THE TRANSFORMATION OF R.A. KOSASIH'S MAHABHARATA WAYANG COMICS DESIGN: COMPARISON OF THE 1955 VERSION WITH THE 1975 VERSION

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ABSTRACT

Mahabharata was an epic Hindu story that has been adapted to comics for so many times, by many comic artists. R.A. Kosasih, was one that was known for his mastery in creating Wayang Comics, and Mahabharata was his best creation. He created two versions of Mahabharata comics. The first was in 1955, published by Melodi and the second in 1975, by Maranatha. The storylines were basically the same, but there were differences not only in formats or spelling system, but in the visual narratives. The pictures in Maranatha version were designed in a more up dated style in comics. In the Maranatha version, R.A. Kosasih adjusted his drawing style like younger artist at that time. The angles of the scene drawn were more dynamic and variated. The scene itself expressed an adjustment to the lifestyles at that time. Consciously or unconsciously, R.A. Kosasih practised what a popular artist usually did: to always adapt to changes of. Even in his 56th of age he still succeeded to create another popular work.

KEYWORDS: Wayang, Comics, R.A. Kosasih, Mahabharata

INTRODUCTION

Wayang content is a priceless wealth in promoting cultural industry, especially in Indonesia. In this country, wayang culture reaches many regions; it has become and existed as performing arts. Apart from being a cultural product, all of them have turned into promising financial profit products for the producers, artists and the supporting parties, and the tourism conscious. The term wayang originally came from the term wayang kulit (shadow puppet show) or leather puppet show) in Java. So there were wayang kulit puppet (leather), wayang golek puppet (wooden marionette), and wayang wong (theater, played by human actors). All of those performing arts mostly tell stories taken from the two largest known and read Hindu epics Ramayana and Mahabharata.

Komik wayang or Wayang Comic is basically a blend of two cultural domains. Wayang rooted in Asian literary tradition while the concept of comic comes from the visual culture concept developed in the western world. Wayang comic is a form of new creation based on the media of telling old stories, especially the epics Ramayana and Mahabharata. The design in terms of character appearance, setting and nature is all the result of the imagination of the stories around those two epics. These stories have gone through a number of adaptation processes, from oral tradition, written text, performing art involving the puppet shadow, wooden puppet ‘puppet theatre’ and wayang wong.
An opinion says that Asia also owns a tradition of visual storytelling like we find in Indonesia when, for example, talk about the relics in Borobudur temple, or the Wayang Beber. In terms of structure, those two forms are so similar to that of the comics. Nevertheless, wayang comic that we are so familiar with is likely to be more proper if we see it from the point of view of the comic history coming from the West. Comic emerged thanks to the remarkable development of the print media technology. Comic strips, which initiated the comic forms, were disseminated through newspapers or magazines in the Western world. Afterwards, among those genres that gain popularity in the West such as roman, detective stories, jungle adventure, science fiction or superhero, wayang culture had penetrated to become the content of the comic in Indonesia.

Wayang has been adapted many times. Some people believe that the Ramayana and Mahabharata epic are true stories that took place in the past. The “event” was written as literary text which is turned into performing art, and then along with the development of technology media, this has gone through adaptation process into other vehicles like short stories, comics, films, animations, radio plays or games. Feature films based on the stories in Mahabharata have been also produced in Indonesia. D. Djajakusuma made a film titled Lahirnya Gatotkatja ‘The Birth of Gatotkatja’ in 1960. In 1983, a film titled “Pandawa Lima” starred by Indonesian actor, Alan Nuary, was made. In 2006, television station RCTI aired the animated version of Mahabharata puppet based on the wayang comic by R.A. Kosasih made in 1956. This production didn’t receive good acceptance; from 38 episodes they have produced, only 13 of them that were broadcasted.

