

KAWI DALANG: CREATIVITY IN WAYANG THEATRE

by

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(Under the direction of Professor Farley Richmond, Ph.D.)

ABSTRACT

The *wayang* puppet theatre is the oldest continuously performed theatrical form among the many genres of performing art in Bali. While *wayang* theatre has a fixed structure and stock dramatic characters, creativity and improvisation play a major role in the way the *dalang* puppet master shapes a performance. The *dalang*'s creativity serves as the 'soul' of *wayang* and has successfully been responsible for transmitting cultural traditions as well as reflecting contemporary social and political issues from one generation to another.

This dissertation examines the creativity and improvisation of the *dalang* puppeteer in the performance of Balinese *wayang* theatre. Due to the dynamic nature of its constituent parts it is possible to consider these innovations within a particular paradigm, that is *Trisandi* 'the interplay of Genre-Scenario-Character.'

After outlining the mythology of *wayang* and providing a brief overview of the various types of *wayang* in Bali, the study explores the structural interplay within the organic elements of genre, story, and characters. Next is a chapter on the creativity in plot construction, recounting the process of selecting a play and transforming narration into dialogue, complemented by the six fundamental principles of constructing a play and originating the story. Then it explores other elements of creativity such as selecting

puppets, naming the characters and locale of the action, puppet construction and manipulation, scenery and stage business, jokes and social criticism, creating puns or play on words, modifying and creating poetry, and making creative responses to any unexpected and expected happenings during a performance.

Integrated into Chapter 3 and 4 are two extensive examples of how puppeteers introduce creativity into a performance. The most recent example is a performance of *dalang* Wija, a respected puppet master in south Bali. In addition, the study discusses a performance of *dalang* Sudarma, a highly regarded exponent of *wayang* in the north Bali. Ultimately, this study may help to clarify a common misconception among western spectators and scholars alike, that Asian theatre forms are generally strictly codified and lack originality in content and form.

INDEX WORDS:

Balinese shadow theatre, *Wayang* theatre, *Kawi dalang*, Creativity, Improvisation, Innovation, Modification, Genre, Story, Characters, Puppetry, Prepared and spontaneous improvisation, Composition, Scenario, Experiment, *Wayang kulit*, *Wayang* puppets, *Dalang*, Shadow master, Bali, Indonesia.

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To the GOD (*HYANG WIDHI*),

my SUPREME GURU,

who gives me life, grace, and protections, this dissertation is dedicated.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The puppet theatre (*wayang kulit*) is the oldest documented theatrical form in Bali. It still survives—performed for both ritual and entertainment purposes—despite the recent overwhelming influx of technologically based entertainment and the endless flow of tourists visiting the island. *Wayang* (or *wayang kulit*) are carved flat leather puppets with highly stylistic shape and color representing animals, demonic beings, mythical figures, human beings of all social strata, heavenly beings, and scenic props or figures. In a *wayang kulit* performance, those flat cutout figures are silhouetted by a *dalang* against a translucent white screen, with an oil lamp as a single source of light. While *wayang* theatre has a fixed structure and stock dramatic characters, its performance invariably involves creativity and improvisation of the *dalang* puppet master. The *dalang* is the creator of and the central focus in *wayang* performance because he unites the role of composer and performer. The *dalang* has been responsible for transmitting and passing culture and tradition from one generation to another.

A. Purpose and Definition of Related Terms

The purpose of this dissertation is to explore and analyze the creativity (*kawi*) of the puppet master (*dalang*) in the performance of *wayang kulit* theatre in Bali. Broadly speaking, Asian theatre forms are presented in the west as strictly codified. The subjects

of creativity and improvisation in this art are unfortunately overlooked. Hence, my ultimate purpose is to unravel this common perception specifically by examining the creativity in the *wayang* puppet genre.

This creative element is known as *kawi dalang*, which means the creativity (*kawi*) of the puppet master (*dalang*). The *kawi dalang* is not only crucial in perpetuating the genre, but it also allows each production to be distinct and unique, even though the *dalang* may perform the same story over and over again. *Kawi dalang* demands that each performance change in accordance with the fluctuating place-time-circumstances (*desa-kala-patra*). To a *dalang* artist, like myself, this element is both interesting and challenging, for it demands the creative response of the *dalang* puppeteer to any performance situation. Thus, *kawi dalang* is a term in the Balinese traditional theater that solely deals with the *dalang*'s creativity and improvisation in his/her performance. *Kawi* refers to two different things: an action of aesthetic creation and the name of a language. With reference to the action of aesthetic creation, *kawi* means creation, improvisation, invention, or modification. One who composes a play is called *pangawi*, meaning creator or composer (poet). This term is composed of the prefix “*pa*” (a tool or an agent who does a work of ...) added to the root word “*kawi*” (creation).

Kawi also refers to the old-Javanese-based language that was traditionally used and developed by court poets (*pangawi*) who translated and transformed the Sanskrit version of the Indian epics *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* into the new Javanese version known as *kakawin*, which is the plural form of *kawi*. *Kawi* language is interchangeable with the old Javanese language¹ and integrates some Sanskrit and invented words.

¹ *Kawi* is a language for literature and theatre; Old Javanese is a language for daily life. The base of *Kawi* language is the Old Javanese language, just as the daily language of

Although *dalang* often quote and recite Sanskrit passages for the performance, they do not really understand the complete meaning of what they are reciting. Consequently, the contemporary *dalangs* in Bali learn and regard the *kakawin Ramayana*, *kakawin Mahabharata*, and *kakawin Bharatayuddha* as the source (*babon*) of their repertoires. Being able to master Kawi language after reading many *kakawin*, a *dalang* uses Kawi language in addition to the vernacular language in performance.

In the context of *kawi dalang*, however, *kawi* is not primarily used as the name of a language, but rather refers to the created arts and improvisations of a *dalang*. According to the ancient sacred treatise, *Darma Pawayangan*, *dalang* is entitled to say anything that can be said (Hooykaas 18-19), including making a new interpretation of any established name or term. A *dalang* may say that "Supraba" is an acronym of "Super-beautiful-angel," although she is just one of the many known angels in the myths.

The *dalang* performs one or more of the three separate functions in *wayang*. First, as an artist he performs as a puppeteer, a narrator, and a shadow master. Second, he is the artistic director and playmaker of the performance. Third, he acts as a priest in the ritualistic performance context. The role of a *dalang* slightly changes depending on the genre. In a dance-drama (*sendratari*), a *dalang* only serves as the narrator rendering all dialogues and narration in the sung and spoken lines. In a ritualistic performance, like *wayang lemah*, in which the performance is offered to the gods, a *dalang* functions as both an artist and a priest. In the popular shadow theatre (*wayang peteng*), employing a

English is the base and hence is partly interchangeable with the language of Shakespeare's plays, although we know that Shakespeare invented numerous words which were not used daily by his audiences and readers. The use of Kawi language by *dalangs* in the Indonesian State College of Arts (STSI) is often criticized by scholars in old Javanese language from Universitas Udayana. This fact indicates that Kawi language

white screen and an oil lamp to cast the shadows of flat puppets, a *dalang* performs all roles of puppeteer, shadow-master, narrator, artistic director, playmaker, and priest. Thus, the word *dalang* is used to identify and specify an artist who performs one or more of those roles mentioned above.

B. Justification Based on Contemporary Publications

None of the many published works on the *wayang kulit* has thoroughly and extensively focused on the creativity of a *dalang*. A few artists and scholars have partly alluded to the improvisational aspect and the role of a *dalang* in the performance. The first American artist performing *wayang* theatre, C.L. Reed, realizes that creativity is a large part of a *dalang*'s task to take an existing story, such as the Javanese-version (*kakawin*) of the Indian epics *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*, and transform it into a play. Unfortunately, he does not clarify how the original story is modified to create new stories. In introducing a story of a Balinese shadow play, Reed simply asserts that *dalang* continually create new stories based on minor incidents in the main body of the myth (3).

Discussing structured improvisation, Kathy Foley writes in The Cambridge Guide to Asian Theatre that: "The genre's set dramatic structure in conjunction with the scenario [story] and rules of type [stock characters] allow performers to generate the text and song sequence in performance" (119). Her statement implies that the creativity emerges from the interplay within the genres, stock characters, and the story (hereafter referred to in this dissertation as Genre-Story-Character or GSC) which I will expand upon at the end of Chapter 2. Though later she suggests that the interplay of strata is more

is a theatrical language. In performance slang is employed by the puppeteer, unlike the old Javanese language which is more grammatically correct.

complex than merely describing each of the component parts, Foley does not go further to formulate the nature of the "interplay." It is exactly in this realm that this dissertation will explore the complex interrelationships that occur within these three different components.

The most thorough illustration of all published records on the subject of creativity is given by Frederick E. deBoer (1987). In discussing the dramatic text, he describes how a *dalang* constructs the plays based on a conventionalized genre's set structure and appropriate literature: "The *dalang* (puppeteer), basing his work on an intimate familiarity with the appropriate literature and a sure knowledge of the conventions of the established form, constructed his plays as he went along, without committing anything to writing" (deBoer, *The Dimba and Dimbi* 77). DeBoer further reports the creativity in rendering dialogue and stage business: "In preparing to give a performance he [the *dalang*] might consult his notebooks or *lontar* (palm-leaf manuscripts) to find appropriate poetic sentences for quotation during the event, but dialogue and stage business were never set down" (77). However, we need further explanation about what is the appropriate literature for a *dalang* and what is the specific knowledge of the conventions of the established form. In a subsequent article (1992), deBoer moves one-step further to explaining the topic by specifying the source of a *dalang*'s creativity.

... beyond the 'classic' episodes with specific sources in the *Ramayana* proper, there are a number of non-canonical stories, which have been invented by the *dalang* themselves. These most typically are made by borrowing a suitable plot from some source (such as Javanese comic books!) and adapting it to fit the context and characters of the *Ramayana*. (143)

Unfortunately, deBoer does not tell us what considerations, deliberations, or standards of judgment lead a *dalang* to borrow a plot from his given sources. Nor does he say how many other sources in addition to the Javanese comic books a *dalang* uses or what stories have been invented from such borrowings.

Another scholar, Mary Sabina Zurbuchen, in her book entitled The Language of Balinese Shadow Theater (1987), mentions a term "*carita* [story of] *kawi dalang*" which means stories created by *dalang*. She further compares and contrasts the distinction between the original stories of basic events/circumstances (*carita unduk*) and those stories that spring from particular *dalangs*' inventiveness within the tradition (215). In reality, however, *kawi dalang* is not merely confined to the story. Rather the inventions encompass all performing aspects of *wayang* theatre: the genre's set structure and stock characters. Out of the four major artistic elements—musicianship, vocal/speech diction, puppet manipulation, and the *kawi dalang* (creativity)—it is the *kawi dalang* that continuously changes over time in response to the local and temporal needs. As the soul of *wayang* theatre, the *dalang*'s creativity has provided considerable vitality to the genre over the centuries. This creativity is obviously worthy of study and exploration.

C. Sources and Research Methodology

This dissertation is based on six major sources of information spanning a period from 1977 to the present in Bali and the United States. Those six sources are as follows:

1. My observation and video and audio recordings of performances that I experienced in Bali from May through August 2001 are the most recent sources. Those recorded performances are listed in the following chart:

Name of <i>dalang</i>	Story	Ceremonial Context	Village	Date	Type
I Wayan Wija	<i>Jayantaka</i>	Family Shrine ceremony	Mas	5/24/01	Parwa
I Wayan Wija	<i>Nabija</i>	Temple Anniversary	Tatiapi Pejeng	5/25/01	Parwa
I Wayan Wija	<i>Jayantaka</i>	Cremation	Getas	5/26/01	Parwa
I Wayan Wija	<i>Nabija</i>	Temple Anniversary	Banda	5/27/01	Parwa
I Wayan Wija	<i>The Cow and Princess</i>	Temple Anniversary	Padang Tegal Ubud		Tantri
I Wayan Wija	<i>Nabija</i> ²	Temple Anniversary	Blahbatuh	5/29/01	Parwa
I Wayan Wija	<i>Detya Maya</i>	Temple Anniversary	Lotunduh	7/29/01	Tantri
I Wayan Wija	<i>Subali Revenges</i>	Family Shrine ceremony	Batuan	5/5/01	Ramayana
I Wayan Nartha	<i>the Lost of Arjuna</i>	Temple Anniversary	Batuan	7/15/01	Parwa
Ida Bagus Puja	<i>Bima Swarga</i>	Cremation	Krobokan	6/20/01	Parwa
I Made Sija	<i>Kunti Sraya</i>	Family Shrine ceremony	Tarukan Mas	5/23/01	Parwa
I Ketut Kodi	<i>Somia Wangsa</i>	Family Shrine ceremony	Singapadu	7/8/01	Parwa

² Recorded by my father-in-law, Wayan Lasia.

I Ketut Sudiana	<i>Balian Batur</i>	Temple Anniversary	Sukawati	7/31/01	Babad
I Wayan Sudarma	<i>Sita Abduction</i>	Three month baby	Ambengan Singaraja	7/24/01	Ramayana
I Wayan Sudarma	<i>Cabang Tatuka</i>	Wedding	Bungkulan Singaraja	7/25/01	Parwa
I Wayan Sudarma	<i>Bambang Kumbayana</i>	Tooth filing	Naga Sepaha	7/25/01	Parwa
I Made Kembar	<i>Sapuleger</i>	Birthday	Padang Sambian	6/19/01	Parwa
I Wayan Tunjung	<i>Sudamala</i>	Creation	Bonbiyu Blahbatuh	5/29/01	Parwa
I Wayan Tunjung	<i>Buddha</i>	Family Shrine ceremony	Tebongkang		Parwa
I Wayan Tunjung	<i>The Death of Meganada</i>	Cremation	Sayan Ubud	8/1/01	Ramayana
Wyn Mahardika	<i>Indra's Tiara</i>	Family Shrine ceremony	Kemenuh	5/28/01	Parwa

2. I also consulted a few existing recordings obtained from commercial vendors:

Names of <i>dalang</i>	Story	Recording company
I Ketut Madra (Sukawati)	<i>Anta Kesuma</i>	Bali Record B-366
Ida Bagus Ngurah (Buduk)	<i>Bima Mapangkeng</i>	Bali Record B-382
Dewa Rai Mesi (Bangli)	<i>Merdah Dadi Caru</i>	Aneka Record 465
Ida Bagauss Gde Sarga (Bongkasa)	<i>Rama Membangun</i> <i>Ayodya Pura</i>	Aneka Record 469

3. In addition, I was given access to the following recordings in private collections.

- Four audio recordings by *dalang* I Made Sija of the following stories: *Nila Candra*, *Supraba Duta*, *Sangut Becomes a King*, and *Rwa Bhineda*.
- An audio recording by *dalang* Gusti Ketut Sudiarta (from Tabanan) of the story *Kumbakarna Lina* 1/15/1994.
- Two video recordings I borrowed from I Nyoman Sumandhi and one video recording made by Dr Farley Richmond. These recordings use the same story *Arjuna Wiwaha*. The first one is performed by *dalang* Nyoman Sumandhi and the second one that was made by Dr. Richmond is performed by *dalang* Wayan Wija.

4. Not the least of my sources of information has been my own formal education that I have experienced from 1977 through 1989 in the government-sponsored-schools.

Majoring in *wayang* puppetry (*Pedalangan*) I studied in the High School of Arts

- (SMKI, 1977-1982) and the National Dance Academy (ASTI, 1982-1986) where I completed my BA. I also studied at the Indonesian State College of Arts (STSI, 1986-1989) where I completed my SSP (essentially an MFA) degree. My school-based *gurus* in *wayang* include: Dewa Ngakan Nyoman Sayang (from Payangan), I Nyoman Sumandhi and I Nyoman Rajeg (from Tunjuk), I Wayan Wija, I Wayan Nartha and I Wayan Loceng (all from Sukawati), Ida Bagus Sarga (from Bongkasa), Ida Bagus Puja (from Buduk), I Wayan Persib (from Blahkiuh) and I Made Mawa (from Badung). My village-based *gurus* include: I Made Sija (in Bona), Nyoman Ganjreng (in Sukawati), the late Gusti Pekak Pacung (in Bitera), the late Pekak Sabung and the late Pekak Ketut Rindha (both were in Blahbatuh).
5. In addition, by practicing *wayang* and the *gender* musical instruments, I have gained valuable insight into the way *wayang* works as a creative fare.
 6. Finally, my library investigation of the books listed in the bibliography has provided additional insights concerning the creativity of a *dalang* doing performance.

Throughout Chapters 3 and 4 I have referred extensively to the performance of *dalang* Wija's *Jayantaka* in south Bali and *dalang* Sudarma's *Bambang Kumbayana* in north Bali. They have been specifically selected as examples of creativity and improvisation, which are meant to represent the performance of *wayang kulit* theatre in contemporary Bali.

D. Limitation and Subject Division/organization

This dissertation focuses on the creativity in the performance of *wayang* theatre in Bali. The traditional principles of creativity and the aesthetic concepts and methods

governing the mise-en-scene of *wayang* discussed in this dissertation primarily reflect the experiences of most *dalangs* in contemporary Bali. By reason of limited space, the examples of creativities are taken only from the two selected performances: one by *dalang* Wayan Wija (representing south Bali) and the other by *dalang* Wayan Sudarma (representing north Bali). Yet, the selection is meant to represent common practice in the entire contemporary *wayang* theatre of Bali.

Thus, the overall division of this dissertation is presented in the following arrangement: Chapter 2 briefly introduces the structure of performance and explains the mythology of *wayang* theatre. This chapter also provides a brief overview of all *wayang* types in Bali. Here I lay out the interplay within the organic element of genre, story, and character as the root or groundwork on which all creativity is undertaken. This chapter concludes by identifying some organic distinctions within each area: genre, story, and character.

Chapter 3 organizes traditional creativities in plot, i.e. transforming narration into dialogue, excerpting plots and passages, selecting and constructing a play. Using my experience-based knowledge as a *dalang*, I inquire into the traditional principles of creativity and attempt to elucidate six fundamental principles which are absolutely essential for constructing a play.

Chapter 4 explores creativity in the presentation of *wayang*, including prepared and spontaneous improvisation, such as:

1. Selecting characters and casting puppets
2. Naming the characters and place.
3. Puppet construction and manipulation

4. Scenery and stage business
5. Jokes and social criticism
6. Creating puns or word play
7. Modifying and creating poetry
8. Cueing musicians and collaborating with them
9. Making creative responses to any unexpected and expected performance

After a brief summary and conclusion in Chapter 5, this dissertation is complemented with a bibliography, both in English and Indonesian languages. Two appendices conclude this dissertation:

Appendix A: OTHER RELEVANT DRAMATIC LITERATURE

Appendix B: PHOTOGRAPHS OF NEW MANIPULABLE PUPPETS

CHAPTER 2

WAYANG THEATRE IN BALINESE CULTURE

Historians suggest that the performance of *wayang* theatre is the peak development of shamanism (see Mulyono, The Origin, Philosophy and the Future of *Wayang* 1978). Expanding the traditional role of the shaman, the *dalang* serves as an artist and a priest to create a *wayang* performance and holy water. Employing a white screen and an oil lamp to cast the shadows of carved flat leather *wayang* puppets from inside a booth, the *dalang* performs all the roles of puppeteer, shadow-master, narrator, artistic director, singer, playmaker, and priest, to the accompaniment of Gamelan music. Based on the two Indian epics or other domestic narrative repertoires, the dramatic characters are presented by about 125 carved flat leather puppets (*wayang*) with highly stylistic form and color featuring various characters such as animals, demonic beings, mythical figures, human beings of all social strata, heavenly beings, and scenic figures. These figures were and are created through a wide range of spiritual experiences or meditations. Since the spiritual experience is the holistic and the ultimate experience of human beings, its expression and explanation can only be visualized through symbols. Numerous symbols grew in every stage of human history, and their formulations are recorded in the various forms of cultural arts. The oldest Balinese theatre that elucidates and records those symbols is *wayang*.

The performance may be purely sacred without human audiences as seen in the day-time performance of the *wayang lemah*, or purely secular as seen in several tourist performances. However, the majority are ceremonial, which are held for numerous religious and ritual celebrations like temple anniversaries, rites of passage, and many holidays. Coming to a performance of *wayang*, the audience is not required to pay an admission fee or to reserve a seat, but is expected to wear the traditional Balinese dress. Several kinds of local games, including gambling, and food stalls temporarily spring up around the performance site to cater to the taste of upwards of 350 people or more. While a performance is in progress, the audience may smoke, drink, eat, chat, and react; a few children may be playing around or even sleep awaiting the comic and fighting scenes; dogs may be barking and fighting for a tiny morsel of discarded food. But the *dalang* is trained to fully concentrate on the performance at hand and uses many theatrical tricks to control audience attendance.

Despite the never-ending debate about the origin of the Balinese *wayang*—whether *wayang* was imported from China or from India—many scholars believe that *wayang* theatre was first created in Indonesia (primarily in Java and Bali) by the indigenous shamans or artists. The epics of the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* were later used to enrich the *wayang* narrative repertoires after they were imported for other purposes in the fourth century C.E. from India. Compared to the work of historians, the myth about the origin of *wayang* is more prevalent. Recorded in the sacred treatise *Purwagama*, the myth serves as the philosophical foundation of performing *wayang* for it shows *wayang*'s role as an exorcistic force; hence, it is performed for the purpose of

purification ceremonies. The following is the précis of the mythology transcribed from the version that widely circulates among the Balinese artists of *dalang*.

A. The Mythology of *Wayang*: *Purwagama*

Once upon a time, the God Siwa was lonely, having cursed³ his wife, the goddess Parwati⁴ to live as the demoness Durga in the Setra Gandamayu cemetery. Overpowered by sexual longing for Parwati, Siwa transformed himself into the frightening demon Kala Rudra, and his coitus with Durga resulted in numerous demonic beings that instigated a widespread pestilence throughout the world.

To restore the security of the world, the triple gods (Sanghyang Tri Semaya), Brahma, Wisnu, and Iswara, transformed themselves into three priests and created *wayang* puppet theatre. Brahma became priest Tapowangkeng and served as the *dalang*'s right-hand assistant. Wisnu became priest Salukat and served as the *dalang*'s left-hand assistant. Iswara became priest Lotatia and served as the *dalang* himself to perform the first invented *wayang kulit* shadow puppet theatre. The Guardian gods of the four directions (Sanghyang Catur Loka Phala, that is the gods Indra, Kuwera, Yama, and Baruna) became the musicians who played the four instruments of the Gender Wayang orchestra.

The performance Lotatia enacted showed Siwa and Parwati, forgetting their divine origin, becoming the demonic Kala Ludraka and Durga, and giving birth to deadly pestilence throughout the world. However, being entertained by Lotatia's performance,

³ There are two popular versions explaining why Siwa cursed his wife: *Parwati* mistreated her baby or *Parwati* traded sex for milk with Gopala, the cow herder.

⁴ The goddess *Parwati* is also called Giriputri or Umadewi.

these demons all are reminded of their divine origin. Calmed, Kala Ludraka returns to Siwa, and Durga to goddess Parwati. As their demonic spirits are pacified, pestilence vanishes, and human welfare is restored (Ramseyer, The Art and Culture of Bali 200).

The significance of this mythology is due to its explicit proposition concerning the context, objective, and the number of the performers. Based on this mythological foundation, a *dalang* is responsible for purifying, edifying, and enlightening an audience through his verbal and comic creativities and improvisation. Maintaining this original function helps to keep *wayang* theatre distinct from other performing arts genres.

In this story there are seven artists involved in the show: one *dalang*, two assistants, and four musicians. This is still the normal size of a troupe of *Wayang Kulit Parwa* in South Bali from Jembrana regency in the west to the Karangasem regency in the east.⁵

A second exorcistic story which is performed for the important Sapu Leger purification ceremonies has a similar theme of performance as an antidote for demonic energy. In that story Sang Hyang Kala (literary means time), an enormous demon, comes into being as Siwa's sperm ejaculates into the ocean when his sexual overtures are

⁵ In Northern Bali, the *dalang* employs only two musicians and one assistant, making the show more affordable for the private families who sponsor the event. This divine origin of theatre is important for understanding the *wayang*; however, it should be noted that other arts are also associated with gods. Gusti Agung Gde Oka discusses this issue in his Cudamani. Performances of *wayang* Sapuleger (the exorcistic story of Durga and Siwa's son Kala) by *dalang* Sidja, likewise points out the influence of gods in establishing theatre: god Isvara becomes *dalang* Samirana; the god Brahma performs mask dance, *Topeng* Bang, and the exorcistic dragon dance of Barong Swari; god Wisnu becomes Telek, the refined-mask dancer. *Topeng*, Barong, and Telek dances (see Bandem and DeBoer for a complete discussion of these genres) are still performed in many places throughout Bali for the purpose of purification and establishing society's welfare.

refused by his wife, Parwati . The sperm becomes a fireball searing the universe and threatening heaven. The gods attempt to destroy the fireball with many weapons, but are unsuccessful as it becomes the insatiable demon, Kala. The more they attack Kala the more his power grows. Since their attacks seem only to increase the power of Kala rather than defeat him, Trimurti (Brahma, Wisnu, Iswara) turn to performance to pacify and control the demonic being. Another version of this mythology is about Kala hunting Rare Kumara who hides in the resonator of the metallophone Gender instrument which accompanies a *wayang* show. Since Kala is so hungry and cannot devour Kumara, Kala eats the offering of *wayang*, for which the *dalang* sues Kala. Unable to compensate for having eaten the offering, Kala authorizes the *dalang* to purify people like Kumara, who are born in the week of *wayang* (see Foley, *The Origin of Kala* 1-58).

