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# “CATUR KARANA” IDA BAGUS GEDE PURWA STUDY OF SANGGIT LAKON (KAWI CARITA) BALINESE SHADOW PUPPET

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Balinese *Wayang kulit* contains deep philosophy and aesthetics, with plays that are not only entertaining, but also contain moral teachings and life values. An important element in the structure of the play is the concept of "*Catur Karana*" created by Ida Bagus Gede Purwa. This research uses a qualitative method with a text analysis and phenomenology approach, involving literature study, interviews with puppeteers, audiences and practitioners of the puppet arts. Data is analyzed through text analysis and semiotics to understand the meaning and structure of the story. The research results show that "*Catur Karana*" is a basic method in building a new play. *Dalang* needs to understand the four main elements: swamandala, antakarana, uparengga, and pasiat, which support the structure of the play in Reka Sadana. *Catur Karana* includes five elements (*panca reka*) and is equipped with Catur Perakreti and Panca Wilasa materials as raw materials for creating new plays, which is an important method in *nynggit* plays. Qualitative research methods using text analysis and phenomenology approaches explore the application of the concept of "*Catur Karana*" in the Balinese *Wayang kulit* play by Ida Bagus Gede Purwa. The main data analyzed came from the Purwa Wasana text and the Kawi Carita text and their documentation. Data collection, literature study, interviews, and art practitioners. Narrative data analysis of text and play structure. *Catur Karana* by Ida Bagus Gede Purwa in the Purwa Wasana Textbook. Understand the drupadi competition play from the main play (Ramayana, Mahabharata), memorize the characters, understand the structure of the play, characterization, scenes, building blocks, pedum coral, and understand the theme. Ida Bagus Gede Purwa implemented *Catur Karana* into a play called the Drupadi Competition. In it, elements of chess *karana* are explored which are presented as a summary of the story, scenes and scenes.

**Keywords:** *Catur Karana, Sanggit, Lakon, Building a Play, Balinese Shadow Puppetry*

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## Introduction

Traditional theater in Bali generally uses regional language dialogue, the plays combine sad, serious and funny scenes, presented improvisationally through stage acts and dialogue, singing and dancing accompanied by regional music. ([Dibia, 1999, p. 4](#)) Until now, *Wayang kulit* has been able to survive through various eras, not worn out by age, not worn out by heat, not decayed by the cold of the times. ([Mulyono, 1978, p. 2](#)) The plays that are played contain stories and entertainment, as well as moral teachings and life values. The fundamental values are the four main teachings in Hinduism called Catur Warga (Catur Purusartha), namely: *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kama* and *Moksa*. ([MederaI Nengah et al., 1986, p. 11](#)) One of the important elements of the Balinese *wayang kulit* performance is the play which provides guidance, spectacle and order for the audience. The play is a strong shell in building the atmosphere and bringing the characters in the play to life. According to the Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia, ([Depdikbud, 1999, p. 488](#)) plays are: 1. Stories played out in *wayang* (plays, films, etc.). 2. Main Role. 3. Essays in the form of theatrical stories (in a direct conversation style). Amir Mertosedono has the same opinion in the History of *Wayang*, the Origins of Types and Their Characteristics, saying that *wayang* story plays describe the nature and character of humans in the world ([Mertosedono, 1990, p. 7](#)).

Studies on sanggit lakon or kawi carita in Balinese *wayang kulit* have been done with a focus on the symbolic and structural analysis contained in traditional stories. In the book Teori Sanggit dan Garap by Sugeng Nugroho ([Nugroho, 2025, p. 217](#)), it is explained that sanggit is (1) someone's idea or imagination of something that has never existed before, (2) one's interpretation of an existing work to produce novelty. This is to study and explore "Catur Karana" (4 ways to build a play). Meanwhile, another book about the results of plays by prominent puppeteers in the 80's entitled "Pakem Wayang Parwa Bali" Project: Excavation/Strengthening of Classical and New Cultural Arts Project in 1986/1987 by the Bali District Pawayangan Foundation. ([Daerah Bali, 1978](#)) The result of the play actually uses the "Catur Karana" method, but it is not explained how the play was formed or made.

The only source that discusses "Catur Karana" is a book by Ida Bagus Gede Purwa entitled Purwa, (tt). "Ancient Empires I, II, III". ([Purwa, n.d., p. 17](#)) In the book, "Catur Karana" is explained as one of the basic methods of assembling a puppet play consisting of 4 elements, namely *Swamandala* (the place of the kingdom and its contents), *Antakarana* (conflict/cause), *Uparengga* (creativity/innovation), and *Siat* (war)/climax. These four elements must be present and used in composing a play in a Balinese puppet show. This was often used by *Dalang* in the 80's, to compose plays that at that time were plays, but now the plays are still used and survive today which for generations is now known as standard plays.

Another source that discusses related to sanggit lakon, by I Nyoman Sedana entitled "Kawi Dalang" Creativity In Wayang Theatre, a Doctoral Dissertation that he completed at the University of Georgia. ([Sedana, 2002, pp. 68–163](#)) Broadly speaking, this dissertation reviews the creativity of puppeteers before and during the performance. It is studied on: creativity in the plot, namely changing the narrative into dialogue, selecting the drama, the premise and choices, building a drama, the story made by the puppeteer (*kawi dalang*) with standard sources, and discussing in depth the creativity of the puppeteer during the performance into seven sub-discussions. In the study, *kawi dalang* as a new play with a language that has a high literary structure, is used in wayang kulit dialogue (verbal language), and not only functions as a means of communication, but also as a medium to express moral and philosophical values that exist in Balinese culture. It plays an important role in shaping the characters and storyline.