So, now all the media that contain Ramayana and Mahabharata epic can use the term Wayang like Wayang Comic, Wayang Game, etc. In the fifties, comic artists start to adapt the Ramayana and Mahabharata stories into comics. So, the term Cergam Wayang (Wayang Comics) became popular. The period of 1950s to 1960s was the golden years of the comic artists who wrote about wayang. At that time wayang comics were the favourite of a wide audience of readers so that many publishers and painters were attracted to take on comics. In the early 1960s comics with martial art theme, superhero of new generation and teen novel started to appear. Comics with this theme started to dominate in 1960s to 1970s. The market for wayang comics decreased as the result of the comics of martial art genre.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, foreign comics translated into Indonesian language started to dominate the market. Indonesian comics were not easy to find in big stores. This situation lasted until 1997; in 1975 the Maranatha publisher made efforts to reprint the wayang comics by old painters like R.A. Kosasih and Oerip S., both in the form of re-drawing of the same stories and the old works which were reprinted. These Maranatha’s wayang comics, despite the different condition of that in the 1970s, survived the bookshelves in main bookstores and special comic kiosks up to now. In 1983, the Misurind publisher published series of Ramayana comics by Jan Mintaraga and Mahabharata by Teguh Santosa, but, unfortunately, the publication wasn’t a success story. They stopped the series because in terms of marketing these series weren’t profitable. In 1994 Jan Mintaraga launched a title of wayang comic, Rama Sinta Legenda Masa Depan ‘Rama Sinta the Future Legend’ which was a work of collaboration with Dufan Ancol. This entertainment park also built a pavilion using the same design and concept as the comic.

When vehicle changes take place, there is always a need to adapt the characters’ visual design. Every media requires different design, which is adapted to the technique of delivering and visual culture context at that time. Even in the comic itself, the character design does change,
Despite the fact that the traditional visual culture tracks are still the features of the character design. Some adaptation concept of R.A.Kosasih in designing the universe were:

a. Preserving the form of specific gelung, which is the form of gelung Supit Urang. He did this because it’s this form that serves as the specific feature of wayang in general and it is the characteristic of a certain character. The form of this gelung in wayang comic finally becomes the shape of a crown.

b. Simplification of complex accessories used in the wayang design in performing arts.

c. In adapting costumes it should be based on logics. The costumes in imagination should be able to support the movement of the characters. For example, by excluding the badong element as it is considered potential to disrupt the movement of the characters.

d. In designing the palace form, he referred to the palaces he found in Java and Bali, for example the Yogyakarta palace, Temples, Bogor Palace and so on.

e. In general R. A. Kosasih wanted his wayang comics to have the image of Indonesia. For that reason, he always attempted to refer to other forms of arts, which he considered able to provide and support the image on his comics.

So, one of the Indonesian comic artists who are very well-known as Wayang comic creators were R.A. Kosasih. Mahabharata was one of the many Wayang Comic titles created by R.A. Kosasih (1919-2012). Many created Wayang Comics based on Mahabharata, but R.A. Kosasih's was the most widely read, the most often reprinted, and already became a collective memory of a part of Indonesian readers. That collective memory about Wayang Comics was built since 1955 to the 1980s. Even though there were many other artists doing comics on Mahabharata, they all associated R.A. Kosasih with Mahabharata comics. And some teenagers in the 1990s also claimed to have read the comic Mahabharata of R.A. Kosasih. Maybe their parents bought them the comic. After a while, when I started researching Wayang comics in 1993, I finally realized that the R.A. Kosasih's Mahabharata comics they read were different. Some read the the 1955 version from Melodi and partly read the 1975 version published by Maranatha. I always thought that Maranatha simply reprinted the Melodi version that I read in the 1960s. In fact, Maranatha asked R.A. Kosasih to make a new one. So, it seems that the more senior readers generally read the 1955 version and the younger generation read the 1975 version.
Figure 1:
Comparison of the size and design of the Mahabharata cover of the Melodi bundle version (above, 14.5 cm X 20.5 cm) with the Maranatha bundle version (below, 17 cm X 24.5 cm).

Figure 2.
Introductory writing on the first page of Melodi's Mahabharata version.

Translation:

The Mahabharata story which will be portrayed here is according to the epic Hindu saga which was genuine without fantasy or additions. Therefore, readers will not find the characters panakawan (some kind of palace's jester or servant): Semar, Cepot, Dewala and Gareng. 500 years BC in India, the Aryans held power, conquering all the peoples who were in the land. Among them was the Hastinapur kingdom located on the Semeru mountain plain. Hastinapur founded by king Hasti (Elephant). Hasti is the son of Kuru. Kuru is the son of Mahabharata, a great nobleman.

Figure 3.

Introductory writing on the first page of Maranatha version of Mahabharata.

Translation:

Foreword

This Mahabharata story is familiar to all of us... Processed into cergam (Indonesian comics) by myself in the 50s.. Because there are still many people who interested and want to read it. Also, considered the government's recommendations in the new spelling regulation, then I was moved to make a new version... Of course, there were also many changes here and there concerning language or pictures. Further, only the readers themselves can judge.