These myths have been the philosophical foundation of the many sacred (*wali*) and ceremonial (*bebali*) performances throughout the island of Bali. In each instance we see that performance has the power to pacify the demon and return the divine to its beneficent form. Hooykaas' book Kama and Kala, a compilation of *mantra* incantation and other lore of the *dalang*, is helpful in gaining insight into this theatre. Hooykaas' title epitomizes the purpose of the theatre: indicating how the god of love, Kama, as a *dalang*, overcomes and pacifies the demonic Kala. Kala gives the *dalang* authority to purify and release people from Kala's threat. In Kama and Kala, Hooykaas gives the mantra and explains step by step the *dalang*'s procedure for creating holy water (274-283).⁶

⁶ Exorcisms are still common in Bali. On July 24th and 25th 2001, Dr. Farley Richmond and I recorded how *dalang* Wayan Sudarma from Bungkulan Singaraja, Northern part of Bali created holy water following *wayang* performances for his patrons in four different secluded villages: twice for a three-month old baby, for a newly wedding couple, and for four teenagers who were undergoing a tooth-filing ceremony.

It is felt that a dangerous lower spirit can be transformed into a favorable divine spirit through the performance of *wayang*. Holy water which the *dalang* creates at the end of the performance is a sign of the “washing away” of the evil, a tangible sign of the desired inner process which the characters in each of the stories achieves release from domination by lower instincts.

In Hindu *Panca-Sradha* belief, the universe is seen as occupied by all kinds of spirits, from extremely good to evil. These spirits are felt to affect the life of human beings prompting them to good or ill. As Freudian psychology sees the unconscious split into three parts—super ego, ego, and id, similarly Balinese spirits are divided into three functions (*Triguna*): *Satwam* (essentially, heart-based truth), *Rajah* (thought-based motive), and *Tamah* (emotional based-decision). Both western psychology and Balinese conceptions of the spirit world see the human being as vulnerable to numerous unconscious motives. In order to win favor from spirits, humans need to appease them by offering the best treatment possible. Art is the best product of a human being and thus becomes the ideal antidote to evil. The philosophical basis of *wayang* by using music, song, dance, and narrative is to exorcise the demonic, showing us what it looks like and returning it into its divine form.

B. Brief Overview of All *Wayang* Types in Bali.

In contemporary Bali, there are several types of *wayang* puppet genres and two kinds of *Wayang Wong* (with speaking dancers) dance-drama. Among dozens of existing genres, *Wayang Parwa* and *Wayang Ramayana* are the two most prominent *wayang* theatrical genres in contemporary Bali. The *Wayang Parwa* concerns stories from the

Mahabharata and the *Wayang Ramayana* concerns stories from the *Ramayana*. Each professional *dalang* specializes or is expert in one genre, although he occasionally also performs in a few other genres.

While more and more experimental works have come into being in recent years, like the *Wayang Arja*, *Wayang Babad* and *Wayang Tantri*, some traditional puppet genres like *Wayang Gambuh*, *Wayang Calonarang*, and *Wayang Sasak* are declining in favor. The innovative and experimental works that are performed occasionally include *Wayang Arja* (first created by Made Sija in 1976), *Wayang Tantri* (first created by ASTI in 1980 and reestablished by Wayan Wija in 1982), *Wayang Babad* (first created by Gusti Ngurah Serama Semadi in 1989). Other works like *Wayang Golek* (1995) and the most recent *Wayang Madya* (1997) are not being performed for the time being. These works may not be collectively referred to as a single “experimental genre.” Each must be treated separately as a new distinctive genre because each has its own entity in terms of the form (performance structure, musical instrument and repertoires), story, and stock characters. Over two dozens *wayang* experimental compositions utilizing modern lightings, dancers, and oversize screens have been presented to complete an academic degree at the Indonesian State College of Arts (STSI) Denpasar. Most of these experimentations were given the highest grades by more than a dozen academic committees. Unfortunately, the traditional stages available around the island do not accommodate the dynamic shifting theatrical scenic effects demanded by these compositions. Consequently, these compositions only attract the international puppet organization, UNIMA, to collaborate and perform overseas, in such places as the USA, Australia, and London.

Several forms or types of Balinese *wayang kulit* theatre are named and distinguished from one another by the literary sources, type of musical accompaniment, the narrative repertoires, the speech diction, the performance structure, the theatrical apparatus, and the performance contexts. There are many ways to classify the *wayang*. Anthropologists usually divide *wayang* into three categories: sacred, ceremonial, and secular performance, because they approach them in terms of their contexts. To make it simple yet equally appropriate and capable to accommodate all forms, they will be discussed as follows in three general categories: the Indian stories, the Indonesian stories, and innovative experimental compositions.

B. 1. Indian stories

B. 1. 1. *Wayang Parwa*

Wayang Parwa is the most dominant *wayang* type in Bali. Its performance is frequently held on many ritual and religious occasions, both as entertainment and as a rite of passage. Broadly speaking, this *wayang* theatre consists of the sacred *Wayang Lemah* ‘day puppet’ without a screen and the ceremonial *Wayang Peteng* ‘night puppet’ with the screen and oil lamp. All of the stories are derived from the Indian epic *Mahabharata*, including numerous related folktales from which a *dalang* frequently modifies and occasionally creates branch stories. Many of these tales may be found in Patil’s Folklore in the Mahabharata (1983).

This puppet theatre has the most numerous puppets and narrative repertoires among all of the existing *wayang* theatres in Bali. Typically, there are about 125 puppets in a puppet box and about 50 or 60 of them are played in each performance. “Bima

Suarga: A Balinese Shadow Play as Performed by Ida Bagus Ngurah” (Reed 1986) and “The Dimba and Dimbi of I Nyoman Rajeg: A Balinese Shadow Play” (deBoer 1987) presented in the Asian Theatre Journal (1986, 1987) are only two such examples of the several-hundred plays belonging to this genre.

Wayang Parwa is the oldest standard puppetry in all aesthetics aspects of *wayang* theatre in Bali. Hence, *dalang* students in several training centers, especially in the two government-sponsored schools (SMKI and STSI), are required to begin to learn this type of performance before moving on to other types of *wayang*. Within one hour for the sacred *wayang lemah* ‘day puppet’ and about two to four hours for the ceremonial *wayang peteng* ‘night puppet,’ the performance involves one *dalang* puppeteer, two assistants, and four musicians. The musical accompaniment is the quartet metallophone (similar to but taller than the western xylophone) Gender *Wayang* music ensemble, although sometime it is reduced into one pair (two instruments) in North Bali. Among excellent publications about this genre are books by Hooykaas, Zurbuchen, Hobart, etc, although none of them has exhaustively discussed the genre.

B. 1. 2. *Wayang Ramayana*

Wayang Ramayana, one of the two most popular shadow puppet shows, frequently features various figures of monkeys, from the naked monkeys to highly sophisticated full-dress crowned monkeys, all siding as Rama's allies in the story of the *Ramayana*. The performance is accompanied by the energetic rhythm of *Gamelan Batel* orchestra that consists of a quartet metallophone *Gender Wayang*, a pair of medium-sized drums, one unit of Rincik (cymbal), one knobbed Kajar (time keeper), Klenang and Cenenet, a Rebab lyre, several *Suling* ‘bamboo flutes’ and the *Kempur* gong-like chime.

"The Death of Kumbakarna of Ketut Madra: A Balinese *Wayang Ramayana* Play" (deBoer 1992) is one of the many popular plays belonging to this genre (deBoer and Bandem 141-200). Other popular plays in this repertory include the *Death of Anggada*, *The Death of Meganada*, *Evicted Wibisana*, *The Abduction of Sita*, *Evicted Anoman*, *The Loss of Laksmana*, *The Loss of Rama*, etc.

B. 1. 3. *Wayang Wong* dance-drama

Wayang Wong is a dance-drama genre in which the dancers speak and emulate puppets. In accordance with the character, the dancers wear various kinds of masks in the form of monkeys, birds, demons, and human, which are derived from the dramatic characters in the *Ramayana* epic. Emulating the movements and speech patterns of *wayang* puppet theatre, the masked dancers of the *wayang wong* wear colorful costumes (including headdresses and hand-gloves) and are accompanied by a musical ensemble called *Gamelan Batel* (Bandem, *Wayang Wong* 1979). The other *wayang wong* with the *Mahabharata* story is called *Wayang Wong Parwa*, or simply called *Parwa* dance-drama. The term *Parwa* is derived from the sub-sections or cantos of the *Mahabharata*. Each canto is called *Parwa*. There are 18 *Parwas* in total. Unlike *wayang wong Ramayana* in which all characters presented wear masks, prince and princess in *Parwa* dance-drama do not wear masks. Further discussion of this genre is available in Bandem's unpublished dissertation, *Wayang Wong* in Contemporary Bali (1979).

B. 2. Indonesian stories

B. 2. 1. *Wayang Gambuh*

Wayang Gambuh is another shadow puppet theatre enacting stories from Malat or Panji cycles. In the book Comparative Stories of Panji (*Tjeritera Pandji Dalam Perbandingan*), Poebatjaraka reports and analyzes numerous versions of stories that belong to the Panji cycles. All of them center on the love journey of the amorous Panji to seek his beloved fiancée princess, who is variously named Candra Kirana, Rangkesari, Galuh Daha, etc. One of those versions that I performed in *Wayang Arja* type goes as follows: After the prayer/wish of the Daha barren king granted a beautiful daughter, Rangkesari, the king forgets to worship the gods. As a divine punishment, the gods send a precious golden dragonfly to lure Rangkesari away deep into a forest, where Rangkesari is adopted by an old farmer who gives her a rural name *Luh Martalangu*.

Seeking for the lost Rangkesari, prince (Panji) of Koripan kingdom, Rangkesari's fiancée, begins a long series of adventures in which he is involved in numerous love affairs and fight scenes. These are typical romantic events of the Panji cycle. Eventually, he hunts a deer that goes through the farmer's cottage, where he meets Martalangu. A passionate love scene begins daily between the two, despite the strong opposition from all parties concerned. Unfortunately, to prevent her son from betraying his lost fiancée, the ignorant queen of Koripan sends her private assistant Rawisrengga to kill Martalangu. Having been killed, the ghost of Martalangu broadcasts to the entire kingdom that she is originally a celestial nymph, Gagar Mayang, who is cursed to live in the middle world fulfilling the prayer of the barren king of Daha as the princess Rangkesari. She can return to heaven only after being murdered.

The musical accompaniment is *Gamelan Pagambuhan* which is dominated by long bamboo flutes. The ensemble is played by at least 12 and as many as 18 musicians. Due to its Javanese origin, the physical appearance of each dramatic figure is very similar to that of the Javanese *wayang* puppet, which is longer or taller in size than those of other Balinese puppet genres. Historically, the puppet was imported from Gresik⁷ (East Java). Wayan Sujana's bachelor's thesis, "*Wayang Gambuh* in the Village of Blahbatuh Gianyar" (1993), reports how the puppet was brought from Java to Bali.⁸

B. 2. 2. *Wayang Calonarang*

Wayang kulit calonarang is distinguished from other types of *wayang* by its mystical features. As the main driving force, *calonarang* itself is a term that refers to witchcraft, which is invariably practiced by the antagonistic characters and their allies. The main dramatic conflict between this black magic and the protagonist's white magic on the screen is often conflated with social conflict between the *dalang* and the local magicians or sorcerers. On one occasion during a performance, the *dalang* who is very much appreciated by the patron of the show, boldly names and challenges the local witch

⁷ When I presented a paper about the "Marginal *Wayang* Genres in Contemporary Bali" (*Wayang-Wayang Langka di Bali Masa Kini*) for the 1994 MSPI Conference in Malang, East Java, one of the audience gave a feed-back and confirmed that *Wayang Gambuh* was derived from Gresik.

⁸ When the Balinese king of Mengwi defeated the east Javanese king of Blambangan, Mas Sepuh and Mas Sedah (also known as Dalem Tawang Ulun), in 1634, both the *Wayang Gambuh* and its puppeteer were brought to Bali. As a victorious title the king was later known as I Gusti Agung Sakti Blambangan and allowed I Gusti Ngurah Jelantik to bring the puppets and its puppeteer, *dalang* Arya Tega, to his home district of Blahbatuh, along with a priest, Mpu Kekeran (Pedanda Sakti Kekeran). Since that time, *Wayang Gambuh* was kept sacred at Blahbatuh district. One after another, the puppeteer Arya Tega was replaced by I Gusti Kobor in 1905, Gusti Putu Samprung in 1908, and finally by I Gusti Nyoman Pering Tega.

/ practitioners who had caused illness around the village. Thus, in addition to mastering his *wayang* theatrical artistry, a *dalang* who performs *Wayang Calonarang* is also expected to master an ample knowledge of witchcraft. Without this knowledge, a *dalang* can only emphasize the artistic aspects and cannot be expected to undermine the local witches, even though the story remains the same.

The source of its narrative repertory is the *lontar* manuscript, which deals with witchcraft. The most popular version among numerous witch stories concerns the sorcerers Sri Walunateng Dirah (also known as Matah Gede). She is featured as the mythical figure *Rangda* who is opposed by the protagonist *Barong* lion figure. She is mad at the king Erlangga for withdrawing his proposal to wed her daughter Ratna Mengali. With her witchcraft she is capable of killing many people including two of the king's ministers: Patih Madri and Taskara Maguna. But before she destroys the entire kingdom, the king's advisor Mpu Bradah devises a trick to foil her plans by sending his son Mpu Bahula to date and pamper Ratna Mengali, with the hidden objective of stealing her mother's secret book of witchcraft. Having mastered this witchcraft text, Bradah easily defeats the witch and foils her plans (see Kodi 1986).

B. 2. 3. *Wayang Cupak*

The general form and the musical accompaniment of the *Wayang Cupak* is very similar to that of the *Wayang Ramayana*, but the musical and narrative repertoires are very different. Before the Balinese Cultural Council initiated the all-Bali *Wayang Cupak* Competition in 1995, this genre only belonged to the Tabanan regency. The competition

considerably changed the map of this *wayang*. The genre now exists in all nine regions of Bali, including the region of Bangli, which unexpectedly won the competition.

The story of this genre is solely derived from the *Gaguritan Cupak Grantang*. This story of *Cupak Grantang* was transcribed in 1961, although the story has been known for centuries through an oral tradition. People believed that the story was created as an allegory of the king of the region. The story briefly goes as follows.

The evil fat gluttonous Cupak always slanders his skinny humble younger brother Grantang. When Grantang was about to be crowned as a king for winning a king competition to kill the monster Benaru and to rescue the abducted princess Tiksnawati, Cupak cunningly claimed the kingdom for his own. Cupak sends soldiers to tie and wrap Grantang with a rug and put him adrift down a river. Cupak is mistakenly crowned as a king although the princess continuously refuses to sleep with him, because she is waiting for the right man to come who will rescue her. Eventually, after Grantang is identified as an adopted son and becomes a successful flower exporter, Tiksnawati invites Grantang along with other princes to join her competition to challenge Cupak. Once Cupak knows that Grantang is still alive, he declares the truth to everyone. Grantang receives the crown and happily weds the princess. Cupak goes to the Obagosi kingdom, where he wins a competition and is awarded the crown and the princess. However, he will receive the awards only after his divine father God Brahma grants him a handsome heart and appearance. The story of *Cupak Goes to Heaven*--in which Cupak experiences an enlightenment--has long been popularized by the performance of *dalang* Jangga, although the story is said to have been composed by his teacher, *dalang* Pan Baruk from Apuan Baturiti (see Sedana, *Cupak Goes to Heaven* 1995).

B. 2. 4. *Wayang Sasak*

Wayang kulit Sasak, the little known type of *wayang*, originally comes from *Sasak*, a region in the western part on the island of Lombok. The form is now found in Karangasem, the eastern part of Bali. The narrative repertoires are taken from the Muslim myths, which are recorded in the *Serat Menak* manuscript, primarily featuring the victory of Islam in Arabia. Umar Maya, Jayengrana and Umar Madi are among the dominant dramatic characters. The traditional comic servants like Twalen, Wredah, Sangut, and Delem are also employed, but their names have been changed to signify their Muslim constituents. In addition to the Kawi and Balinese language, the *Sasak* language is also employed. Presenting simple pieces and also limited repertory, the musical instruments are very similar to those used in Gamelan *Gambuh*. However, the flutes in this genre are of the regular size. (see Widnyana 1985).

B. 3. Innovative and experimental compositions

B. 3. 1. *Wayang Arja*

Wayang Arja integrates the aesthetic elements of the *wayang* puppets and the *Arja* ‘opera’ dance-drama (human *Arja*). The characterization (the profile, shape, and the movement of the puppets), the rhetorical methods (with *tembang* songs, speech, and diction in poetry and prose), including the structure of performance and the musical accompaniment all imitate the human *Arja*. Consequently, *Wayang Arja* fully observes the structure and the use of stock characters found in the *Arja* ‘opera.’ Therefore, it does not adhere to the established dramatic structure of the *Wayang Parwa*, which is the quintessence of the Balinese *wayang*. The musical ensemble that accompanies the *Arja*

‘opera’, gamelan Geguntangan, is now used for a *Wayang Arja* show. The narrative repertoires consist of numerous modified stories derived from the *Malat* or *Panji* cycles. All types of *tembang* songs are employed although the *macapat*⁹ type is the most prevalence.

Wayang Arja was first performed in 1976 in Gianyar Palace. In conjunction with the *Arja* ‘opera’ summit on December 29-30, 1975, the late mask-dancer and *dalang* Ketut Rindha originally proposed the creation of *wayang arja*, but the work was performed by his student, *dalang* Made Sidja from Bona. The production of this genre was financially supported by the Consultative and Development Council for Balinese Culture (Listibya) and the Indonesian *Dalang* Association (Pepadi). My ‘*Wayang Arja* Class Manual’ (*Panduan Kuliah Praktik Wayang Arja*) for STSI students in Bali gives a complete play of *Cita Kelangen* and provides details about the origins of the genre and additional details about the art.

B. 3. 2. *Wayang Tantri*

Wayang Tantri was originally established in 1980 by the Arts College in Bali, presenting the first *dalang* student, Wayan Persib. Enacting the theme ‘Religious Imposter’ (*Pedanda Baka*), the production was featured in the Festival of National Arts Institute in west Java. About two years later the reputable *dalang* Wija established his own version of *Wayang Tantri* with rich interpretations and a high performance skill, which popularized this genre (see Serama Semadi 1986). Accompanied by the ensemble Gamelan Semar Pagulingan (with seven-tones Pelog scale), the performance invariably enacts the local stories of animals as recorded in the book *Tantri Kamandaka*, which is a

⁹ The term *Macapat* is also known as *Pupuh* and *Sekar Alit*.

story about the girl Diah Tantri who tells the king Iswaryadala stories within stories. As a narrative literature, *Tantri* encompasses a wide range of continuously superimposed stories within stories.

B. 3. 3. From *Wayang Topeng* to *Wayang Babad*

If *Wayang Arja* integrates the aesthetic elements of the *Arja* ‘opera,’ *Wayang Babad* integrates the aesthetic elements of the *Topeng* masked theatre. The characterization (the profile and shape of the puppets), the rhetorical methods (speech and diction, most are in prose and few in *tembang* songs) imitate the *Topeng* masked theatre. However, *Wayang Babad* does not share the musical accompaniment and the established narrative structure with the *Topeng* masked theatre. *Wayang Babad* observes the conventional narrative structure of *wayang* with the narrative repertoires from *Babad*. The performance is originally accompanied by the musical ensemble of *Batel Wayang Suling* (flute dominating ensemble) and later (in 1995 of *dalang* Suparta’s version) by the *gamelan Semar Pagulingan* (with seven-tones *Pelog* scale).

As the narrative reservoir of the *Topeng* masked theatre, *Babad* is the chronicle that converges local history with myth. *Wayang Topeng* takes its name from the genre, while *Wayang Babad* takes its name from the narrative reservoir, but the essence of both types of *wayang* are the same: That is transforming the *Topeng* masked theatre with *Babad* story into a new *wayang* genre.

Inspired by *dalang* Sija’s experiment of the *Wayang Topeng*, in 1989 Gusti Ngurah Serama Semadi created *Wayang Babad* to complete his degree at the Indonesian

State College of Arts (STSI), where the first performance script, *Dalem Dukut*, is kept along with other final academic projects. (see Serama Semadi 1989).

B. 3. 4. Experimental *wayang* projects

Since 1981 there are over two dozens *wayang* experimental projects composed by *dalang* students to complete their academic degrees in the Indonesian Dance Academy (ASTI, now called the Indonesian State College of Arts, STSI). These artistic explorations and experimentations involve a wide range of puppet shapes and sizes, ranging from one foot to seven feet tall, a wide range of lighting devices, from the traditional simple torches through modern elaborate lighting arrangement to produce special effects. Scenic backgrounds and setting are variously featured through lighting, pictures, moving backgrounds like the diorama, and the traditional narrative lines, as well. The traditional leather *wayang* puppets, newly created rod puppets and human actors and actress are also employed. Although the themes and contents generally remain traditional, the forms have been carefully and extensively developed. Fortunately, all of the performance scripts (essentially the performance thesis) are collected in the library of the college. “The Innovation of Balinese *Wayang* Theatre” (*Inovasi Wayang kulit Bali*) that I presented for the National Performing Arts Conference (*Temu Ilmiah MSPI* 1993) in Sumatra provides an analytical description of the aesthetic innovation, its premise and methods of these experimental forms.

C. The Interplay of Genre-Scenario-Character

In the following discussion I will articulate how those genres, partly recounted above, fit into a triadic interplay of genre, scenario, and character. In Bali the audience is the active subject who invites the artist and sponsors the performance. In contrast, in the

west the audience is a comparatively passive entity, who gains the right to watch a theatrical production by paying for admission. The patrons in Bali initiate and arrange the schedule, as well as selecting the artists. They provide the transportation, arrange food served at the event, set the performing venue, and provide the fee for the performers, an almost never fixed-rate paid by the patron right after the show.

The Balinese artist is correspondingly more passive than the entrepreneurial western artist. Each artist is trained in certain specialized repertoires and performance genres, and focuses on perfecting and producing his or her own artistry without any effort to advertise his ability or hold a press conference. He or she awaits the invitation and leaves issues like box-office, announcing the event, and arranging its details to the patron.

An individual or a group of people with the intention to commission a performance would, typically, first come to the artist's house and agree with the artist on the performing arts genre to be performed. The theatre genres of Bali include: *Gambuh* dance-drama with seven toned *Pelog* music, *Wayang Wong* theatre with *Slendro Batel* music, *Parwa* dance-drama also with *Slendro Batel* music, *Calonarang* dance-drama with *Gong Kebyar* music, *Topeng* masked theatre also with *Gong Kebyar* music, *Arja* opera with *Geguntangan* music, *Prembom* 'commedia del arte' with *Gong Kebyar* music, and *wayang kulit* with its *Gender Wayang* music. The forms are distinguished from each other more by the form (style of dance/movement and acting, speech and diction, song repertoires, costumes, stage property, and musical accompaniment) rather than by the content (story or play), although each genre implies its related repertoire of stories and the dramatic characters associated with that repertoire. At the time of commissioning a

performance, however, the sponsor is concerned with the genre and not with the specific play to be performed or characters to be presented.¹⁰

Once an artist is hired and agrees to perform a given genre, he/she prepares the performing devices—puppets, masks, costumes, musical instruments, etc. belonging to the genre.¹¹ When the sponsor wants *Topeng*, the artist is ready with masks; when the sponsor selects *wayang kulit*, the artist brings the puppets.

After the genre is set, the artist next considers the story. There are many conventions regulating the aesthetic concepts and treatment of story for each genre. The way the artist will develop the story is regulated by the rules of the genre, but the specific plot or presentation will be molded by his/her understanding of the repertoire from having viewed other performances of that play or from the artist's own interpretation of the episode. The dramatic characters are the last things the artist considers. Although each genre has in itself an implied number of stock characters (king, prime minister, sages, prince, princess, servants, etc.), the specific identity or profile of each character can only be established after the story is selected. The story determines which kingdom is involved and who, in turn, is the king. For example, if the story selected is a *Mahabharata* episode in the kingdom of Amarta, Yudistira, the eldest of the five Pandava brothers will be the king. Thus, the thinking of the artist typically begins with the genre, then moves to the story, and finally to the particular characters included in the dramatic action. The interdependency of the genre-story-character can be visualized as a perfect triangle, which I will call *Trisandi* (genre-story-character).