The research gap in this study is theoretical, contextual, and factual. Most of the existing studies focus more on the analysis of texts and narrative structures without exploring how sanggit plays or kawi caritas are perceived by modern audiences, especially younger

generations who may be less familiar with traditional narrative languages and structures. In the context of Chess because in the 80's Dalang plays, an still exists to survive until now it is used as a standard play. The fact is that puppeteers in the 20<sup>th</sup> century era have not been able to create plays that can be used as standard plays, matching the plays that were performed by *Mpu Dalang* before. Although the study of *wayang kulit* often relies on well-established theoretical frameworks, this approach does not take into account the socio-cultural changes that occur in modern Balinese society. Such as the use of puppet terms (*pangrang*, *pangrum-rum*, *tandak*, friends, without providing an explanation of the meaning or meaning of these terms). Unbalanced and prolonged plot divisions, divisions, long-winded scenes, and poorly structured verbal language, so it seems boring to modern society.

Although many puppet performances have interacted and been influenced by digital media in distributing and adapting puppets into more modern forms, such as performances adapted for television or online platforms. Therefore, a study that integrates modern perspectives is needed in understanding how sanggit plays (*catur karana*) remain relevant and function in a developing social context.

This research aims to fill this gap by adopting an interdisciplinary approach that combines media theory and modern cultural studies to understand modern audiences' acceptance of sanggit plays in Balinese puppetry. By using qualitative methods, including interviews and observations of puppet performances that have developed. This research will explore how these traditional elements are maintained or developed in the context of globalization and digitalization, without compromising the value of the wayang's "*adiluhung/utameng lungguh*".

This approach offers a unique perspective by combining the analysis of traditional texts according to the times, with a wider acceptance of mass culture, by exploring how "*Catur Karana*"/*kawi carita* can still be appreciated and understood in modern Balinese society. The purpose of this research is in line with the research question that seeks to explore the relevance and adaptation of sanggit plays in facing the challenges of the times and technological developments, while maintaining the cultural values contained in it.

Ida Bagus Gede Purwa, a famous Balinese puppeteer in the 70's, was known for his theatrical abilities and wrote a book about learning the Purwa Wasana Balinese puppet art. This book discusses the procedure for singing a play (*ngetus lakon/Kawi carita*) called "*Catur Karana*". ([Purwa, n.d., p. 17](#)) There has been a lot of research on Balinese Shadow Puppetry, but there has been no study focusing on "*Catur Karana*". Therefore, this study is about the concept of *catur karana* as a sanggit play method according to Ida Bagus Gede Purwa and how this concept is applied in his work as well as its impact on the plot of the *pawayangan* play itself.

Balinese Shadow *Wayang*, a traditional performing art form with a very high depth of philosophy and aesthetics. In the context of Balinese Shadow Puppetry, the plays played not only contain stories and entertainment, but are also full of moral teachings and life values, and are able to create a harmonious relationship between humans, nature and God. One of the important elements in (creating a play) Balinese *Wayang kulit* is the use of the concept of "*Catur Karana*" (four methods/principles used to shape character, behavior and storyline in the show. This concept is the foundation for the development of the play's characters.

1) Background: Balinese *Wayang kulit* is an art as a cultural heritage, to educate the younger generation and communicate noble values to society, so the study of "*Catur Karana*" by Ida Bagus Gede Purwa, *Kawi Carita* is very relevant, as an effort to explore and respond to the phenomenon of traditional Balinese performances.

Balinese shadow puppet performances blend with the personalities of the people related to Hindu religious life, both regarding social life and religious ritualism. Puppetry that lives and develops consists of technical equipment such as: *Wayang*, *Kelir*, *Kropak*, *Cepala*, *Blencong* (resin *wayang*), puppeteer, and accompanying *gambelan*.

A puppeteer is a puppet artist who plays an important role in shadow puppet performances, apart from having the technical ability to perform *wayang* such as storytelling skills, mastering good and interesting songs, vocals and language, he is also considered to have magical knowledge (Groenendael, 1987, p. 67). So the word *dalang* in the context of shadow puppet performances means a person who shows puppets, or someone who goes around showing puppets here and there (Mulyono, 1978, pp. 11–12).

Sang Amangku Dalang māvak gumi, māvak bhūta, māvak Déva, dalang ngaranya vanèh, kārana dadi Siva, kārana dadi Parama-Siva, kārana dadi Sada-Siva, kārana dadi Hyang Acintya. (Hooykaas, 1973, p. 18)

(meaning: that a *dalang* is the embodiment of the world, the embodiment of all creatures, the embodiment of God/God in the manifestation of Shiva, Parama-Shiwa, Sada-Shiwa, and becomes Sang Hyang Acintya.

The puppeteer has the right to treat, process and arrange his puppets according to the plot of the play he wants, including creating new plays according to the theme and structure of the play he wants, but still guided by the main plays, namely *Itihasa* and *Purana* as a glossary of the Vedas. Hinduism in general, including in Bali, is guided by the holy book *Veda*, the philosophical implementation of which is in the *Mahabarata* and *Ramayana* which are classified as *itihasa*. In the *Wayu Purana* it is stated that *itihasa* (history) and *Purana* (history of kings and gods) are references, encyclopedias or glossaries of the Vedas. (Titib, 1995, p. 122) This shows how strong the connection is between *wayang kulit* performances and Hindu religious life in Bali. From the source of the play, the puppeteer creates/tweaks the play according to his needs. *Ngetus* is an attempt to create a new play from a small part of the source of the main play.

The form and structure (order) of the performance, there is a transformation of values from the *wayang* to the audience. The performance is able to provide spiritual nourishment/satisfaction, concrete guidance for certain actions, (good and bad). Sartono Kartodirdjo said that cultural arts products that have high communicative value are able to describe actions, meanings and imagine the results. (Kartodirdjo, 1982, p. 125) For this reason, plays are needed that provide guidance and spectacle, but also a good and correct *wayang* structure.