In the introduction to the Melody version, R.A. Kosasih explained the source of the story being referred to was the Hindu Kanda (saga) from India. R.A. Kosasih intends to use the most
"original" sources, not from the fictional stories of Indonesian writers or puppeteer. R.A. Kosasih confirmed by saying that in the Mahabharata comic there were no Panakawan (the indigenous archipelago characters). In the introduction to the Maranatha version, R.A. Kosasih said that his first version of Mahabharata comic was published in the 1950s. Many enthusiasts drove this re-creation, as well as the government's suggestion to use the new spelling system. Also mentioned are changes in stories and images.

In the fifties, there were many wayang comics (strip) published in magazines such as strip Bunga Gangga dan Perwitasari by IKS Sulianto, in Terang Bulan Magazine 1953, Gatotkotjo and Pergiwo by B. Djie III in Terang Bulan magazine, 1953, and Rama and Shinta also from B. Djie III in Terang Bulan in 1954. In the fifties, Melodi gathered many talented artists to create Wayang Comics. One of them was R. A. Kosasih Melodi Publishing. Melodi, in 1954, published the first wayang comic in the form of a book titled Burisrawa Merindukan Bulan (Burisrawa Yearns for the Moon), by R.A. Kosasih. It seems that R.A. Kosasih was very suitable to do the wayang genre. After "Burisrawa", he asked to do Ramajana series. Those titles were a big hit in selling that many other publishers are asking for a license to publish. Melodi continued publishing the wayang genre with the Mahabharata comic series. All titles were a success in the sale. After Melodi closed down in the 1970s, Maranatha bought all comic artworks (with the license to publish) except the Ramajana series by R.A. Kosasih, Mahabharata (including Bharatayudha and Pandawa Seda episodes) by R.A. Kosasih and Wayang Purwa by S. Ardisoma. Those titles' artworks and publishing rights inherited personally to Anjaya Tatang, son of the Melodi owner. Considering the success of the Mahabharata title, the publisher of Maranatha in 1975 requested R.A. Kosasih to remake the work. In 2001, the publisher Elex Media Komputindo, got the license to publish the 1955 version from Anjaya Tatang. Elex Media Komputindo printed the comics in a smaller size, used the 1955 version of the Mahabharata along with the Ramayana, Wajang Purwa, and some others. While the Maranatha version of Mahabharata is still published today (2019). In 2014 publisher Anjaya (not Anjaya Tatang) re-published Mahabharata comic, based on the 1955 manuscript with more luxurious packaging, bound hardcover, and published online. So, the two manuscripts artworks), for Melodi publishers 1955, and for Maranatha 1975, were the sources for the reprint edition of R.A. Kosasih Mahabharata. We can still buy the 1975 version now.

The Maranathah version is 20 years adrift from the 1955. There were slight differences is the storyline at the beginning and the middle. In terms of naming, the characters of the two comics are the same, only the spelling was different. The Maranatha 1975 edition already uses "EYD" (enhanced) spelling. I will discuss in this paper that there was a development in terms of visual narratives that was quite significant from the concept of comic R.A. Kosasih in the span of 20 years. I want to see more deeply the visual narrative aspects of R.A. Kosasih who made the second version at the age of 56 years still developing. Mr. Kosasih explained in an interview in 1995 that he admired the works of Teguh Santosa, the illustrator who was famous for his "chiaroscuro" inking style. So, he tried the Teguh Santosa's inking style like added more cross hatching, shading and black spaces. Changes in image style are seen not only in the Mahabharata version of Maranatha which was made back in 1975, but has been seen in the R.A. Kosasih's "Silat" genre such as Setan Tjebol, Kudjang Emas, Kala Hitam, Sariti Kucing Galak and others were published in the 1970s.
Synopsis of Pandawa Luluhur, the Melodi Version

In the kingdom of Hastina, Prabu Santanu, father of Bisma, hunts in the forest. There he met a beautiful woman named Setyawati. The prabu fell in love and wanted to make her an empress, but Setyawati was only willing if their son guaranteed to be the crown prince. These requirements cannot be fulfilled because Bisma is already the chosen crown prince of Hastina. Prabu Santanu was disappointed and when he arrived at the palace he became ill. Bisma who loved his father very much asked about the cause of his illness and the prabu finally explained about his meeting with Setyawati. Bisma then swore in front of his father not to have a wife so that when he did not become king, no descendants would claim his rights. Bisma picked up Setyawati and brought her to the palace. Setyawati eventually became empress of Prabu Santanu and had two children, Tjitragada and Tjitrasena. After Prabu Santanu died, Tjitragada ascended the throne. Shortly after Tjitragada became ill and died, Tjitrasena was replaced. In fact, even under these conditions, the Hastina state government continued to run well because Bisma controlled it. Bisma kept thinking about Hastina's future and worried about the sustain of the Hastina breed because Tjitragada and Tjitrasena did not yet have a wife.

