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Comparative Analysis of Indonesian Presidents' Identities in Wayang during the *Reformasi* Era

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Abstract

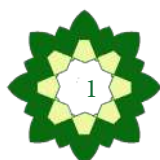
This study comparatively analyses the allusion and analogies of Indonesian Presidents' by wayang characters and stories. It particularly interrogates how wayang characters and lakon allude and mediate the personal and political identities of Indonesian presidents in the Reformasi era. The study focuses on the portrayal of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and Jokowi during Reformasi era. The study is a qualitative research and deploying Textual and Critical Discourse Analysis approaches. These are to examine how language in the selected wayang kulit and wayang golek stories, as a form of social and cultural practice, constructs the personal and political identities of the presidents. Central to the analysis, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono is in most cases alluded as Semar, and his association with selected lakon significantly inform on the political and personal identities among Indonesians and the International community. On the other hand, Jokowi is alluded to as Petruk but presenting contradicting allusions and analogies in Indonesian politics. Generally, findings suggest that the portrayal of Indonesian presidents' identities by wayang characters and in the lakon is never fixed. The change of political atmosphere and failure to meet peoples' expectations culminate in changes on the portrayal of political and personal identities of presidents.

Keywords: *allusion and analogy, reformasi era, political identity, Semar and Petruk*

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Introduction

Wayang is the most practiced traditional art in Indonesia and other parts South East Asia. It is highly respected in all borders of Indonesia from East to Central Java, West Java to Bali and Sumatra, and other parts of Indonesia. Etymologically wayang means a puppet- shadow play. Generally, it is a theatrical performance that deploys puppets or human figures to mediate its concerns to the audience. Accompanying this theatrical performance are wayang stories that originate from the Indian epics of Ramayana and Mahabharata. Ramayana stories are about the battles over the palace politics in Ayodhya. Central to Ramayana is Rama, Sita, and Ravana. In most wayang stories Rama would be placed on the winning side, more righteous,



spiritual, and good. Ravana is metaphorical to evils in the society and Sita(Sinta) is always seductions. Throughout the wayang stories, Rama manages to defeat Ravana, the symbol of evil in the story(Salleh, 2009). In the story, Ravana appears to influence the separation of Rama from Laksamana, and the abduction of Sita on one hand and keeps on seducing Sita unsuccessfully on the other hand. Rama gets help from Sugriva and Hanuman and other supernatural powers to fight against Ravana. Finally, Rama defeats Ravana and gets back Sita and the throne of the kingdom(Doran, 2011).

On the other hand, Mahabharata stories explain the struggle between two groups of cousins of Pandawa and the Korawa. Like in the Ramayana the struggle between the two opposing sides is metaphorical to the fight between good and evils. Pandawa like Rama is more righteous, spiritual, and refined ones (Pausacker,2004). Korawa is often placed left of the dhalang (narrator in the wayang) and characterized by greed, lust, and dishonesty (Andrea Acri, 2011; Pausacker, 2004). According to Salleh (2009), wayang is argued to be local, adaptive, and transformative of borders of space and time across South East Asia and so does Indonesia. As of this view Williams (2009) adds that wayang is often localized to articulate identities of space and time. In this particular point, Williams (2009) stresses the significant contribution of wayang in delineating the political, social, and cultural identities of society in place. In so saying wayang have evolved over time and spaces in many of its aspects to articulate identities in context.

As pointed out earlier, this paper analyses the significance of the traditional art of wayang in mediating the political and personal identities of the key political figures in Indonesia. It particularly analyses the portrayal of Indonesian presidents' identities in the *reformasi* (reform) era. In a point of fact, the trend of portraying political figures in wayang started in pre-colonial Indonesia. Though the portrayal of political figures in wayang during the pre-colonial and the Dutch colonial Indonesia was somehow fixed in terms of characterization, it was not the case in post-colonial Indonesia.