To create a new (*anyar*) puppet play, certain knowledge and methods are needed to make it happen. In connection with this need, in this article we will examine the procedure for creating a new puppet play by examining the problem formulation: 1). The overall research design employs a qualitative research strategy involving an interpretative design in the fields of social studies and theology; 2). Based on the background that has been described, the problem formulation is: 1) What are the main elements that must be present in composing a play according to Ida Bagus Gede Purwa? and 2) How are these elements implemented in a puppet play?; 3). Based on the formulation of the problem, the aim is to find out and study the main elements that must be present in the preparation of a play according to Ida Bagus Gede Purwa and to find out and study the implementation of these elements in a puppet play; 4). The theoretical frameworks that are relevant for studying this research are hermeneutics theory and intertextual theory, both theories can be explained as follows.

The word hermeneutics comes from the Greek word *hermeneutice* or *hermeneutikos*. The word *hermeneutikos* is formed from the word *hermeneuin* which means 'to interpret'. The nouns are *hermeneia* which means 'interpretation' or 'interpretation' and *hermeneutes* which

means 'interpreter' or 'interpretation', ([Webster & McKechnie, 1983, p. 851](#)) Hermeneutics is the study of interpretation. Hermeneutics plays a role in a number of disciplines whose subject matter demands a distinctively interpretive approach, because the disciplinary subject matter concerns the meaning of human intentions, beliefs, and actions, or the meaning of human experience as preserved in art and literature, historical testimony, and other artifacts. Traditionally scientific disciplines that rely on Hermeneutics include Theology, especially Biblical studies, Jurisprudence, and medicine, as well as several humanities and social sciences. History records that the term hermeneutics in the sense of "science of interpretation" began to appear in the 17th century. This term is understood in two senses, namely hermeneutics as a set of methodological principles of interpretation and hermeneutics as a philosophical exploration of the nature and conditions that cannot be avoided in the activity of understanding. ([Palmer, 1969, p. 8](#)) Interpretation of the Purwa Wasana text is very necessary, because this text still uses refined Balinese and some of the content still uses *Kawi*. To be used by the wider community, especially by non-Balinese communities, so that it can be interpreted or studied in more depth. Therefore, translating and interpreting the Purwa Wasana Text is very important.

Intertextual theory is a concept that explains that every literary work never stands alone, but is always related to previous literary works. Intertext, comes from the prefixes 'inter-' and 'text'. The prefix 'inter-' expresses the meaning of 'mutual' or 'relationship'. The first intertextual approach was inspired by the ideas of Mikhail Bakhtin. According to Bakhtin, the intertextual approach emphasizes the understanding that a literary text is seen as an insert or graft on the framework of other literary texts, such as traditions, types of literature, parodies, references or quotations ([Bakhtin, 2011, pp. 278–309](#)).

This intertextual approach was introduced or developed by Julia Kristeva, ([Kristeva, 2024, pp. 36–89](#)) the term intertextual is generally understood as the relationship of a text with other texts. Kristeva argues that every text is woven from quotations, permeations, and transformations of other texts. This is what underlies this theory, where a text will have a certain relationship with other texts. Literary works must be placed in a concrete time and space framework, so that the text has a relationship with other texts, utilizing expressions from other texts, the text as a game and a mosaic of previous quotations. In intertext research, there is no text that is not influenced by the text.

Relationships between texts are actually formed due to the influence caused by the author's experience of the references encountered. Furthermore, Kristeva's understanding of the mosaic principle is also explained, namely that a text takes good things from other texts and then reprocesses these texts to create a new text. In this way, an author obtains ideas, inspiration or ideas after reading, viewing, absorbing, absorbing, quoting certain parts of texts into his new work. The definition of intertextuality is further emphasized by Kristeva, ([Suwardi, 2011](#)) that the theory of intertextuality has certain rules and principles. The rules and principles are as follows. a) In essence, a text contains various texts. b) Intertextuality studies mean analyzing the intrinsic and extrinsic elements of texts. c) Intertextuality studies provide a balance between intrinsic and extrinsic elements of the text that are adapted to the function of the text in society. d) In terms of the author's creative process, the presence of a text is a result obtained from other texts. e) In relation to intertextuality studies, the meaning of text (literature) should not be interpreted only on literary material, but must include all elements of the text, including language elements.

Intertextualism is used as a theoretical or methodological approach that examines how texts relate to and influence each other in the reading and writing process. This is a more complex analytical approach, which seeks to identify and explore the meaning that emerges from the relationship between one text and another. In intertextualism, the reading process is more focused on how readers (or literary critics) identify relationships between texts and interpret texts in a wider context, by paying attention to cross-references and literary



conventions. This approach sees literary texts not only as the individual product of the author, but as part of a larger network of cultural and literary traditions.

## Research Method

Research methods with research procedures and techniques according to details regarding design, implementation and analysis. The components of the research method are: 1). Qualitative research design is an approach used to explore an in-depth understanding of social or cultural phenomena by analyzing non-numerical data, such as texts, interviews, or observations. This research focuses on the context and meaning contained in the data, to describe or interpret social reality. The qualitative approach is descriptive and analytical, researchers play an active role in collecting and analyzing data. This research combines text analysis and observation of Balinese shadow puppet performances to explore the symbolic and philosophical meanings contained in the stories; 2). Data collection is a research step to obtain valid and accurate information. Data collection, by observation, interviews, surveys, according to research objectives. The procedures are carried out with the complexity of the topics and methods applied, strict procedures to maintain the quality and reliability of the data (testing the reliability and validity of the data is important to ensure it can be trusted ([Sugiyono, 2013, pp. 99–102](#)); 3). Data analysis using a qualitative approach focuses on understanding the meaning and patterns of collected data, such as interviews, observations, or documents. Approach in qualitative data analysis with four main aspects, namely; understanding context, interpreting data, categorizing, and drawing conclusions. The approach allows digging deeper into the phenomenon under study and discovering patterns or themes that are not visible in quantitative analysis. In ensuring the validity and reliability of research findings, it is important to triangulate data and maintain consistency in interpretation. As Moleong said, researchers can organize data systematically and increase the credibility of research findings ([Moleong, 2001, pp. 180–183](#)).

