

# The Creativity of Wayang Kulit (Shadow Puppet) Crafts in Surakarta

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## Abstract

Creativity is an ability to create something, which keeps developing in an individual's self, including creating crafts and *wayang kulit* (shadow puppets). The objective of this research is to explain the creativity in *wayang kulit* crafts and various types of leather craftworks as innovation of Surakarta *wayang purwa*. This study adopts the characteristics of qualitative reasoning. The type of puppet which is most popular, widely spread, and has the most characters in Java (particularly in Surakarta) is *wayang kulit Purwa*. *Wayang kulit* is created through such processes as drawing sketch, making pattern or *mbabon* through scratching, carving, coloring, and finishing. The creation of leather crafts to develop *wayang purwa* results in innovative creation of *wayang kulit* for performance, leather craftworks to develop *wayang Purwa*, several *wayang kulit kreasi baru* (new creation), leather craftworks for wall decoration, decorative lamps, *rana* (room dividers) with decorative motifs of *wayang*, and souvenirs.

**Keywords:** creative, crafts, *wayang kulit*

## 1. Introduction

The main basis of art creation is creativity, and therefore, the resulted works can reflect different, better, more creative and innovative things, compared to the existing works or the works used as the basis of innovation. The art of the *wayang* in Java, Indonesia, is the traditional art which has existed for a long time, has been inherited from generation to generation, and has reached the peak in the form of *wayang kulit purwa* (classical shadow puppets). Before being carved beautifully on the stones at Borobudur Temple, Prambanan Temple, and Sukuh Temple, myths, stories and figures had existed since hundreds of years before. The *empu* (masters) of *wayang* in Java could wisely accept the influence of Islamic teaching which prohibited realistic drawing, and therefore, *wayang* changed into the human's composition that was stylish, full of stylization, and was later called *wayang purwa* (*kawitan*, the beginning). *Purwa* means the beginning, the onset or the pioneer of form stylization and proportion that is much different from the shape of human. Meanwhile, *purwa* in term of time means the primeval period of the presence of Islam and Islamic culture in Java. The form of *wayang kulit purwa* has occupied deformation process as an imitation (mimesis) of human. A *wayang* shows the depiction of human from the side and front views with different proportion from the size of human in real life. Indonesian *wayang* was enacted the Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity by the UNESCO, and therefore, the *wayang kulit purwa* in Java, including the *wayang kulit* in Surakarta, was mostly benefited since this was a type of *wayang* that was most popular for its performance and craftsmanship; many people collected the *wayang*, it was widely spread throughout the globe, and many crafts were resulted as the creative development and innovation of *wayang kulit purwa*. Few researches and writings on the art of *wayang* have been done and produced, unlike those on the *wayang* as a literature work and puppetry. The number of *Wayang kulit* studios and craftsmen in the area of Surakarta has decreased. If the government does not make any efforts to encourage the cultural change of the *wayang*, the craftsmanship will not develop and the *wayang* even will lose its lovers, particularly young generation of Indonesia. Creativity is an ability to work and create something, and this ability will always develop in individual's self, including the ability to create artworks, crafts, and *wayang kulit*. This article explains the creative innovation of *wayang kulit* and reveals and explains types of leather crafts as the products of the innovation of *wayang kulit purwa* in Surakarta.

## 2. Methodology

The method of this research was done in a cycle, which included three primary activities: 1) comprehensive explorative stage, 2) focused explorative stage, and 3) report drafting stage. The research objects were creative leather crafts developed from *wayang kulit purwa*, particularly Surakarta style *wayang kulit Purwa*. The research locations were some places in Surakarta: Department of Puppetry of ISI Surakarta; Balai Agung Studio; and Pare Anom Mangkunegaran Place Art Shop. The researchers also examined creative *wayang* produced by Bima Studio in Karanganyar, *wayang* crafts studio owned by Hariyanto in Telukan, Grogol, Sukoharjo, and Bey Tani Wayang Museum in Wuryantoro, Wonogiri, as well as the creation of students of Department of Craftsmanship of the Faculty of Fine Arts and Design of ISI Surakarta, who had developed the *wayang kulit* crafts.