The portrayal of presidents as wayang characters started during the Soekarno era. Following Soekarno, the later portrayal of presidents in wayang continued to be specific to punakawan (clown servant) wayang characters. These changes in the portrayal of presidents in wayang have attracted several researchers (Anderson, 2004; Thomas, 2006). In particular, their studies examined the depiction of presidents by wayang characters. For this reason, there are significant findings on the representation of the presidents in wayang from 1945 to the mid-2000s. But findings are yet to communicate the representation of presidents afterward.

According to Pausacker (2004) a set lakon and analogies with individual political figures can be fitted into a storyline that becomes handled down from one generation to another generation. Analogies of individual political figures that may be fitted in a lakon are often associated with political parties that presidents associate with, populism, their personality, and historical backgrounds (Basuki, 2006). Of particular note, the role of wayang to mediate political identities in Indonesia has arguably and remained important in both political and public communication. Nagy (2006) and Clark (2001) stated that wayang has been a useful tool to communicate political propaganda and political identities at different times in Indonesia. In a similar line, Keeler (1987) explains that during pre-colonial Indonesia wayang was mainly used as a tool for kings to boast the wealth and majesty of their kingdoms and more importantly to circulate information and to their people apart from its entertainment aspect. Corroborating the foregoing view, Soedarsono(1985) notes that kings were most often portrayed as noble characters in wayang such Arjuna and Yudhistra. Arjuna for instance was often portrayed as the third son of Pandawa, capable of overcoming any force of seduction and desire despite being engaged with numerous marriages as well as

halus which is often associated with good physical appearance, spiritually strong and with good mind as opposed to kasar (Yoshimi,1990).

Pausacker (2004) establishes that the change of political system from kings to colonial masters provided wayang with problems and new ways in which identities of rulers were presented. In most cases during colonialism, wayang was deployed to resist all forms of injustice done by the colonial masters. It was an alternative means to communicate disagreement and dissatisfaction with the colonial rule. Ras (1976) also points that during colonialism the Dutch rulers were often represented by wayang characters with ugly faces, big teeth, nose, and red hair. A similar observation is made by Pausacker (2004, p.216) that Dutch colonial rulers were portrayed as buta (monsters and demons). With particular reference to the portrayal of Dutch rulers, Sasono (2014, p.23) argues that 'the profiling occurred with the depiction of colonial rulers as giants or ogre-like creatures with ugly physical attributes to emphasize the demonic quality of the colonial forces that occupied Indonesia'. Generally, the portrayal of Dutch colonial rulers was characterized by immorality and demonic qualities of wayang characters Sears (1996).

Following the 1945 Independence, wayang continued to function as a medium for political commentary in Indonesia (Anderson, 2004).. It particularly became a vocal tool by those in powers to communicate political propaganda and by those who are critical to them. As a result, the portrayal of political discourse and presidents' identities in this particular context is reported to display different images through wayang characters based on the personalities, political identities, and political legacies of individual key figures (presidents) in Indonesian politics. Altogether, the portrayal of personalities, political identities, and legacies of presidents of respective ruling epoch significantly inform on the history and political atmosphere of Indonesia.

According to Pausacker (2004) at the beginning of Soeharto's presidency, Semar alluded to his identities, and therefore as he was considered to be a transformative leader of Indonesia, servant, and authoritarian ruler while during his final days in the office his government was accused of corruption and nepotism. Throughout his authoritarian rule from 1968 to 1998, Soeharto was represented in wayang by different characters but most often as the punakawan Semar. Anderson (2009) explains that Semar is the most honored of the punakawan class of wayang characters. He is considered as a clown, a man of people, repository of the highest wisdom and pamong (leader) (Nagy, 2006; Ghulam-sarwar Yousof and Kheng-kia Khor, 2017).

According to Pausacker (2004, p.219), Soeharto was associated with being a man of people and a Semar with no aristocratic pretensions. It is said that Soeharto was fond of wayang and thus in 1974 he established a foundation called Supersemar from which he established a strong relationship with Semar figure in wayang. Throughout the portrayal, Semar was represented as both a faithful servant and a voice of common people (Pausacker, 2004). However, in the late 1990s, Semar was represented as an oppressed ordinary person than a leader and sometimes a Semar characterized by immoralities and other negative qualities (Clark, 2006). This change of portrayal of a Semar figure in wayang alludes to the political atmosphere of Soeharto government which was now being accused of being corrupt and undemocratic to the majority of Indonesians.