This study uses a qualitative approach with case studies and text analysis to explore how Catur Karana is translated in Balinese puppet plays and how these interpretations are influenced by the socio-cultural dynamics of modern Balinese society. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with puppeteers and audiences, as well as observations of reformed puppet performances, with a sample involving 10-15 experienced puppeteers and 20-30 spectators from various backgrounds. Thematic analysis was used to identify the main themes of the interview transcripts and observations, compare existing patterns with theories in the literature, so as to understand the relationship between traditional texts, new interpretations, and their impact on Balinese cultural identity in modern society.

## Result and Discussion

These results and discussion provide comprehensive and in-depth information about the research results, which are offered in two ways to understand the study and its relevance in a broader scientific context.

### 1. Knowledge and Understanding of a Puppeteer in Building a New Play

*Wayang* and *Pedalangan* are two single elements, they have two elements but are an integrated whole, namely *wayang* performances. That is the expression of one of the Balinese cultural figures, I Gusti Bagus Sugriwa, in the Balinese Puppetry Committee entitled "The Science of Puppetry/Puppetry". He further stated that the art of shadow puppetry is a great Indonesian cultural art, and its high quality has developed from prehistoric times to the present, and is still popular with the people, especially the Balinese and Javanese. ([Sugriwa, 1985, p. 1](#)) Sugriwa's words finally resonated throughout the world with the proclamation of Indonesian wayang art as one of the world's intangible cultural heritages by UNESCO on November 7 2003 in Paris, France. The survival of wayang through various eras cannot be separated from the values contained in it, such as Sri Mulyono's expression that wayang

contains things that are necessary in human life both in the worldly (outward) field and in the mental (inner) field. Therefore, wayang is able to survive throughout the ages, not worn out by age, not worn out by heat, not decayed by the cold of the times. In this way *wayang kulit* is given the title of traditional classical art, Adiluhung (1978:2) ([Sugriwa, 1985, p. 2](#)).

A shadow puppet performance that can be considered quality is one that is able to move the hearts of the audience, so that the feelings of the puppet audience are carried away by the atmosphere of the dramatic plot (*pedum coral* and *bah bangun satua*) of the play that is taking place in front of them. The above expression is reflected in Empu Kanwa's writing in the book *kakawin Arjuna Wiwaha* which was bound by guru laghu Çikarini. One of the books that reviews *Kakawin Arjuna Wiwaha* is published by Yayaysan A. A. Panji Tisna. The dramatic plot expression that arouses Lango's feelings regarding *wayang* reads as follows:

"Hana nonton ringgit menangisasékel müdha hidupên; huwus wruh tewin yan walulanginukir melahangucapi: haturaing wwang trsneng wisaya malaha tar wihikana, ri tatwanyân mâyā sahana-hananing bhawa siluman" ([Samba, 1983, p. 67](#)).

If this *Kekawin* is explained freely in Indonesian, the translation would be something like this:

"There are people who are engrossed in watching a wayang kulit performance, they are sad and crying with annoyance in their hearts because they are stupid and easily absorb thoughts, even though they clearly know that the wayang is carved cowhide carved to move with words (because of their actions) Ki Dalang), such are the same people who love *tresna* for the prey of their respective sensual desires, while the ways to defeat or suppress it are unknown to them, and they also do not know about the nature of the world of *mâyā*, namely all things what appears is only a shadow. " ([Samba, 1983, p. 67](#))

Thus Empu Kanwa, a literary scholar, philosopher, expert in psychology and nature, accompanist and advisor to Sri Erlangga, the king of Kediri in Java-dwipa in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, described the spirit of love for human sensuality towards all the objects of the world, the same as people watching a performance Puppet.

## **2. Important Elements in Composing a New Play**

It has been explained above that shadow puppet performances are a noble art. among puppeteer artists in Bali, *wayang* is an art that is primarily noble, meaning it has a special place in society. Therefore, to make the performance truly outstanding, it requires a play that is full of meaning or *metatsu*.

According to I Wayan Dibia, there are three important things about *taksu*: 1). divinity and spirituality; 2). power or energy; and 3). inspiration. Based on these ideas, Dibia built a simple definition of *taksu*, namely: spiritual power or energy that can stimulate the emergence of inspiration. Dibia further explained that limitations like those mentioned above show that *taksu* is a power that comes from the power of God or energy bestowed by Hyang Kuasa. To gain this spiritual power, after mastering the technical or physical aspects required by a field of work or profession, a person must make various spiritual contemplation efforts which are not easy. If necessary, a person must meditate or worship with prayers and offerings. In this regard, only people who have a high sense of artistic devotion, or are disciplined professionals, will be able to gain this spiritual power ([Dibia, 2012, p. 35](#)).

Therefore, starting from the planning of the play, you must think carefully about the structure of the unit, the tone of the song and the sweetness of the play. This means that when designing a play, the puppeteer really thinks about the dramatic plot, the scenes, the characterization, the theme, the atmosphere, and the desired message can be conveyed well. One of the methods in designing a play by Ida Bagus Gede Purwa is *Catur Karana*, namely the

four main elements that must be present in designing a new play, consisting of: Swamandala, Antakarana, Uparengga, and Siat ([Purwa, n.d., p. 17](#)).

### **1. Swamadala = *adan gumi, ratu, pepatih, putri, saluwir ane dadi satua*.**

The first element in designing a new play is the Swamandala element, which means country or location. So in the play there must be an area as a place where the characters in the play are located or as a place to live. These places can be heaven and hell, or a large kingdom, a village, a hermitage, even mountains and oceans. The place or area must be given a name to clarify the status of the area. After giving a clear name for the area, continue by explaining who the powerful figures are in that place. If the area is a kingdom, then it must be explained who the king is and other supporting figures such as his brother, wife and children, the governor, and other figures deemed necessary to be introduced, so that their role in the play is clear.

Swamandala in a play can be just one kingdom, or two conflicting kingdoms. It could also be one kingdom and one hermitage, or one in heaven and one in the world, depending on the desired theme. Apart from that, what is no less important is that the name of the country or region (swamandala) must contain a certain meaning, or there is a background underlying why the name is used. Likewise, the function of the courtiers, the role of the princess or empress, even the role of the Bagawanta in the play, must be determined and chosen carefully as to who will be the main and supporting characters, and think about the reasons behind why they are chosen and positioned that way.

