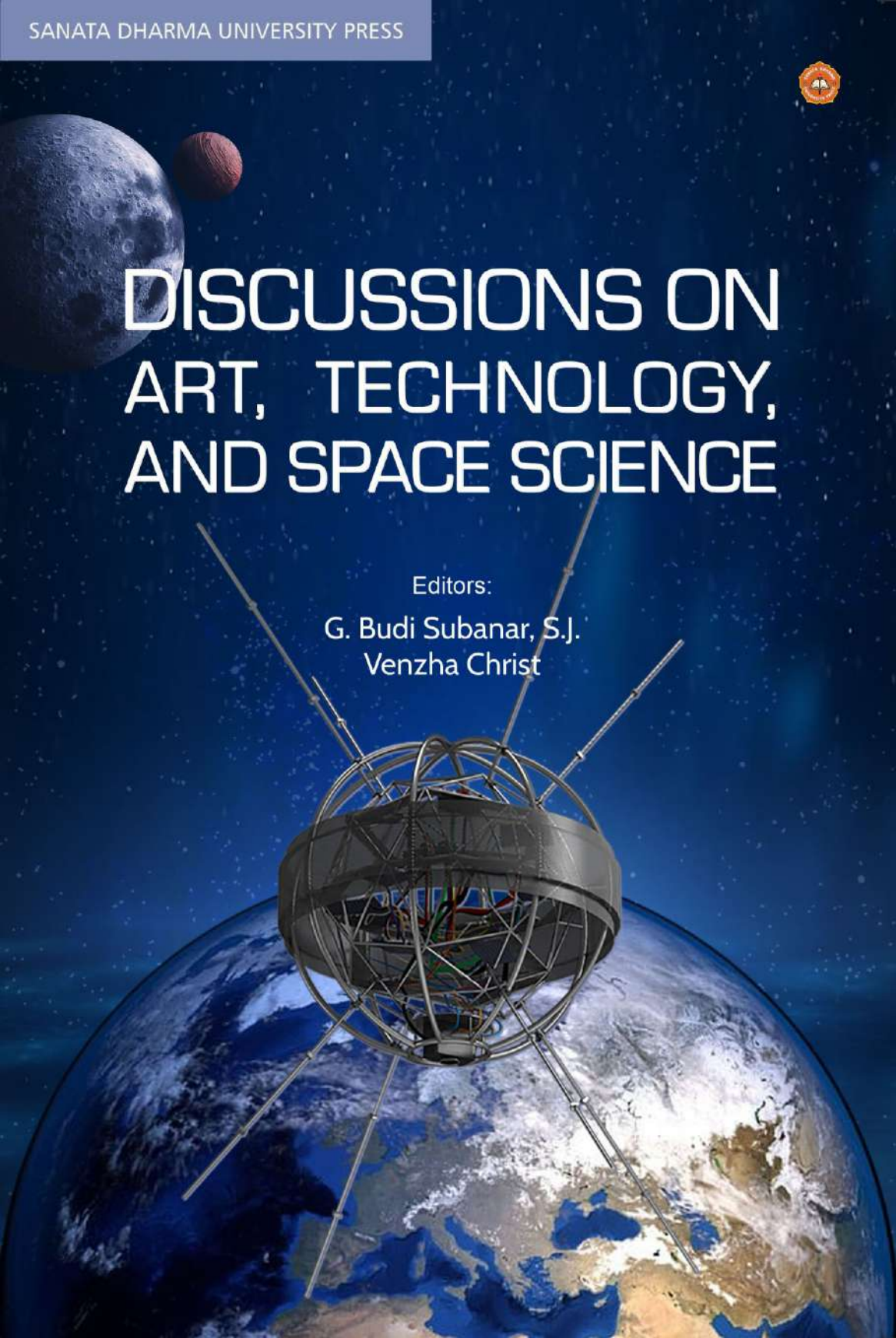




# DISCUSSIONS ON ART, TECHNOLOGY, AND SPACE SCIENCE

Editors:

G. Budi Subanar, S.J.  
Venzha Christ



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## Foreword

This volume presents a curated selection of papers and reflections derived from the INTERNATIONAL S.E.T.I. CONFERENCE 2024 – International Conference on Art, Technology, and Space Science. The conference convened a multidisciplinary assembly of scholars, researchers, and practitioners from across Indonesia and internationally, including representatives from the United States, the Netherlands, Japan, and Singapore.