On the basis of the problem statements and data sources, the data were collected using various techniques,

among others are historic documentation, observation, documentation, and interview. Data analysis was carried out along with data collection process, and was designed to be done in some stages. Analysis of comparison method was also conducted in this research by comparing visual data of photographs or figures of *wayang kulit purwa* works with standard Surakarta style and innovative creation of *wayang kulit* and new types of *wayang kulit*. The procedures included selecting several types of documented *wayang*, categorizing, comparing, analyzing, and identifying the similarities to be used as data for preservation and the differences as the basis for further creative, innovative, and aesthetic development.

### 3. Discussion

#### 3.1. Creativity in Working on Wayang Kulit Craftworks

Creativity is an ability to create, and this ability keeps developing in individual's self and can be triggered through practices of making things using various techniques. Creativity is commonly defined as an ability to create something. The creation is not merely related to new work, but possibly to the composite or combination of the existing elements. Creativity is a thinking process of various ideas to cope with certain problems, as a creative process dealing with ideas or elements in the brain that is interesting and challenging for a creator, including in term of producing *wayang kulit kreasi baru* (new creation), developing, and changing the shape based on *wayang* as the model.

The *Wayang* craftwork is a traditional work which can be useful for developing students' creativity in the future. We can make innovative works with regard to tradition and develop traditional *wayang* with modern touch. When developing the shape of *wayang*, we need to be creative and innovative, and willing to do experiments to seek for new shapes and values in creating leather craftworks. The innovation can be accomplished by combining leather and other materials, updating tools, changing the shape of *wayang* character patterns, adding basic carving model, and improving color varieties in technique of *sungging* (*wayang* coloring).

Craftsmanship can be defined as a manual work which requires specific knowledge, experience and skill. Knowledge is obtained directly through experiments or practices of creating craftworks, observation, reading book or information from other sources. Experience is needed to practice making sketch, design, pattern, technique, and finishing to create high qualified artworks. Meanwhile, skills deal with broader aspects, such as creativity, talent, and skill of hands to work with raw materials and use equipment.

Leather craft art is defined as human's artwork with art, creative, and aesthetic values, taking the forms of decorative and functional crafts made of leather as the primary medium and buffalo's horn as a *gapit* or clam (to support and hold the *wayang* at the middle part) and a hand (to move the hands of the *wayang*). The high quality of leather craft art can be achieved by those who are strongly determined, active to create, supported with expert carving technique, qualified leather material, and appropriate tools. Leather craft art also involves the works which can communicate the spiritual experiences of the creator and if the works are expressed beautifully and attractively, they can provide or stimulate spiritual experiences of other people who appreciate them. Some of the works can take the forms of *wayang kulit* puppets, ornaments or carvings and painting on tanned leather, and leather bag.

#### 3.2. Design and Pattern in the Wayang Kulit Craftsmanship

The inspiration of *wayang kulit* design can come from the desire to create *wayang* to preserve and develop *wayang purwa*, make *wayang kreasi baru* (new creation) and *wayang kulit* based on the market demands/orders. The design of leather souvenirs and *wayang* commonly requires pattern or mal of the shape of an object as a model to cut leather material which will be processed to create crafts or products. Pattern can also take the form of *wayang* sketch on thin paper or the photocopy of the *wayang* with scale of 1:1 as the model to shape *wayang* on leather. *Wayang kulit* artists in Surakarta follow the regulation to keep using standard *wayang kulit purwa* pattern. The *wayang* pattern making is called *mbabon* which is directly done on parchment by putting the *wayang* on the leather and tracing lines on the edge of the *wayang* and ornaments within it using *uncek* or large-sized needle with sharp end. Hence, the characteristics of *wayang kulit purwa* model are well-kept and sustained for hundreds of years.

Learning to design leather works should start with direct observation of leather products or literature data on those related with *wayang* products that will be designed. Then, the ideas or concepts are described in the form of sketches. Artists can also imitate or refer to the shapes of the existing *wayang* or leather products and observe pictures as the models. In the *wayang kulit* performance, the roles of *tatahan* (carving) and *sunggingan* (coloring) are highly significant since the presence of *wayang* carving can make clearer and better shadow that can be seen behind the *kelir* (scene), meaning that both the outer shape of *wayang* and the shadow of *wayang* pattern are also obvious. Meanwhile, when being observed from the front part of the *kelir*, the carving motifs are not obvious due to striking, bright, and colorful colors. Thus, the *wayang kulit* for performance has to be both carved and colored. The combination of carving and coloring, elements which complete each other, is clearly represented on the motifs which become a decoration. Carving is the divider among coloring motifs and

functions as the filler of the coloring. In general, the carving and coloring of the *wayang kreasi baru* (new creation) which develops *wayang kulit purwa* is similar to or resembles the model.