### **2. Antakarana = *Pawiwitan ane dadi jalaran (contradiction as the basis of conflict)***

Antakarana is a conflict or cause of conflict between figures such as Arjuna and Karna, as well as between groups or countries such as Astina and Indraprasta. Conflict can occur with oneself, which is known as inner conflict, as happened to the characters Bhishma and Salva during the Bharatayudda war when defending the Pandavas or Korawas. Likewise, inner conflict occurs in the character Kumbakarna when he is assigned to fight Ramadewa. One of the meanings of conflict in performing arts (especially *wayang*) is the conflict between good and bad, wrong and right, Dharma versus Adharma which is commonly called *Rwabhinada*, namely the struggle between two different things. In Dramaturgical theory, conflict is a very important thing in a play or drama, both traditional and modern drama.

Drama is the quality of communication, situations, action (everything seen on stage) that creates attention, excitement and tension in the listener/audience. According to Moulton, drama is life depicted with movement, where human life is expressed directly in front of ourselves. Brander Mathews said that the conflict of human nature is the main source of drama ([Harymawan, 1993, p. 2](#)). With the definition of drama above, shadow puppet performances can be said to be a traditional classical art that accommodates the requirements of a drama such as the quality of communication, situation, action, excitement, tension (conflict) and the presence of an audience. Apart from that, *wayang* also embodies the term "play". *Sandi* means secret, *wara* or *warah* means teaching. Skits are teachings carried out using symbols ([Harymawan, 1993, p. 2](#)). The word play itself by P.K.G Mangkunegara VII is a word to replace the word *tonil* from Dutch. The *wayang* performance itself is a performance that is full of values and symbols in it which relate to the secrets of the universe/ *Bhuwana Agung* (macrocosm) and *Buwana Alit* (microcosm).

So a more complete definition of drama is a story of human conflict in the form of dialogue projected on stage using conversation and action in front of an audience. However, in shadow puppet performances, the dialogue projected on the stage comes from one actor called the puppeteer through the puppets with various kinds of conflicts in them. Therefore shadow puppet performances are called theater by the scientific community. To understand theater, Harymawan's opinion will be explained as follows:



There are people who define theater as "performance building", there are those who interpret it as "stage". Etymologically (the origin of the word), a theater is a performance building (auditorium).

In a broad sense: Theater is any spectacle that is performed in front of many people. For example: Wayang Orang, Ketoprak, Ludrug, Srandul, Membai, Randai, Mayong, Arja, Rangda, Reog, Lenong, Masks, Slapstick, Magic, Acrobatics, and so on.

In the narrow sense: Drama, the story of life and human life told on stage, witnessed by many people, with the media: conversation, movement and behavior, with or without decoration (screens and so on), based on written manuscripts (literary art results) with or without music, singing, dancing ([Harymawan, 1993, p. 2](#)).

Whatever the name of the performance, whether traditional or modern, in the form of theater, drama, play or drama, and whatever the play, conflict is an absolute requirement that must exist.

### **3. Uparengga = *papayas an ane adung teken pajalan lalampahan* (creativity or development in accordance with the plot of the play)**

Uparengga is also called *papayasan*, namely firstly as an element of creativity and innovation in *nyanggit* or composing a play, and secondly as the creativity of the puppeteer during the performance. The first thing that is intended is to develop or process the main story into a play according to the desired theme, but still within the corridor of the standard story order. Uparengga can be done through: 1). the plot of the play; 2). the *wayang* movements; 3). the vocals; 4). dialogue which includes jokes and jokes, and even 5). the addition of certain characters.

1). Plot Order of the Play. In the performing arts of theater or drama, old artists in Bali more often refer to the plot of a play or story plot as *bah-bangun satua* and *pedumkarang*. What is meant by *bah-bangun* is a scene, and *pedum coral* is a scene for each character. Likewise with shadow puppet theater. A puppeteer must know how to create a good scene and divide it into several scenes and provide the right atmosphere to build a feeling of "*lango*" (beautiful pleasure) in each scene. To build the taste of "*lango*" or *kalanguan*, our old artists often say "*pang nyak adung lalah Manisne*" (to match the spicy and sweet). This sentence means that when creating a new play, the atmosphere or feeling that will be created must be taken into account, whether it is tension, emotion, happiness, sadness, funny, love, mystical or spiritual. So the atmosphere in each scene is likened to the taste of the food so that the seasoning is complete and correct so that the food is delicious (Balinese "*jaen*"). Likewise, in designing a new play, mix the atmosphere so that it is right on target and effective so that the performance is enjoyable to enjoy (*mataksu*).

2). Puppet Movement. In Balinese shadow puppet performances, the puppet movements are called *tatikesan* or *ngigelang wayang*. In the text *Purwa Wasana* by Ida Bagus Gede Purwa it is called *Agem*, namely the movement of the puppet according to the position of each character and the etiquette of puppetry. It is stated that there are 9 types of *agem*, namely: a). *Agem Luhur*: namely puppet movements for the figures of Gods, Rishis, old Kings, reflecting a regal and dignified character; b). *Agem Dadeling*: namely the young king with round eyes, reflects a tough and emotional character; c). *Agem Manis*: namely for warriors or sons of kings with narrow eyes, reflects behavior that is smooth and sweet but firm; d). *Agem Aeng*: namely for characters with sharp teeth, reflecting a fierce and frightening nature; e). *Agem Garini*: namely for princess (human) characters, reflects soft and sweet movements and qualities; f). *Agem sor*: namely for panakawan or servant characters, reflects the nature of humility and devotion; g). *Agem Bobot*: namely for large wayang characters such as purists, with heavy movements, reflecting a sinister, violent nature; h). *Agem Sandi*, namely: the puppet's movements adapt to the situation and conditions of the scene that is taking place; i). *Agem Yuda*, namely: puppet movements on the battlefield carrying various types of weapons

and also riding animals such as: Horses, Elephants, Rhinos, Garudas, and chariots ([Purwa, n.d., pp. 17–18](#)).