When the Kasi kingdom held a contest to get a son-in-laws for his two daughters: Dewi Ambika and Dewi Ambahini, Bisma participated and managed to kidnap them. In the process of kidnapping the two daughters, the eldest daughter of Prabu Kasi, Dewi Amba, unintentionally carried along in the Bisma's chariot. Dewi Amba was already had a fiancée, Prabu Salwa. Bhishma corrected the error by returning Dewi Amba to the Kasi kingdom, but Prabu Salwa no longer accepted Dewi Amba as a fiancée and married another princess. Dewi Amba who was still has a grudge against Bisma went to meditate until death. In the process, the goddess Amba was promised by Betara Shiva that she would be able to avenge Bisma when she reincarnated to a person named Srikandi. Then, King Tjitrasena died. He haven't got any children. Bisma heart becomes restless again. After conferring with the queen Setyawati, Bisma decided to meet Abiasa, son of Dewi Setyawati from her previous husband, Begawan Parasara. Bisma Asks Abiasa to have intercourses with Dewi Ambika and Dewi Ambahini to get offspring. Because Abiasa's face was ugly and her body smelled fishy, Dewi Amba closed her eyes during the intercourse, so their son was born blind, named Destarata. While Dewi Ambhini's eyes widened and pale when they came in contact so that their son was pale and his head was a little to the right, named Pandu Dewanata. The queen's mother still did not feel satisfied so she asked Abiasa do an intercourse once again. The two daughters were reluctant to do. So, they asked a nanny to replace them. From the nanny born a crippled son named Yama Widura.

Maranatha Version of the Pandawa Luluhur Synopsis.

In the kingdom of Hastina, Ganggadata, prabu Santanu's son accompanied his father to hunt in the forest. There he parted ways with the group and met a beautiful woman named Dasabala who finally claimed that his real name was Setyawati, the daughter of the king of Wirata who had run away because he had been smelly. After being helped
by *begawan* Parasara her body becomes fragrant and she surrenders himself to the *begawan*. From that relationship, their son named Abiyasa was born.

The prabu fell in love with Setyawati and wanted to make her an empress, but Setyawati was only willing if their son would become the crown prince. These conditions cannot be fulfilled because it will violate royal rules. Feeling disappointed, Prabu Santanu returned to his group. Arriving at the palace, the king was immediately ill. Ganggadata asked him about the cause of his illness and the prabu finally explained about his meeting with Setyawati. Ganggadata then swore in front of his father not to have a wife so that no descendants of him would claim for the royal throne. Ganggadata immediately picked up Setyawati and took her to the palace. After the oath, the Gods gave Ganggadata a new name, Bhishma Dewabharata.

Setyawati eventually became the consort of Prabu Santanu and had two children, Citragada and Citrasena. Both are cared for and educated by Bhishma. But only Citragada is capable of mastering Bhisma's abilities. After Prabu Santanu retreated, Citragada was made king. Citragada is arrogant and likes to fight to conquer other countries. The gods acted by sent the Duruwiksa to kill him in a battle. Citrasena succeeded him as king of Hastina. Even under these conditions, the Hastina state government continued to run well because it was controlled by Bhishma. Bhishma kept thinking about Hastina's future and worried about the survival of Hastina descent since Citrasena did not have a wife. Incidentally, the Kasindra king held a contest to get a powerful son-in-law for his two daughters; Ambika and Ambahini if they succeed in defeating Harumuka and Wahmuka. Bhishma participated and succeeded in winning against Harumuka and Wahmuka.

In the contest Bisma also defeated and killed Prabu Salwa, who turned out to be the fiance of Dewi Amba, who then demanded that she be married to Bhisma. Because Dewi Amba forced, Bhishma frightened her with an arrow that accidentally released and killed Dewi Amba. Before dying, she had prayed that his soul could again become a princess to avenge Bhishma. Then, Prabu Citrasena became ill and died. He didn't have children yet. Bisma heart becomes restless again. Dewi Setyawati called Abiyyasa Dwipayana, the son of the goddess Setyawati from her previous husband, Begawan Parasara. Dewi Setyawati asked Abiyyasa to give children to Dewi Ambika and Dewi Ambahini. Because Abiyyasa's face was ugly and his body smelled fishy, the goddess Amba closed his eyes when having intercourse, so their son was blind, named Destarata. While the goddess Ambahini's eyes widened and pale when they came in contact so that their son was pale and his head was a little to the right, named Pandu Dewanata. The queen mother was not satisfied, so she asked Abiyyasa to have intercourse again. The two daughters were reluctant so they asked a woman from the sudra caste to replete them. From the sudra woman born a son with a limp leg named Yama Widura. Abiyyasa's three sons were later educated by Bhishma. When they were old enough they were sent to Abiyyasa's hermitage for further training until they had their respective powers.