¹⁰ However, if the performance is held for a ritual purification (*sapuh leger*), specific stories are mandatory.

¹¹ Many artists are trained in more than one genre.

*Trisandi*¹² derives from *tri*, “three,” and *sandi*, “matching.” To create the harmony of the performance all three elements are involved. Within this triad there is a dynamic interplay.

Plate 1

Three-matching (*Trisandi*) Interplay of Genre-Story-Character:

A paradigm governing the mise-en-scene of *wayang* theatre

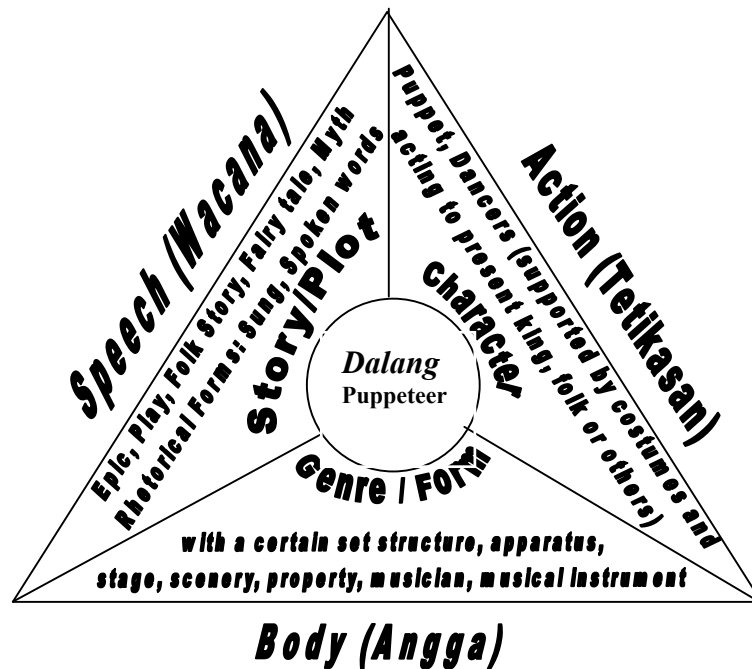


Plate 1 provides a visual representation of the structural interaction within the three. Genre occupies the bottom of the triangle serving as the foundation or base, which accommodates the story and the characters. Among the three components, genre is the most identifiable feature, establishing an autonomic form. While the same story and

¹² In Bali there are many tripartate concepts: the balancing concept of God, human, and environment within every house and village is called *Trihita Karana*; the trinitary god [Brahma (creator), Wisnu (preserver), and Siwa (destroyer)] is called *Trimurti*. The three balancing aspects of human energy, speech and thought are known as *Tri Premana*, and

characters may appear in a few different genres, the form will be clear from the genre. Almost the entire structure of the genre (music, style of costume, customary way of improvising a performance, etc.) may be seen in one single holistic presentation, but only the selected parts of the story and characters will appear in that performance because the genre has very limited space to accommodate dramatic scenes. For example in the *wayang* genre, the *dalang* typically selects only one sad scene, one love scene, and one climax for each performance, although the narrative he/she draws from has many more scenes of each type.

The story and characters slope up from the foundation to form a perfect triangle. These two slanting positions are appropriate, because story and characters are relatively less stable/crucial than genre. *Dalang* artists do not often reveal the story and characters they are going to perform until the show begins. Sometimes the artist does this to surprise the audience with a new story. At other times he may want to access the rumors and gossip among the patrons at the performance site before making a choice of the story to perform. Even when a story has been pre-selected by the artist in accordance with the type of a ceremony, local circumstances may prompt the *dalang* to suddenly change the story to a more appropriate version. The *dalang* constructs a play in one of three ways: 1) by excerpting the plot from the main line of the potential story as given in *Kawi* literature (*kakawin*), 2) by reconstructing a play from an existing *wayang* play he/she has seen (*pakem*), or 3) by creating new stories (*lakon carangan*) based on minor incidents in the main body of the epic. No matter how the story is generated, the bottom line always is to activate the harmonic *trisandi* of genre, story and character. Modification of the story

so forth. While I am inventing this term, my innovation is linked to a long tradition of tripartate groupings.

and the characters will be adjusted to comply with the necessary form of the genre, until all parts of genre-story-character are harmoniously balanced.

As the word *trisandi* suggests, the three organic components of the *trisandi* are always interactive and never independent of one another in bringing about harmony. Since a *dalang* must be able to present something new or fresh in every show, there is always a need to modify one or more elements of the *trisandi*.

The chart below exemplifies the *trisandi* GSC within the major Balinese genres of performance art:

If the genre/form is:	The story is taken from:	The characters must be:
<i>Gambuh</i> dance-drama With <i>Pelog</i> 7 tones music	Any part of <i>Malat/Panji</i> cycles	Demang, Tumengung, Lasem, Panji, Candra Kirana / Rangkesari, Condong, Kakan-Kakan, Arya, etc.
<i>Wayang Wong</i> theatre With <i>Slendro Batel</i> music	Any part of <i>Ramayana</i>	Rama, Sita, Laksmana, Rahvana, Marica, Surpanaka, Kumbakarna, Trijata, Hanoman, Subali, Sugriva, Anggada, etc.
<i>Parwa</i> dance-drama With <i>Slendro Batel</i> music	Any part of <i>Mahabharata</i>	Yudistira, Bima, Arjuna, Nakula, Sahadewa, Duryodana, Sakuni, Bisma, Drona, Karna, Salya, etc.
<i>Calonarang</i> dance-drama with <i>Gong Kebyar</i> music	Any version of <i>Calonarang</i>	Liyak, Barong, Rangda, Balian, Celuluk, Bojog, Matah Gde, Galuh, Sisya, Prabu, Patih Taskara Maguna, Bondres, etc.

Topeng masked theatre With <i>Gong Kebyar</i> music	Any part of <i>Babad</i> chronicle (local history mixed with mythology)	Patih / Gusti Agung, Panasar Kelihan and Cenikan, Dalem Arsa Wijaya, Pasek, Bendesa, Bondres, etc.
Arja opera With <i>Geguntangan</i> music	Any part of <i>Malat/Panji</i> cycles	Condong, Galuh, Desak / Made Rai, Limbur, Liku, Punta, Wijil, Mantri Manis, Mantri Buduh, etc.
Prembom ‘comedia del arte’ With <i>Gong Kebyar</i> music	Any part of <i>Malat/Panji</i> or <i>Babad</i>	Panasar Punta, Wijil, Patih / Gusti Agung / Ngurah, Desak Rai, Liku, Bagavan, Dukuh, Arsawijaya / Mantri, Galuh, etc.

This general paradigm also applies to the *wayang* theatre. The chart below exemplifies the *trisandi* GSC within the group of shadow puppet theatres.

If the genre/form is:	The story is taken from:	The characters must be:
<i>Wayang kulit Parwa</i> With quartet <i>Gender</i> music	Any part of <i>Mahabharata</i>	Yudistira, Bima, Arjuna, Nakula, Sahadewa, Duryodana, Sakuni, Bisma, Drona, Karna, Salya, etc.
<i>Wayang kulit Ramayana</i> With <i>Slendro Batel</i> music	Any part of <i>Ramayana</i>	Rama, Sita, Laksmana, Rahvana, Marica, Surpanaka, Kumbakarna, Trijata, Hanoman, Subali, Sugriva, Anggada, etc.

Wayang kulit Gambuh With <i>Pagambuhan</i> music	Any part of <i>Malat/Panji</i> cycles	Reden Panji Inu Kertapati, Candrakirana, Trate Bang, Lasem, Bajak Taruarsa, Kabo Tan Mundur, Kebo Anggun-angun, Togog, etc.
Wayang kulit Cupak With <i>Slendro Batel</i> music	Any part of <i>Cupak</i> (Balinese folk story)	Pan Bekung, Men Bekung, <i>Cupak</i> , Grantang, Raksasa Benaru, Prabu Kediri, Diah Citrawati, Nang Klimun, Nang Klenceng, etc.
Wayang kulit Arja With <i>Gaguntangan</i> music	Any part of <i>Malat/ Panji</i> cycles	Condong, Galuh, Desak / Made Rai, Limbur, Liku, Punta, Wijil, Mantri Manis, Mantri Buduh, etc.
Wayang kulit Tantri With <i>Semar Pagulingan</i> music	Any part of <i>Tantri</i> (animal story from the Indian <i>Panca Tantra</i>)	Ni Diah <i>Tantri</i> , Prabu Iswarya Dala, Patih Bande Swarya, Macan, Singa, Sembada, Penyu, Yuyu, Angsa, Pedanda Baka, and other animals.
Wayang kulit Babad With <i>Semar Pagulingan</i> music	Any part of <i>Babad</i> chronicle	Dalem / Raja, Patih / Gusti Agung, Gusti Ngurah, Panasar Kelihan and Cenikan, Dalem Arsa Wijaya, Pasek, Bendesa, Bondres, etc.
Wayang kulit Calonarang With <i>Gong Kebyar</i> music	Any version of <i>Calonarang</i>	Liyak, Rangda, Balian, Celuluk, Bojog, Matah Gde, Galuh, Klika, Sisya, Prabu, Patih Taskara Maguna, Bondres, etc.

Thus, the *trisandi* interplay is a dominant paradigm governing the mise-en-scene of all forms of the Balinese theatre, and also is the strong base of the *dalang*'s creativity and improvisation, applying to each variation of *wayang kulit* theatre, from the most popular *Wayang kulit Parwa* to the most obscure *Wayang kulit Gambuh*. The fundamental task of the *dalang* for every performance is to compose a harmonic *trisandi* of GSC (Genre-Story-Character).¹³ To give a specific example of how the works it is

¹³ Under several circumstances it is possible to reverse the order of the triad and to create a new order, such as CSG (Character-Story-Genre) instead of the common order of the triad GSC. But, even then the need to create harmony remains the same. To give a specific example, I will describe my performance in Florida State University on April 10, 2001 to clarify some issues of improvising the *trisandi* GSC into *trisandi* CSG (Character-Story-Genre).

Since the name of the FSU gamelan music group is Hanoman Agung, I felt obligated to elucidate the greatness (*agung*) of the white monkey Hanoman, Rama's messenger. At that time, I had only a very limited number of puppets, so the available puppets dictated the way I organized the *trisandi* GSC: To make a love scene, a standard component of the genre, I did not have the Trijata puppet, so Hanoman could not woo this beautiful niece of the demon king as would be customary when the puppet is available. The given circumstances of the epic (*pakem*) would not allow me to have Hanoman making love with Princess Sita, for Sita could only make love with her husband Rama. To feature the greatness of Hanoman, the story would best focus on the part during the abduction of Sita, when she is kept by the demon king Rahvana in his pleasure garden Angsoka, and Hanoman risks great danger to find her. Since Rama is in Dandaka forest, far across the sea from Sita during this part of the epic, I wondered how could I feature them in love? In a complete performance, I could certainly begin before the kidnapping scene, when Rama and Sita are still together, but the maximum performance time I am allotted was only one hour. I could not excerpt earlier scenes of the *Ramayana* and still feature Hanoman in an integrated fashion. Consequently, I had to ignore the *rebong* love scene, which belongs to the set structure of the genre. The *pagundem* exposition was the meeting scene between Rama and Hanoman, discussing numerous difficulties and challenges they face and the way they should control their selves and enemies. The *angkat-angkatan* traveling scene featured Hanoman's flight to Alengka palace to investigate Sita's condition. The following *babad* scene of the antagonist character occurred in Alengka. The climax featured the fighting scene between Hanoman and demonic characters, including Rahvana.

Thus, the construction of my *trisandi* GSC at the time was dictated by the character (C), rather than the genre (G), which reversed the normal order of the *trisandi* from GSC

possible to examine the mise-en-scene of *Arjuna's Wedding (Arjuna Wiwaha)* as performed by my teachers, the *dalang* Sumandhi and *dalang* Wija.

The standard opening of the genre begins with the *pagundem* (meeting scene). Both *dalangs* Sumandhi and Wija began their performance by featuring a discussion between the hero Arjuna and his comic servants about the need to perform meditation to win the God Siwa's favor. Following this scene came the traveling scene (*Angkat-Angkatan*), which showed the idyllic journey of Arjuna and his servants to their destination, Indrakila Mountain, where Arjuna would undertake his meditation. Next followed another standard component of the genre, the shifting scene (*Babad* or *Mabad*), which features the antagonistic king of Himantaka kingdom: Niwatakawaca, expressing his intention to attack heaven in order to marry the celestial nymph Supraba. Hearing of the god's intention to request Arjuna's help to defeat him, Niwatakawaca sends his Prime Minister Momo Simuka to disturb Arjuna's meditation. The climatic fight occurs after the seven celestial nymphs unsuccessfully attempt to seduce Arjuna. Shooting Momo Simuka who transforms himself into a wild boar, Arjuna's arrow is claimed by the God Siwa disguised as a hunter, Kirata, to test Arjuna. This fighting scene occurs between Arjuna and Kirata, concluding as Kirata transforms back into Siwa and awards Arjuna a mighty weapon. As required by the genre, the story is concluded here, without telling how Arjuna marries seven celestial nymphs after killing Niwatakawaca. The genre can accommodate only one fighting scene in a given performance, consequently, no single show can portray the whole action of the *Arjuna Wiwaha* epic, and not all dramatic characters from that story will appear in one show. It is more important to present the

(Genre-Story-Character) to CSG (Character-Story-Genre). However, the underlying goal to reach harmony in the *trisandi* remained the same.

harmonic interplay of Genre-Story-Character than it is to finish an entire story or feature all the characters in it.

We have seen so far that the performance of *wayang* theatre is aesthetically formed by three major organic elements: genre, story, and characters. Having discussed how each of the three theatrical components plays its role and interacts with each other under the *dalang* puppeteer's artistic discretion, it is necessary to define and clarify those components. Hence, the following discussion will clarify one after another the genre or performance form, the story, and the stock characters of the *wayang kulit* theatre.

C. 1. Genre or Form

Some aspects of the genre that are essential to mention include the general apparatus (stage, scenery, and property), the artists, the performance structure, and the musical accompaniment. Obtaining a general overview of a theatrical genre is analogous to visiting a new place. When we arrive at a new locale we first look at the external appearance of the buildings around the area. Hence, it may be useful to begin with a brief discussion on the general apparatus that creates the 'building' and the artist that are always involved in the genre.

C. 1. 1. The apparatus and artists

Typically a partly open pavilion or a hall is temporarily transformed into a booth about three meters wide by four meters in length. A *Wayang* performance always needs this simple booth to hold the white screen on which the shadow puppets are projected by the oil lamp (*Blencong*). The screen becomes the sole stage for a *wayang* show. The

dalang defines the performance area on the screen by sticking the largest puppet Butha Siu or Wisnumurti at the right edge of the screen and Butha Sia or Ludramurti at the left edge. The brightness of the lighting is occasionally dimmed by *klopekan gadebong* ‘a piece of banana log’ in order to create a special effect for dramatic scenes, or to alter the mood or emotion of the scene.

Among the artists involved, the *dalang* is the most important. He is the playmaker, narrator, and shadow master. He is often called upon to act as a priest at the end of a performance to invoke holy water. As an important motive of sponsoring *wayang* performance, the patron often requests the puppet’s holy water (*tirtan wayang*) after the show.

Typically two *dalang*’s assistants (*katengkong*) work closely with *dalang*. In order to expedite his specific theatrical tricks, a *dalang* may prefer to keep his own assistants rather than his musicians. In other words, to perform with musicians with whom he is not familiar is better than to perform with new assistants. In the northern part of Bali the *dalang* employs only one assistant in order to economize on the cost of the show.

Specific to the musicians, most *wayang* types (*Wayang Ramayana*, *Gambuh*, *Cupak*, *Arja*, *Calonarang*, and *Babad*) employ about a dozen musicians. However, *Wayang Parwa* requires only 4 musicians. In the northern part of Bali only two musicians are required.

Next, to obtain a better understanding of the genre, it is essential to identify and define the nature and scope of the performance structure of the *Wayang Kulit Parwa*, since it is the most popular type of *wayang* in Bali.

C. 1. 2. The eighteen divisions of performance structure: *Astadasa Krama*

The genre's set dramatic structure might be best represented by (although not limited to) the basic format of *Wayang Parwa* as nicely charted by Mary Sabina Zurbuchen in the book The Language of Balinese Shadow Theatre (1987: 208). Since our emphasis here is on the creativity in performance rather than the language which is her concern, we need to expand her ten categories into eighteen items of performance activities. Let me call them *astadasa krama*, literary means eighteen chronological activities in the *Wayang Parwa* shadow puppet. Those activities include:

1. Ritual offering and invocation. After all hospitality (food and social welcoming greeting) and the apparatus are set up, *dalang* begins to dedicate opening offering (*Peras Santun Pamungkah*) to invoke divine guidance.¹⁴ A *dalang* also serves the *segehan* offering to the lower spirit in order to obtain spiritual support. The end of dedicating the offering is a cue for the musician to begin their overture.
2. Musical overture/prelude (*Gending Pategak*). This piece technically hints to the spectators that the *wayang kulit* performance is about to begin, while the musicians are 'warming up' with their pure instrumental music. Among numerous popular musical pieces, musician often plays Sekar Gendot, Sekar Sungsang, Merak Angelo, Cagak Merengang, Katak Ngongkek, and Sulendro.
3. Next comes the opening of the puppet box (*Pamungkah*) with some silent incantations by the *dalang*. After the *dalang* taps the box three times with his palm, musicians begin to play the *Gending Pamungkah*. Eventually the *dalang* leads the

¹⁴ In *Kama and Kala*, Hooykaas translates necessary *mantra* incantations along with the type of offerings and procedures.

tempo of the music by knocking his wooden hammer (*Cepala*) on the right side of his puppet chest.

4. Tree of life (*kayonan*) puppet dance, symbolizing the first creation of the universe through the evolution of five universal elements (the *panca maha butha*) of life: earth, water, fire, wind, and ether. Regardless of the selected story and context of the performance, the *kayonan* puppet always begins and ends the show, in addition to making appearances in between the acts (*Babak* or *Babad*). The *Kayonan* puppet dance is accompanied by a musical piece called *Taru Mentik* (blomming tree).
5. Casting, the selection of story and preliminary arrangement of puppets. While the musicians display their skill by playing a number of pieces from which they may choose, known as *Oncang-Oncangan*,¹⁵ the *dalang* would independently re-cast and prepare his puppets. For example, the same puppet previously used to present god Wisnu might be recast as Kresna. The next time it is used it may represent Rama, and so forth.
6. The second tree of life (*kayonan*) dance to begin the first act (*babak*). The dance is accompanied by a musical piece called *Taru Keampehan* (blown-out tree).
7. Entering scene with sung poetry (*Alas Harum* “Fragrance Forest” piece for soft characters, *Candi Rebah* “Slanted Tiara” piece for demonic characters, *Bopong* “Ostinatic” piece for strong/hard characters). All lyrics are in Kawi language which is only partly understood by the audience. Thus, it is more important for the spectators to feel the mood and atmosphere than it is for them to fully understand the meaning of

¹⁵ In the regent of Gianyar, the complete pieces include: *Katak Ngongkek*, *Manuk Anguci*, *Tulang Lindung*, *Sesapi Ngindang*, *Brayut*.

- the words. In this scene the *dalang* begins to sing with a medium pitch, tempo, and power of his voice. This is the only opportunity for the *dalang* to warm up his voice.
8. Incantation and Prologue (*Panyacah*). Narrating the early evolution and the creation of the universe resulting in the settlement of all the planets and on earth life, a *dalang* puppeteer must explore all possibilities of his voice, from the very soft through the extremely loud, from the very low through the extremely high. The narration is in Kawi language, which is also only partly understood by the audience, but musically and spiritually it is enjoyed by the *wayang kulit* fans. The dramatic structure or story begins about the last quarter of this prologue, when the *dalang* recites “*Warnan taya ri wijil ira...*” (Essentially meaning, “Now it shall be told the appearance or the coming of...”)
 9. The first court meeting scene (*Patangkalan*): (a) King interlude (*Pangalang Ratu*). (b) Servant interlude (*Pangalang Parekan*). Either one of the older servants (Twalen or Delem, never Sangut or Wredah) entertains or praises his lord by singing a hymn or reciting a stanza of a *kakawin*. This hymn is called *Tampak Silir* “stepping on one lane together,” since the melody and the pitch of the vocal and instrumental should go simultaneously and exactly in the same step and tempo. In this meeting scene, the *dalang* uses at least three languages: the Kawi, Sanskrit, and Balinese (low, medium, and high). Sometimes he may even use Indonesian languages and foreign words.
 10. Traveling scene (*Angkat-angkatan*) accompanied by a number of ostinatic pieces. The *dalang* recites an elaborate song over short pieces (ostinato) of repeatable instrumental music. Among the many pieces are Gedebeg, Srikandi, Bimakroda, Krepetan, etc.

11. Love / flirtatious scene (*Rebong*). To many contemporary *dalangs* who are not well trained in the puppet-manipulating skill, this scene is optional or substituted with *ragragan* comic interlude, although the *rebong* is traditionally a requirement.
12. Sad scene (*Tetangisan*). Depending on the character the scene has three different versions, and each is accompanied by a different musical piece: *Gending Mesem* for soft characters with a tiny flat eye, *Rundah* piece for demonic characters with sharp fang, *Bendu Semara* for strong/hard characters with big oval or round eye. Only one version may be performed at a time. Recently, this scene is also optional.
13. Complication with the second court scene (*Babad*) of the opponent or antagonist character, although it may often be reversed, or the meeting scene may be in a hermitage, or between protagonist character and the antagonist.
14. *Ragragan* comic interlude and social contemporary commentary. It appears continually anywhere from traveling scene through the end of fighting scene. One or a pair of comic court attendants always appears for this commentary in an allegorical, ludicrous, hilarious dialogue and or monologue.
15. The dance of (*Bapang*) Delem. The boisterous court attendant Delem typically begins the second scene. Just like the fat black servant Twalen always appears with his son Wredah, Delem always appears with his skeptical younger brother Sangut.
16. Second traveling scene (*Angkat-angkatan*). Unlike the first traveling scene, this scene is more than a mere traveling; it is more likely a group of rebellions (ogre soldiers or monkey armies) pursuing a battle scene.

17. Fighting scene (*siat*). This scene always signifies the climax of a play or a performance, no matter what story the *dalang* selects. The accompanying musical piece is *Batel*, which musical mood may sound like a battle.
18. Ritual dedication (*Panyudamalan*) in case holy water is arranged for one's purification ceremony. The beginning of *dalang* incantation is a cue for the musician to begin the piece of *Panyudamalan* or *Bugari*.

Except the *Ragragan* interlude, each of these 18 categories is identified by and must match with the exact set of musical accompaniment. Musicians are independent from *dalang*'s cues and dramatic activities only in the phase number two, five, and eighteen, but to begin these independent pieces, musician still wait for the cue from the *dalang*. In the rest of those activities (beyond those three pieces), the musicians must closely follow the *dalang*'s cues whether to remain or to adjust and/or to change the piece, the rhythm, or tempo (with an appropriate musical cadences) in accordance with dramatic sequence and movements. Beginning from the phase number three to four and then from the phase number six to seventeen, musical accompaniment should closely follow the puppet movements, reinforce the dramatic mood, or fuse with the *dalang*'s vocal arts to compose a musical drama. In Bali there has never been a *wayang* show without musicians. *Dalang* artists may produce the conventional types of vocal arts (*Tetandakan*) only with a musical accompaniment.

C. 1. 3. Musical accompaniment

An ensemble of gamelan music always accompanies the performance of *wayang kulit* theatre. Of the thirty existing divergent ensembles, three ensembles are traditionally

affiliated and employed to accompany a *wayang* show. The quartet or at least a pair (*pangisep* ‘male’ and *pangumbang* ‘female’ instruments) of the metallophone *Gender* *Wayang* music ensemble invariably accompanies the *Mahabharata*-based *Wayang Parwa*. When two medium-size *Kendang* drums, a unit of cymbal, knobbed *Klenang*, *Kajar*, and *Kempur* gong chimes are added to the quartet *Gender* music, then the ensemble is called the *Batel Ramayana*. This *Batel* music is used to accompany the performance of *Wayang Ramayana*, *Wayang Calonarang*, and the *Wayang Cupak*. When the quartet *Gender* instruments of the *Batel* ensemble are replaced with several giant bamboo flutes and several instruments like the *Gumanak* and *Gentorag* bells clusters, the ensemble is called *Pagambuhan*. This flute-dominated music is used to accompany the performance of the *Wayang Gambuh*, which is based on the Panji cycles. However, for a number of recent experimental compositions other unique musical ensembles have also been created to accompany a show. For example, the ensemble may be joined by either a *Geguntangan* (multi scales), a *Semar Pagulingan* (seven-key *Slendro* scale), an *Angklung* (four-key *Slendro* scale), a *Gong Gde* (five-key *Pelog* scale), or a *Gong Kebyar* (10-key *Pelog* scale). Just as the narrative repertoires are associated with different genres of performance, different ensembles are associated with a specific type of *wayang*. Consequently, an audience would recognize immediately the specific type of *wayang* that is being performed simply by hearing the music.