3). Vocal Workout. According to Desak Suarti Laksmi, vocal creativity can be done in various forms, such as: *metembang* exercises (*kakawin*, *kaidung*, *pupuh*, *gending rare*), *Tandak Babaturan*, *Tandak Pangalang*, *Pangrangrang*, *Pangrumrum*, and *Cacantungan*. In his book "Understanding and strategies for developing Hindu religious songs in Denpasar City" it is stated that the classification of songs in Bali is divided into four groups, namely Sekar Rare, Sekar Alit, Sekar Madya and Sekar Agung. Each song group has its own rules for each presentation. The rules concern vocal techniques including the placement of sounds in songs such as *wreta* and *matra*, *guru* and song, on *lingsa*, *guru wilang*, *guru gatra*, and *guru dingdong* ([Laksmi, 2022, pp. 184–185](#)).

4). Dialogue. in Balinese *wayang kulit* performances, dialogue is the form of speech most often used by Ki Dalang. Apart from that, narrative and developing speech are also used. These three forms of speech fill the entire antewecana or speaking form of Ki Dalang in his performances. ([Rota, 1990, p. 175](#)) Uparengga in dialogue or *antewecana* is the part that gets the most opportunities for development. Apart from being able to develop it through philosophy (*tatua*) by quoting from several *kakawin*, Puranas, Itihasa and other literature, *antewecana* can present fresh jokes in the form of parodies or puns, and can also be modeled on linguistic styles. According to the results of a study (research report) ([Rota, 1990, p. 175](#)), it is revealed that the presentation of dialogue can be expressed through ten models of language styles, namely: 1). Alternation; 2). *Sloka*; 3). Epenthesis; 4). Repetissi; 5). Correction; 6). Emphasize; 7). Contradiction; 8). Appeal; 9). Emphasis; and 10). *Sor-Singgih*. The alternation style itself is divided into four components, namely: 1). Alternation of Kawi language and Balinese language; 2). Alternation of official varieties of speech and familiar varieties of speech; 3). Alternation of *tembang* speech and *gancaran* speech; and 4). Rhythm alternation.

From the results of the research above, the puppeteer has various ways of presenting his speech. With the richness of speech offerings like that, the opportunity for puppeteers to develop dialogue is wide open for a puppet performance of "*adiluhung*" quality and the quality of puppeteers who are "*utameng lungguh*".

Dialog. in Balinese *wayang kulit* performances, dialogue is the form of speech most often used by Ki Dalang. Apart from that, narration and developing speech are also used. These three forms of speech fill the entire antewecana or speaking form of Ki Dalang in his performances. ([Rota, 1990, p. 175](#)) The science that studies speaking is called Rhetoric, from the Greek rhetor meaning expert in speaking or making a speech. Through this Greek tradition, the five most important aspects of dialogue were introduced, which were then agreed as an acceptable and reasonable way of thinking, namely: a. introduction, b. main issues to be explained, c. evidence regarding the main issue, d. supporting evidence that functions to support the main issue, and e. closing ([Ratna, 2007, p. 233](#)).

5). Addition of Characters. The final *uperengga* is the addition of several puppet characters, *Kayonan*, such as giants, gods, animals, garudas, trees, and *bondres* characters (comedian characters). Usually new puppets are created by the *dalang* according to the needs of the play and the quantity of puppets, as well as the characteristics of the puppet show. One of the puppeteers who did this was puppeteer I Wayan Nardayana (the puppeteer of Ceng-Blong). Various types of *Kayonan wayang* shapes to provide an aesthetic atmosphere to the *Pamungkah* scene, and also several monkey (*ape*) *wayang* which are made in such a way that they look funny and are used for slapstick or jokes.

#### **4. Pasiat = *Pamuput satua; kamolihan Dharma*. (the end of the play with a war scene)**

This scene is the culmination of the conflict established at the beginning of the play. Conflicts are resolved through conflict (war), and are won by the protagonist or group of protagonists (the victory of dharma over adharma). In the text *Purwa Wasana* by Ida Bagus Gede Purwa, the term puppet movement in war is called "*agem yuda*".

There are several *agem yuda* or *siat*, such as: *siat ngontel* or *gossip*, *siat ngelipet/milpil*, *siat dugalan*, *siat gada*, *siat undur-undur*, *siat turangga* (riding a horse) and *siat kawisesan*.

##### **a. Siat Ngontel or Ngotek**

Is a war between two knights carrying arrows or *keris* weapons where the weapon is positioned in the hand of the puppet in front. The puppet's arms are half bent in front of the chest, moved like a *makotek* or *ngontel*, while the puppet's body moves forward and backward, but remains attached to the screen or screen. The main characteristic of this technique is the weapon's stabbing position.

##### **b. Siat Ngelipet or siat milpil**

Is a war in which the puppet's hands still carry weapons, but both are bent against the puppet's chest. The movement of the puppets is in the position of attacking each other simultaneously with the hands in a folded position, where when the right hand goes to the left, simultaneously the left hand goes to the right, done repeatedly as if folding each other. This war is usually for soldiers or troops and also for knights.

##### **c. Siat Gada**

Is a war between two figures with mace weapons (beating weapons), usually carried out using the techniques of *ngontel*/noticing and also *ngelipet*. However, the main characteristic of this *gada* technique is the hitting technique.

##### **d. Siat Dugalan**

Is a battle between two hard knight figures (round eyes), or two giant figures, or a knight against a giant. This war usually does not use weapons or *mamogol*.

##### **e. Siat Undur-undur**

Is a war scene between two knights who initially use the strategy of talking, guessing and/or sneaking, then continue with chasing each other (the loser is chased by the winner).