### 3.3. *Leather Craftworks Creativity as the Innovation of Wayang Kulit Purwa in Surakarta*

#### 3.3.1. *Overview on the Innovative Creation of Wayang Kulit*

The essence of creativity or creation is seeking for new things or new relationships from what have existed. Human creates something based on what has been available, instead of what does not exist. Creative and great artists start from the previously-created material. This is what we call tradition. Every artist starts from certain existing traditional art.

Making creative and innovative *wayang* craftworks in order to develop the shape of *wayang kulit purwa* is not easy. To keep, preserve, and develop *wayang* in Java successfully, many should be involved, including cultural, cultural, and governmental institutions, *dalang* (puppeteers), Javanese cultural philosophers, scientists, artists, craftsmen, etc. Experimenting, developing or changing the shape of creative *wayang kulit* requires longer period of time. Before practicing, an individual has to learn, examine, and observe those related to *wayang kulit* to understand about the fine art of *wayang*, *wayang* craftsmanship, materials, equipment, and techniques of *wayang* making. To create *wayang kulit kreasi baru* (new creation), an artist needs to have affection for *wayang*, patience of practicing carving and coloring, soul of creativity, courage for innovation, and ability of making sketches.

To be a creator of innovation of *wayang*, we don't have to be able to do carving and painting well, but more importantly to be able to design the pattern of *wayang kreasi baru* (new creation), either in the form of sketches or carving motifs. Craftsmen or students who intend to develop *wayang* or to make *wayang kreasi baru* (new creation) need to practice to carve parchment and paint it using gradation technique for making good *wayang kulit*. If we are creative enough to make sketch, design the *wayang* pattern, design the motifs of costumes of *wayang kulit kreasi baru* (new creation), as well as the carving motifs, we can collaborate with carving and coloring experts living in Surakarta, particularly in *Balai Agung* Studio in Surakarta, *Bima* Studio in Karang Pandan, *Wayang Kulit* Studio in Telukan, Grogol, Sukoharjo, and group of *wayang* artists in Manyaran, Wonogiri to design *wayang kulit purwa*.

#### 3.3.2. *Creation of Wayang Kulit Craftworks for Performance*

*Wayang kulit purwa* as a craftwork is widely available in the market and produced by artists/craftsmen. Some of the products are available at art shops in tourist resorts, star hotels, airports, malls or grand malls in Surakarta and in other big cities in Java. According to the 2014 inventory data of *wayang kulit* collection of the Department of Puppetry of the Faculty of Performing Art of ISI Surakarta, 44 boxes of *wayang* (with total number of 3,577 puppets) were found. About 70% ( $\pm$  2500) of the collection is *wayang kulit Purwa* and 30% ( $\pm$  1000) is *wayang kreasi baru* (new creation) and *wayang eksperimen* (experimental). In addition to ISI Surakarta, Kasunanaan Mangkunegaran, Radya Pustaka Museum, and Bey Tani Wayang Museum in Wuryantara Wonogiri also have *wayang kulit* collection. Many popular puppeteers in the region of Surakarta are found to collect at least one box of *wayang kulit purwa*.

