closeness between objects, *Punakawan*.



Fig. 3. *Wayang Golek Punakawan* ; *Cepot* (a), *Dawala* (b), *Gareng* (c), *Semar* (d)

Cepot's photo (Figure 3 (a)) was taken with the depth of field composition techniques. This technique is a simple technique that focuses on the main object and blurs the object and the background behind it. With this technique, *Cepot* becomes the main object that is the focus of attention. In Figure 3(b)-(d), the composition technique applied is the rule of third combined with the depth of field. With this combination of techniques, viewers will look more comfortable in seeing the object shown. Moreover, in one frame, there is only one object stored. Especially in Figure 3 (b), *Dawala* storage on the Left with a sideways pose shows one of its long-nosed characteristics.

3.1. Instagram as a Medium in Disseminating Photographic

Results Instagram was chosen as a medium for disseminating *golek Punakawan* puppet photos in maintaining the existence of *Wayang Golek* because it has eased in disseminating it even to various corners of the world. Instagram also still has high popularity as data from We Are Social, and Hootsuite mentions as many as 79% of the population. The results of photography obtained then researchers send through a personal Instagram account with the account name @noviana.sbl on the grounds that researchers can review and analyze the extent to which the photos submitted are scattered. Researchers then caption each post explaining who and what objects are in the photo shared. Researchers also opened up space for viewers to interact with each other in the comments field. From one of the posts containing a group photo of *Wayang Punakawan*, there are some comments, and the most interesting is a comment from @dheanandakr account that mentions "so curious about the advice and journey of his life" such comments certainly strengthen the evidence for researchers where photography can build curiosity and curiosity to have Puppet *Golek*. So that is the essence of maintaining the existence of *Wayang Golek* through Photography.



Fig. 4. One of *Golek Punakawan* 's Puppet Posts on Instagram @noviana.sbl

Aside from the results of the researcher's photos that researchers shared, there are also several other photographer artists who also share their work as a form of distributing work while maintaining the effectiveness of *Wayang Golek*. Among them is Oktav Andy, who has an account name. @octavandys has shared a photo of a puppeteer with *Wayang Golek* as well as Zenn Virgiawan, who photographed souvenirs of *Wayang Golek* on Braga Street through his Instagram account @zv.eye.



Fig. 5. Ki Warsad, A Maker, Puppeteer & Lover of Puppet *Golek* (Photo: Octav Andy, 2021)

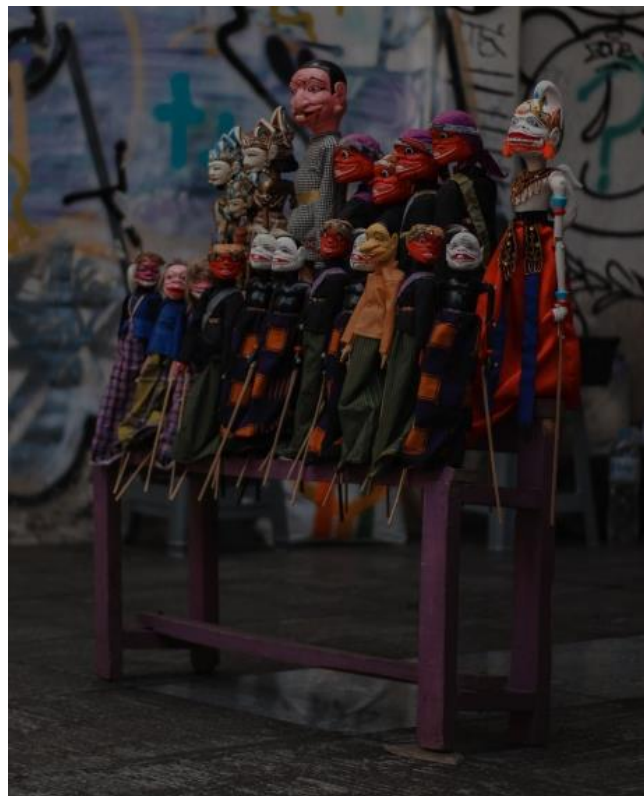


Fig. 6. *Wayang Golek* on Braga Street (Photo: Zenn Virgiawan, 2021).

All the photographic works of *Wayang Golek* either belong to researchers or other artists that are shared periodically and constantly keep the existence of *Wayang Golek* awake.

3.2. Puppet Photography Competition as a Form of Cultural Preservation

Photography in the world of puppetry has been widely held in the race. WOW, or Word of Wayang, is a radiant show organized by PT Bank Central Asia Tbk. (BCA) in collaboration with Pepadi. This event explores puppet culture in Indonesia as well as holding a photo race in it. BCA Held a WOW Photography competition from October 6 - December 12, 2012. In the previous year, precisely 19-22 October 2011, World of Wayang, in collaboration with Digital Camera Indonesia magazine, also conducted a Puppet photo competition with the theme of the puppet. The purpose of the event was none other than to preserve one of the archipelago's cultural characteristics. In addition to WOW, there is an International Puppet Festival on December 22 - 27, 2013, organized by Rumah Topeng and Wayang Setiadama, who hold photography competitions. Photography competitions with puppet themes prove that the art of photography is effective in maintaining the culture and art of the puppet area.

4. Conclusion

In the era of globalization and modernization process as it is today, the existence of *Wayang Golek* still exists despite the decline. The establishment of *Wayang Golek* as a Masterpiece of Oral and Intangible Human Cultural Heritage in 2003 by UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) does not mean this culture will remain sustainable precisely *Wayang Golek* must be more and more us. Photography as one of the communication media used to convey messages/ideas to others can be used in maintaining the existence of *Wayang Golek*. This study is devoted to the Group of *Punakawan* figures consisting of *Semar*, *Cepot*, *Dawala*, and *Gareng*. The group of always-awaited figures who are known for their witty nature but still slip advice or advice in each show must continue to be known. With Instagram media as a bridge between Photography Work and information dissemination, media can be a support in maintaining the



existence of *Wayang Golek Punakawan* Sunda. The dissemination of Golek Puppet Photography results must be done continuously even though the response from viewers is not much, and it is better than being trending once then lost. By looking at the photography work of *Wayang Golek Punakawan*, viewers will again acknowledge the existence of *Wayang Golek Punakawan*, which then triggers curiosity with puppet *golek* show even wants to buy souvenirs *Wayang Golek*. Maintaining the existence of *Wayang Golek Punakawan* Sunda through Photography will certainly be more effective if other photographers or Sundanese people participate in the dissemination of *Wayang Golek* culture.

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