##### **f. Siat Turangga**

Is a war scene where the knight characters ride animals, such as horses, elephants, rhinos, Garuda, *Wilmana*, and war chariots. This war scene was famous during the war between Arjuna and Karna in the Bharatayuddha war.

##### **g. Siat Kawisesan**

Is a war scene using spells or supernatural powers. The figures of knights who fight each other emit supernatural powers, such as fire, wind, water, rain, and animals, and can change shape into something scary or terrible, like *Bertriwikrama*. The warrior figure who made such a frightening transformation was Krishna when he was the Pandawa ambassador to ask for the return of the Astina State to the Korawa.

Ida Bagus Gede Purwa implemented *Catur Karana* into a play called the Drupadi Competition. In it, elements of chess karana are explored which are presented as a summary of the story, scenes and scenes.

## **1. Story Summary**

It is said that Dewi Kunti and her sons (Panca Pandawa) were in the village of Kumbaka Sala (in Waranawata, the hermitage of Resi Biksa Karma) after escaping the Cardboard House tragedy. Pandawa disguised himself as Wiku (Priest) to become Bagawan Domya's student. On the advice of the group, the Pandawas (Arjuna and Bima) were advised to take part in the competition for the goddess Drupadi, Prabhu Drupada's favorite daughter in Pancala Country. The warriors and kings of Bharatawarsa, including the Great King of Astina Pura Sang Prabhu Duryodana, participated in it. As witnesses to the competition were the Brahmins Reseng Langit, Sapta Resi, Panca Resi, and the Krishna King Dwarawati and the Baladewa king of Mathura. The means of the competition are lifting the Shiva Gendewa and being able to aim at the head of a bird on a tree (in another story: aiming at the eye of a fish hanging swiveling above, by just looking at its reflection in the water in a jar placed below).

Started by king Astina Duryodana, and continued by other kings (Prabhu Salia, Prabhu Kalinga, Prabhu Awanti, Prabhu Sindu, Prabhu Magada), none of them were able to lift the magic bow. Arjuna, disguised as a priest, came to the podium and received jeers and taunts from the audience. However, Arjuna remained calm and focused. Arjuna prayed to Ciwa, then slowly Arjuna lifted Gendewa, and pointed his bow at above, while his eyes focused on seeing the image of the target in the jar below him, and "derrrr!" the sound of the bowstring echoed and the arrow hit the target.

However, not everyone present was happy. Duryadana and his subordinates (Dusasana, Karna, Jayadrata, Wikarna, Sakuni, etc.) felt dissatisfied and wanted to take Draupadi by force. battle is inevitable. Arjuna, assisted by Drestadyumna and Bima, fought Astina's troops. However, Bima and Arjuna were too strong to defeat, so finally Duryodana and his troops fled. Prabhu Drupada and Dewi Drupadi became very happy after knowing who the young priest was who won the competition. Finally, the wedding took place in Pancala before the Pandawas returned to Waranawata to face Dewi Kunti.

## **2. Catur Karana in the Drupadi Competition story.**

### **a. Swamandala.**

The Swamandala element in this story is the Pancala Kingdom, the Kumbaka Sala village (the area where the Jugs are made) as the main swamandala. The kingdoms of Astina and Dwarawati, Mathura, Madra, and the kingdoms of other kings participated in the competition as supporting swamandalas. The figures in the Pancala Kingdom are King Drupada, Dewi Drupadi and Raja Putra Drestadyumna, and Condong. The characters in Kumbaka Sala are Dewi Kunti, Panca Pandawa, Bagawan Domya, Malen and Merdah. The figures of the Astina Kingdom were Duryodana, Dusasana, Karna, Salya, Jayadrata, Kertawarma, Sakuni, Delem and Sangut. Other supporting figures are the Heavenly Priests (Narada, Kanwa, Janaka, Parasurama) as witnesses to the competition.

### **b. Antakarana.**

Antakarana is the cause of conflict. Antakarana is in the conflict scene of Draupadi's competition in Pancala Country. In this competition, inner conflict and also physical conflict emerged from several characters. The prominent character in this story is Prince Duryodhana, who could not accept defeat from a mountain Brahmin, and was not willing to have Goddess Draupadi married by another king, let alone a poor Brahmin. Antakarana was supported by other figures such as Dusasana, Karna and Sakuni, who always incited Duryodana to commit adharma (bad things). So the main Antakarana in this story is the contest scene of Draupadi, and the victory of the hermit (Arjuna) in the Competition.

### **c. Uparengga.**

Uparengga or papayasan is the creativity of the puppeteer to develop the story, by building the desired atmosphere through puppet movements, dialogue, monologue, vocals

and the plot of the play. Sedana, ([Sedana, 2002, p. 202](#)) in his dissertation entitled *Kawi Dalang: Creativity in Wayang Theater* stated that:

"Although wayang has "rules" governing the aesthetic concept and methods that each dalang has to adhere to, those methods are subtly modified by the context of yadnya celebrations in which the performance is held and by the dramatic sensibility of each dalang. Major creativities in the performance manifest themselves through a dalangs prepared and spontaneous improvisation in response to the changing performance contexts such as religious celebrations and social conditions."

The main creativity in the performance manifests itself through the puppeteer's prepared and spontaneous improvisations in response to changing performance contexts such as religious celebrations and social conditions." What uparengga can do most of is the dialogue and monologue (*antawecana*). With the strength of his speaking knowledge, the puppeteer elaborates or compares the antewecana of each character according to the desired guidance and spectacle value. The figures who play a very important role in conveying the uparengga with guidance and spectacle value through the antewecana are Panakawan figures (Delem, Sangut, Twalen, and Merdah, and Condong). In the important *Antewecana* of Tualen and Merdah, the characters are in the first trial scene, where Arjuna and Bima ask permission to take part in the competition at Pancala, followed by Malen and Merdah's dialogue to emphasize and provide meaning as well as why and how the Pandwa are in Waranawata (Kumbaka Sala). Meanwhile, the important antewecana of Delem and Sangut is when explaining, praising, bragging that Duryodhana would definitely be victorious in the Goddess Draupadi contest. Uparengga wayang movements (*tatikesan*) are performed during the *Bapang Delem* or dance movements of the *Delem* figures, the journey of the figures (the lifts) when they go to the competition venue, and during the war movements (*agem yuda*), the lifts of the *Resi* or *Pandita* figures, and the lifts of the *Turangga* (riding the train) when Salya returns home by train. The *turangga* force can also be carried out by Krishna and other kings when they come to competitions.