*Wayang kulit purwa* for puppetry is created in the forms of various puppets performed with the story of either Mahabarata or Ramayana. The shapes of the *wayang* either in puppetry or in puppetry art have their own style and Surakarta style *wayang kulit purwa* is the most popular one in Indonesia. The shapes of the figures are widely used as the basis of developing other types of *wayang kulit*. The styles appear to be various since many styles are peculiar to province, city/ regency, individual due to popular and widely-spread creativity of *wayang* creation. One of *wayang kulit* styles is *wayang kulit purwa* of Surakarta style. This is a creative artwork and becomes the standard *wayang kulit* for performance and is mostly used as model of *wayang* outside Surakarta. Surakarta is considered the center of *wayang* in Java since it has: Kraton Surakarta (Surakarta Palace) and Pura Mangkunegaran which has many collections of *wayang*, Taman Budaya Jawa Tengah which regularly holds *wayang kulit* performance in Wage Thursday night, the Department of Puppetry of ISI Surakarta, and the Department of Craftsmanship which provides Leather Craftsmanship subject in which students can learn how to create *wayang purwa* and its creation, and many well-known puppeteers. In traditional *wayang kulit purwa*, *wayang* is always developed. Many puppeteers and creative craftsmen have improved *wayang* because they want to perform *wayang* which can fulfill the plot and to choose proper characters, or in other words, they want to present special *wayang* performance that is different from the ordinary one. *Wayang kulit purwa* crafts which have been innovated mostly have the same characteristics, except the carving motifs and the color gradation on the costumes or jewelry. The characteristics of Surakarta style on the *wayang kulit* which are well-maintained are: (1) the use of common technique of *mbabon* (reproducing made by superimposing original *wayang* on parchment and copying the lines and main holes of the carving) to make *wayang* contour line patterns; (2) the use of gold leaf to color body, feet, and hands; (3) black/ golden yellow painted face of good characters and pink painted face of the bad ones; (4) the use of primary color gradation (*sorotan* or projection) of red, green or blue, combined with white or yellow on costumes or jewelry, in addition to the presence of *sunggingan* in one

decorative motif comprising two combinations of colors.



Figure 1. Three samples of Surakarta *wayang kulit purwa* for performance: Werkudara (a type of *Jangkahan wayang*), Kresna (a type of *Bokongan wayang*), and Mustakaweni (a type of *Putren* or female *wayang*) (Collection of Puppetry Department, ISI Surakarta)



Figure 2. Surakarta style *wayang kulit purwa* performance  
Catalogue of Musium Wayang

In this *wayang kulit Purwa* performance, the *sunggingan* (coloring) is obvious from the front view and the beautiful shadow of *wayang* is seen from the back of the *kelir* (white screen) because the carving is projected with lamp.

### 3.3.3. The Creation of Leather Crafts as Innovation of Wayang Elements

The practice of *wayang kulit* making involves such processes as *mbabon* or pattern making, drawing sketches/*wayang* patterns, carving, coloring and clamping. Leather craftwork creation means a creation, creative and beautiful actualization made by skillful hands using high-grade parchment (cow/buffalo hide which has been processed by removing the hair and drying).

The innovation of *wayang kulit* presents as an attempt to create or make different *wayang*, in which the *wayang kulit* serves as the model for the innovation or modification. One or more elements of *wayang kulit purwa* are commonly developed. The innovation of *wayang* crafts can be done on the elements of material, production technique or process, shape or decorative model. Innovative creation of *wayang kulit* based on techniques and realization of craftwork of *wayang kulit* falls into four categories: (a) innovation of sketches/patterns of *wayang kulit*, (b) innovation of *tatahan*, (c) innovative creation of *sunggingan*, and (d) creation of jewelry for *wayang orang* figures' costumes.

#### 3.3.3.1. Innovation of Sketches/ Patterns of Wayang Kulit

Developing sketches/ patterns of shadow puppets is an attempt in expressing ideas to change, update, or create new figures of *wayang kulit* (shadow puppets) at the beginning of the creation. Several ways to make initial patterns of *wayang kulit* include: *mbabon* (tracing), photocopying, or sketching. The former, pattern making by copying figures of puppets including their shapes, *tatahan* (carving), and *sunggingan* (coloring) is widely used in industry of leather crafts by shadow puppet craftsmen, particularly those in Surakarta. Sketching is important in creation of *wayang*, innovations in modified shapes of *wayang*, and creation of new *wayang*.

Neither *wayang kulit*, nor *wayang kreasi baru* (new creation puppets) was made by a king, but rather by

some people with different professions/ skills; the process of turning cowhide into parchment, for example, is done by those who have skills of currying the hide, splitting it using machines, and drying it, sketch drawing and making of intended patterns with which the creation of new *wayang* starts is done by craftsmen, *penatahan* (carving) by puppet carvers, while *penyunggingan* (coloring) by others than aforementioned carvers. Sketch drawing is highly required in creation of *wayang*, innovations in modified shapes of *wayang*, and creation of new *wayang*.