This paper aims to describe how the differences in visual narrative between the Melodic Mahabharata and the Maranatha Mahabharata. Given the limitations of time and space, I use only the first part of the story as the subject of discussion, namely the Episode of the *Pandawa Ancestors* for the Melodi version and the 2nd Episode of the *Pandawa Ancestors*, for the Maranatha version. This first section focuses on the events of Santanu's meeting with Setyawati. The material being compared is the general picture style, depictions of scenes, and
panel settings. Of the two versions, an equal scene was chosen, also with consideration of having emotions and varied mood of the story, also on things that might be interesting, which hopefully could show a bit of the concept from R.A. Kosasih.

R.A. Kosasih created Wayang Comics Universe. When we create the universe or the setting of a wayang comic story, basically, it was like creating a kind of new "culture". This kind of "Culture" is a system used by actors in a story. Cultural forms are depicted by the behavior of figures, ranging from how to dress, technology, government systems and others. Also, how the actors behave or norms created were also part of the "Culture created". In comics, the "norms" usually can be read through gestures of the actor in a scene. The Mahabharata story has a fictional culture that cannot fully refer to a particular cultural or ethnic form in the world. Actors are individuals who play roles in the story. The relationship between the actors are interlocking. In the Mahabharata story, the composer of the story has a complete "family trees" between the characters. The actors have their own characteristics. The costume designs worn by comic puppet characters mostly have the same characteristics as the costume designs on the types of puppet shows. The development from the shadow puppet costume to the comic puppet costume seemed to have a straight path. The type of puppet show that arises usually shows the characters with characteristics that are identical to the characters in the puppet show people, skin or golek. Because there is a transition vehicle, it is often necessary to interpret the visual characteristics of a character to be translated into another vehicle. This interpretation, coupled with the creativity of the artists, gave birth to diverse visual forms. In this case, it was the visual and language of comics.
Figure 4.
Melodi version of Prabu Santanu in the forest
Figure 5:
Maranatha version of Prabu Santanu in the forest

The two sequentials both illustrate how Santanu was lost in the forest and then carried deeper into the forest to finally meet Setyawati. In Melodi, Prabu Santanu was motivated to find out who the inhabitants of the hut (which was allegedly inhabited by ascetics). He then walked toward the hut. At Maranatha prabu Santanu was attracted by the fragrance that brought her deeper into the forest and saw Setyawati bathing in the river. The first verse told us that Prabu Santanu curios for the hut and want to visit it because he thought it was the house of a hermit. While, in Maranatha version he attracted to a fragrance scent. The motivation in the first version seems to be towards something "noble", while the second gave impression of a worldly motivation.

Visually, the description of Maranatha looks more detailed in picturing the landscape. The picture gave impression of a broad landscape and silence nature. It seems that the reader feel the sense of prabu Santanu being alone, in serenity. The Marantaha version uses the moment to
moment scene drawings techniques. The camera angle shot changed dynamically from panel one, extreme long shot, panel two full shot, panel three medium shot. Like using a zoom-in process on the camera, from the wide image narrowed, prabu Santanu riding a horse scene into the image of Santanu sitting. After that, it was continued with 4 full shot panels depicting Santanu prabu who stood up to look for the source of fragrance. In Melodi, transition of panel scenes shot uses the subject-to-subject technique, moving from one subject to another, all of which are long shots except for the third panel depicting Santanu's Prabu thinking about using a medium shot.

Setyawati

Figure 6:
Panel 5 of Melodi (left) compared to panel 5 of Maranatha (right). The first appearance of Setyawati.

In the Melodi version, Setyawati is depicted fully clothed, wore kemben (javanese clothing) with tiaras, earrings, necklaces, and other accessories. He leaned on the hut with her face down, gave an impression of shyness, passive, and looks like a weak woman. This scene shows the interaction between Prabu Santanu and Setyawati that seems more polite. Female were supposed to be passive and male more active. In this scene, Prabu Santanu was interested in the beauty and gentle impression of Setyawati.