The role of music is crucial in *wayang*, because numerous dramatic moods, emotions, movements may properly be established only by playing a certain piece with all its cadences (rhythm, melody, and tempo). Although there is no room here to exhaustively discuss the important role of music to the *wayang*, we must realize that

certain musical pieces may effectively establish a certain dramatic event or mood like sadness, angry, travel, fighting, and so forth even before any verbal lines are heard. Fortunately, Lisa Gold's dissertation entitled "The Gender *Wayang* Repertoire in Theater and Ritual: A Study of Balinese Musical Meaning" has provided an excellent introductory accounts of the significant role of *gamelan* music in *wayang* performance.¹⁶ However, in terms of creativity it is essential to discuss how a *dalang* cues and collaborates with musicians.

C. 1. 3. 1. Cueing and collaborating with musicians

The role of music in *wayang* performance is absolutely essential. As briefly alluded to earlier, there has never been a *wayang* show without musicians. Except for the *ragragan* interlude, each of the eighteen chronological activities (*astadasa krama*) of the performance is identified by and must match with the exact set of musical accompaniment. The musicians must closely follow the *dalang*'s cues whether to remain or to adjust and/or to change the piece, the rhythm, or the tempo (with an appropriate musical cadences) in accordance with dramatic sequence and movements.

As far as creativity in presentation is concerned, a *dalang* and his musicians must actually work as a team that has been working together for a sufficient length of time. On a spur of the moment, the best musicians taken from Singaraja regency (north Bali), for instance, would not work very well with the best *dalang* chosen from Gianyar regency (south Bali), unless they had experienced the same training and repertoires from a certain guru or training centre. A *dalang* may be frustrated by his musicians when they are

¹⁶ Additional information about Balinese gamelan music may be found in the Colin McPhee's Music in Bali; a Study in Form and Instrumental Organization in Balinese Orchestral Music and the Michael Tenzer's Balinese Music.

careless or less dramatically sensitive and when they do not give him an accurate dramatic response during a performance. Suggesting the specific significant of “his own sensitive musician” a *dalang* once told me, “My *wayang* is powerless whenever my leading musician is not available to play the music.”

Thus, a *dalang* and musicians are actively engaged in expressing the dramatic presentation. In other words, their interaction always results in creative expression. The trigger for this interaction is a cue delivered by a *dalang* to his musicians and who must respond to that cue musically. Specific triggers for this dynamic relationship express themselves through the following:

1. When the *dalang* raps rhythmically on the puppet box (*tabuh cepala*);
2. When the puppet perform certain movements on patterns of movement;
3. During the dramatic narrative;
4. When the *dalang* sings his lines;
5. During routine ritualistic action.

1. *Dalang* raps rhythmically on the puppet box

The first sound that *dalang* uses to cue his musicians while sets the tempo of the opening piece (*pamungkah*) is manifested through a tapping sound. This sound is accomplished by knocking or tapping the cone-shaped-wooden rattle (*cepala*) over the puppet box either by the hand or with the right foot of a *dalang*. This is similar to the use of the foot pedal used by Jazz drummer. Three basic sounds of *cepala/box* are *tak* (single), *blak* (simultaneously double sounds when *dalang*’s foot and the *cepala* hit the box), and *tak-blak* (alternately plural sounds when the first *tak* is immediately

complemented by the second *blak*). Any composite patterns of the *cepala* is known as *tabuh*, a term which also refers to a compositional piece of Balinese gamelan music.

Although each *dalang* may develop his own distinctive rattle music (*tabuh cepala*) with a different degree of proficiency and a wide ranges of sophistication, the function of the sound is the same. A *dalang* invariably employees the sound like a sensor to cue musicians to initiate and stop a motif. Like a musical conductor, a *dalang* treats the sound as a beat keeper to adjust and control the tempo of the music. Most of the time a *dalang* employees the *cepala* rattle as a musical device to emphasize the cadence of puppet movements.

According to the rhythmical pattern and function of each type, the *tabuh* of *cepala* is distinguished as follows:

One stroke (*tabuh pisan*) has three divisions: a single *tak*, a single *blak* and a series of *tak...tak...tak...tak....*

1. A single *tak* (only *cepala* hits the box) has a function to begin a dialogue, speech, or speaking.
2. A single *blak* (both foot and *cepala* simultaneously hitting the box) is to end a sequence of action.
3. A series of *tak* is to begin a sequence of action.

A syncopated pattern of two (*tabuh dua*) is to accompany the dancing of a puppet, or stabbing scene with *kris* (sword), and the walk of a lame or cripple *wayang* puppet character.

A syncopated pattern of three (*tabuh telu*) is to end a speech.

A syncopated pattern of four (*tabuh pat*) is to accompany fighting.

A syncopated pattern of five (*tabuh lima*), also known as *ngebrag*, is to accompany Delem, the clown of the antagonist, as he dances (bapang Delem), and for fighting with Gada (maces). A syncopated pattern of seven (*tabuh pitu*), which is the (composite) pattern of three and four, is to follow the rest of the actions.

It should be noted that the first stroke is not counted, for it serves to warn the musician about the upcoming cue. In every case, the *tabuh* of the *cepala* rattle supports the action or movement of the puppets. It translates the *dalang*'s conception of character and the demands of the story's action into tangible sound.

2. Puppet movements (*tetikasan*)

The second device that a *dalang* uses to cue his musicians is *tetikasan*, a term which refers to all puppet movements and manipulation. Musicians typically know that a certain character should have specific music for a certain occasion, such as when entering, when running, when character is angry, expressing love or sadness and so forth. Some pieces are even named according to the action of a puppet, for which the piece must be played. For example, the piece of Bapang Delem must accompany the entrance of the comic servant Delem. The piece of Gending Garuda must accompany the dance of Garuda the eagle, and so forth.

A good musician is not only skilful but he must be attentive to the cue of a *dalang*. However, musicians do not have to be attentive all the time to all the various puppet movements. But it is absolutely crucial that they be attentive to the transitional moments or actions. Most mistakes occur when musicians are careless and inattentive missing transitions and this frustrating the *dalang*. Formalized movement and cadence known as *ngeseh angsel* that all-principal character experience is the most crucial among

the movement patterns. *Ngeseh* is a jerky physical cadence of the *wayang* puppet which is a cue that must be promptly responded to by the musicians in order to develop an *angsel*, an abrupt rhythmic pattern of syncopated accents followed by the orchestra, culminating in a sudden pause which suspends the music.

During a battle scene, the movement of a puppet in shooting arrows, jabbing his fists, poking weapons, and numerous fighting gestures is comparable to the commanding movement of a baton in the hand of a music conductor. Musicians only miss cues when they are careless.

3. Dramatic narrative

The third way of a *dalang* cues his musicians is by loudly reciting dramatic terms.

Zurbuchen lists some of those cuing devices and helpfully translates them as follows:

<i>bawisiati</i>	next, then, following upon
<i>ari wawu</i>	just then, next, just as
<i>agelis</i>	immediately, quickly
<i>ari tedun</i>	upon the descent of
<i>ari wijil</i>	upon the appearance / coming forth of
<i>caritanen</i>	let it be told
<i>warnanen</i>	let it be described
<i>byatita</i>	formerly, in the part
<i>saksana</i>	in the wink of an eye
<i>kancit</i>	straightaway (Zurbuchen 163)

This dramatic narrative is relatively easier than the puppet movements and the pattern of *cepala* rattle for musicians to respond to. For example, when a *dalang* wishes to tell his musicians to begin the *mesem* sad scene for Arjuna, all he needs to do is simply to recite, “Therefore Prince Arjuna cries... (*Menangis...gatinirang Arjuna wekasan*).” In

The Language of Balinese Shadow Theater, Zurbuchen reports that the term is uttered in the “screaming and moaning” voice which either refers to the psychological states of characters, like anger and sorrow, or their actions, like arrival, departure, listening, and so forth (163).

4. Sung lines

The fourth device that a *dalang* uses to cue his musicians is by singing a line or phrase. Similar to the technique often practiced in the musical theatre in which a brief song signals musicians to begin a piece, a *dalang* simply starts by singing a line after which the musicians would promptly follow. For example, when a *dalang* wishes to begin the *rebong* love scene, he may simply sing, “Fragrant aroma permeates the air... (*Miyik ngalub malimpugan...*).” Other musical scenes that require a sung phrase to begin them include the *tampak silir* unison vocal and instrumental, *angkat-angkatan* travelling scene, *peparikan* seductive scene, and the *genjekan* drunken scene.

In terms of musical drama or narration, a *dalang*’s cue for his musicians to collaborate with him is a *sine qua non*. Based on interactivity between a *dalang*’s vocal art and instrumental music which complement them, the *wayang* performance employs three divergent types of musical drama as follows:

1. *Tandak* (*tetandakan*, plural) is the vocal art that embellishes the melody and faithfully follows the pitch and tone of the instrumental music. This type of vocal art is always used for entrance scenes, sad scenes, and love scenes. For example, *tandak alas harum* is used for the appearance of refined characters. *Tandak candi rebah* is for the arrival of demonic characters. *Tandak mesem* is for a sad scene of refined characters with small eyes; *tandak rundah* is for sad scenes of demonic characters with sharp

- fangs; *tandak bendu semara* is for sad scenes of strong/hard characters with big oval or round eyes.
2. *Tampak silir* is vocal cum instrumental music where melody, pitch and tone match. In the first meeting scene, *tampak silir* is usually sung by the servant or precedes the dialogue, narrating the features of each character who is about to speak. The lyric is usually a brief, flamboyant description about a great king, a resilient hero, a holy sage, a gorgeous palace, or a prosperous country.¹⁷
 3. *Bebaturan* are ornamental vocal arts, which are melodically free from and far more elaborate than the instrumental music. Unlike the *tandak* in which the instrumental music is dominant, the vocal element in *Bebaturan* always dominates the ostinato of the instrumental pieces. This vocal type is used in traveling scenes and some fighting scenes. The lyrics describe the situation or the mood of a specific character.¹⁸

5. Routine ritualistic actions

Finally, there is a cue that prompts the musicians to play a musical piece that is purely artistic, structural, and/or ritualistic, without any association with dramatic characters. An example of this is the musical overture which always begins a *wayang* performance. When a *dalang* dedicates an opening offering (*santun pamungkah*) to the God and then serves the *segehan* offering to the lower spirit in order to obtain spiritual support, the action serves as a cue for the musicians to get ready. This signals them to

¹⁷ In the northern part of Bali around Singaraja, *tampak silir* is employed far more extensively than it is in southern part of Bali. *Tampak silir* is called *gerong* when used in *Sendratari* dance-drama.

¹⁸ Musical pieces of *bebaturan* include *gedebeg*, *bima kroda*, *sekar gendot* (a traveling version), *krepetan*, etc. *Bebaturan* is called *sasendon* in *Sendratari* dance-drama.

conclude their idle chatting or drinking without being told. The end of a *dalang*'s activity dedicating these offerings is a cue for the musician to begin their musical overture. In case holy water is arranged for one's purification ceremony at the end of *wayang* performance, the beginning of a *dalang*'s incantation "*Ong...*" serves as a cue for the musician to begin today a piece called *panyudamalan* or *bugari*.

C. 2. Story

A story is quite important to *wayang*. A genre of *wayang* is often known by the story with which it is associated. For example, the *Wayang Ramayana* indicates that the story repertoires of this sort of *wayang* are derived from the epic *Ramayana*. So too, in other types of *Wayang Parwa*, *Wayang Babad*, *Wayang Tantri*, *Wayang Calonarang*, and the *Wayang Cupak*, the second word is the *wayang*'s modifier, which is the narrative reservoir affiliated to that particular type of *wayang*. The word *Parwa* refers the cantos of the *Mahabharata*, which is the source story of the *Wayang Parwa*.¹⁹ The local term for story or play is *lakon*. My two-volume unpublished notes of the "Top Fifty Active Stories" (*50 Lakon Teraktif Masa Kini*) provides a representative example of popular stories used in performance. In the following, the story will be briefly discussed in terms of its source, format, and rhetorical methods.

¹⁹ However, this naming system does not apply to the other type of *Wayang Arja* and *Wayang Gambuh*. *Arja* and *Gambuh* are the names of dance-drama genres, with what those *wayang* share the stock characters.

C. 2. 1. Several sources: India, Indonesia, Bali

The two most important narrative reservoirs of *wayang* are the epic *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*. Scholars agree that both epics, including numerous related folklores as collected and described in N.B. Patil's *Folklore in the Mahabharata* (1983), were imported from India. Interestingly, most *dalang* puppeteers do not regard the Sanskrit versions of the epics as the source of their repertory. They turn to the *kakawin* for their inspiration for the *kakawin* were transformed from the Indian epics into old Javanese and are the ultimate ancestor (*babon*) of a *dalang*'s narrative reservoir. Kathy Foley is perfectly correct when she reports in the *Cambridge Guide to Asian Theatre* that *kakawin* is one of the "proto-theatrical practice" (119-120), because the Javanese poetry *kakawin* has long been the dramatic literature that people in Bali read and recite (in traditionally institutionalized form) to find edification while exploring the 'ocean' of stories. As the oldest (and frequently consecrated) dramatic literature, the *kakawin* is a long series epic poems that were written between the ninth and the tenth century by a number of court poets sponsored by Javanese kings. The *kakawin* was composed in old-Javanese language, translated and "written in Sanskrit-derived meters and language" (see Zoetmulder; see Foley 120). Perhaps because of the authority of the kings who sponsored the project at the time, the Sanskrit version had gradually been abandoned, while the text of the *kakawin* which still has some Sanskrit words in it is continuously recited, employed, and widely modified in many dramatic performance genres until this day. *Dalang* puppeteers in creating a new story are wary of infringing on the basic story line given by the *kakawin*. In other word, all subsequent stories must come out either as a segment of or a branch of the *kakawin*.

Another story imported from Indian is the *Tantri Kamandaka*, the story about a smart girl *Tantri* who creates stories about animals that talk like humans. *Tantri* consists of stories within stories. The work appears to have been derived from the Indian work *Pancha Tantra*, although the local poets in Bali have superimposed numerous other tales in addition to and on top of the source material.

Narrative repertoires are also derived from Indonesian tales. The *Calonarang*, *Panji* cycles, and *Muslim Mythologies* are among the examples that are adopted for *wayang*. All repertoires of the *Wayang Gambuh* are derived from the *Panji* cycles. *Wayang Calonarang* enacts any versions of the magical story *Calonarang*. Some versions are centered in East Java and the rest are derived from Bali. *Wayang Sasak* concerns stories derived from Muslim mythologies.

Some *wayang* stories that are believed to be indigenous to Bali include the chronicle *Babad*, *Gaguritan Basur*, *Balian Batur*, and the *Gaguritan Cupak*. *Wayang Babad* concerns stories from any part of *Babad*. *Balian Batur* is a part of *babad*, therefore it is also a repertoire of the *Wayang Babad*. For their magical constituents, like the *Tempest*, both *Basur* and *Batur* are the narrative repertoires of the *Wayang Calonarang*. *Wayang Cupak* always features the character *Cupak* along with his younger brother *Grantang*.

C. 2. 2. Several narrative texts and rhetorical forms

The narrative texts of *wayang* exist in poetry (*tembang*), in prose (*gancaran*), and in a mixture of the two known as *Palawakya*. Major narrative texts composed in poetry include *Kakawin* poem in Kawi language and *Gaguritan/Paparikan* rhyme in high

Balinese language. In addition to the language, each division is distinguished by precise metric, rhythmic, and melodic rules. The rule governing the long and short syllables in the *kakawin* is called *Guru Laghu* (Sugriwa, *A Guide to Recite Kakawin* 1977/1978). The rule concerning the rhythmic composition is called *Matra*, and the number or syllable is called *Canda*. One holistic *gaguritan* is built with numerous *macapat* stanzas. Each *macapat* is defined by the rule namely *Pada Lingsa*. *Pada* is the number of lines in one unit of stanza and the number of syllables in a line. *Lingsa* is the required vowel (either *a*, *i*, *u*, *e*, or *o*) of the last syllable in each line (Bandem, *Model of Macepat poetry* 1983). While *kakawin* contains entire cantos of the epic in Kawi language, each of these composed *gaguritan* deals only with a specific part of the main epic in high Balinese language. For example, *Gaguritan Salya* specifically focuses on the events in the ninth canto of the *Mahabharata*, when Salya serves as commander in chief heading the Korawa army in *Bharatayuddha* war. Although both *kakawin* and *gaguritan* may be written in either Balinese or Roman script, most of the existing *kakawin* are written in Balinese script, while *gaguritan* is written in Roman script.

The narrative text in prose includes the *Pakem* play and the pictured story (*Komik*). The first narrative prose, the *pakem* play format, is the performance text that resembles a western play, for the lines have been given in dialogue format rather than in narrative format. The comic servants who are never mentioned in the *Parwa* and *kakawin* have also been given complete dialogues in the *pakem*. Most importantly, the scenic arrangement of a complete *pakem* exactly fits into the genre. In other word, one complete *pakem* is deliberately written for a single show, or is carefully transcribed from a

complete performance for *dalang* students.²⁰ An excellent published example of this type of dramatic script is the Pakem Wayang Parwa Bali [Plays of *Wayang* Parwa Puppet] 1978, which is transcribed by *dalang* Sumandhi, as well as numerous unpublished play scripts composed by students of STSI and collected in the STSI library. The three performance scripts published in the Asian Theatre Journal (1986, 1987, 1992) entitled "Bima Suarga: A Balinese Shadow Play as Performed by Ida Bagus Ngurah" (Reed 1–33); "The Dimba and Dimbi of I Nyoman Rajeg: A Balinese Shadow Play" (deBoer 76–107); and "The Death of Kumbakarna of Ketut Madra: A Balinese *Wayang Ramayana* Play" (deBoer and Bandem 141–200) belong to this category.

Another narrative text in prose is available in the *wayang*-pictured-story books known as *komik*. Each page of a *komik* book is generally divided into four sections, with two rows and two columns. Each area is filled with *wayang* characters in appropriate environments, such as forests, pathways, mountains, rivers, etc. Brief narrative passages or dialogue are given in each section. Poerwadarminta defines *komik* as a "pictured story" (General Dictionary of Indonesian Language 517).

Rhetorical forms that convey stories in *wayang* are very rich. These narrative expressions exist in various methods of speeches, dictions, and songs, which will be discussed in a greater detail in Chapter 3.

²⁰ By requiring the students to read a *pakem* and providing them with all the necessary resources (puppets and other instruments) every day for a couple of years, the two government-sponsored schools have produced many young *dalangs*. By memorizing and reciting lines in the *pakem* and practicing with the *wayang* puppets two hours everyday, committed students find themselves ready to perform. But they are mostly not ready to perform more than once in the same village, unless the students have memorized several *pakem* to change the story or have mastered sufficient skills to give creative responses to any fluctuating performance condition.

The last narrative text is called *Palawakya*, which actually refers to the melodically-stylistic method of slowly reading a semi-prose story. Thus, *Palawakya* is more a reading/recital method rather than as a writing style. Of the existing examples, *Parwa* and *Sakuntala* are the most popular. *Parwa* is the local term for canto of the *Mahabharata*. The most popular of the 18 *Mahabharata*'s cantos is the first canto, *Adhi Parwa*. *Sakuntala*, a play by the Indian poet Kalidasa, originally was written in a Sanskrit. In Bali the play has been transformed into a semi-prose tale in Kawi language and is recited in the *Palawakya* style. Let me briefly quote the opening part of the *Sakuntala* in the prose version:

Hana sira maharaja Duswanta ngaran ira. Pratiwyah segarantayah, sira ta kumawasaken pratiwi mandala maka hingan catus samudra.

There is a king namely Duswanta. He rules the land confined by four oceans.

The '*Pratiwyah segarantayah*' is Sanskrit phrase. The sentence (in Kawi language) following it, '*sira ta kumawasaken pratiwi mandala maka hingan catus samudra*,' explains the meaning of the Sanskrit phrase, i.e. He rules the land confined by four oceans.

C. 3. Character

C. 3. 1. Perspectives on characterization

Several local terms for characterization that overlap one another include *tokoh* (personality) that dramatically relates to the gender of the character, *watak* (profile) that practically relates to the acting style of the character, and *peran* (role) that theatrically relates to character's function in a genre, or simply *karakter* that relates to the allies or coalition of their characters. Scholars depart from varying bases or perspectives in

approaching the characterization of the Balinese theatre. Among those perspectives, four are plausible and conceivable: characterization based on (1) gender, (2) type, (3) genre and (4) affiliation/alliance.

1. Characterization from the perspective of gender lays a primary emphasis on the story or dramatic text, so that all characters in the play are first identified based on their gender: male, female, or androgynous. In *wayang*, this gender perspective helps a *dalang* to define the standard voice into three broad divisions: low voice identifies male characters; medium voice identifies androgynous characters; and high voice is used for female characters. The *kakawin* poem that tells the gender of each dramatic character helps the *dalang* to further elaborate this division in greater detail. A distinctive attribute and stratified position of each dramatic character determines the appropriate languages²¹ in accordance with the three hierarchical linguistic manners/level: high, middle, and low (see Zurbuchen 1987). The *kakawin* poem also gives a fixed phrase of verse or song that is appropriate to accompany each character and mentions a specific weapon and vehicle which should be used by and associated with a specific character.
2. Characterization from the perspective of type or acting style lays primary emphasis on the vocabulary of movements, gestures, and coded body positions of the performers including puppets. In a dance-drama genre, this perspective belongs to and is used to communicate among the artist practitioners, i.e. the actors, actress, and the instructor. Consequently, these artist practitioners develop several terms for coded body gestures or

²¹ As the title suggests, Mary Zurbuchen's The Language of Balinese Shadow Puppet focuses on the important of language distinctions to *wayang*.

movements (like *gagah* “macho,” *lemuh* “gentle,” *sengap* “a mixture of rush and tense,” *ngenduk* “soft” etc.) associated with a certain character. In *wayang*, this characteristic formalism is directly related to the aesthetic concept of *wayang* given in the *wayang* manual known as *Panititala Wayang*. With this perspective we may list stylistic characters based on the similarity of its acting type or manipulation. This type-based character includes:

- *Keras* ‘strong’ or *kasar* ‘harsh,’ like Duryadona, Bima, etc.
- *Manis* ‘sweet’ or *halus* ‘soft’ like Darmawangsa, Rama, etc.
- *Serem* ‘scary’ or ‘magical’ like Yama, Kumbakarna, etc.
- *Banyol* ‘farce’ or *kocak* ‘loose or shaky.’ like Twalen, Baru, etc.

The puppet construction directly affects the vocabulary of movements and the methods of manipulation. The number of sticks attached to the puppet partly helps to define the movement of a puppet. For example, a symmetrical-shaped puppet with a single stick like the kayonan tree-of-life allows a *dalang* to twirl it easily. Puppets with several sticks such as those with a handle along the trunk of the body and a stick attached to one of the hands, allows a *dalang* to create a rolling movement when the puppet moves across the screen. Puppets with sticks attached to both hands and to the body, allow a *dalang* to feature a perfect worshipping gesture (*sembah*), swinging both hands while walking, etc. Puppets with symmetrical hands like Wredah and Sangut allow *dalang* to feature a boxing scene. So too, a puppet with a specific control in the jaw, tail, neck, knees, ears, etc enables a *dalang* to manipulate that specific body part respectively. The movement of a puppet is the vehicle of its profile or character.