Figure 3. An example of pattern and carving shape of a *wayang* figure, Batara Kamajaya (left: carving design by Agus Ahmadi).

The figure of Batara Kamajaya on the left side was drawn in Surakarta style. It is commonly found in many books on *wayang kulit purwa*. The type of pattern is hereditarily characterized by shapes, costumes, and jewelry. Meanwhile, the figure on the right side represents a design of carving motifs for carving holes on figure of Batara Kamajaya. Neither the model of pattern nor design of such carving is found in creation of *wayang* by skillful craftsmen. After being zoomed in using photocopy machine, the pattern is used to guide the carving. It is helpful for students who are new to *wayang kulit purwa* carving.

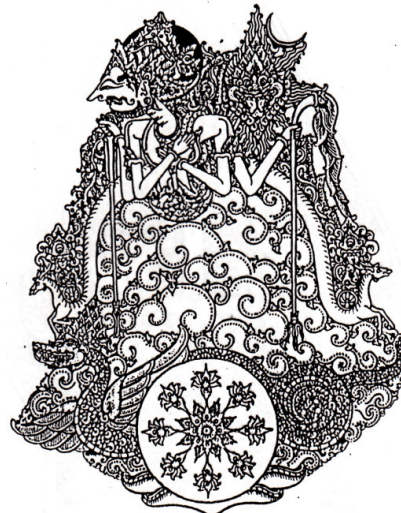


Figure 4. the pattern of *wayang* figure Kyai Mendhung Bintaramanik, Batara Guru wanda Mendhung, a type of new figure of *wayang*, with theme of *Sastrajendra Hayuningrat Pangruwating Diyu* (Utterance of Ruler of Nature which transforms the bad into good, and turns away from and turns heart and will to God) (Created by Bambang Suwarno).

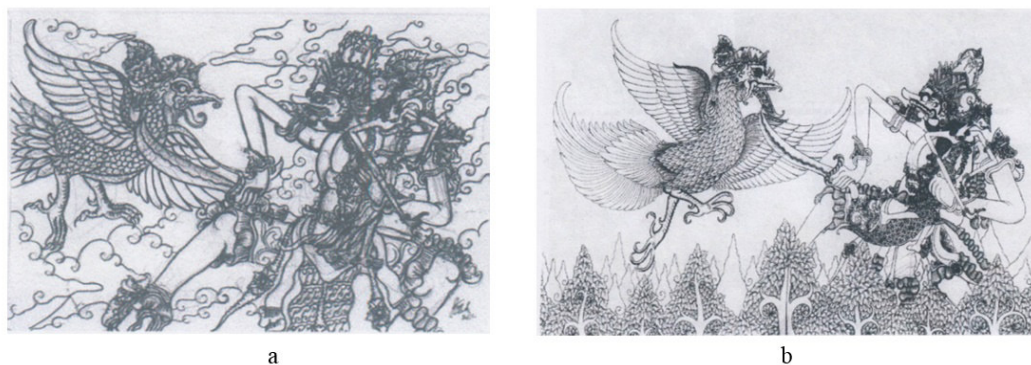


Figure 5. a. Alternative sketch. b. Pattern of wayang with story of Ramayana “Abduction of Sinta”: the result of sketch improvement of wayang figures of Jatayu, Dasamuka, and Sinta. (Sketch and patterns by M. Cholim Purnawan).

### 3.3.3.2. Innovative Creation of Tatahan for Leather Craftworks

The element of typical decorative motif line of figures of wayang kulit purwa is motif of tatahan. The tatahan is characterized by krawangan (perforated), severed, and complicated motifs and functions to substitute the motif lines, to give borderline on decorative motif of sunggingan, as well as to create beautiful shadows which are attractive to see from behind the shadow screen during wayang kulit purwa show.