In the Maranatha version, Setyawati was first shown in a bathing scene in the river that was certainly not dressed, while Prabu Santanu watched from behind a tree. The scene gives the impression that the initial attraction of Santanu's Prabu to Setyawati is based more on lust than the Melodi version that expresses admiration for the softness of character. The panel's perspective was made with the foreground of Setyawati and Prabu Santanu far behind, so Setyawati’s body beauty was better illustrated. This more "bold" portrayal of change shows a development of interpretation of R.A. Kosasih. Maybe, R.A. Kosasih was aware of a shift in values in society at that time (1975). Entertainment media, including comics and the public, are more permissive about showing "bold"
scenes that were previously in 1955, considered taboo. On the other hand, R.A. Kosasih is more pronounced and more specific in determining Santabu's prabu character.

In the Maranatha version, Santanu was also told to trace the appearance of "the smell of fragrance" until finally caught Setyawati bathing in the river, not "seeing the hut and interested because he suspected that it was a hermit's house". Two opposing motives. Chasing the smell of fragrance as if there is a thirst for worldliness. An interest in the hermit gives an impression about the search for spiritual things.

Panel 6-7 Melodi (above) compared to panel 6-7 of Maranatha (below). The first encounter between Prabu Santanu and Setyawati.

Panel 6 Melodi depicts Setyawati who was surprised looking at Prabu Santanu in the forest, using the word balloon "OOH!" On panel 7, the camera shot from behind Setyawati's shoulder facing prabu Santanu. The looks on Parbu Santanu's face didn't show any specific expression. Like almost all panels on both Melodi pages, panels 6-7 use a "medium shot" perspective. While panel 6-7 Maranatha shows more specific expressions and gestures, especially in the prabu Santanu figure. On panel 6, Prabu Santanu stands leaned against a tree with his head bowed, and arms folded. The gesture was like showing indifferent personality, whereas before he
had just peeked at Setyawati bathing in the river and he was interested in Setyawati. Setyawati passed in front of Prabu Santanu, shocked and said "IH?". So obviously Prabu Santanu is waiting for him. In the second panel, Setyawati's profile in close up perspective with the background of Santabu's prabu who paid serious attention and facial expressions that appeared "very interested". So from the two panels, it looks like R.A. Kosasih is more intensive in interpreting Santanu's prabu nature, which is portrayed through gestures and faces that are more directed towards certain expressions.

The events of Santanu's Prabu meeting with Setyawati were both described on two pages. If this page is intended to describe a romantic atmosphere, it was felt that the 1975 version was more successful in building the atmosphere.
| picture(s) on the panel | narration | words balloon | depiction |
|-------------------------|-----------|--------------|-----------|
| 1. | The King continued along the banks of the river Yamuna | - | The picture states the same thing as narration. Prabu Santanu who was riding a horse on the edge of the river. |
| 2. | Arriving under a tree, there was a hut | - | The picture states the same thing as narration. Depicted a hut under a tree on the river bank. |
| 3. | - | thought balloon: “Ah this is must be a hermit’s house, I want to meet him”. | The picture shows prabu Santanu is thinking about the hut, depicted without any other object. |
| 4. | After tying his horse, Prabu then approached the house. | - | The picture states the same thing as narration. Prabu Santanu is seen from behind, walking towards the hut. |
| 5. | A very beautiful woman is leaning watching the chickens eating grass. | - | The picture states the same thing as narration. Dewi Setyawati is depicted leaning on her hut, looking down (towards chickens that is not pictured). |
| picture(s) on the panel | narration | words balloon | depiction |
|-------------------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|
| 6. | This woman was very surprised at the arrival of Prabu | word balloon: “Ooh!” | The picture states the same thing as narration. Dewi Setyawati’s face did not clearly describe the expression “shocked”. |
| 7. | Prabu Santanu was fascinated by the beauty of this woman. He continued to go inside. | word balloon: “Please enter my lord!” | Dewi Setyawati turned her back to the reader, Santanu prabu entered. Prabu Santanu facing the reader. |
| 8. | - | - | Stating the condition of Prabu Santanu who was amazed when he saw Dewi Setyawati. Pictures do not add information about an enchanted face. |
| 9. | - | speech balloon: “O beautiful woman! Who are you, what is the reason for being in such a quiet place?” | Describe the conversation scene. Prabu Santanu seen from behind, Setyawati looked down. |
| 10. | - | speech balloon: “Before I answer, I want to know, who are you?” | Setyawati is viewed from the side talking to Prabu Santanu while looking down. Prabu Santanu is pictured in a smaller size than Setyawati, facing the reader. |
| 11. | When he learned that this was the king of Hastina, he worshiped. | speech balloon: “Forgive me who has been insolent”. | The picture states the same thing as narration. Setyawati turned her back on the reader to worship Prabu Santanu who looked down. |