3. Characterization from the perspective of genre lays a primary emphasis on the form or genre of the performance. Consequently, each genre has its major distinctive stock characters. For example, in the genre of *Arja* opera the stock scene character includes the Condong 'maid servant' Galuh princess, Desak/Made Rai coquettes servant, Limbur queen, Liku coquettes princess, Punta and Wijil male paired servants, Mantri Manis sweet prince, and the Mantri Buduh crazy prodigal prince. This perspective allows us to list cogent stock scene characters of other genres. In all types of *wayang* the stock characters include a group of comic servants (*panasar*) with male and female folk characters (*panjak*); soldiers/fighters (*balayuda*), a sage or priest (*rsi*) a king (*raja*) and a queen (*ratu*), a prince (*putra*) and a princess (*putri*), one or several prime ministers (*patih*), a few funny courtier like Dusasana (*raja buduh*), and monsters (*raksasa*) or demonic characters (*detya*), both male and female. A certain improvisational potency of each stock character is commonly expected or appreciated by the audience. For example, the comic servants and funny courtiers typically present farcical interludes or social commentaries; A sage is expected to reinforce moral order; a folk character presents hegemonic criticism, and so forth.
4. Characterization from the perspective of alliance lays a primary emphasis on the allied group of characters in the play or based on the category of creatures. With this perspective, all characters are grouped according to their coalition or affiliation. In largest division the affiliation-based characterization of *Wayang Parwa* may be divided into three sub-groups: celestial beings, human beings, and demonic beings. The human being

may be further divided into good and bad characters. In her Dancing Shadows of Bali Angela Hobart divides *wayang* characters into 6 divisions: heavenly beings, those of high caste, ogres, mythical creatures, servants, and scenic figures (46-48). Each group has a set hierarchically and moral order, as an eternal moral law (112-113). Since all puppets are analogues to living creatures, mythical figures and trees may also be categorized as characters. Consequently, another way to understand the stock characters is by looking at them in a greater detail in order to see their sub-groups. For example, there are gods and goddesses, titans, angels, heavenly priests, mythical figures, human beings, animals, birds, demonic beings, trees and several scenic figures.

This affiliation is most prevalent and is demanded for the puppet operation or manipulation. A *wayang* show always involves many characters and the mobility within the space of the screen is defined more by the affiliation rather than by the vocabulary of their movement. Some rigid conventions about the use of space and direction of the screen/stage—where a certain character should come from and then exit into—apply to each of the groups and are incorporated into their performance at the screen. The placements of characters, the distinctive division of their entrance and exit, and the directional mobility is crucial to every performance. For example, the good characters invariably enter from the right side of the *dalang* and exit into the left, while the bad characters and most of the ogres enter from the left and passes to the right. The heavenly beings usually enter from the right upper side of the screen while the characters of a lower order, like snake, frog, and Naga dragon, enter from below, and so forth.

C. 3. 2. Characteristic signifiers (semiology)

Although there is no room here to apply semiology to the *wayang* theatre, it is important to realize that the shapes of puppets provide a potential area for semiotic analysis. In his Knowledge of *Dalang*'s Artistry/Puppetry [*Ilmu Pedalangan/Pewayangan* 1976], Gusti Bagus Sugriwa gives a brief description regarding the significant of the puppet's shape, primarily concerning the meaning of the shapes of the eye, mouth, teeth, stomach, and headdress.

The shape of a puppet's eye directly defines the tenet or profile of a character. For example, a big rounding shape of a puppet's eye suggests a grumpy and thoughtless character. A tiny flat shape of the eye suggests a wise, prudent, thoughtful character. The shape of a puppet's mouth and teeth directly define the basic speech diction appropriate for the character. For example, an open mouth with full sharp teeth and fangs demands that the *dalang* use a rough vocal quality to suggest the demonic nature of the character. This signifier suggests a demonic character. The fewer the number of teeth that are visible the softer should be the vocal quality used to depict the character. A small mouth with one line of teeth visible without fangs demands that the *dalang* use a small and soft voice.

The shape of a puppet's stomach directly refers to his or her eating habits and the maturity of the character. Voracious stupid demons invariably have big stomachs, while spiritually advanced and mighty characters are featured with slim bellies. The type of costumes and the headdress shape of a puppet signify the social status of the character. The king and aristocratic characters are featured with an impressive headdress. A humble

but noble character sports a simple but beautiful headdress. A crazy character has an exaggerated headdress, and so forth.

There are still wide ranges of puppet's shape and colors that suggest a symbolic significance and affiliation with a certain deities and its distinctive supernatural power and weapon, which cannot be included here. For example, Karna uses a magic charm in the form of an earring, which signifies his genealogical origin of how he got connected with the sun god, who is his divine father.

Based on the type or shape of the puppet, there are some fixed puppets like Yudistira, Bima, Panasars, Kunti, Gatutkaca, Hanuman, etc. which cannot be used to depict any other puppet characters. There are also some puppets which may be used interchangeably to signify other characters. As was indicated earlier, the puppet for Rama may be used for Kresna or Wisnu; Arjuna may be used to depict Laksmana; Baladewa can be exchanged for Brahma, Karna for Indra, Yama for Kumbakarna, Salya for Wibisana, Srenggi for Suratma, and so forth.

This chapter has provided a general overview of *wayang* performance in Bali, the mythology of *wayang*'s origin and its purposes, a brief assessment of all types of genres, and the interplay scheme of genre-story-character. To reiterate what we have discussed, characters are defined by story; and story must comply with the format of the conventionalized genre. These three organic elements of genre, story, and characters are the basic ingredients needed by a *dalang* to create the performance. Therefore, it is appropriate to place the *dalang* at the center of the *trisandi* GSC, because of his essential role as the unitary composer-performer. *The dalang* constructs and improvises the play while maintaining a harmonic interplay among genre, story and character. In the

following three chapters we will explore the *dalang*'s creative artistry (*kawi dalang*) in developing a *wayang* performance. The first of these chapters focuses exclusively on the creativity in plot. The next chapter focuses on a broad range of creative practices in presentation. The last chapter provides a brief summary and conclusion.

CHAPTER 3

CREATIVITY IN PLOT

Each play is a creative work (Angela Hobart Dancing Shadows of Bali 137).

As already noted, once the genre is chosen, the first job that faces a *dalang* is to transform²² the story into play format. The major reservoir of *wayang* stories is the narrative *kakawin* verse. In this respect, *wayang* is unlike modern western drama which relies on playwrights to originate plays from a variety of sources. The stock characters of a genre cannot be fully set in position on the screen before the story is defined; the story cannot match the genre before it is transformed into a single holistic unit of a play format. To take an analogy, the story is like the infinite number of pages in the web-site while the genre is like a monitor that allows only one page to appear at a time. Hence, the *trisandi* GSC governing the *dalang*'s process of developing performance has to begin, first, with a discussion about how a *dalang* transforms *kakawin* poems into dialogue or *pakem* play format. After having established how this happens, I will discuss the recurring task of *dalang* to construct a play. This is done either through excerpting plots and passages from *kakawin* or by originating a new story. Finally, this chapter will detail the specific methods employed by the *dalang* to originate a story.

²² This job is skipped by *dalang* who learn and adopt a play from *wayang* performance, or obtain the written *pakem* play format of their teacher or other *dalang*. However, the transforming job had to be done by the teacher or other *dalang* who originated the play.

A. Transforming Narration Into Dialogue

Among the many tasks of a *dalang* is to transform narration of the *kakawin* into dialogue, the *pakem* of a *wayang* play.²³ Before discussing the transformation, it is necessary to understand the background of *kakawin* poetry, how the *kakawin* are performed and the poetic conventions governing the form.

Kakawin are Javanese poetic versions of the Indian epics, the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* rendered in Kawi language. The name *kakawin*, itself, is the plural form of *kawi*. Zoetmulder dates the *kakawin* genre to the charter (*prasasti*) of Sukabumi, dated March 25, 804 A.D. (Zoetmulder 3). It seems likely that *wayang* theatre evolved simultaneously with *kakawin* as is proven by *wayang*'s mention in *kakawin Arjuna Wiwaha* by the court poet Mpu Kanwa, dated approximately in the ninth century. It seems likely that *kakawin* and *wayang* could have interacted with each other in the past just as they do in the present. In contemporary Balinese religious celebrations *kakawin* is performed simultaneously with *wayang*, mask theatre, and Gamelan music.

Kakawin are presented by a pair of performers. One person (*juru wacen*) recites the verse/poem in Kawi language followed by the translator (*juru arti*) who paraphrases

²³This task seems to have been analogous to the work of the first Greek actor, Thespis, who helped dramatize material from epic sources. As rhapsodes recital was the base of tragedy, so *kakawin* recital is the base of *wayang* theatre. My comparison follows the arguments made by Gerold Else in The Origin and Early Form of Greek Tragedy (1965). Else argues that Greek Tragedy originated from rhapsodes (oral performers in religious festivals) who recited passages from the Odyssey and the Illiad.

each line in vernacular Balinese. Kawi language²⁴ was developed by court poets (*pangawi*) to translate the Indian epics from Sanskrit into Javanese versions.

The *kakawin* poetry is composed in narrative form with the strict rules known as *guru-laghu*. There are numerous names of *kakawin* verse types (*Aswalalita*, *Basanta*, *Sekarini*, *Sragdara*, *Sronca*, *Mredukomala*, *Swandewi*, *Mandamalon*)²⁵ and some two dozens of them are actively recited in contemporary Bali. Each type is distinguished by the number of lines (*canda*) in a stanza, the number of syllables (*matra*) in each line, the long-and-short (*guru-laghu*) syllabic arrangements in each line, and the melody (*wilet*). Let me quote one stanza, that is the verse number 51 of the *kakawin Arjuna Wiwaha* in *sikarini* type:

Hana nonton ringgit, manangis asekel muda hidepan.
Huwus wruh towin yan walulang inukir molah angucap.
Haturning wang tresneng wisaya molaha tar wihikana.
Ritatwanyan maya sahana hananing bhawa siluman.

²⁴ The base of Kawi language is the Old Javanese language. *Kawi* used by contemporary *dalang*, however, is not grammatically pure if we are to believe the scholars of Old Javanese at Udayana University.

²⁵ Sanskrit words occasionally appear in *kakawin*. For example, the second stanza of *Ramayana kakawin* in *sronca* verse begins:
Sira ta Triwikramapita, pinaka bapa bhatara Hyang Wisnu manganjadma.
Triwikramapita is a Sanskrit word that is composed of ***Triwikrama*** (Wisnu's avatar) and ***pita*** (father). Interestingly, the six words following the Sanskrit word that means "as the father of the god Wisnu's avatar" is exactly the meaning of the Sanskrit ***Triwikramapita***. This redundant wording is typical in *kakawin*, but the translator would always paraphrase it only once instead of twice. Thus, the entire line simply means: "He is the father of the god Wisnu's avatar" (King Dasarata who is Rama's father). Although *dalang* often quote and recite Sanskrit passages based on *kakawin* for the performance, they do not often understand the complete meaning of what they are reciting. However, the majorities of contemporary *dalang* in Bali learn and regard the *kakawin Ramayana*, *kakawin Mahabharata*, and *kakawin Bharatayudha* as the source (*babon*) of the stories they perform.

Watching a *wayang* show the audiences weep miserably due to their ignorance/stupidity.

Although, the *wayang* puppets are merely carved leather, manipulated to dance and speak.

Those audiences are slaved by their senses, which binds their life.

Actually, all that appears to them are *maya* illusions that are totally deceptive.

Many *dalang* are even expert in *kakawin*, as is, for example, *dalang* Ida Bagus Kakyang Bima in my village of Tegallinggah. In the school-based education of a *dalang* at the high school and university of arts, learning *kakawin* is a requirement. After becoming familiar with the *kakawin* poetry, the Javanese versions of the material, and *gaguritan* verse, and the Balinese versions of the material, students typically make numerous excerpts of plots, note quotations of *kakawin* passages, and develop synopses derived from these sources. Such study is also typical of *dalang* who study in the traditional way at the home of their teacher.

To enact the stories of the *kakawin*, using puppets to represent the characters, some of the *kakawin* lines must be rendered by characters in dialogue formats. Hence, a major job of a *dalang* is to transform this narrative *kakawin* poem into a dramatic format, called *pakem jangkep* (complete play).

There are three types of *pakem* dramatic formats. They are *pakem balungan*, *pakem gancaran*, and *pakem pedalangan jangkep* (Brandon, On Throne of Gold 34).

Each is discussed below.

1. *Pakem balungan*, literally meaning skeleton *pakem*, is the briefest outline of a story in the form of a synopsis of major plot points. *Balungan* derives from the word ‘*balung*’

meaning bone or skeleton. For example, there is no reference in this *pakem* to the clowns who play a major part in any story and the implications of the episodes are not explored. *Pakem balungan* are comparable to *commedia dell'arte* scenarios which, likewise, only give a general sense of what might actually occur in a performance. Most *dalang* still keep their personal notes of their active repertoires in this format. My two-volume manuscript of *Top Fifty Active Stories (50 Lakon Teraktif Masa Kini)* is being used by students and *dalang* in Bali today and is a good example of stories rendered in *pakem balungan* form. To take an example from a contemporary performance given by *dalang* Wija, we may transcribe it into a *pakem balungan* format very much like a synopsis as follows: Having been blessed by the God Siwa Mahadewa with all kinds of good fortune, king Jayantaka of the Kencana Pura kingdom obeys Sakuni's suggestion to initiate a ceremony (*rajasuya*), in which Jayantaka declares himself as king of kings. As the prime minister of Duryodana, Sakuni suggests this idea simply to undermine Yudistira's authority as the existing king of kings.

Learning of Jayantaka's intention, Kresna reports to Yudistira that the ceremony does not follow the traditional decorum, for Jayantaka has not yet proven his ability to defeat all existing kings, the prerequisite to being king of kings. Jayantaka simply trades his wealth for the support of many kings rather than demonstrating his personal qualities or superior abilities.

At the beginning, as long as Jayantaka can correctly rule the entire country, Yudistira reluctantly reacts against him for he is the worshipper (*bakta*) of Siwa Mahadeva. But after Yudistira's younger brother, Bima, emotionally decides to

challenge Jayantaka by himself, Yudistira prays to Siwa and carefully agrees to investigate if Jayantaka really has a good reason to be regarded as a king of kings. In response to Yudistira's invocation, the God Siwa and his wife goddess Giriputri disguise themselves as commoners, Putu Lingga Subawa and Kadek Parwati Bawaneswari Yonidewi, respectively, and seek to meet King Jayantaka.

Responding to Subawa's comprehensive questions in the meeting, Jayantaka claims himself better in many ways and wealthier than Yudistira, although he has not defeated Yudistira in a battle. On the other hand, Subawa proves that Yudistira is much richer and that years ago he had even brought Subawa miraculous fortune. Hearing Subawa's praise of Yudistira, Jayantaka becomes furious and tries to burn Subawa, who easily blows out the flames and immediately disappears. Jayantaka can only hear Subawa's voice prophesying that his kingdom will be destroyed in five minutes. Seeing Bima spinning his *gada* mace, all invited kings, guests, and people frantically vacate the place. The only one who rises to defend Jayantaka is his spiritual advisor, Bagawan Buh Barati, who is defeated by Bima. After Jayantaka is defeated by Yudistira and Kresna, commoners Lingga Subawa and Kadek Parwati revert to their true selves as the God Siwa and Goddess Giriputri. Siwa reiterates that Yudistira is the rightful king of kings; but he does not allow anyone to harm Jayantaka unless Jayantaka dares to repeat his mistake.

Dalang Sudarma of the north Bali may has included the *pakem balungan* in the following way: Unable to get a job, Bambang Kumbayana decides to go to Pancala to meet Sucitra, his former classmate, with whom he had made an agreement that whoever first gets a job will recruit the other to join him. On his way to join his

classmate he needs help to cross the sea. Kumbayana vows that any man who helps him across the ocean will be considered his brother; if a female helps him, he will take her as his wife. No sooner than he has made the vow, a celestial nymph called Nilotama transforms herself into a winged-female horse and helps Kumbayana across the sea. Soon after having been helped, Kumbayana has to marry the female horse. Eventually she bears a son, Aswatama, he who has the nails and mane (*gembal*) of a horse.

Having arrived in Pancala kingdom, unknown to Kumbayana his friend Sucitra has become king of the region and has changed his name to that of the honorable King Drupada. Not only that, but anybody who dares to call King Drupada by his former name Sucitra is subject to a severe punishment. Once Kumbayana reports to the front office security about his intention to meet Sucitra, Drupada's Prime Minister, Gana Medana, captures and tortures Kumbayana. Having broken Kumbayana's knees and elbows, Gana Medana throws Kumbayana out and he falls comatose in Kenawa forest.

Fortunately, a native cannibal, called Jim Bambang Putri rescues and cures Kumbayana with leaves. Jim also changes Kumbayana's name to that of Drona and gives him an invincible weapon namely Brahma Astra. As Jim predicted, Drona eventually becomes an admired teacher who teaches the art of weaponry and battle to the five Pandawa brothers and the 100 Korawa brothers of Duryodana. As a final test of their abilities he arranges for his students to fight Drupada. It turns out that Drupada is very powerful and can only be defeated after Drona gives Arjuna the invincible weapon Brahma Astra. In exchange for his life, Drupada finally agrees to

give Drona part of his kingdom. Drona builds his house and pedagogical center for the study of archery (*aji danurdara*) on the plot of land. Thus, the *pakem balungan* may exist as a synopsis.

2. *Pakem gancaran* “combined prose and poetry” is a story given in a combination of narrative prose and verse. Except for the clowning and the fact that the story is delivered in narrative form rather than in dialogue, this format contains almost all components of a complete play. The quintessence of *pakem gancaran* is a holy myth of deities and knights (*wiracarita* / *itihasa*) delivered in a combination of prose and poetry.²⁶ The poetics include verses in Balinese language (*gaguritan*), narrative prose and poetry (*gancaran*), and *pantun* rhyme (*peparikan*).²⁷ While the narratively expansive *kawi* language *kakawin* contains in its broad sweep and multiple cantos the material for many possible plays, each of these composed *gancaran* dramas deals only with a specific part of the main epic in high Balinese language. For example, *gaguritan* Salya focuses on the events in the ninth canto of the *Mahabharata*, when Lord Salya serves as commander-in-chief of the Korawa army in *bharatayuddha* war. The intimate drama of character is revealed in both narrative and dialogue form. This

²⁶ In *Various Quintessences (Aneka Sari, 1982)*, I N Tinggen provides four divisions of *itihasa*: the prose version of *Mahabharata (Parwa)*, *kakawin* poems in Kawi language, *kidung* verse in middle Javanese language, and *gaguritan/paparikan* rhyme in high Balinese language. *Pakem gancaran* is closest to the fourth category.

²⁷ The poetic rules and melody of the *gaguritan* are different from those of *kakawin*. The rule governing the *kakawin* is known as *guru-lagu*. *gaguritan* is composed of numerous stanzas of *macapat*, which is governed by *pada lingsa*. *Pada* concerns the number of lines in each stanza and the number of syllables in each line. *Lingsa* concerns the final vowel that concludes each line. *Pantun* or *peparikan* are verses found throughout the Malay world and the form requires a stanza of four lines, rhymed ABAB with the first two lines setting up a rhyme and sound pattern but having no link to the idea to be presented and the final two lines containing the actual meaning or message.

delivery of a small, emotionally focused section of the epic is close to, but not synonymous with, the form a *dalang* actually employs in performance.

3. *Pakem jangkep* (complete play) is the rendition of a whole play that has all the dialogue and includes the clown scenes.²⁸ This format is similar to the ‘script’ of a western play. The best-published example of this type of dramatic script is in *Pakem Wayang Parwa Bali*, which was transcribed by *dalang* Sumandhi. Numerous unpublished play scripts composed by students of STSI and collected in the STSI library also follow this format. Transcriptions and translations of performances found in *Asian Theatre Journal* 3.1 1986: 1-33 translated by Larry C. Reed and the *Asian Theatre Journal* 4.1 1987: 76-107 translated by Frederick deBoer also belong to this category.

In 1988/89, the tendency to fully document and notate performance practice was relatively new and associated with the development of materials which may be used in formally teaching the art. For example, I was a member of a Ford Foundation sponsored team that transcribed *wayang* performances. The purpose of the project was to make the performing texts available in *pakem jangkep* format for future generations of students. A student with a play in *pakem jangkep* format can immediately begin to impersonate characters in the *kakawin* with his *wayang* puppets.

²⁸ The clown characters like Twalen, Wredah, Sangut, Delem, and Condong always appear in *wayang* performance as the servants although they are not available in the *kakawin* poem and the Sanskrit version of the epic. Scholars consider them as proof that *wayang* theatre was not imported from India or China but invented by local artists with the story about their ancestors.

The art of the *dalang* is one of text building²⁹ with relation to other texts. A *wayang* performance is linked to understanding of the epic material in its most archaic form, *kakawin*; and its more accessible Balinese variant *gaguritan*. The *dalang* may use the barest of outlines (*pakem balungan*), or the more comprehensive treatments of *pakem gancaran* or *pakem jangkep* to help him in this endeavor. The following plate 2 makes visible the interrelationship between texts (from the narrative *kakawin* to a play *pakem* format; from the trunk of the *Mahabharata* to its derivatives; from a potential reservoir to an active repertory).

The interrelationship between texts is well exemplified by considering the story of Salya. In the plate 2 let us begin from left to right; that is from the play *Flirtatious (Pangipuk) Salya* to the *Gaguritan Commander in Chief of (Senapati) Salya*, and to the *Salya Parwa*.

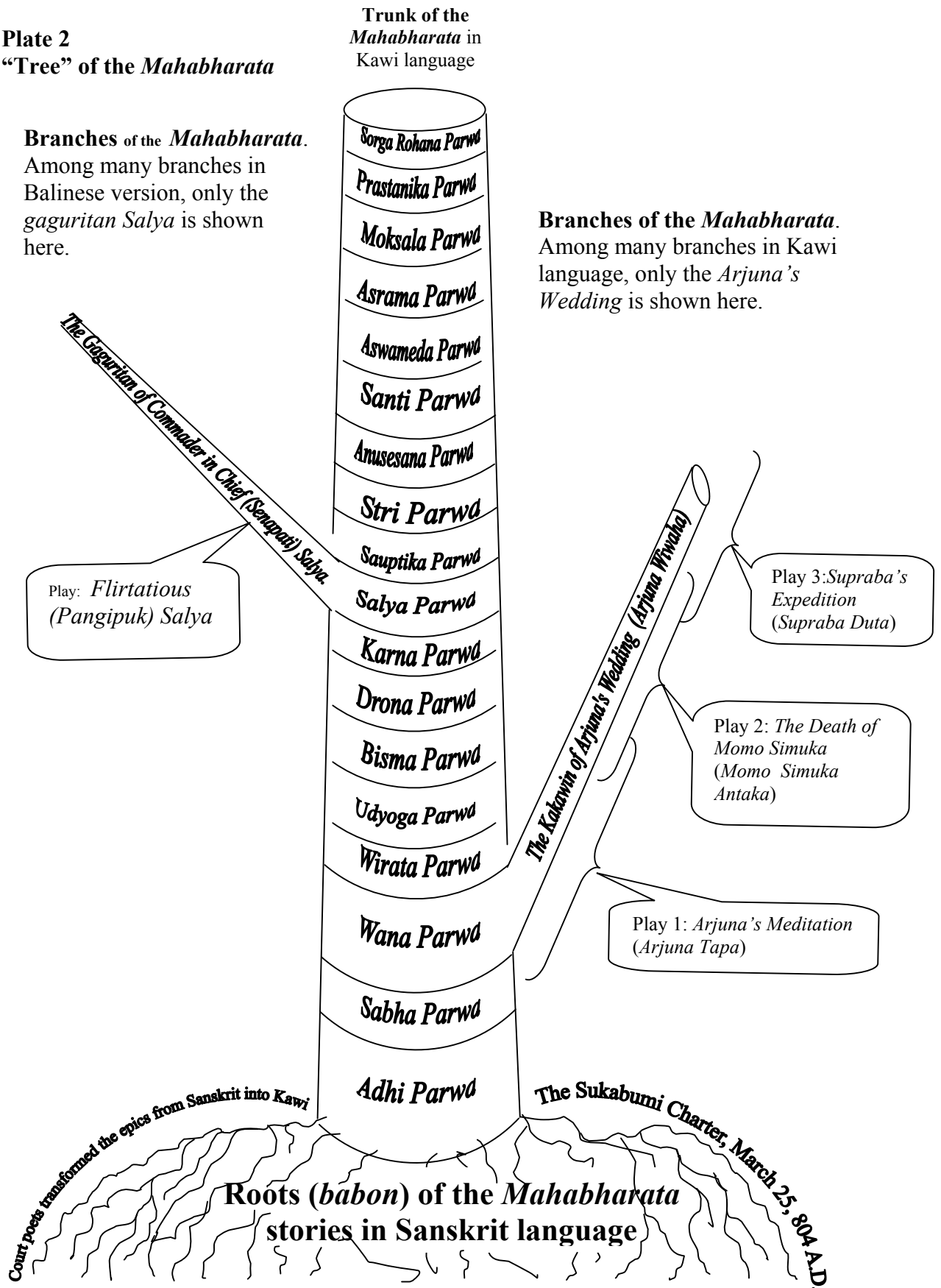
In *wayang kulit*, the play of Salya is known as *Flirtatious (Pangipuk) Salya*. It focuses on Salya's amorous encounter with his wife Satyawati before he goes to battle where he is killed. In the verse in Balinese language, the same play is known as *Gaguritan Senapati* (commander in chief) *Salya*, and focuses on Salya as the commander in chief of the Korawa army in the famous war of Bharatayuddha. In the *kakawin* version,

²⁹ Further reading on text building or text with its context can be found in Allen Backer, Poerbatjaraka's Comparative Study of Panji Cycles (*Tjeritra Pandji dalam perbandingan*), and Zoetmulder.