Similar allusion of presidents in wayang continued to Habibie who took-over after Soeharto resignation. Habibie became the president of the Republic of Indonesia in May 1998. His portrayal in wayang was most often through Gareng. Gareng is the oldest son of Semar. He is always patient and a good listener. Gareng is the most liked son of Semar. The representation of Habbie as Gareng followed the portrayal of Soeharto as a Semar. Habibie

was seen by many as the closest person of Soeharto and as a result, he was disliked by the reformists. He was treated like an adoptive son of Soeharto like Semar and Gareng. More importantly, the allusion of Habibie as Gareng portrayed the characters of Habibie who was softer compared to his predecessor (Pausacker, 2004).

Habibie was succeeded by Abdurrahman who is also known as Gus Dur. Gus Dur served as the president of the republic of Indonesia from 1999 to 2001. He was also often portrayed as Semar. Unlike the Supersemar Soeharto who was semi-godly looking, Semar Gus Dur was humble, comic, and open to criticism. The different portrayal of Semar as of Soeharto and Gus Dur reflected their respective personal and political qualities during their ruling regimes. Of particular note, Semar of Gus Dur alluded to the qualities of faithfulness and integrity. Of course, because of the political and economic contexts of Indonesia, Gus Dur was viewed as the right political figure to take Indonesia further from political dilemmas and economic crises (Pausacker, 2004). It is also noted that Gus Dur like Soeharto promoted his portrayal as Semar in wayang however the Semar of his image was open to alternative interpretations. In other lakon Gus Dur was portrayed as Bagong. According to Pausacker (2004), the shift from Semar to Bagong for the depiction of Gus Dur was associated with the loss of power during his short stay in the presidency. Of course, while Semar is assumed to be a man of people, clown servant Bagong is kasar who is a fool and impatient. Of this view, the alluded Gus Dur by Bagong implicates a negative image of the Gus Dur portrayed in wayang.

Following the impeachment of Gus Dur in July 2001, Megawati became the president of the Republic of Indonesia. She was often represented as Srikandhi. According to Basuki (2006), Megawati was always alluded by Srikandhi in Republik Bagong where she was often portrayed as being incapable of ascending to the throne because she is a woman. Contrary to what is often portrayed about womanhood, the rise of Megawati as the Indonesian president shows the turn of events especially when a woman struggles for her desires and wishes. The portrayal of Megawati as successful Srikandhi empowers nobility to Indonesian women with whom their identities are subsumed in the male-dominant system as of the politics of Indonesia. The change of portrayal of Megawati was also vivid. Though the shift avows a similar conception of incapability, the portrayal of Megawati as Petruk in some lakon informs on the important phenomena yet not realistic to Megawati. While Petruk signifies the rakyat (common people) and their ascendance to the throne, Megawati was a member of the royal family and with well-established ties in Indonesian politics. For this reason, Pausacker (2004) notes that the portrayal of Megawati as Petruk is not agreed upon as it is a rare case where Petruk becomes royal as a queen or king.

Method

The general objective of the study is to critically analyze the significance of wayang in mediating the political and personal identities of Indonesian presidents in the *Reformasi* era. The study focuses on the two presidents in the *Reformasi* era namely President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and Joko Widodo in respective of their ruling regimes. The choice of the presidents is potentially significant in the analysis as of the study objective due to the fact that their influence in Indonesian politics has been vivid so far. Accordingly, they often provide what modern politics has to carry to meet people's expectations. Van Dijk (1997) argues that political discourses have to be analyzed by taking into consideration the key actors in politics. The study is qualitative in nature and analyzing six selected lakon namely Wayang Kisah Sukses by Tara, Semar Membangun Kahyangan by Ki Hardoyo, Ketika Jokowi, JK, Gus Dur, SBY dan Obama Bertemu by Ki Enthus, Petruk dadi Ratu by Sampurno Hadi, Petruk dadi Ratu: Jokowi Punakawan dan Anak Kyai Semar by Manuel Mawengkang and Wayang