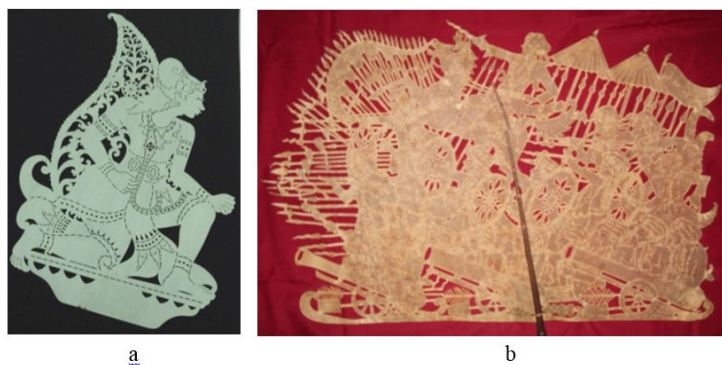


Figure 6. Wayang kulit with improved tatahan: (a). Wayang Budha by Jrabang, Surakarta. (b). Wayang Sandosa “Ampyak Prajurit Diponegara” which displays the shadow, and therefore is only carved (Collection of Department of Puppetry of ISI Surakarta)

### 3.3.3.3. Innovative Creation of Sunggingan of Wayang

Creative innovation of element of sunggingan refers to an innovative, updated, and different craftwork with coloring on sungging of wayang kulit purwa. Of the three elements on craftwork of wayang kulit comprising sketch/ pattern, tatahan, and sunggingan, applying sunggingan is relatively easier to do mostly by either artisans, students of fine art, craftsmen, or painters. The researcher’s research and teaching experiences on creation of wayang kulit purwa show that the wayang kulit craftsmen with expertise of coloring are more numerous than those with expertise of carving and designing wayang kreasi baru (new creation). Wayang figures with similar styles (for example Surakarta style), particularly those appearing in many high-profile lakon (stories), have different coloring of costumes, especially color gradation. However, almost all wayang figures have the same color of body, arms, and legs: golden yellow or golden, and various colors of face: golden, black, pink, and white.

Students taking course of Leather Craftsmanship performed better in coloring than in carving which was supposed to be more difficult to do. Applying colors had been known and practiced by the students, and therefore, the coloring technique is generally easy to learn. The coloring is commonly done using acrylic paint, wall paint blended with screen printing ink, white glue, and golden yellow element. The typical characteristics of coloring of wayang kulit purwa are color gradation of costumes and jewelry, application of primary colors (black, golden yellow, white, or pink) on face and golden yellow on body. Above color gradation is cawen (small black lines), or drenjeman to combine contrast colors.



Figure 7 (left). “Bima Suci”, Innovative creation with coloring style of *wayang kulit purwa*.  
 Figure 8 (right). “Doa Dewi Sri dan Sadana”, Acrylic coloring with color gradation technique (by Agus Ahmadi).

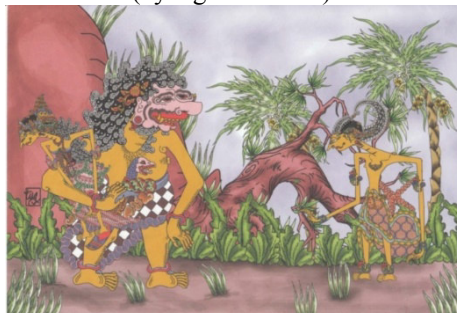


Figure 9. Arjuna met Jin Wilawuk. Jin Wilawuk had searched for him to match make him with his daughter, Dewi Jimambang. Created by Waluya Jati, this pattern of *wayang* resembles that of *wayang purwa*. It has evenly distributed colors with background of soil and plants. Such work was created with coloring and without carving. (Source: Joyoboyo magazine).

#### 3.3.3.4. Creation of Wayang Kulit’s Jewelry for Wayang Orang’s Costume



Figure 10. Costumes for *Wayang Orang*, left: *Sumping Pudak Sinumpet* and *Kelatbahu* for *wayang orang* figure of Bratasena. Right: *Kupluk* (headcover) for Janaka figure. Such costumes refer to those of *wayang kulit purwa*. (Collection of Department of Puppetry of ISI Surakarta)

#### 3.3.4. Several Types of New Creation of Wayang Kulit in Surakarta

Several types of *wayang kreasi baru* from leather which are models of *wayang* for performance, are associated with *wayang kulit purwa*, and are in Surakarta were chosen. The new creation in *wayang kulit* yields craftworks which involve creativity in developing shapes of *wayang*, either in pattern, costumes (clothing and jewelry), or *sunggingan* (the colors applied). Some examples of *wayang kreasi baru* which will be performed include (a) *Wayang Gedog*, (b) *Wayang Sadat*, (c) *Wayang Wahyu*, (d) *Wayang Kancil*, (e) *Wayang Sandosa*, and (f) *Wayang Eksperimen*.