Plate 2
“Tree” of the Mahabharata

Branches of the Mahabharata.
 Among many branches in Balinese version, only the *gaguritan Salya* is shown here.

Branches of the Mahabharata.
 Among many branches in Kawi language, only the *Arjuna’s Wedding* is shown here.



the tale of Salya is known as *Salya Parwa*, the ninth *Parwa* (canto) of the 18 *Parwas*³⁰ in the *kakawin asta dasa Parwa*. A good *dalang* is aware of all these sources.

The quickest way to learn to perform *wayang* in contemporary Bali, especially for some beginning *dalang*, is to learn from several *pakem jangkep*. To memorize a *pakem jangkep* is similar to the way theatre students in the west learn the lines of a play. The only difference is that a *dalang* memorizes all the lines of all the characters plus all the narrative translations. However, beginners may also learn directly from their teachers, from friends, and by observing performances of other *dalang*. When they learn from the *pakem* or they borrow a play from another performer, they skip the task of transforming narrative ideas from *kakawin* or *gaguritan* into dialogue as discussed above. Instead, they jump directly to selecting a play from among the established repertoire of other *dalang*.

B. Selecting a Play: Its Premise and Choice

Selecting a play is an indispensable first step in preparing a performance. Major elements in the process of selection are; 1) the individual preference of the *dalang*, 2) the ritual context in which the performance takes place, and 3) knowledge about the patrons' intentions or other aspects of the performance situation which will make a particular story appropriate.

The selection of a particular story is partly based on the *dalang*'s individual interest and strengths. Later in this Chapter, I will discuss this aspect in greater detail

³⁰ The 18 chronological divisions of the *Mahabharata* are as follows: *Adi Parwa*, *Sabha Parwa*, *Wana Parwa*, *Wirata Parwa*, *Udyoga Parwa*, *Bisma Parwa*, *Drona Parwa*, *Karna Parwa*, *Salya Parwa*, *Sauptika Parwa*, *Stri Parwa*, *Anusesana Parwa*, *Santi Parwa*, *Aswamedha Parwa*, *Asramawesana Parwa*, *Moksala Parwa*, *Prastanika Parwa*, and *Sorga Rohana Parwa*.

under the section dealing with the methods a *dalang* uses to delivery his improvisation. The *dalang*'s personal taste will be more evident in a ceremonial-secular performance that demands more careful artistic arrangement than in the sacred-ritual-religious performance where religious commitment and devotion are more valued than art-entertainment. However, the *dalang*'s inclinations are only one element in choosing a story.

A major determinant in choosing the material is the religious celebration³¹ during which and for which *wayang* is performed. A *dalang* is traditionally expected to elucidate (*ngelampahang*) the ceremony being held. For example, when the performance is held in conjunction with a cremation ceremony, a *dalang* is expected to explain the ritualistic arrangements surrounding the journey of a soul, what ceremony can be done (and can do) for the soul, for the family that hosts the ceremony, and for the participants. While a performance at a cremation will deal with issues of death, one for a purification ceremony will show the philosophical foundation of the purification rite and why it is

³¹ Religious celebration is based on the basic beliefs of Hindus in five things (*Panca Srada*): God, Atman spirit, Karma, Reincarnation, and Moksa heavenly eternal life. This belief demands five divergent offerings (*panca yadnya*): for God (*dewa yadnya*), for ancestor (*pitra yadnya*), for priest (*resi-yadnya*), for humans (*manua yadnya*), and for the lower spirits (*bhuta yadnya*). The complete celebration for each of the ceremonies also demands five groups of performances (*panca prakara*): that of the priest with complex and colorful offerings, that of the *dalang* with his puppetry, that of the masked theatre to play the local chronicle/myth, that of the musicians with their gamelan music repertoires, and, finally that of the singer with *kidung* and *kakawin* poetry.

needed by those born within the week of *wayang* (*wuku wayang*)³² and in other specific conditions.³³

As an example *dalang* Wija performed *Jayantaka* for a family-shrine anniversary and in a connection with a contemporary political situation which had occurred in the village. The performance was held on May the 24th 2001 in conjunction with a family shrine ceremony. This type of ceremony is a typical occasion for a *wayang* performance for each family shrine and/or village temple. Shrine ceremonies usually occur every 210 days coinciding with an auspicious day of the Balinese *Wuku* calendar (see Eiseman 1996). A family shrine is a familial spiritual affiliation, where people with similar ancestral background and tradition throng every 210 days to worship their ancestors as their invisible protectors. In daily life, this spiritual affiliation conflates with the word *siwa*. For example, “I need to pray here because it’s also my mother’s *siwa*, although my father’s *siwa* is in that village.” In the play, all the parties (those affiliated to Jayantaka and those affiliated to Yudistira) glorify the God Siwa as a symbol of spiritual affiliation. In response to Kresna’s proposition to react against Jayantaka, Yudistira says: “I don’t react because Jayantaka is the worshipper (*bakta*) of the lord Siwa. I prevent myself from being *pramada* ‘disrespectful’ to the Lord Siwa.”

The other show on July 25th 2001 in the village of Naga Sepaha, Singaraja, north Bali, *dalang* Wayan Sudarma (popularly called *dalang* Darma) performed *wayang kulit* in conjunction with a tooth filing ceremony. This type of ceremony is another typical

³² Eiseman’s two-volume of Bali: Sekala and Niskala (1996) deals with traditional calendars in Bali and explains *wuku wayang*.

³³ Hooykaas (1973) describes conditions of a person that requires purification through the performance of the *Wayang Sapuhleger* story.

occasion for a *wayang* performance in which a *dalang* usually elucidates the meaning and purpose of tooth filing ritual based on a number of myths.³⁴

In Sudarma's show, the tooth filing ceremony as a ceremony for human maturity serves as a reason for selecting this particular story. The *dalang*'s dramatic dialogue provides hints as to the specific purpose of the ceremony and the psycho-cultural significant of the play. In the first meeting scene, Kumbayana tells his father that he has graduated but feels inferior for being unable to secure a job. He feels guilty for begging his parents for money. These are important messages for the audience and specifically for those undertaking the tooth filing ceremony that they must prepare to be financially independent from their parents. Through this ceremony Balinese adults are ritually and symbolically educated to understand that they must file six of the teeth at the top center of their mouth. Those six teeth symbolize the six internal terrorists/enemies (*sad ripu*) which must be aligned and brought under control. In the beginning of the fourth act, Kumbayana recommends that the five Pandawas and the 100 Korawa brothers stop playing ball and start practicing their weapons. To begin the fighting scene, Kumbayana tests his students by telling them to fight King Drupada.

The third consideration, along with personal interests and ceremonial demand, is the *dalang*'s reaction to the objectives of the patron who commissions the performance. Motives of sponsors may range from simply announcing the new name of an organization or person, to introducing a major public program, to serving in a heated political campaign. For example, in the late 1970s, the National Birth Control Department of

³⁴ Through a tooth filing ceremony Balinese teenagers or adults are ritually and symbolically educated to understand that they must file six of the teeth at the top center of their mouth. Those six teeth symbolize the six internal terrorists/enemies (*sad ripu*), which must be aligned and brought under control.

Indonesia (BKKBN) sponsored many *wayang* performances to promote birth control in even the most remotest of villages. From 1985-95 many *wayang* performances were sponsored by the National Agency for Promoting Pancasila Ideology. The selection of the story may facilitate the delivery of the sponsor's messages to the public; however, *dalang* are discouraged from allowing the sponsor's influence to overwhelm the performance such that they violate demands of the pre-existing story.

Dalang Sudarma thoughtfully improvised his story selection. Although he really planned to repeat the same story that I saw at Bungkulan village on the previous night, when he realized that I had come to another show he dropped the story of *Baby Gatutkaca (Jabang Tatuka)* which he has planned to perform on this occasion and substituted *Bambang Kumbayana* in its stead. Both plays are actually appropriate for the occasion of such ceremonies for the following reasons: For the tooth filing ceremony, the cutting off of Gatutkaca's fang or the Kumbayana's maturity must be elaborately expanded. For the wedding ceremony, the marriage of Gatutkaca's parent or Kumbayana's vow to marry a female helper must be elaborately emphasized. Elucidating the ongoing ceremony may also be accomplished by inventing or devising additional plots that link the religious-cultural phenomenon to the main story. Using his comic servants *dalang* Sudarma is very good at integrating additional plots into the main plot.

The literary source of selecting a play is the active repertoire and potential reservoir.³⁵ Active repertory includes all written *pakem* plays and stories. I have collected and transcribed 100 *pakem balungan* in my manuscript, *Top Fifty Active Stories (50 Lakon Teraktif Masa Kini)*. Most performances are based on stories in the existing active

³⁵ I use the term 'potential and active repertoire' following Kathy Foley (1979) who uses these terms in her dissertation on *Wayang Golek* theatre in West Java.

repertoire. More rarely a *dalang* may select a story from the potential reservoir. This potential repertory derives from all the potential sources of *wayang*. To understand this wider repertory the reader may conveniently refer to the many *kakawin* mentioned by Zoetmulder in his book, Kalangwan: A Survey of Old Javanese Literature (1974) (also see the Appendix A: Other relevant dramatic literature).

Most contemporary *dalang* do not slavishly imitate the play they may borrow from another *dalang*. The majority of *dalang* adopt some things from other *dalang*, but they do not perform it in exactly the same way even though they may adhere to the same story. *Dalang* will modify the story they select in accordance with the performing contexts. Inspired by their understanding of *kakawin*, *gaguritan*, and viewing of the same episode as rendered by a number of different *dalang*, most contemporary *dalang* rework whatever story they select, integrating other elements, plot ideas they have, or performance techniques that appeal to them as they construct their play. As a result each *dalang* using his/her distinctive resources, makes each show unique and his/her own.

C. Constructing a Play

The core of creativity or improvisation in the performance of *wayang* theatre is constructing a play that involves integrating many existing plots into new holistic compositions. The local term for this activity is weaving a play (*ngiketang satua*³⁶), which is similar to the term *sanggit* used by Javanese *dalang*. Frederick E. deBoer (1987) has given a good introduction to how a *dalang* constructs a play:

³⁶ The root word of the *ngiketang* is *iket*, which means ‘weave.’ The word *satua* is interchangeable with *lakon* or *lampahan* meaning play or story.

In the past, Balinese *Wayang Kulit* was an entirely oral-visual medium, and no “script” of any kind was employed. The *dalang* (puppeteer), basing his work on an intimate familiarity with the appropriate literature and a sure knowledge of the conventions of the established form, constructed his plays as he went along, without committing anything to writing. In preparing to give a performance he might consult his notebooks or *lontar* (palm-leaf manuscripts) to find appropriate poetic sentences for quotation during the event, but dialogue and stage business were never set down. (deBoer, *The Dimba and Dimbi* 77).

Here deBoer introduces three of six fundamental principles used in play construction: (1) “appropriate literature,” (2) “conventions of the established form,” and (3) “poetic sentences for quotation during the event.” To these, three more fundamentals must be added: (4) opposing forces, (5) creative construction, and (6) identification of preferable plots. The first principle I have added to deBoer’s list reflects the need to have at least two opposing forces (*rwa bhineda*) as the driving force in the play. The second principle concerns how to construct a play, which includes locating, transposing, and combining several selected plots from the reservoir. The final principle is the ability to identify preferable plots. I will discuss each of these fundamental principles below beginning with the three I have added and then returning to consider the three noted by deBoer.

C. 1. The basic dramatic ingredient: two opposing forces (*rwa bhineda*)

To construct a play a *dalang* first needs to establish at least two opposing forces (*rwa bhineda*), whose opposition will deliver the indispensable clash needed for a play. These forces will eventually appear as the protagonists versus the antagonists. The protagonists in *wayang* are the good characters, while the antagonists are the bad

characters. This opposition is displayed in the spatial dynamics of the form. The good characters are collected on the right (*tengen*) side of the *dalang* and they enter from the right side of the screen. All the bad characters belong to the *dalang*'s left side and must enter from the left side of the screen. However, the detailed actions of all the characters cannot be specified until the story is selected. As the triangle GSC suggests, to fit into a *wayang* play format, the characters are modified by the story, and the story in turn is modified by the particular genre in which it fits.

In Wija's *Jayantaka* contemporary show, the two opposing forces in the play are the Jayantaka's obsession to be the king of kings and Yudistira's decision to keep his status as the king of kings until there is a better king to replace him. In the subtext, the two antagonistic forces as the basic dramatic ingredients in building a play derive from the endless hostility between the 100 Korawa brothers and five Pandawa brothers.

Presiding over the Korawas, Sakuni cunningly persuades Jayantaka to claim to be king of kings although he knows it is against the Pandawa's supremacy. In case Jayantaka defeats the Pandawa in the inevitable battle, Sakuni tells his employer Duryodana to stand at the front. When the Pandawa win, Sakuni tells Duryodana to rush home immediately. On the side of the Pandawa, Kresna reports to Yudistira that Jayantaka's ceremony to be king of kings violates established rules and decorum. Along with Bima, Kresna demands that Yudistira, as a ruler, correct Jayantaka's ceremony.

In Sudarma's show, the two opposing forces as the basic dramatic ingredients in building a play is between the protagonist of Bambang Kumbayana (later known as Drona) versus the antagonist Sucitra (who becomes King Drupada). The initial motive of Kumbayana is simply to find a job with the help of his previous classmate Sucitra. The

second motive of Kumbayana is revenge, since Drupada was pompous for his authority and did not even make any effort to stop his minister Gana Medana from tormenting him. The rest of the parties are affiliated to the protagonist Kumbayana. Thus, the interplay between story and genre is explained below.

C. 2. The convention of the established genre/form

Considering the conventional interaction between story and genre of the *trisandi* GSC, weaving a play is basically done through arranging and re-arranging the plots (story) to suit the dramatic structure of the genre. Four required scenes and one optional scene allow the story-genre interaction to unfold:

1. Exposition: This scene is always in a meeting (*pagundem*) format, with one or a pair of court attendants. It customarily takes place in a court, but sometimes occurs in a forest, hermitage, roadside, and mountain.
2. Traveling scene (*angkat-angkatan*): This scene reinforces the rising dramatic action. The scene may be intensified by a love scene (*rebong*), complicated by a sad scene (*tangis*), enriched and broadened by a social commentary interlude (*ragragan*) between two servants or other low characters. Since the same dramatic characters featured in the first meeting experience this traveling scene, the exposition and the traveling scene may be perceived as a single act in the western dramatic sense.
3. Shifting to another party (*babad*): this scene is always initiated by the *kayonan* tree-of-life puppet, which signifies the appearance of an opposing party or meeting in another court, be it friend or foe of the first party. *Bapang Delem* (the scene for the boisterous court attendants of the antagonist party) usually follows

this *babad* in order to provide comic relief at the same time as the *dalang* establishes the new locale and sets the stage for the characters of the upcoming scene. The exposition of the second meeting, if included, is always shorter than the first meeting scene and the dramatic action is more intense. Another shorter traveling scene usually follows the second meeting. The *rebong* love scene and *tangis* sad scene may be inserted here, if not in the traveling scene earlier. The *ragragan* comic interlude may appear here again as comic comment may be inserted virtually anywhere within the plot.

4. Climax: this scene always features emotional debate and fighting scenes (*siat*) between the opposing parties. The show may conclude at this point.
5. Resolution (*panyuwud*): If there is a concluding scene it may feature the retreat (*kelilih*) of the protagonist until an unexpected ally comes to the rescue with divine, magic, or demonic power. The scene helps to conclude the show. This resolution is optional, and many *dalang* ignore it or integrate it into the climax with its fighting.

This dramatic structure should not be confused with the performance structure discussed in Chapter 2 above. Dramatic structure is confined to the area of the story in which narration occurs. Within it the story is adjusted, cropped, and rearranged to weave the drama within the constraints of the structure discussed above. The same story may be chopped, reconstructed, and represented in many different ways, as long as *dalang* can build an exposition, traveling scene, shifting to another party, and climax scene to fill the dramatic structure.

Dalang Wija's Jayantaka aptly suits the divisional convention of the established genre for such a story in that it is presented in four acts. Each act is separated by the appearance of the *kayonan* tree-of-life puppet by which the *dalang* provides a brief narration in Kawi language. The major audiences who do not or barely understand the Kawi language are able to deduce details of the drama from the humorous dialogue between the two comic servants who immediately appear after the *kayonan*.

The first act begins with a common exposition featuring a meeting scene between Yudistira and Kresna in Astina kingdom accompanied by two court attendants (the black chubby servant Twalen and his sharp quick son Wredah). The *tampak silir* song that traditionally illustrates the dramatic mood was totally omitted, perhaps to condense the first meeting. Or it is possible that Wija may have simply been disinterested in employing such a simultaneous-vocal-instrumental style of singing at this point in the performance.

During the meeting, Kresna reports about Jayantaka's defiance of the traditional decorum, but Yudistira not only reluctantly reacts against him but is also not even worried that Jayantaka may really replace him as king of kings. Suddenly, Bima warily appears in the meeting and severely protests his brother's hesitancy. The tension dramatically increases as Bima declares his own clear decision to punish Jayantaka without negotiation, and sadistically says to Yudistira: "I will alone sacrifice my own self to keep our dignity and your sovereignty. However, if I win you must be the ruler forever." Bima's emotional outburst causes Yudistira to shift his decision from ignoring Jayantaka's claim to actively investigating his activities.

Initiated by worshipping the God Siwa, Yudistira begins the traveling scene from his Astina kingdom to Jayantaka's kingdom of Kencana Pura, accompanied by his allies.

During this traveling scene, the main plot is embellished with many additional plots or anecdotes as comic relief presented by the servants Twalen and Wredah. The comic relief is loaded with all kinds of social criticism. To retain the unity of the plot, Twalen concludes these embellishments by linking them back to the main plot.

TWALEN (pretending to respond to a question from the followers). What did you say?.. Oh yes, you had better bring your own foods for this journey, just in case the court supplies are not available. If it is available you may eat doubly well. (To another question) What?.. Oh I don't know that!

WREDAH. What did he ask you Dad?

TWALEN (to Wredah). Will there be cockfighting and gambling? (To the followers) I don't know! But you had better bring your cock roosters. If there isn't any gambling, let us bake/cook and eat the cock roosters.

The switch to another party (*babad*) occurs in the second act that takes place in the palace of Kencana Pura kingdom. The scene begins with another pair of comic servants: the boisterous court attendance braggart Delem and his skeptical sluggish younger brother Sangut. They provide a *rageragan* 'farcical' interlude with music, dance, and song. They highly exaggerate the healthiness of their king, Jayantaka. Wija assigned the traditional *rebong* 'love' scene to several teenage' girls that assist Jayantaka in preparing his ceremony to be the king of kings (*rajasuya*). Featuring Jayantaka surrounded by many pretty women, golden ornaments, and pearls perfectly emphasizes his worldly extravagance like a prodigal boy.

The third act focuses on the rural commoners, Putu Lingga Subawa and Kadek Parwati Bawaneswari Yonidewi. Acting as villagers, the couple meets Jayantaka not to beg any help from him but to test his leadership ability. When Subawa proves that Yudistira's humanistic values are far better than those of Jayantaka, the king becomes furious and tries to burn Subawa.

As Subawa magically disappears, the fourth act begins. Bima's arrival in Kencana Pura, along with his brothers and allies, is a cue for an inevitable fighting scene. All of the invited kings and Korawa brothers rush away as they see Bima spinning his *gada* mace. After Jayantaka and his spiritual advisor Bagawan Buh Barati are both defeated, Putu Lingga Subawa and Kadek Parwati Bawaneswari Yonidewi reveal their true identity as the God Siwa and Goddess Giriputri.

Dalang Sudarma's *Bambang Kumbayana* also aptly suits the divisional conventions of the established genre for the story is presented in four acts. Each act is separated by the appearance of the *kayonan* tree-of-life puppet, by which the *dalang* provides a brief narration in Kawi language. The major audience who do not or hardly understand the Kawi language will be able to deduce the dramatic action from the humorous dialogue rendered by two comic servants, who immediately follow the *kayonan*.

The first act begins with a common exposition. This is the first meeting scene between Bambang Kumbayana and his father, Bhagawan Baradwaja, in the area of Luhuring Buana hermitage. Two court attendants, Kenyot and Tonglang, character both of whom have mouths like a horse, also participate in this first meeting scene. The *tampak silir* song that characterizes the dramatic mood precedes the first speech of each

character, except Tonglang, the second comic servant, who does not speak until the end of the meeting.

In the meeting Kumbayana tells his father Baradwaja that he has graduated but feels inferior for being unable to secure a job. He regrets that despite the fact that there are numerous schools and centers of education none of them can guarantee a person a job after graduation. Hegemonic officers appear as the object of social ridicule as Baradwaja responds that unfortunately there are too many senior employers who want to retain the status quo. Later, Kumbayana remembers that he made an agreement with Sucitra, his former classmate. The meeting concludes when Kumbayana decides to see his school friend, Sucitra, in Pancala in the hope that he will get a job.

The traveling scene begins as Kumbayana bids farewell to his father. The two servants Kenyot and Tonglang, who continually comment on each event and provide comic relief accompany Kumbayana on his journey. It has been noted before that the significant action in this traveling scene occurs when Kumbayana has to marry the female horse who is actually the long time cursed celestial nymph called Nilotama. This action is an excellent motivation for Kenyot to conclude the traveling scene by telling two ludicrous stories which serve as a kind of intermezzo to the action.

Conventionally, the first meeting between the protagonist Kumbayana and the nymph Nilotama is the potential place to include a flirtatious or love scene (*rebong*). But *dalang* Sudarma chose not to present a serious love scene here. The scene is narrated by the comic servant Kenyot and Tonglang who aptly comment on the main story by overlaying two ludicrous stories. In the three performances that I have recorded, Sudarma never builds the love scene for the main protagonist characters as most *dalang* in south

Bali traditionally do. Instead, he is the first *dalang* that I encountered in Bali who transforms the *genjekan* drunken-folk dance into a general plot of *wayang* love scene. This creativity allows *dalang* Sudarma to assign the love scenes to the comic servants and to liberally present it in any part of his performance, regardless of what story he selects. Transferring the love scene from noble characters to the comic servants allows him to include numerous lewd jokes that his audiences seem to enthusiastically responded to.

Shifting to another party (*babad*) occurs in the second act that takes place in Pancala kingdom. The scene begins with another pair of comic servants, the boisterous court attendant and braggart Delem and his skeptical sluggish younger brother Sangut. They provide a *ragragan* ‘farcical’ interlude and recount the new regulations of the kingdom.

As noted earlier, the dramatic tension increases when Kumbayana’s expectation to get a job fails. He is betrayed and is sadistically tortured. His long time friendship with Sucitra drastically changed into hostility and pledge to revenge. When Kumbayana falls comatose with his knees and elbows broken, it is traditionally the best moment to render the sad (*tetangisan*) scene. But again, just like the earlier *rebong* love scene, *dalang* Sudarma unfortunately chose not to present the sad scene in this place. Only the comic servant Kenyot and Tonglang briefly narrate and comment on the dramatic action without rendering anyone of the three traditionally established formats of the *tangis* ‘sad’ scene. A tendency to skip or ignore these highly stylistic sad and love scenes in *wayang* as seen in Sudarma’s performances is typical of the contemporary performances of the more recent *dalangs*, because the impulse to be a popular *dalang* is more prevalence than the commitment to fully master the art.

The third act takes place in the Kenawa forest. The *ragragan* ‘farcical’ interlude between Ngurah and Nani begins this scene. They first reveal numerous social gossips un-connected to the main plot and eventually they suggest how their king, demon Jim Bambang Putri, rules the forest. Having discovered Kumbayana in his comatose state, this native cannibal Jim fortunately feels compassion and sets about curing him with leaves. He also feeds baby Aswatama bananas. Jim gives Kumbayana a new name Drona and predicts that he will be a famous professor. This act concludes after Jim tells Drona to deliver an invincible arrow called Brahma Astra to Drona’s best student in the future (the not-yet mentioned Arjuna). As Drona leaving the Kenawa forest, a brief traveling scene (*angkat-angkatan*) concludes this act.

The fourth act features the children of the five Pandawas and the 100 Korawa brothers in the Astina kingdom. Similar to the previous acts, another pair of comic servants also begin the scene. After making a humorous interlude, the black chubby servant Twalen and his sharp quick son Wredah reveals that the Pandawa and Korawa children are sad because they could not find a way to retrieve their ball that fell down into a well. Drona approaches and impresses them that he can easily retrieve the ball with his supernatural power. The children of the Pandawas and the Korawas begin to study all kinds of weapon with Drona. The actual scene of study is entirely skipped by a narration and the *kayonan* puppet which is typically used as a time shift mechanism from one act to another. The story jumps into a final test of employing weapons in an actual battle. Drona tells his students to fight his enemy, King Drupada, who is easily defeated as Arjuna uses the invincible Brahma Astra arrow, which is given by Jim Bambang Putri through Drona. In exchange for his life, Drupada finally agrees to give Drona a part of his kingdom

whereupon Drona builds his house and study center. The performance ends here and most of the audience begins to leave. However, the entire performance is concluded only after the ritual purification (*panyudamalan*), in which *dalang* Sudarma invoked holy water to be used for the five adults who participate in the tooth filing ceremony. For information about this ritual purification ceremony, see “The Production of Holy Water: The Service of Puppeteer to Balinese Life Cycle Rituals” (Richmond and Sedana 2002).