Participants brought with them a broad spectrum of academic and professional backgrounds - spanning the natural sciences, technological innovation, communication studies, visual and performing arts, cultural studies, and philosophy. This diversity underscores the interdisciplinary ethos of the conference and affirms the necessity of cross-disciplinary dialogue in addressing complex contemporary questions.

In addition to academics and researchers, the conference also welcomed artists and independent scholars, including contributors from the United States, Japan, the Netherlands, Singapore, Mexico, and Germany. Their presence enriched the discourse and expanded the scope of inquiry beyond conventional academic boundaries.

While the overarching framework of the conference was organized around the intersection of art (space), science, and technology, the breadth of contributions reveals a dynamic interplay of perspectives and methodologies. This interdisciplinary structure enabled a robust engagement with the central theme of Search for Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence (SETI), viewed not merely as a scientific pursuit, but also as a cultural and philosophical inquiry.

The proceedings documented in this volume reflect the intellectual vitality and discursive plurality that emerged from this international forum. The event was held through the collaborative efforts of the Doctoral Program in Cultural Studies (Art and Society) at Sanata Dharma University, Yogyakarta, and the Indonesian Space Science Society (ISSS), as part of the Indonesia UFO Festival (IUF) 2024.

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# Acculturation and Visual Narrative of Serat Menak Jayengrana

Wawan Suryana, Erika Ernawan, Belinda Sukapura\*

## Introduction

Serat Menak Jayengrana is one of the ancient manuscripts that has important significance in the Javanese literary tradition. The text is based on the story of Amir Hamzah, a legendary figure from the Persian tradition. The use of Javanese script to adapt the story from Persian culture indicates a deep cultural acculturation process between these two civilizations. Therefore, research on Serat Menak Jayeungrana is very important to understand the cultural dynamics that occurred and its impact on the development of Javanese literature and cultural identity.

In a historical context, cultural acculturation can be defined as a process in which two different cultures influence, adapt and integrate elements from each other. In this case, acculturation between Persia and Java creates a cultural bridge that not only enriches the literary tradition, but also provides a new perspective in understanding the values and norms that develop in Javanese society. This research aims to explore the aspects of cultural acculturation reflected in Serat Menak, as well as how this narrative is packaged in an attractive visual form.

Some of the problems that arise in relation to this research include a lack of understanding of the historical and social context in which Serat Menak was composed. Often, ancient manuscripts do not receive the attention they deserve, so many important elements in narration and visualization are overlooked. In addition, this research is also faced with the challenge of exploring the deep meaning of the visual elements that appear in the depiction of the narrative. How the colors blue, red and white

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\* Universitas Kristen Maranatha

contribute to the delivery of messages and emotions in the story is one aspect that needs further research.

## Method

The method used is a qualitative descriptive method of Feldman's art criticism and visual language, the data collected is based on literature study, namely menak fibers traced through searching on the internet and data from relevant journals.

## Result and Discussion

Analyzing and identifying the process of cultural acculturation that occurred between Persia and Java through the narrative in Serat Menak Jayengrana, exploring the meaning contained in the visual elements that appear in the narrative, especially those related to the use of blue, red and white colors.



Picture 1. Serat Menak Jayengrana (Amir Hamzah)  
(Source: Serat Menak Jayengrana book Page. 46 Ngayogyakarta Hadiningrat Palace)

The picture above tells the story of Raden Bakarkum on the battlefield meeting Prabu Arkus, both of them clash with mace and sword, the figure is positioned in the center and both feet of the figure are on bricks. In the upper left and upper right corners there is a tree branch with two twigs, the first branch pointing towards the corner and the second

branch towards the opposite direction. At the top of the branch, a group of leaves is depicted, visually forming a square and symmetrical, between the left corner and the right corner.