Santri by Ki Enthus Susmono. Textual and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approaches used to examine the way language in the selected wayang kulit and wayang golek stories as a form of social and cultural practice construct the personal and political identities of the politicians. The CDA is significant in unraveling the ideology behind certain discourses in political and personal ideologies embedded in wayang. Language expresses ideologically-based views as a member of a group. The discourse is fed and shaped according to ideology (Amaghlobeli, 2018; T. van Dijk, 2003; T. A. van Dijk, 1997). The study is housed in Stuart Hall's theory of representation which implicates meaning to practice and patterns of one's doings in his/her daily routines. Therefore, this study analyses the portrayal of ideological identities embedded in the selected lakon and interrogates the analogies of both the wayang characters and the stories to allude identities of the Indonesian presidents in the *Reformasi* era.

Results and Discussion

Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY) became the sixth president of the Republic of Indonesia in 2004. His party, Partai Demokrat (PD) had won over Megawati's Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan (PDI-P) (PDI-P) in the second run-off stage. SBY was the fourth president after Suharto resignation in 1998 and the first Indonesian president to be directly elected by the people. Before joining political career, SBY had served as a military officer of the highest rank under the Soeharto regime.

According to Davidson (2018), SBY was a prophesied reformer whose characters and actions suited the prevailing political and economic situations of Indonesia. A similar observation is made by Alhumami (2012) who explains that on 21st May 1998 Kiai Afifuddin had prophesied that SBY would become the sixth president of Indonesia. Following the prophecy, SBY became the focus of the media and public talk among Indonesians. According to Sari (2014), SBY was seen as a rising star in Indonesian politics especially when he was appointed to serve as a minister under Gus Dur and Megawati governments. While serving in this capacity SBY had demonstrated his ability as being a decisive, honest, and uncorrupt figure. As such SBY was considered to be the true reformer that would take Indonesia further.

In examining the portrayal of SBY in wayang it is worth comparing SBY with his predecessors in terms of personalities and leadership styles. Commenting on SBY Mujani and Liddle (2010, p.23) note that during the 2004 presidential election voters saw him as 'decisive, charismatic, inspiring, caring, honest, likable and smart'. Voters saw him as a true reformer into the era of multiple transitions. SBY was symbolic of forces of denial to social orders in the politics of Indonesia. Unlike the Semar of Soeharto in his project of Supersemar from which he established a strong relationship with Semar figure in wayang as a man of people, SBY was a Semar that would change the ruling regime that had existed for more than 40 years. According to Anderson (2009), Semar is the eldest punakawan in Java, a man of people, humble, and the repository of the highest wisdom. SBY was observed to display similar qualities of Semar as noted previously. Indonesian needed a Semar who would 'grow the economy, promote general prosperity, defend national unity, fight corruption, and improve the quality of education and health care' (Mujani & Liddle, 2010, p.48).

Like some of his predecessors, SBY was also fond of wayang and other cultural arts. According to Tara (2018), SBY's love of wayang was shown while he was still young and when and after the presidency. Of course, he had also shown interest in Semar Punakawan. On 26th February 2018, while watching wayang at Tulungagung area, SBY commented that 'The leader is like a Semar pamong ing jagad (educator in the world) a leader with wisdom and caring, loving and guides his people like a great character Semar in puppet'.