Figure 11. *Wayang Gedog* figures made of leather material: (a). Dewi Sekartaji and (b). Panji Asmarabangun, of

which model of *tatahan* and *sunggingan* is similar to that of *wayang kulit purwa*, (c). Doyok, who is humorous figure of *wayang Gedog*. (Created by Bambang Suwarno).

Experts' theories and explanation demonstrate that *wayang gedog* is classified as *wayang kulit* which depicts the story of Panji. *Wayang gedog* is derived from the word *gedog* which means a stable. Such heroic figures of *wayang gedog* as Raden Panji Kuda Angron Akung, Raden Kuda Tanungan, Raden Kuda Panaruh, Raden Kuda Wiraka, Raden Kuda Prakosa, Raden Kuda Partaka, Raden Kuda Sangkaya, etc are given name *kuda* (which literally means horse). The word *gedog* can also mean *dog-dog*, a sound produced from puppeteer's knocks on cone-shaped wooden rattle over the puppet box (Damar Tri Afrianto, 2014: 17).



Figure 12. *Wayang kulit Sadat*: The above *kayon* (a mountain-like puppet) resembles that of *wayang kulit purwa*, on left side is *kayon Blumbangan*, on the right side is *kayon Gapuran* with simplified decorative motifs. The pattern of the three figures of *wayang Sadat* above is similar to that of *wayang kulit purwa*. (Collection of Wayang Museum, Jakarta).

*Wayang Sadat*, made of leather, was created in 1985 by Suryadi Warno Suharjo, a math teacher of SPG (the School of Teacher Education) Muhammadiyah in Klaten. The *wayang* enacts Javanese culture-based Islamic religious themes with setting of *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school). The *wayang* figures created are more realistic than *wayang kulit purwa* figures. The stylized shapes, particularly shapes of fingers, *celana cinde* (Indian patola pants), and *bokongan* (buttocks) resemble those of *wayang kulit purwa*. Compared to *wayang kulit purwa*, *wayang sadat* is more colorful due to the use of brighter colors. The stories depicted involve stories of *wali songo* (the nine saints), as well as the history of the spread of Islam in Java. The term *wayang Sadat* is derived from/ associated with the word *syahadat*, and it is also acronym for *sarana dakwah dan tabligh* (a means of propagation of faith and communication of a message or revelation) (Encyclopedia of Indonesian Wayang, the 4<sup>th</sup> Edition: 1114).



Figure 13. *Wayang Wahyu*: Angel Gabriel, Eve, and Adam, the above *wayang* figures, are presented in realistic ways to depict the real representation of humans. The material, the pattern (front and side views of human shape stylization), and the color gradation are associated with those of *wayang kulit purwa*. (Collection of Department of Puppetry of ISI Surakarta).





Figure 14. *Wayang Kancil* with various animal figures: monkey, bird, tiger, elephant, wolf, deer, snake, crocodile, dog, and mouse deer (on right side is a smart mouse deer in Javanese children's fable). In *wayang kulit purwa*, various animal figures are termed *wayang kewanan*. (Source the catalogue of Senawangi *wayang* exhibition in Europe, 2004).



Figure 15 (left). Kayon Tirta Amerta, with height of 112cm, Figure 16 (right). Bathara Guru Lodra, with height of 110cm. Those creative works were presented in *wayang Sandosa* theatre (*wayang* performed in Indonesian language) (Collection of Puppetry Department, ISI Surakarta).



Figure 17. Experimental *wayang kulit*: (left), puppet of Indonesian battleship, 90 x 60 cm. (right) Puppet of fighter, 70 x 58 cm. Experimental *wayang kulit* appears as the result of unique innovative creation of *wayang*. (Collection of Puppetry Department, ISI Surakarta).

### 3.3.5. Innovative Creation of Leather Craftworks to Develop Functions of Wayang Kulit Purwa

*Wayang kulit*, commonly used for shadow puppetry, is nowadays developed for other functions. This part details creation of *wayang* for other functions and for trade: leather craftworks for wall decoration, decorative lamps, *rana* (room dividers) with decorative motifs of *wayang*, and souvenirs.