*Table 1.*

Analysis of Melodi Comic’s Mahabharata
| picture(s) on the panel | narration | words balloon | depiction |
|-------------------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|
| 1.                      | Finally, the king lost track ... didn’t aware that he had been separated from his group ... | - | Prabu Santanu rides a horse on a mountain scenery background. |
| 2.                      | Feeling tired and resting first on the side of the river Yamuna. | - | Prabu Santanu sat under a tree by the river |
| 3.                      | While enjoying the pleasant breeze of the jungle, suddenly there was a smell of fragrant fragrance. | speech balloon: “Hmmm how fragrant...” | Prabu Santanu sits under a tree and expressed his admiration for the fragrance |
| 4.                      | The prabu was amazed because the fragrance was not of flowers, he immediately investigated ... | - | Prabu Santanu stood up to find the source of fragrance. |
| 5.                      | How shocked he was when he saw beautiful virgin bathing on the edge. | thought balloon: “Ha?”. | King Santanu from a distance saw Setyawati who was taking a bath. The shock of Santanu’s prabu is expressed by the thought balloon. Setyawati depicted naked to the hips. |
| 6.                      | Then he waited for the sweet virgin until she finished the bath, she was surprised by Prabu Santanu presence. | speech balloon: “Ih?”. | Prabu Santanu leaned under a tree, face looking down. Setyawati already dressed, surprised, came over. Setyawati’s surprise was expressed by speech balloons. His body gestures and his face are calm. |
| 7.                      | The king was fascinated mixed with surprise because it turns out that the sweet fragrance was coming out of the virgin’s body. | - | Setyawati in the foreground looked down, showing a beautiful face profile. Prabu Santanu watched with gestures that showed that he was thinking. |
| picture(s) on the panel | narration | words balloon | depiction |
|-------------------------|-----------|--------------|-----------|
| 1.                      | -         | Ganggadata: “Then I swear to Gods, I will not marry for life, so I will not be have descendants.” | Ganggadata depicted in medium shot, facing slightly to the right, he take an oath. Around the head are lines of light effects. |
| 2.                      | Instantly there was a thunder boom right above the palace. That is a sign of the Gods witnessing the Ganggadata oath ... | - | The sky was dark and cloudy with lightning struck the earth. |
| 3.                      | -         | Speech Balloon, Ganggadata: “Now father, the Gods have blessed my oath, don’t hesitate ...” | Prabu Santanu in the foreground looked at Ganggadata who raised his hand. |
| 4.                      | -         | Prabu Santanu: “Oh my son, Ganggadata, you are truly a noble person ...” | Prabu Santanu praised Ganggadata while holding his shoulder. Ganggadata's position in the foreground, facing Prabu Santanu. |

**Table 2:**
Analysis of Maranatha Comic's Mahabharata
Bisma's Oath

Figure 8:
Comparison of the Melody panel (left) and Maranatha (two on the right) that describe the atmosphere and expression when Bhishma made an oath.

An important moment in this episode is when Bisma (Ganggadata) vowed not to get married so that he will not have descendants that probably will demand the throne from Setyawati's descendants in the future. In Melodi, the scene depicting when Bhishma swore seemed very "flat. The oaths that was very important in the journey of Bhisma's life Bhishma (and this oath will greatly affected the course of the story) delivered like an ordinary conversation, with no face expression. While, in the Maranatha version, Bhisma's facial expressions show strong intention, strengthened with the expression lines that form the effect of light around Bhishma's head. Also, the next panel depicts lightning in the black sky that struck the earth, which further amplified the impression of how important the oath was. In the next panel (see table 2) Bhishma picyured standing and raised his hand while taing oath. The drawing in the Maranatha panels clearly showed the changes in R.A. Kosasih's, and it was an improvement. The style added more emotions and expressions.
Perempuan dan Kereta Kuda