C. 3. The method: spotting or locating, transposing, combining

Based on his familiarity with the conventions of the established dramatic structure of the genre, a *dalang* employs several different methods for weaving a play. In my experience there are three common methods that are used: locating, transposing, and combining two or more stories into one.

The spotting or locating (*nyompong*) method of weaving a play is quite common. In the story of *Arjuna Wedding* (*Arjuna Wiwaha*), for example, the first exposition may be done in many different parts of the story. The decision where to set the opening scene may be decided by the event for which a performance has been ordered. When the show is performed to celebrate a wedding ceremony, for example, the first exposition may begin with the meeting between the hero Arjuna and his consort, the angel Supraba in Indra’s heaven, to signify the complex passion³⁷ between the bride and groom.

When the performance is presented for a temple celebration (*dewa yadnya*) or for a priest ceremony (*rsi yadnya*) the first exposition may begin with the meeting scene between Arjuna and his two servants. On this occasion they discuss the need of human

³⁷ The conflict between passion and duty occurs before and after the scene. This choice of building an exposition would allow a *dalang* to integrate social rumor or gossip surrounding a couple into a *wayang* performance, so that the aesthetic and social drama are interrelated freely in a romantic way.

beings to undertake meditation at which time they are rewarded for their efforts. In this story Arjuna is rewarded a mighty weapon by the God Siwa. This earlier part of the story, known as *Arjuna's Meditation (Arjuna Tapa)*, allows a *dalang* to signify a great struggle to achieve a great success, to have a personal relationship with God or to experience God, beyond the temporal pleasure of deceptive transient maya.³⁸

Depending on a *dalang's* personal interests or the particulars of the ceremony for which the performance is being held, the first meeting scene of the *Arjuna Wiwaha* may take place in Amerta palace with the hero Arjuna's family, or in Indrakila mountain where Arjuna is tested by Rsi Padya (the god Indra in disguised), or in Himantaka, the palace of the demon king Niwatakawaca. Shifting the location of the dramatic action entails adjustments of dialogues; plot sequence, dramatic emphasis, edification, and diction.³⁹

Even when a *dalang* selects the same story with the same plot sequences, he never really performs his selected play in exactly the same way twice, for the emphasis, mood, running time, and speech will be different due the different audience and performance site. While all performances respond to audience stimulation, a form in which dialogue and other features are improvised allows for more flexibility and thus makes each performance unique and distinct. For example, if Shakespeare's *Tempest* were performed in the *wayang kulit* form, the *dalang* might well construct the plot beginning with the

³⁸ The servant puppets (*punakawan* or *panasar*) usually assume a "hyper" role because they are conventionally permitted to go back and forth across the border of inside and outside the story (referring often to themselves as participants in the ceremony concerned, as well as participating in the epic action) as well as transcending the border between past, present, and future.

meeting scene between Prospero and Ariel, or he might begin with a meeting between Caliban and his islanders, etc. He would not be obliged to begin when the boat of the Duke is capsized in the storm. The *dalang* would also be free to alter the emphasis of his version of the *Tempest* in many different ways. The work might even be made into a tragedy, a comedy, or a tragic-comedy, as he likes. The patrons cannot control a *dalang*'s creativity in plot, although they are charged to initiate and arrange for the venue, time, and set the fees of the performance.

In *dalang* Wija's *Jayantaka*, the method of building the play is known as spotting or locating or exposing (*nyompong*). Without presenting any of his previous background, Jayantaka as a worshipper of Siwa is obsessed by his intention to be king of kings. From the first exposition through the end of the play all plot elements are built in response to Jayantaka's unjustified obsession to be king of kings.

The method of building Sudarma's *Bambang Kumbayana* in the first three scenes is spotting or locating or exposing (*nyompong*) and in the fourth scene he uses the jumping method (*nyalogcag*). Without presenting proper information leading up to the moment, Kumbayana is directly revealed to have graduated and being jobless, while Sucitra is appointed as a king in Pancala with a new name king Drupada. The female horse having a baby miraculously turns herself into her original form as the celestial nymph Nilotama. The story within each of those spots or expositions occurs one after another in a narrative sequence.

However, in building the fourth scene, *dalang* Sudarma employs the *nyalogcag* 'jumping' method, because he skips the moment when Drona teaches his students, the

³⁹ Sense and emotional pronunciation for every line depends on the mood and type of character.

Pandawa and Korawa brothers. In other words, the training is not shown but is very briefly narrated in Kawi language while the *kayonan* tree-of-life puppet appears on the screen. Thus, the last scene is almost like two scenes combined into one. In the first half, Drona suggests that those who are born in the warrior caste should master the art of weaponry and he quickly agrees to teach them, but the *kayonan* tree-of-life puppet immediately intercedes with a brief narration, telling them that Drona's teaching has done very well. The second part of the scene features a final examination, in which Professor Drona requires his students to attack King Drupada until the king is defeated and agrees to give parts of his kingdom to Drona. That is how Drona affords to build his Sukolima hermitage as the center of training weapons (*aji danurdara*).

Regarding the second method of weaving a play, transposing/jumping (*nyalogcag*), a *dalang* may integrate fragments of linear narrative story—say from A through Z—into a continual-fragmented story—say beginning from AB going to KL and finally ending with XYZ. In other words, rather than presenting a sequential narrative story (*lakon banjaran*) of Karna, king of Awangga, from his birth through his death, a *dalang* may reconstruct the plot by emphasizing how his mother Kunti first deserted him when he was a baby and finally begged him for a reconciliation after he was appointed by the oldest 100 Korawa brothers, Duryodana, to be a king of Awangga kingdom (*lakon jumenengan*). A *dalang* may reshape the story from a linear autobiographic story to a fragmented sequence of events. In other words, it becomes a “transposing/jumping story.” The reverse is also true. It is also possible that a few fragmented elements of a play might be reshaped into a chronological narrative.

In the third method used for constructing a play, a *dalang* may integrate (*nunggalang*) two or more stories into one. For example, in the play of *Kunti Yadnya*, Duryodana (the Korawa antagonist) disturbs a ceremony of the heroic Pandawas. To reconstruct it, a *dalang* may substitute the antagonistic character of Duryodana with another demonic king from a different play, saying that this demon king is hired by Duryodana to harm the Pandawas. While true to the intent of the story, this opens the door for additional inventive opportunities.

Whatever event motivates the construction of the play, whether the artist's personal interests or the needs of the ceremony for which the play is being performed, the play construction remains in accordance with the conventional set dramatic structure of the genre arranged chronologically one after another: exposition (*pagundem*), traveling scene (*angkat-angkatan*), shifting scene (*babad*) of the opposing party, and the climax (*siat*). This dramatic structure corresponds with the musical repertoires through which the musicians help to reinforce the dramatic effect of each scene.

C. 4. Preferable plot

The preferable plot in weaving a play is one that allows a *dalang* to present complete emotions (love, sadness, comedy, tragedy, misunderstanding), show conflicting interests of the characters, reveal gaps between personal needs and social norms, and execute fighting. The underlying motivation behind this diversity is the need to provide the audience with maximum variety in a wholistic performance. The variety of emotions in the story is reflected in the variety of musical pieces in the show. In case a *dalang*

skips one scene in the story, say the love scene, the musicians may ignore musical accompaniment appropriate to that scene in the genre.

The complete dramatic sensation is said to represent and to pacify all six tastes (*sad rasa*): sweet, bitter, salt, hot, sour, and tart. The element of conflict leading to fighting always merits the *dalang*'s consideration in selecting, and constructing a play. As suggested by Schechnerian performance theory— reciprocal influences within social and aesthetic drama— gossip, rumors, political and social satire are always present as the subtexts helping the *dalang* to construct his play.

The most preferable plot, however, is the plot that fits a particular event for which the *wayang* is performed. The Puppeteer/Puppetry book, *Ilmu Pedalangan/Pewayangan*, suggests that the story for a birthday ceremony should tell about the birth of a great man, for example, *The Birth of Kresna-Baladewa*, *The Birth of Sutasoma*, etc. The story appropriate for a wedding ceremony ought to be *Samba Steals Princess Yadnyawati*, *A Contest to Win Princess Drupadi*, *Arjuna's Wedding*, etc. (Sugriwa, 7-12). Stories suitable for cremation ceremonies include *Bima Goes to Heaven*, *The Cooling of Hell*, etc. For ceremonies to honor the gods (*dewa yadnya*) the story may be *Churning the Milk Sea (Samara Mentana)* which tells how the gods and demons used a huge snake to transform the world mountain into a churn from which divine nectar, *amerta*, emerged, or *The Burning God of Love (Smara Dahana)*, which tells how the God Siwa becomes angry when he realizes that he is in the power of Kama, the god of love and turning his third eye on the hapless god burns away his body. Plots that are rich, diverse, complex, and appropriate to the occasion are prized.

Dalang Wija's Jayantaka is dramatically constituted not to incorporate all the preferable plots and moods mentioned above, because it has a very 'light' love scene and lacks a sad scene. Although the *rebong* 'love' scene is aptly attached to feature the extravagance of Jayantaka's life style with many women, the scene lacks an intense and solid emotional motivation. It has more to do with satisfying the structure of the established genre as discussed above rather than with the dramatic action. In other words, this sudden *rebong* love scene is not demanded by the plot of the dramatic action but it merely fills and completes the genre.

To enrich the main plot, *dalang* often integrates several supporting plots. To embellish the main plot in contemporary performance, *dalang Wija* incorporates several plots that obviously reflect current social issues. The servants Twalen and Wredah debate the pros-and-cons of being fast and slow. In the current business climate Wredah is in favor of moving quickly but Twalen is opposed to this idea.

WREDAH.⁴⁰ If you go slowly, you will be behind!

TWALEN. If you go quickly you will miss many valuable things along your way.

WREDAH. If you can build a house in 15 days rather than 30 days, many people will hire you.

TWALEN. Okay, one week after you built, the house collapses; who would trust you to build a house any more? So too, my son, you study so much and so quickly, but after all you master nothing. You know ten dances, but you can do none of them perfectly.

⁴⁰ Pursuant to the conventional format of the *pakem* plays, the names of dramatic characters are capitalized to suggest that they have the following dramatic lines.

In various ways and moments Delem exaggerates the wealth of the Kencana Pura kingdom of having tons of gold and jewels.

DELEM. The roads along this kingdom are paved with five meters of gold.

SANGUT. You exaggerate; it is perhaps only two centimeters.

DELEM. I said approximately.

Delem shows Sangut how many golden rings with various pearls he wears on his fingers. His pinky can only accommodate 7 rings; his ring finger has 10 rings; his middle finger has 12 rings; his index finger has 10 rings, and his thumb has 5 rings. He opens his mouth to Sangut to show him how many golden teeth he has. Delem says: “Look here Ngut! Can you see your reflection in my golden teeth?”

Additional plots recounted by Subawa in the third act are well-integrated and support the main plot, because Subawa’s ludicrous stories about his sudden fortune directly counters and proves Jayantaka’s misperception to Yudistira’s reality. When Jayantaka claims himself to be wealthier than Yudistira, Subawa promptly proves that Yudistira is much richer. Subawa confesses that when he begged Yudistira for a fortune years ago, Yudistira warned that the fortune may bring him difficulties. Since Subawa insisted, Yudistira gave Subawa a diamond Indramaya (a gift from the god Indra) that magically brought him miraculous fortune in just two weeks. Since that time, the fortune really brings robbers and thief to Subawa’s fancy house and threatens his life. Therefore, Subawa declares that the best way to live is to be a commoner, rather than wearing kilos of golden ornaments like Jayantaka is want to do.

In the contemporary show of Sudarma's *Bambang Kumbayana*, in terms of the vocabulary of actions and incidents integrated in this story, this is one of the ideal plays of developing a *wayang*. The play includes an ample variant of preferable plots (in the hermitage, in the ocean, in the palace, in forest, etc.) that satisfies the structure of the established genre. The play also contains a complete set of dramatic emotions or moods which expand and intensify the tension. Such emotions include happiness, ferociousness, grief, love, treachery, revenge, etc. which ultimately intersect one another.

Although *dalang* Sudarma chose to transform the folk drunken dance into his *wayang* love scene, the main plot still has potential room to build an interesting love scene, whether to make the scene ludicrous when the bride is still in the horse form or passionately realistic after the magical horse reverts herself into a beautiful angel Nilotama. It also has the potential for building the conventional sad scene, when Kumbayana is suffering from being tormented, although the *dalang*, again, did not to choose to employ its use in his performance.

In addition to the main story, *dalang* Sudarma excerpts and incorporates many interesting plots that are superimposed on one another without obscuring the main plot. His most important creativities are due to his ability to create and incorporate several hilarious independence plots which he freely uses in every performance regardless of the story he selects. If we were to be concerned with 'unity of plot,' it would have been a lot better for him to incorporate only additional plots that complement, comment on, and reinforce the main or master plot.

Additional plots presented in act one are well-integrated and support the main plot, because Kenyot and Tonglang's two ludicrous stories are in response to

Kumbayana's destiny to wed the chubby female horse. This ludicrous wedding reminds Kenyot to share his memory (in a storytelling manner) with Tonglang (and the audience) about his stepmother's love affair with his father's male horse when he was still a little boy. The second memory that Kenyot shares is about his father's luck years ago when he unexpectedly found a nymph's towel drifting in the river which caused a nymph to wed his father in order to retrieve her towel.

These two additional plots are unified and well-integrated with the main plot. However, additional plots presented by the comic servants Ngurah and Nani in the beginning of act three are not very well connected to the main story, although the topics of these plots concern hot social issues. The main plot is about Jim's compassion and intention to cure the comatose Kumbayana and his son Aswatama. The additional plots concern the scandal of the love affair of the comic servants. It is Ngurah's intention to seduce Nani's teenager wife and his plan to divorce his legitimate wife. These are plots that do not correspond to the theme of the main plot and hence are dramatically irrelevant, although the plot aptly does accommodate Sudarma's obsession to feature the drunk dance instead of using the traditional *rebong* love scene.

Having observed and recorded three of his full performances, the strength of *dalang* Sudarma's theatrical creativities does not lie in his ability to change his voice to aptly suit each of the comic characters, but it is due to his ability to create a 'counter plot.' For example, by the end of the first meeting scene, Tonglang makes comments to the scene by presenting an anecdote for how selfish his father was to him. This anecdote is quite the opposite of the main plot that features a mutual love, sharing, caring, and

respect between Kumbayana as a son and Baradwaja as a father. On the other hand, Kenyot's response invariably provides a further counter argument. For example:

TONGLANG. Wish I had a nice father like this priest Baradwaja. But my father was quite a cheap skate and was so mean to me, so that now I have become an illiterate man forever. I simply requested a motorcycle to go to school, but my father didn't grant me one. If he were still alive here, I would twist his head upside down now.

KENYOT. Wait a minute! Your mouth is wrong. When you requested a motorcycle, was that really for school or actually for seeking prostitutes?

TONGLANG. When have you ever seen me looking for a prostitute?

KENYOT. Two days ago! Where did you take the white lady with a sexy pants?

TONGLANG. Oh, that was only once, just one time! Never before!...

This contrasting method allows *dalang* Sudarma to expose many domestic issues that are both interesting and even embarrassing to the audience, but which may also be illuminating or instructive, since comedy typically teaches audiences by showing the defectis of human beings. *Dalang* Sudarma has rich, creative imagination when he embellishes the main story with plots commenting on the main plot. Special among them is the plot of the drunken songs and dances (*genjekan*) which he incorporates in lieu of the conventional *rebong* 'love scene.'

C. 5. Literary source

Another principle in constructing a play, de Boer's "appropriate literature," depends on the type of *wayang*⁴¹ that is being performed. Each *wayang* type has its distinctive main literature that contains potential and active repertoire. For example, *kakawin Ramayana* is the main literature for *wayang kulit Ramayana*; *kakawin Bharatayudda* is the main literature for *wayang kulit Parwa*. *Kidung Malat* (the Panji cycle) is the main literature for *wayang kulit Arja* and *wayang kulit Gambuh*; *Kidung Tantri* is the main literature for *wayang kulit Tantri*, etc.

The literature of all *wayang kulit* types consists of all the existing dramatic resources in Bali. As previously noted, P. J. Zoetmulder (1974) has given an excellent overview of 19 major dramatic literary works appropriate for *wayang* theatre (see the Appendix A: Other relevant dramatic literature). Since each of these manuscripts has been discussed briefly in Zoetmulder's Kalangwan: A Survey of Old Javanese Literature (1974), I will not repeat them here. Many complete manuscripts are kept in numerous public and private libraries throughout the island. In my own library, for example, I have complete *kakawin* of the *Ramayana*, *Bharatayuddha*, and *Arjuna Wiwaha*. Both the *kakawin* (in Kawi language) and the translations (in Balinese language) are written in Balinese scripts/letters.

Furthermore, due to the ritualistic, cultural, and educational significance of *wayang* performance, a *dalang* also needs non-dramatic literature to supplement fictional materials. Supplemental literature deals with religion, ethics, ritual, culture, mythology,

⁴¹ *Wayang Parwa*, *Wayang Ramayana*, *Wayang Gambuh*, *Wayang Tantri*, are examples of some of these types.

and moral values. Ida Bagus Gde Agastia⁴² briefly describes all existing Hindu literature, including dramatic literature, used by scholars, priests, artists, and others in Bali. A *dalang* ought to be familiar with these materials. Although these are non-dramatic works, a *dalang* often quotes them during performance. Morality, ethics, and social, political or cultural issues are important, because the philosophical foundation of *wayang*—as partly alluded to earlier in the *wayang* mythology—is purification and edification. For example, two books, *Nitisastra* and *Sarasamuscaya* are non-dramatic material, but the passages are widely quoted and sung by *dalangs* and other artists in Bali. In this respect a *dalang* is like a minister who refers to certain verses and chapters of the Bible. For example, a passage of *Nitisastra* that all *dalang* can recite without fail reads:

Nora hana mitra mangluwihi waraguna maruhur
Nora hana sih mangluwihi sihikang atanaya
Nora hana satru mangluwihi geleng hana ri hati
Nora hana sakti mangluwihi daewa juga ya sakti

There is no friend better than one's useful knowledge.
There is no love truer than a parent's love.
There is no enemy more powerful than one's internal hatred.
There is nothing stronger than *karma*, fate.

For such supplemental literature, Ida Bagus Gde Agastia gives a brief overview. For example, *Atma Prasangsa*, a sacred knowledge of what a human spirit experiences after death, is employed very frequently in *wayang* theatre.

⁴² Agastia, IBG is the author of An Introduction to Hindu Literature in Indonesia (*Kesusastraan Hindu Indonesia Sebuah Pengantar*), 1994.

Another literary source is the *Pustaka Raja Purwa*, consisting of 27 books, written by Ronggowarsito. Although most *dalangs* and scholars generally suggest that the *Pustaka Raja* is the literary source for *wayang* in Java, while *kakawin* is the source for *wayang* in Bali, my research suggests that the Balinese *dalang* are more influenced by the repertoires of *Pustaka Raja Purwa* than the Javanese *dalang* are influenced by the *kakawin*. This may be due to the fact that many Balinese *dalang* are fond of excerpting stories from the Javanese *komik* books and *lakon carangan* (“branch stories” which are Javanese stories which have elaborated and expanded on the epic stories contained in the Sanskrit epics.) *Dalangs* have more opportunities to read books about Javanese *wayang* and to watch performances of Javanese *wayang* on TV than do the Javanese *dalang* have to experience Balinese versions. With the establishment of the formal school training at the high school and university of performing arts in Bali, there came the opportunity for Balinese *dalang* to undertake research⁴³ on Javanese *wayang* or to invite *wayang* instructors from Java to come to Bali. Thus, the literature includes dramatic, non-dramatic, and pan-Indonesian *wayang*-related materials.

In the contemporary play, the source for building Wija’s *Jayantaka* and its overlaying stories is taken from many traditional folk literatures. These include such fairytales as the *Ms Rich and Ms Poor*, *An Orphan*, *Onion and Garlic*, *Pucung* ‘Bottle’ verse, *kakawin Bharatayuddha* (about the war of Bharata’s descendants), and the

⁴³ My government-sponsored research collaboration with the Javanese *dalang* Dru Hendro in 1994 allowed me to further learn Javanese *wayang* from *dalang* Purbo Asmoro, *dalang* Bambang Murtiyoso, *dalang* Sri Joko, as well as others. In the research, it was obvious that I learned more from Hendro than he did from me. The research results, including stories I collected and edited from books and the internet, are for our students at the Indonesian State College of Arts (STSI) in Bali. Those students may share the stories with other *dalang* in their village.

kakawin Arjuna Wiwaha. Reading *kakawin* is still the most popular ritual reading activity throughout the island of Bali.

When the comic servant Twalen criticizes the negative aspects of ritual reading activity, he mentions seven competing *kakawin* reading groups (*pasantian*) in the village.

TWALEN. Ritual reading activity is supposed to be an activity where you experience peace. It does not cause participants to fight among themselves, as we observed last time. Such a ritual reading always involves interpretations ‘hermeneutic circles.’ It’s okay to have different interpretations among the readers and interpreters, because no one knows for sure the absolute correct meaning of the text, just as no one exactly knows God. The differences must be absorbed rather than taken personally as a reason to fight each other, so that we may find the essence of the essence ... of the *kakawin* reading.

WREDAH. What’s the essence of all essences?

TWALEN. That is God that no one really knows.

In Sudarma’s *Bambang Kumbayana*, since his story is adopted from the *komik* pictured-story book and not from a *kakawin* poem, the job of transforming the narration into dialogue was not needed. The *komik* books typically provide ample dialogue and brief narration, often only to suggest that the story shifts into a different place or jumps from one point to another after several years have elapsed. The title ‘Bambang’ in front of a name, essentially similar to ‘Mister’ is a common clue in the *komik* story: Bambang Kumbayana, Bambang Putri, Bambang Ekalawya, etc. In *kakawin* poetry a similar title in front of a name, if any, is ‘Sang:’ Sang Kumbayana, Sang Putri, Sang Ekalawya, etc.

As far as the source is concerned, this *Bambang Kumbayana* story is not a new story. It is derived from the *komik* books and hence the paradigm of creating a story with all its details does not apply to this story. But the source for building overlaying stories and the verbal creations and improvisation is taken from many traditional folk literatures. These include at least the myth of *Rajapala* (regarding a nymph who marries a man), *Aji Putra Sasana* (regarding the duty a son owes his parents), the *kakawin Bharatayuddha* (about the war of Bharata's descendants), and the *kakawin Arjuna Wiwaha*.

For the *tetandakan* vocal accompanying the first entrance scene, *dalang* Sudarma recites the first stanza or the introduction of the *kakawin Arjuna Wiwaha*. An unusual lyrical choice he made was that he did not differentiate his *tetandakan* vocal entering-scene for *Wayang Parwa* from that of the *Wayang Ramayana* as most *dalangs* are supposedly to do. When he performed *Wayang Ramayana* in the village of Ambengan on the day prior to this performance, he did not select a stanza from the *Ramayana kakawin*, but recited the same stanza above that he also used for his *Wayang Parwa*.

C. 6. Excerpting plays, plots, and passages from the epic and the *kakawin*

A major part of the improvisation in the performance of *wayang* involves a *dalang*'s ability to excerpt a desired play, plot, or just a few passages out of the existing dramatic repertoire. As mentioned earlier, the repertoire includes the *kakawin Ramayana* and *kakawin Bharatayuddha/Mahabharata*.⁴⁴ Indian versions of the *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* are quite long, even longer than the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad*. The *Mahabharata*

⁴⁴ The most frequent excerpts from the 18 *Parwas* of the *Mahabharata* or *Astadasa Parwa* come from the *Adi Parwa*, *Sabha Parwa*, *Wana Parwa*, and *Wirata Parwa*. Less frequent excerpts are taken from the *Udyoga*, *Sauptika*, *Stri*, *Santi*, *Aswamedha*, *Asramawusana*, *Moksala*, *Prastanika*, and *Suarga Rohana Parwas*. When the excerpt is

has eighteen chapters (*Astadasa-Parwa*) and the *Ramayana* has seven cantos (*Sapta Kanda*). However, as has been stated, each dramatic genre has only limited room to accommodate the material taken from these epics in its scene structure. For example, the standard love scene, *Rebong*, and the sad scene, *Tangis*, of the genre are not supposed to be played more than once in a show. Clearly there could never be a single performance presenting either epic in its entirety. Likewise, for the stories of the witch *Calonarang*, the greedy brother *Cupak*, the tales of a prince *Panji*, the animal fables *Tantri Kamandhaka* or *Pancatantra*, and other relatively shorter local stories, a *dalang* always presents an excerpt rather than the whole.