In Wayang dan Kisah Sukses SBY (wayang and the story of success of SBY) Tara

(2018) narrates the analogies of Semar and SBY leadership. In the story, Semar Badranaya is strategic and holy a figure to whom the mission of restoring humanity lies. Semar is ambitious, focused, determined, and faithful to God to whom he often seeks assistance to serve his humans. The analogies between Semar and SBY are evident here. In this lakon Wayang dan Kisah Sukses, SBY ascends to political excellence of the highest job as a president of Republik of Indonesia. As pointed in Mujani and Liddle (2010); Sari (2014) and Davidson (2018) SBY was seen as a true reformer of Indonesia which was heading to multiple transitions after the post-Soeharto era. SBY was considered, to be honest, humble, wise, and more importantly a religious figure like Semar that fit the political context of Indonesia. Of particular note, Indonesia had previously suffered from various crises that needed Semar-like figure that would restore stability in politics, social and economic. Being successful in earlier posts that SBY served, he was the Semar Badranaya that would serve his humans from crises. SBY had come to restore what the older regimes had caused. He made several decisions carefully without using any forces. According to Tara (2018), SBY was wise, polite, and religious and in order to achieve what majority Indonesians expected from him, he always adhered to use no force but wisdom and democracy.

In *Semar Membangun Kahyangan* (Semar builds heaven) by Ki Hardoyo the portrayal of SBY is also vivid. The lakon was created along with another *Hidup Mbak Megawati* (The life of Megawati) in 2004 during presidential campaigns. *Semar Membangun Kahyangan* carried the mission and vision of the Partai Demokrat through the main figure SBY to whom the prosperity, hopes, and future of Indonesia housed. The analogies between SBY and Semar in this lakon are also clear. The fact that the lakon was created against another lakon of his opponent, *Hidup Mbak Megawati* suggests that Semar is metaphorical to SBY. In the lakon, Semar is the central figure of restoration of the victimized majority by the past *culiko* (evil behavior) in the *Kahyangan*. He is the center of justice and spirit of restoration. Semar is eager to rebuild the *Kahyangan* which has been distorted by greed and other *culiko* of the past. According to Davidson (2018), SBY was a true reformer who was expected among others to build democratic and inclusive Indonesian societies that were stagnant and invisible for more than 30 years. Similar to the lakon *Semar Membangun Kahyangan* Semar wants to cleanse and build the *Kahyangan* for prosperity and stability of her humans. As pointed by Alhumami (2012) SBY had already proved to be a religious, honest, and uncorrupt figure and so he was the right leader to lead Indonesia ahead of multiple transitions. A similar observation was made by Tara (2018) that SBY had shown trust to people for opting for soft power over hard one. Like Semar, SBY was capable to serve Indonesia (*Kahyangan*) at all capacities as he appeared to represent the voice of God and common people as well. In the lakon Semar who has been a servant of Pandawa transcends and demonstrates capabilities of greatness and nobility to whom *Kahyangan* will be restored. Semar believes restoration of *Kahyangan* should involve repentance and purification to cleanse the past which has been distorted by evil behaviors and injustices towards people. Semar passion to build *Kahyangan* alludes the SBY desire to build Indonesia which had passed through political and economic havocs in past governments. While in the lakon Semar suggests repentance and purification as the mechanism through which new *Kahyangan* will be built, SBY and his party Partai Demokrat advocated for democratic ways to rebuild Indonesia.

Generally, the analogies of SBY between Semar in *Semar Membangun Kahyangan* are suggestive of the *punakawan* nature of political figures to which people were ambitious to entrust their future. The lakon largely conveys an image of the good SBY who is represented as the right and strategic *punakawan* being contrasted to another heroine *Srikandhi-Megawati* who was vying for a similar post in 2004.

Similar to what happened to his predecessors whose images in wayang changed as

per their stays in power, SBY's also did. Importantly these changes were spearheaded by the change of political atmosphere during his presidency. People were too ambitious that SBY would bring changes and take Indonesia further, his final years of presidency proved them wrong and this culminated in changes in his image in wayang. Mujani and Liddle (2010 p.330) explain that after his first term of presidency, SBY was 'indecisive, cautious and slow to decide leader compared to his vice president'. Of course, it is pointed out that his re-election in 2009 was followed by SBY's indecisive and over-hesitant ruling system coupled with the fragility of his coalition government which culminated in failure of transforming the country as of majority expectations. Following this observation, his portrayal in wayang did not remain fixed. For example in a comic political lakon *Ketika Jokowi, JK, Gus Dur, SBY dan Obama Bertemu*, (When Jokowi, JK, Gus Dur, SBY, and Obama meet) by Ki Enthus Susmono, SBY has been portrayed passive and indecisive compared to his colleagues. Though it is comic in nature yet it informs the personal qualities that SBY had demonstrated during his final days of the presidency. According to , individual national political figures are not necessarily represented by one fixed wayang character due to change in political atmosphere over time. In *Wayang Santri* by Ki Enthus Susmono for instance, there are many lakon through which SBY is represented as a comic and passive Semar.