**Figure 9:**
The three princesses who are fascinated by Bhishma in a chariot, Melodi version

**Figure 10:**
The three princesses who are fascinated by Bhishma in a chariot, Maranatha version
Figure 9 (from Melodi) and figure 10 (from Maranatha) were the scenes where Bhishma arrived in a dramatic way at the contest. He rode a chariot dashingly. In the Melodi version, the chariot pictured moving towards the reader. Bhishma took control of the carriage stoutly. He wore a cape, just like a knight from the ancient Roman empires. The difference between the versions of Melodi and Maranatha, besides the point of view, is the shape of the chariot and the depiction of women. In the Melodi version Bhishma used some kind of coach (carriage) like such in Europe or ones that we can see in the palace of Yogyakarta or Solo. While in the Maranatha version, He rode an open chariot. Women's hairstyles in the Melodi version seem to follow the hairstyles of the time (the 1950s), in contrast to the Maranatha version that also seems to follow the trends of the 1970s. There is a note in the costume worn by Bhishma. In Melodi he wore a cape, while in Maranatha he did not. With the cape, Bhishma looked more like a noble knight. Also, in Melodi, the shoot was from the front of the chariot, while Maranatha was shot from behind. At this point, Melodi's Bhishma looks more dashing than the Maranatha's version. The arrival of the chariot scene, knights and enchanted women reminded me of past Hollywood films that often featured scenes of women who were also fascinated by men in sports cars. Maybe R.A. Kosasih was inspired by the film's scene.

R.A. Kosasih once said that in creating chariot designs, and palace he used many references, one of which was portrayed in films about Roman culture such as the Ben Hur film. He considers the "universe" of wayang to be an invention so that it is our freedom to design visual forms. Although he uses the basic story from India, to build the universe of his puppet both costumes, buildings or objects refer to many sources, such as dancers' costumes, puppets, puppet shows, Javanese court, and temples. All of them were mixed and designed according to the aesthetic concepts that he believed in. His concepts became the basic point to be adapted by some other wayang comic artists at that time.

**Notes on Melodi’s and The Maranatha’s Comparisons**

1. The angle shot of Maranatha's were more dynamic than Melodi's. The Melodi's scenes seem to be taken with a camera that positioned on an eye level.

2. Besides the angles, Maranatha pictured the scenes in a more expressive approaches through the gestures of the characters, the "light" effects on one's head and placing object that will enhance the ambience like thunder in one single panel.

3. The scenes in Maranatha's version were more detailed in telling a scene and detailed in showing the expressions of the characters. For example, it explained how first, Prabu Santanu directed to Setyawati existence after the fragrance scent. The panel also shows Prabu Santanu dazed and stood up after noticing the fragrance.

4. In line with changes in norms and value systems, the scenes depicted by R.A. Kosasih were also evolved and adapted to the changes. For example, the first encounter between Prabu Santanu and Setyawati was described on different "customs" or "norms". Maranatha's even depicted the situation like a peeping tom scene. While Melodi pictured the encounter in a more polite way, shows shyness of Setyawati when meet Prabu Santanu.
5. Just as R.A. Kosasih mentioned in the interview, he designed the concept with references from historical books, performing arts and also movies. Some scenes depicted reminded us of the life styles in the movies.

CONCLUSION

Overall, the Maranatha version shows changes in the style of the picture, the angle of the shot, as well as the expressions of the figures depicted. The pictures of the Maranatha version are more detailed, showing the use of a more bold inking technique and more cross hatched than the Melod version. Also, borrowing the terms from photography, viewpoints that used were more dynamic than the Melod version. Melod use the "eye-level camera" approach and are often static. While the Maranatha version is more varied. In terms of the portrayal of character and character traits, Maranatha is more expressive, more daring to bring out the unique traits compared to the Melod version whose portrayal of the characters is more uniform. However it cannot be said that the Maranatha version is better than the Melod version. Each, of course, has its plus and minus. Readers attachment to their favorite version, depends on which edition was his/her first. Usually the first incised a deeper first impression than the other versions. As for myself, I still feel that the Melody version is more meaningful because it was the first version I read when I was still in elementary school so that I was already deeply impressed. The memory of happiness when we first read the comics book was the clue to our choices of the comics we love.

R.A. Kosasih, as a senior in the comic scene, continued to study other successful works of his era. He studied the contemporary sequential techniques from other younger artists which he considered successful. He also absorbed the positive inputs from other entertainment products such as films. Just like any other popular cultural products, comics can show the culture in the age that the comic grew. The context of the comic visual narrative is built by utilizing the living reality around the growth of the comic. He held fast to the original story, but for the making of the (sequential) art he adapted to a style that the reader would like.

So, up until now his concept which were also resulted from many inspirations and resources still being developed by his successors. R.A. Kosasih achievement in designing his comics undoubtedly, adopted and refined by some of his successors. Ideally the process will make our comics better and better.

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391
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