The composition in *Serat Menak* is balanced, with the two figures in the center as the point of interest, and the two tree trunks depicted symmetrically in the left corner and right corner. Figures are depicted from head to toe, and side view or typical view, in accordance with traditional depictions. The depiction of the floor is shifted, so that the surface of the floor made of bricks can be clearly seen visually. The two nobles at war can be seen from the batik patterns used, namely the parang pattern on the batik on the left with a purple top, and the Sidomukti pattern used by the figure on the right with a yellow top, a complementary color that contrasts sharply with the color used by the left figure, as well as the color of the shield on the left in blue and the shield on the right in red.

The battle of the two figures is the core of this narrative, so it is visualized very carefully, so that it can reflect the two figures, both from the batik patterns, colors and movements of the two figures. The left figure steps on the left foot and the right foot is ready to step, while on the right figure, the back foot defends with the knee bent, and the shield is raised to withstand the attack. The two figures attack and defend each other.



Picture 2. *Serat Menak Jayengrana* (Amir Hamzah)

(Source: *Serat Menak Jayengrana* booklm. 48 Ngayogyakarta Hadiningrat Palace)

The picture above tells of Princess Cina Adaninggar entering the cave to meet Agung Menak. Princess Cina is depicted in the center with Agung Menak in the cave. The cave is depicted in flat space-time (RWD), the left wall of the cave is a flat cliff and there are two trees on it, while on the right side of the cave there is a large tree almost as high as the mouth of the cave, and on the back of the tree there is a cliff with half the height of the tree.

The composition of the Chinese princess facing Agung Menak is depicted from head to toe, as per traditional depiction and side view or typical view. Agung Menak is depicted larger than Putri Cina, as he is considered more important. Putri Cina and Agung Menak are in the center of the composition and become the point of interest, bounded by the curved line of the cave, and are lit from behind and the colors of pink and blue clothes, which are cold and warm colors. The seats of the Princess and Agung Menak are in the same place, while the adjoining floor has a different type, in the form of bricks that are shifted so that the pattern is more clearly visible. The left side looks heavier than the right side, although there is a tree on the right side, but it cannot compensate for the cliff on the left side.

The Chinese princess and Agung Menak have very different appearances. The Chinese princess carries complete weapons and pink clothes and decorations that show luxury, while on the right side Agung Menak wears blue clothes that look elegant and authoritative with a calm demeanor. The image above is a depiction of how the relationship between narrative text and visuals both complement each other in conveying the story.

## Summary

The harmonious synergy of the cultural acculturation process in Serat Menak Jayengrana is clearly reflected in the visual narrative that tells Amir Hamzah's journey. In this context, Amir Hamzah is not only a character, but also a symbol of the exchange of values and norms between the two cultures. Amir Hamzah's intelligence, courage, and loyalty represent traits valued in Javanese culture, while his Persian background shows the strong influence of outside culture.

The use of color in the visual narrative also has its own meaning. Blue, which is often associated with calmness and wisdom, can describe the spiritual aspect of Amir Hamzah's character. Red on the other hand, symbolizes the spirit of courage and sacrifice that is very relevant to the main character's journey in facing various challenges while white is often associated with purity and honesty, two very important values in Javanese culture.

This research is expected to provide a deeper understanding of Serat Menak Jayengrana as a work rich in cultural and historical values through the analysis of cultural acculturation and the depiction of impressive visual narratives, it is expected to reveal many things that have not been known before regarding the relationship between Persian and Javanese cultures. In addition, this research aims to encourage the appreciation of ancient Indonesian literature.

### **Acknowledgement**

My gratitude goes to the Ngayogyakarta Hadiningrat Palace for giving official permission for research on Serat Menak Jayengrana with the Cross-Institutional Research Team, my gratitude also goes to BRIN for providing funding support for this research through the Research and Innovation Program of the Advanced Indonesia Competition Wave V of the Education Fund Management Agency (LPDP) with Contract Number 67/IV/KS/07/2024 dated July 08, 2024 concerning Funding for the Implementation of the Research and Innovation Program of the Advanced Indonesia Competition Wave V.

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