On the other hand, Joko Widodo has seemingly alluded to as a controversial Petruk. The Jokowi Petruk reflects the change of the political atmosphere of Indonesian Politics. This however should be noted that there exists a complex and debatable analogies of who is Joko Widodo (also known as Jokowi) and the Petruk character. Jokowi became the seventh president of Indonesia after his party *Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan* (PDI-P) had secured victory by 53.15% of the total votes in the presidential elections held on 9th July 2014. According to Davidson(2018), Jokowi rose rapidly and took Indonesia by storm from mid-size politics. Before the presidency, Jokowi was a mayor of a medium-sized city Surakarta (2005-2012) in Central Java, and later a governor of Jakarta (2012-2014). His outstanding service to these posts attracted the majority of Indonesians to vote for him for the presidency. Ford and Pepinsky (2014) noted that Jokowi represented a victory for democratic pluralism as he was a true reformer who had no ties with the *Orde Baru*. As of this view, Jokowi was expected to clean-up vices of the past governments.

Many of the wayang stories in which Jokowi is alluded symbolizes the rise of power of the ordinary person. According to Pausacker (2004) of all the four punakawan, Petruk is metaphorical to the rise of the rakyat to power. In the lakon *Petruk dadi Ratu* (Petruk becomes a queen) by Sampurno Hadi from Kediri in Eastern Java, Jokowi is alluded as Petruk. In addition to this lakon Sampurno had prepared wayang painting labeled *Petruk dadi Ratu Jokowi*. This painting was exhibited at the inauguration of Jokowi as the seventh president of Republik Indonesia. In the lakon, the chaotic Petruk who changes to a powerful Prabu Kanthong Bolong struck all the orders of Mayapada. Petruk who had worked for decades in Mayapada as the clerical officer made radical changes to the ruling system of Mayapada. She becomes a trouble maker to kings and gods. Subsequently, Petruk becomes a king Raja Kanthong Balong of Mayapada. The kings and gods unite in an attempt to overthrow Raja Kanthong Balong but their attempt fails. Raja Kanthong Balong manages to defeat all the kings and gods of Mayapada –Krishna, Pandawa, and the master ruler of Mayapada. In so saying the situation of Mayapada remains chaotic and restless until when it is intervened by Semar Bodronoyo. Finally, Prabu Kanthong Bolong changes to Petruk and kneels before Semar. The allusion of Jokowi to Petruk in this lakon comes when Petruk manages to ascend from clerical officer to throne. This allusion symbolizes one of the rare possibilities of common people to excel to the throne as of Indonesian politics. The use of Petruk who had worked as a mid-sized officer in Mayapada is of course very

close to the political career of Jokowi who before the presidency had served as a mayor and governor for a short period. He was more an outsider to the ruling regime of the New Order. Though in the lakon Petruk ascends to the throne by opting for violence, it is not the case to Jokowi. As Davidson (2018) notes Jokowi's politics of anti-corruption, accountability, and establishing strong public enterprises (statism) during the election campaign in 2004 and his promising track record in the posts he had already served attracted Indonesian voters and the international community which in turn influenced his rise to the throne as the seventh Indonesian president. Nevertheless, it should be pointed out that the lakon may be argued to be by far real to Jokowi. While Petruk made overnight changes on the ruling regime of Mayapada, Jokowi's intention to eradicate corruption and other vices for the better Indonesia is expected to be gradual and a very difficult thing to achieve.