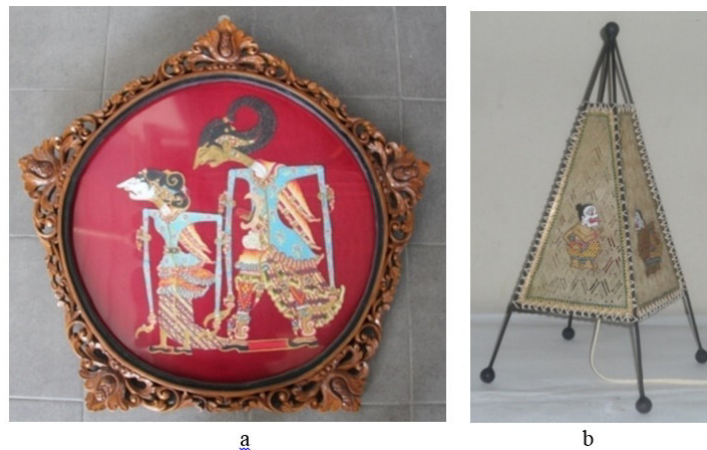


Figure 18. (a). *Wayang kulit* wall decoration: Dewi Ratih and Batara Kamajaya on a five-sided carved wooden frame. (b). Desk lamp decorated with motif of punakawan figures. (Collection of Puppetry Department, ISI Surakarta)



Figure 19. A room divider decorated with *wayang* Ramayana figures by students. Figure 20. Decoration on center with motifs of Dewi Sinta, plants, and a logo (Collection of Puppetry Department, ISI Surakarta)



Figure 21. Creation of souvenirs from leather material with carved and colored motifs of *wayang*: (left). handheld fan, (center). mascot with motif of Kresna, and (right). miniature of Wisanggeni with height of 20 cm.  
A souvenir is a keepsake or remembrance mostly found in tourist resorts, art shops, malls/ supermarkets, as well as in a wedding reception or other traditional ceremonies. It is something a person acquires to remind of a place, object, person, or event. Attractive souvenirs are small, easy to bring, uneasy to get damaged, not heavy, and typical of a particular location visited. Craftworks in the forms of souvenirs are presented by including brief explanation on various souvenirs made substantially of leather and other materials. *Wayang*-themed souvenirs are favorable. Such souvenirs can be found in Surakarta in the forms of adhesive decoration, book ends, mascots, handheld fans, miniatures of *wayang* figures and wall decoration.

#### 4. Conclusion

*Wayang* craft presents as a traditional artwork which allows to develop creativity. We are able to produce creative works in the richness of tradition, and to develop traditional *wayang* to be more modern one. Leather craft art is defined as human's artwork with art, creative, and aesthetic values, taking the forms of decorative and functional crafts made of leather as the primary medium. Creating qualified leather crafts is done with strong intention, skillful use of carving technique, qualified leather materials, and appropriate tools. The success of the making of *wayang kulit kreasi baru* (new creation) requires affection for *wayang*, patience of practicing carving

and coloring, soul of creativity, courage for innovation, and ability of making sketches.

*Wayang kulit purwa* for puppetry is created in the forms of various puppets performed with the story of either Mahabarata or Ramayana. The shapes of the *wayang* either in puppetry or in puppetry art have their own style and Surakarta style *wayang kulit purwa* is the most popular one in Indonesia. The shapes of the figures are widely used as the basis of developing other types of *wayang kulit*. The styles appear to be various since many styles are peculiar to province, city/ regency, individual due to popular and widely-spread creativity of *wayang* creation.

Innovative creation of *wayang kulit* based on techniques and realization of craftwork of *wayang kulit* falls into four categories: innovation of sketches/ patterns of *wayang kulit*, innovation of *tatahan*, innovative creation of *sunggingan*, and leather works for *wayang orang* figures' costumes. The new creation in *wayang kulit* yields craftworks which involve creativity in developing shapes of *wayang*, either in pattern, costumes (clothing and jewelry), or *sunggingan* (the colors applied). *Wayang kulit*, commonly used for shadow puppetry, is nowadays developed for other functions: leather craftworks for wall decoration, decorative lamps, *rana* (room dividers) with decorative motifs of *wayang*, and souvenirs.

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