#### **d. Siat.**

The final scene is the war scene (*siat*), which is a follow-up to Antekarana. Ida Bagus Purwa used several types of war, such as the Bala-Bala war (war between soldiers), namely the war between Astina soldiers and Pancala soldiers. The War of Contest was the war in which Drestadyumena was attacked by Korawa troops and knights. The Gada War was a war between Bima and Dusasana and Salya. The ngotel or ngotek war, the Arrow war, and the Kawisesan war occurred in the scene of Arjuna's war against Karna.

In general, art must experience changes and developments to adapt to the times and human science. Likewise with *wayang*, the function of *wayang* has changed, since it started as a ceremonial tool or means with religious magical beliefs, to becoming a medium for moral education, and becoming a medium for entertainment/regional arts as well as a scientific object. The development of the function of *wayang* is followed by the development of forms and plays in a continuous and continuous manner. Plays created by puppetry figures such as I Made Sija, puppeteer Bona Gianyar (deceased), I Ketut Madra, puppeteer Sukawati Gianyar (deceased), I Nyoman Rajeg, puppeteer from Tunjung Tabanan village (deceased), Ida Bagus Ngurah Buduk, puppeteer from Buduk Badung village (deceased), etc. It has had an intense influence on the *Pedalangan* community to this day by puppetry activists. For this reason, there needs to be a guide (*wimba*) in creating a new, meaningful play.

In general, Balinese *Wayang kulit* performances have the same performance structure, even though in some regions there are some small differences, this actually shows the unique characteristics of each region. Due to this uniqueness, *Ki Dalang* has its own fans and performance areas. ([Bandem, 1983, p. 5](#)) Talking about *wayang* (shadow) theater, in India itself there is a drama called *Chayantaka* which means shadow performance ([Mulyono, 1978, p. 26](#)), it is very likely that the Sanskrit *Chayanataka* (shadow dance) has similarities with



Javanese Purwa *wayang*, ([Sarkar, 1992, p. 12](#)), and definitely also has similarities with Balinese shadow puppet performances.

In Bali, there are at least three typical *wayang* performance models, namely the Sukawati Gianyar style, the *Babadungan* style, and the north Bali style (Singaraja). Of these three areas, there are also some puppeteers who have their own characteristics or strengths, such as having strengths in the field of jokes, strengths in cuts or slashes, and some in speaking (philosophy).

From the chess method, plays can be developed according to the desired theme. Changes in the form of performance from the original until now always adapt to the times, texts and contexts. It cannot be denied that global influences have been able to marginalize *wayang*, increasingly marginalized, pushed aside by global media, TV, film, cellphones, IG, Facebook and other advances which have given rise to a tendency to forget *wayang*. Therefore, changes are needed, organizing *wayang* performances continuously, but still at its roots. The innovative works (*sanggit lakon*) by I Nyoman Sedana, I Made Sidia, I Ketut Sudiana, I Ketut Kodi, and other young puppeteers are efforts to align *wayang* with other modern arts, glorifying *wayang* while preserving it as a noble cultural heritage.

This research shows that the concept of *Catur Karana* in Balinese puppet plays is still relevant in the modern era even though the way of making plays is perceived differently by the younger generation. The puppeteer interprets *Catur Karana* flexibly to compose a play that is easier to understand, while the younger generation sees its values as a reflection of social and interpersonal dynamics. This shows that there is a shift in the understanding of "*Catur Karana*" to this traditional method in the era of globalization and digitalization. These findings update the theory of performing arts and provide practical direction for puppeteers and cultural arts managers so that *wayang kulit* continues to be relevant to today's audience, including the younger generation who are familiar with digital media through various exciting new plays.



Figure 1. *Catur Karana* in the *Wayang Lemah* Performance  
(Source: 9 January, 2024)

## Conclusion

Balinese Wayang kulit is a traditional performance that has deep philosophical and aesthetic value, with the concept of "Catur Karana" as an important element in character formation and the storyline of the plays being played. This concept not only serves to convey entertainment, but also to instill moral teachings and life values, which are deep and contained in every performance. This research highlights Ida Bagus Gede Purwa's development of "Catur Karana" in his play, as well as the impact of applying this concept on the Balinese people's understanding of the culture and moral teachings contained in Shadow Wayang. The development of Balinese Shadow Puppets continues to follow changes in time and science, along with the increasingly widespread function of wayang, from a ceremonial means to a medium of entertainment and education. Global influences and changing forms of performance also play a role in how wayang survives and develops, despite being pushed by mass media such as TV, film and social media. For this reason, it is important to have guidance and guidance in creating new plays with substance, as applied by Ida Bagus Gede Purwa in the "Catur Karana" method or concept which is enriched with various elements, in order to maintain the relevance and depth of philosophy in each performance. The Catur Karana concept emphasizes four important elements, namely: Swamandala (kingdom or territory and ruler), Antakarana (the cause of conflict), Uperengga or papayasan, namely the creativity of the puppeteer in presenting the play. Siat, namely the climax of the story ending with physical conflict and inner conflict.

This research contributes to academic insight by revealing the relevance of the Catur Karana philosophy in Balinese puppet plays, especially in modern Balinese society, as well as showing how the traditional method can still be maintained by the younger generation flexibly and contextually. These findings enrich our understanding of the dynamics of traditional culture and modernity, offer new methodological approaches through text analysis, audience observation, and puppeteer interviews, and recommend ways to keep puppet performances relevant to young audiences in the digital age. Further research is suggested to explore the influence of technology and globalization on the interpretation of local performing arts.

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