Similar allusion of Jokowi in wayang is reflected in Petruk dadi Ratu: Jokowi Punakawan dan Anak Kyai Semar by Manuel Mawengkang. This lakon depicts the heroism of Petruk who emerges due to the injustices of the rulers of Mayapada. Petruk emerges as a true revolutionist of Mayapada. His father, Semar intervenes to restore a state of harmony in Mayapada. Like Petruk, Jokowi emerges in an era when Indonesia needs to undergo multiple transitions. According to Davidson (2018), Indonesia had suffered a series of crises that needed an outsider to encounter and move Indonesia further. Jokowi who is portrayed as having no established ties with the previous ruling governments comes to the high office as an ambitious and true revolutionist to whom the future of Indonesia lies. Jokowi is an outsider who emerges as a mid-sized servant to presidency contrary to the practice. As of the same view Petruk had served as a clerk of Mayapada for decades ascends to the throne. Also during the 2018 wayang exhibition on the celebration of Indonesian presidents' legacies, the portrayal of Jokowi puppet was so ordinary to capture his nature of humbleness and ordinariness. The analogy is fitted to Petruk as Jokowi manages to ascend into Indonesian topmost position of the presidency like Petruk in Raja Kanthong Balong of Mayapada.

While many of lakon allude Jokowi to Petruk as an ordinary person who successfully ascends to the throne, contested debates have emerged with regards to the portrayal of Jokowi as Petruk. Of particular importance to those debates is Jokowi's historical background and the concept of ordinary Jokowi. Before politics Jokowi engaged in business and managed to establish his name in business family locally and internationally. He had established a factory to manufacture furniture which managed to secure a market outside the border of Indonesia. Does Jokowi continue to remain as Petruk- an ordinary person? This question and others pose a challenge to those lakon and other wayang stories which portray Jokowi as Petruk. I suppose those who opine Jokowi as an ordinary person compare him to his predecessors who had served in the former governments and had strong ties in Indonesian politics.

Of particular importance to this study, the portrayal of presidents by wayang characters in lakon is dynamic. This means that their portrayal is not fixed to a single wayang character as also pointed by Pausacker (2004). In so saying in different lakon presidents may be portrayed by different characters as of the prevailing political situation in time. In a point of fact, the change of political atmosphere may necessitate changes of wayang characters to fit the portrayal of a respective president.

Conclusion

The discussion on the allusion of Indonesian presidents by wayang characters and stories is based on the selected lakon from a particular occasion. This emphasizes the way wayang characters allude to presidents in respective political contexts. The reviews of previous studies on the portrayal of presidents suggest them to be Punakawan and so they are alluded by either Semar, Gareng, and Bagong and less by Petruk. This also informs on the rare

possibilities of an ordinary person or a woman to become a president in Indonesia. Of particular importance to this study which focuses on two presidents of *reformasi* era SBY and Jokowi, their portrayal by wayang characters is informed by people's expectations towards them. The portrayals of SBY as honest and uncorrupt Semar signify people's desires during *reformasi* era. The allusion of SBY as Semar which emphasizes good behaviors in the early years of his presidency informs the reforms that the people wished was done. However, the indecisive Semar in the last years of SBY's presidency shows people's disillusionments towards his service in the office. On the other hand, Jokowi is alluded to Petruk as an outsider who manages to excel in Indonesian politics to the topmost rank. Jokowi who is portrayed as having no established ties with the previous ruling governments comes to the high office as an ambitious and true revolutionist to whom the future of Indonesia lies. Jokowi is an outsider who emerges as a mid-sized servant to the presidency contrary to the older practice. As of the same view, Petruk had served as a clerk of Mayapada for decades ascends to the throne.

While many of lakon allude Jokowi to Petruk as an ordinary person who successfully ascends to the throne, contested debates have emerged with regards to the portrayal of Jokowi as Petruk. Of particular importance to those debates is Jokowi's historical background and the concept of ordinary Jokowi. So, based on these findings, further studies may devote to critically examine interdisciplinary the ordinariness of Jokowi in Indonesian politics as it is conceived among the majority of Indonesians in wayang and other arts. Prior to politics Jokowi engaged in business and managed to establish his name in business family locally and internationally. Does he remain an ordinary person as of the view of the majority? This question and others pose a challenge to some wayang stories which portray Jokowi as Petruk.

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