The premise of appropriateness discussed in selecting a play also applies to the method of excerpting a story. The five religious celebrations of *panca yadnya* again play a significant role since these religious events are still the major venues for *wayang* in Bali. Moral edification and a spiritual orientation underlie the performance. Of the five types of performers who commonly appear in a ritual celebration—priest, *dalang*, musician, mask dancer, and singers/chorus—the priest is the most soft spoken, tranquil, and introverted in his demeanor. His role is unlike that of a Christian preacher who publicly shares his knowledge in a church in sermons and public readings of religious texts. Of the remaining artists the *dalang* is perhaps the most well-trained, in religious and moral issues; hence, he is expected to speak publicly about issues of significance ranging from the comic to the tragic, from the profane to the holy. In a sense, one can argue that the priest and the *dalang* are analogues to each other. What the priest silently executes on the eternal plane, the *dalang* voices for the mundane.

from the *Bharatayudda*, most often it is taken from the *Bisma Parwa*, *Drono Parwa*, *Karna Parwa*, or *Salya Parwa*.

C. 6. a). Excerpting plays

Every *kakawin* may be divided into several plays. The simplest way to decide how many plays may be derived from a single *kakawin* is by counting how many times the climax /fighting scene occurs in the *kakawin*. Each complete play has to have one climax that is always a battle scene. The genre needs a battle scene but can accommodate only one per show. To clarify how a *kakawin* may be excerpted into several plays, let us take a simple example from the *kakawin Arjuna Wiwaha* or *Arjuna's Wedding*. There are at least three popular plays that have been derived from this *kakawin*: *Arjuna's Meditation (Arjuna Tapa)*, *The Death of Momo Simuka (Momo Simuka Antaka)*, and *Supraba's Expedition (Supraba Duta)*. Before we explore the different emphasis in each of these plays, let us refer to the Plate 2 above, which visualizes the interrelationship between the *Mahabharata*, the *kakawin* of *Arjuna's Wedding (Wiwaha)*, and the three following plays.

In the *Arjuna's Meditation*, there is an incident at the beginning of the *kakawin*, showing a meeting scene between Arjuna and his relatives. The sad scene can be included in this meeting that reveals the kingdom has been taken by their Korawa foes. This prompts Arjuna to seek invincible power through his meditation on Indrakila mountain in order to help his brother Yudistira regain their lost kingdom. From this first exposition through Arjuna's travel to meditate is added to the *kakawin*. The love scene comes when the seven celestial nymphs attempt to seduce Arjuna as he meditates. Then comes an oral examination given by the Sage Padya, who is the god Indra in disguise. The climax is the fighting scene between Arjuna and the all-powerful God Siwa who is disguised as a hunter named Kirata. The story is concluded when the gods award Arjuna

an invincible weapon and invite him to help them by defeating Niwatakawaca, a demon who is attacking heaven. This episode ends in the middle of the entire story⁴⁵ of the *kakawin*.

In the *The Death of Momo Simuka* is also excerpted from the same *kakawin*. It begins with a meeting scene in Himantaka kingdom. In this scene the demon king Niwatakawaca sends Momo Simuka, his powerful prime minister, to Mount Indrakila to disrupt Arjuna's meditation. After the traveling scene of going to the mountain, a nymph disguised as Arjuna's wife, Drupadi, cries (sad scene) and begs Arjuna to stop his vain meditation and, instead, to make love to her. Unsuccessful in seducing Arjuna, the fake Drupadi⁴⁶ returns to the celestial nymph she really is, cursing Arjuna to be celibate sometime in the future. Momo Simuka transforms himself into a wild boar and causes the mountain to quake. Startled by the uproar, Arjuna comes out of his meditation and discharges his arrow at the boar at the same moment as the God Siwa, who has transformed himself into a hunter called Kirata, shoots his arrow. The fighting scene comes as Arjuna and Kirata contend over who has killed the boar. The play concludes very much as in the first model above when Arjuna is awarded the invincible weapon by the God Siwa.

⁴⁵ The stock characters and their action remain the same, while the genre's structure is slightly adjusted, by putting the sad scene at the beginning of meeting scene.

⁴⁶ The sudden appearance of princess Drupadi, Arjuna's wife, is a dramatic addition to the original text, to allow the inclusion of familial daily issues. The disguised nymph can be made to say, among other things: "Oh my Arjuna, my dearest beloved husband, you have left me alone for years. When will your meditation be completed? Don't you love me and long for me? I am longing for you so much, my Arjuna. I love you Arjuna. Alas, after all, you just sleep here and neglect your duty to your wife and children, don't you! Meditation is a mere nonsense reason to leave me alone; otherwise you would be happy to go home with me now."

Finally, in the third example, *Supraba's Expedition* begins from the middle of the *kakawin*, during the meeting scene between the god Indra and Arjuna who are devising a scheme to defeat Niwatakawaca, enemy of the gods. To do this the god Indra sends the most beautiful celestial nymph, Supraba, and Arjuna on a mission. According to the scheme Supraba is required to pretend to fall in love with Niwatakawaca and to lure him into revealing the spot of his secret power, so that Arjuna can immediately shoot him in that vulnerable spot, causing his death.

The sad scene is done right after the meeting scene, as Supraba feels overwhelmed by uncertainty of what awaits her at the hand of Niwatakawaca. The scene is followed by Supraba's travelling scene with Arjuna to the kingdom of Himantaka. The second meeting scene includes Supraba's seduction of Niwatakawaca and her ruse used to find out the point on his body of his secret power. Once Niwatakawaca tells her that his power is hidden at the root of his tongue, the fighting scene between Arjuna and Niwatakawaca begins. After the demon's death the play concludes with Arjuna's wedding to the seven celestial nymphs. Although the story and characters unfolds very much like the *kakawin*, this excerpt is not called *Arjuna's Wedding*, but *Supraba's Expedition (Supraba Duta)*, because the emphasis is given to Supraba's hoax. We can clearly see from these three examples how excerpts derived from a single *kakawin* may produce quite different plays.

C. 6. b). Excerpting motifs

Another kind of excerpting is to inset into the story standard plot motifs which are not in the original *kakawin* but are episodes that can easily be recycled from story to story. For example, a popular plot motif that contemporary *dalang* often excerpt includes

a fighting scene between two mythological figures. This may be the mythical beast *Barong* and witch *Rangda*, the ‘thousand-eyed demon’ *Buta Siu* and the ‘nine-eyed demon’ *Buta Sia*, the eagle *Garuda* and *Naga*, the dragon, or between water and fire. In any story the *dalang* may transform the good characters into *Barong* or *Garuda*, while the bad character may be transformed into *Rangda* or *Naga*. A *dalang* may also excerpt these scenes one after another; that is, the terrorist may first attack with fire only to be doused with water by a good character. Following that, the terrorist may transform himself into a powerful *Naga* dragon only to be devoured by the *Garuda* eagle, a transformation of the good character. Later, the bad character may transform himself into the frightening demon *Butha Sia* in order to catch *Garuda*, who suddenly transforms himself into the big demon *Butha Siu*. Finally, the evil character may transform himself into *Rangda* in order to attack a good character, who transforms himself into a *Barong*.

Stock motifs of this kind may be accomplished with other scenes as well. In my article, *Cupak Goes to Heaven: A Model of Reconstructing a Play*⁴⁷, I have discussed how a *dalang* excerpts a great many of the traveling scenes from three sacred non-dramatic manuscripts: *Tortured Soul (Atma Prasangsa)*, *Body-spirit (Anggaprana)*, and *Lore of the God of Death (Yama’s Purana Tatwa)*. Similar to the theme of the many medieval plays, those three manuscripts feature the journey of the human spirit (*Jivatma*)⁴⁸ to the other world; simultaneously they reveal how *karma* may lead the spirit to heaven or to the hell’s fiery cauldron.

⁴⁷ The Indonesian title is *Cupak ke Sorga: Sebuah Model Pengolahan Lakon*, published in Mudra Performing Arts Journal of the Indonesian State College of Arts (STSI), 1995.

⁴⁸ This prototype is also used in many other stories, such as *Bima Goes to Heaven* (see Hinzler’s *Bima Swarga* and Diana Pucci’s *Bima Swarga*) and *Japatuan Seeks His Dead*

In excerpting plots it is important to make a distinction between general plots and specific plots. The *Barong* versus *Rangda* or *Garuda* eagle versus *Naga* dragon mentioned above belongs to the category of a general plot; hence, both plots may be used in any selected canto and for any part of the epic story. On the other hand, a specific plot may only be used or referred to in a set place in the story. An example of a specific plot is as follows: to represent how a just and wise character may defeat a disgusting and fearful one, a *dalang* may refer to the story of the humble Dharmawangsa⁴⁹ who defeats the ferocious Salya⁵⁰ using only the power of his meditation.

To use this scene as a general model, he cannot refer to these specific characters directly since they are locked into a specific story. Instead he will adapt the idea into a general plot by eliminating the names of the specific characters. Thus the names of two opposing characters may be replaced with, say, Mr. Wise versus Mr. Grumpy; however, the action remains the same. Places are similarly generalized. By replacing the specific names with general ones, the plot can be employed in any canto, whether it involves showing the full action or merely making a verbal reference.⁵¹

Wife. The events depicted are similar to the Orpheus story where a human goes to the other world to recover a dead soul.

⁴⁹ Dharmawangsa only performs *semadi yoga*, *dyani yoga*, and *sandi yoga* to glorify (*pangastuti*) God.

⁵⁰ Salya uses his most dangerous weapon, *Rudra Murti*, a huge monster who continuously multiplies himself every time he is killed.

⁵¹ An exception to this rule would be if the story performed deals with an episode that comes after the ninth canto of the *Mahabharata*, which relates this confrontation of Darmawangsa and Salya. In this case the names of the specific characters may be mentioned, by saying “like Dharamawangsa versus Salya....” However, when the plot is excerpted for the scene before that canto, say, for the first canto (*Adi Parwa*) the names cannot be mentioned, as this would be a “historical” violation.

Recently, the introductory dance of the braggart attendant Delem and his skeptical younger brother Sangut has been widely borrowed for other servants or antagonistic characters. In its new context, the names of Delem and Sangut are replaced with other names, while the dance pattern remains the same. For example, in the genre *Wayang Arja*, the dance is performed by the two antagonistic servants Punta and Wijil. In a new genre *Wayang Babad*, the same dance becomes an introductory dance by the court attendants Punta and Kartala.⁵²

In summary, it is clear that general patterns may be borrowed from one performance or story to the next. Such patterns include inserting archetypical characters such as Barong and Rangda, inventing generalized types that may actually derive from a specific case (Mr. Wise [Darmawangsa] vs. Mr. Grumpy [Salya]), or performing dances developed for one character which have been generalized to be executed by characters of the same type.

C. 6. c). Excerpting passages

Since *kakawin* are considered the zenith of Javanese literature, they hold a position of authority in the *wayang* narrative reservoir. In addition to the importance of *kakawin* as a source for the major action of the epic, I think *dalang* go to *kakawin* to impress the audience with their mastery of the traditional literature with its meticulous

⁵² *Dalang* may also excerpt a plot from an established dance-drama genre. For example, in performances of *Wayang Tantri* by *dalang* Wija that I observed in summer of 2001, a dance of two pompous courtiers based on Demang and Tumenggung characters in *Gambuh*, the oldest dance-drama was included. This dance scene was included in the second half (*babad*) of his performance. Wija created two puppets, Demang and Tumenggung, giving them manipulable jaws, thighs, and hands. He deliberately employed the standard *Gambuh* diction and music to accompany both characters. Wija successfully transferred the dance of Demang - Tumenggung from its original *Gambuh* dance-drama form to the *Wayang Tantri* genre.

syllabic rules, set melody, rhythm, and rhyme. *Kakawin* are used to relate the social and dramatic facts to their divine philosophy. Edification and beauty result from being able to tap this rich source.

To illustrate the beauty or the ugliness of a character, a *dalang* tends to use analogy or metaphorical passages excerpted from *kakawin*. For example for any female a *dalang* might say, “Her eye is like a budding lotus; her smile is like chewing honey;” for a male, “His gentleness is like the moonlight; the smoothness of his speech is like water.” To illustrate a ferocious character, a *dalang* may excerpt these passages: “His frightening shiny bulging eye is like twin suns. His every step creates an earthquake, stirs the ocean, and kills numerous sharks and fishes. The rumble of his scary voice is like an obstreperous thunderbolt.”

A *dalang* is conventionally allowed to derive or borrow text from any verse, whether it is chronologically from before or after the incident being depicted. This is possible because the *kakawin* poetry has philosophical value that shows universal and eternal truth. For example, the *kakawin* verse excerpted from the *Arjuna Wiwaha* below can be used by a *dalang* when performing stories from the *Ramayana* which in the chronology of *wayang* comes before Arjuna’s birth or stories that are associated with the Javanese or Balinese past as are *Panji*, *Calonarang*, and *Babad*.

Below are only a few examples of passages⁵³ taken from *kakawin*.

An excerpt from *Nitisastra* is:

Sanghyang Candra tranggana maka dipa mamadangi rikalaning wengi
Sanghyang Surya sedeng prabasa maka dipa mamadangi ri bumi mandala
Widyasastra sudarma dipanikang tribhuana sumena praba swara

*Yan ring putra suputra sadu gunawan maka dipa mamadangi kula wandu
wandawa*

Moon and stars illuminate to light our path in the night.
The Sun illuminates, lighting our path in the world during the day.
Knowledge illuminates our mind and thought in the three worlds.
A precious son illuminates and lights the path of his family.

An excerpt from *Arjuna Wiwaha* is:

Wasita nimitanta manemu suka
Wasita nimitanta manemu duka
Wasita nimitanta manemu mitra
Wasita nimitanta manemu pati kapangguh
Speech causes you happiness.
Speech causes you sadness.
Speech causes you to have friends.
Speech causes you to die.

This cautions one to use words wisely: birds are entangled by their feet, men by their
tongues.

An excerpting from the *kakawin Ramayana* is:

Ragadi musuh maparek; ri hati yata ungwania, tan madoh ring awak

Lust is our closest enemy; it occupies our heart, not far from our body.

⁵³ These passages are second nature to *dalang* artists as Hamlet's "To be or not to be" speech is to theatre students in the west.

This saying encourages self-control.

Wruh sira ring weda bakti ring dewa

He knows Veda and worships gods

This saying is used to glorify a leader.

From the *kakawin Bharatayuddha* comes:

Sang sura menanging rananggana amukti suka wibawa boga kawiryan

Sang sura pejahing rananggana angungsi surga sinayut dening watek wrapsari

A victorious hero of a battle enjoys respect, food, and prestige.

A dead hero of a battle goes to heaven escorted by celestial nymphs.

This passage is meant to encourage soldiers to be brave in battle, since a battle scene is an indispensable ingredient in *wayang* in which the passage is always relevant.

A concluding passage from the same source goes as follows:

Pira ramianing wang maurip, pira laraning wang pejah

How happy (not so happy) when one is alive, how painful (not so painful) when one dies!

After saying this passage, the hero jumps into the fray.

The *kakawin* verses are important for illuminating the philosophy of the story and enhancing the beauty of the performance. Because they carry complex and deep ideas,

they are skillfully transposed by the *dalang* from their original setting to the episode, which is presented in the individual performance.

For the *tetandakan* vocal accompanying the first entrance scene, Wija's *Jayantaka* strictly adheres to the tradition for he always recites one stanza of the *kakawin Bharatayuddha* as follows:

*Rahina tatas kemantian, humuni mradangga kalasangka gurnitan tara.
Gumuruh ikang gubarbala, samuha umangkata nguwuh pada seruh rumuhun.
Pararatu sampun ahiyas asesalin lumampah hawanrata parimita.
Narapati Yudistira, parangmuka Bimasena.
Nakularjuna glalu murug.*

The dawn breaks, the war drums sound and conches roar.
Soldiers rumble; all shout enthusiastically and each rushes to be in front of the other.

Kings and lords have dressed; they sally forth in chariots.

King Yudistira leads the way in front with Bima

Nakula and Arjuna frantically hurry to the fore. (see Reed 9; see deBoer *The Dimba and Dimbi* 84-85)

As most *dalang* do, *dalang* Wija also excerpts passages from the *kakawin Arjuna Wiwaha*. For examples:

Sasi wimba aneng gata misi banyu

Ndan asing suci nismala misi bulan ...etc

Just as the moon (reflection) inside the earthen-pot/jar/pitcher of water

Anything pure will reflect divine spirit...etc

From the *kakawin Bharatayuddha* the passages are excerpted as follows:

Rahina tatas kemantian...(as already mentioned in the section concerning *dalang* Wija's performance).

From the *kakawin Sutasoma*:

Ruanika datu winuwus

*Wara Buddha wisya...*etc.

The two is said or unified into one

That is the unified Buddha and Siwa... etc.

On the other contemporary show, excerpting passages from a number of sources.

As most *dalang* do, *dalang* Sudarma excerpts passages from the *kakawin Bharatayuddha*.

For examples:

Tankala nrepa kresna tan tulus anyakra ri rsi wara.

When Kresna is not committed to shoot his Cakra weapon to the great priest.

For the *tetandakan* vocal accompanying the first entrance scene, *dalang* Sudarma always recites the first stanza of the introduction of the *kakawin Arjuna Wiwaha*. This very popular stanza type is called Sardula Wikridihita and goes as follows:

Ambek sang paramartha pandita, huwus limpad saking suniata.

Tan sangkeng wisaya prayojananira, lwir sanggraheng lokika.

Siddaning yasa wirya donira, sukanikang rat kiningkinira.

Santosa, heletan kelirsira, sakeng sanghyang Jagatkarana.

The wish of a reputable priest has penetrated through the eternal spirituality.

His super objective is not the materialistic pleasure that is commonly sought by an authority.

His will and effort is successful for it is directed toward the prosperity of all living beings.

His mind is peaceful; the distance between him and the God Siwa is only a piece of screen (essentially meaning that he is very closely connected to the God Siwa).

An unusual lyrical choice *dalang* Sudarma made was that he did not differentiate his *tetandakan* vocal entrance scene for *Wayang Parwa* from that of the *Wayang Ramayana* as most *dalang* usually do. When he performed *Wayang Ramayana* in the village of Ambengan on the day before this performance, he did not select a stanza from the *Ramayana kakawin*, but recited the same stanza above that he also always used for his *Wayang Parwa*.

D. Originating a Story: *Carita Kawi Dalang*

The challenge of creative artistry in the performance of *wayang* also involves developing original material. In this section I will discuss how a *dalang* develops a new story, an important ability for any contemporary *dalang*. These stories developed by the *dalang* are also known as *carita kawi dalang* (stories made by *dalang*). While the stories are new, the cultural conditions under which they are generated are old—village decorum (*krama desa*), the five-rituals (*panca yadnya*), and the country civility (*krama negara*) are crucial. In his role as artist and priest, a *dalang* is expected to introduce and reinforce those social and philosophical concepts.⁵⁴ For those who are illiterate and for those who

⁵⁴ These concepts and ideology include, among other things, the three holy/beneficial actions: to work well, to speak well, and to think well (*Trikaya Parisudha*); the balancing concept of human, devine, and environment (*Trihita Karana*); the five beliefs in the existence of God, spirit, karma, incarnation, and the *moksa* ultimate freedom (*Panca*

do not themselves take time to read the religiously oriented philosophy (*tatwa*) and village regulations (*awig-awig*), the *dalang*-made stories (*carita kawi dalang*) serve to acquaint them with these ideas. Hence, a *dalang* is motivated to develop new stories that may serve this important purpose.

Since the repertoire is predicated on the set incidents discussed in the *kakawin*, a *dalang* generates new material in a constrained structure.⁵⁵ He cannot alter the major events of the stories, which are considered the “facts” of the heroes’ and villains’ lives. Like a coral reef where the new must build on the old, the new story must be built on what already has been established. Most new stories are developed based on the early incidents of the epic story, especially the first episode *Adi Parwa* and the third episode *Wana Parwa*. The created stories which grow out of the main events of the epic are called branch stories (*lakon carangan*). Two most popular *lakon carangan* are the *Bima Goes to Heaven* (*Bima Swarga*) (see Kusuma 1984 and see Hinzler 1981) and *Arjuna’s Wedding* (*Arjuna Wiwaha*) (see Menaka 1983 and see Zoetmoulder 1974), which are part of the *Wana* (Forest) *Parwa*.

Carita kawi dalang will be discussed in 3 divergent categories: 1) the specific part of the story that is developed, 2) methods of creating a story, and 3) narrative sources.

D. 1. The specific part of the story which is developed

As visualized in the Plate 2 above, the epic narrative is perceived as a tree complete with its roots/seed, trunk, and branches. The root of the story is the source of

Srada); and the several leadership concepts of *Asta Brata*, *Asta Lingga*, *Pancastiti Darmeng Prabhu*, and so forth.

the story (*lakon pokok/babon*). The trunk story is the main body or standard story (*lakon baku*), and the branch story is the outgrowth or elaboration (*lakon carangan*).

- a) The source stories (*lakon pokok* or *babon*) are the original narrative reservoir, from which all the stories are derived. The Sanskrit epics of the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata* with many related folklores and numerous Sanskrit plays belong to this category. However, very few Balinese *dalang* have access to these original Sanskrit versions or their translations. To most people these root materials are removed and obscure.
- b) A trunk story (*lakon baku*) is a standard, well-known version that adheres to the main story as presented in the *kakawins*. Thus though both *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* originally came from India they are remembered in these versions in the Old Javanese language descending from the reign of King Darmawangsa Teguh Ananta. In Sukawati, a village which has the most *dalang* on the island, *lakon baku* is known as *lakon unduk*, i.e. stories that adhere to the rule (*unduk*), of the *kakawin* poem. Thus, *lakon baku* basically adheres to the source story.
- c) A branch story (*lakon carangan*) is a newly created story. Among senior *dalang*, creating a story is a prestigious activity. So, too, assignment to make a branch story as part of the curricula at the Indonesian State College of Arts (STSI) is usually welcomed with enthusiasm by the students. I see the stories that are created as being of two kinds, simple and complex.

An example of a simple branch story is as follows: During the wedding ceremony of Bimanyu, the son of the Pandawa hero Arjuna, and Diah Utari in Wirata kingdom,

⁵⁵ Mary Sabina Zurbuchen briefly discusses this technique of story-making in her The Language of Balinese Shadow Theatre (1987: 227).

King Kresna creates an opportunity to exhibit the distinctive power, skill, and ability of the sons of the five Pandawa brothers.⁵⁶ This new plot is easily elaborated with comic folk characters as the viewers of the exhibition. For an antagonist to create the climax of a fight the party of a rival suitor for Utari's hand is introduced. Exhibition of prowess, comedy, and conflict combine to generate a relatively simple branch story

An example of a sophisticated branch story is *Bimanyu's Expedition (Bimanyu Duta)*. This plot has more complicated connections with the trunk stories as given in the *kakawin*. The new plot is about the king Puspadanta of Simbar Sumedang, who wishes to wed his daughter to the King Baladewa of Madura. This plot is elaborated by developing a number of incidents that connect the main recognized "facts" in the story. The pre-existing facts include the eternal hostility between the five Pandawa brothers helped by King Kresna and the 100 Korawa brothers, assisted by Baladewa, Kresna's older brother. Baladewa and the Korawa king he serves often lose out to the Pandawa and Kresna in love competitions. The branch story begins with Baladewa announcing his intention to give the Korawa prince, Laksanakumara, the beautiful Puspitawati, the daughter of king Simbar Sumedang, Puspadanta. The Korawa simultaneously persuade Baladewa to sign a letter for the Puspadanta confirming the wedding of Puspitawati with Laksanakumara and requiring Puspadanta to kill Bimanyu, who delivers the letter. The clown servant

⁵⁶ Bima's sons exhibit his specific power as follows:

1. Lindu Segara kills an enemy by pecking the shadow of the enemy.
2. Megawarna transforms into a cloud.
3. Gatutkaca becomes a huge monster.
4. Gajah Mina destroys buildings and forests.

Arjuna's sons exhibit their prowess as follows:

1. Erawan transforms himself into the Naga dragon.
2. Bimaniyu transforms himself into a moon.
3. Jagatkarana becomes the Garuda eagle.

Twalen, suspicious of Baladewa's intentions, urges Bimanyu to open the letter. But he refused.

However Puspitawati finds the letter in the pocket of the sleeping prince Bimanyu. Enamored of the messenger, she replaces the original letter with one which tells her father to wed her with Bimanyu. After the marriage Baladewa arrives and accuses Bimanyu of changing the letter. When Baladewa is about to kill Bimanyu, Gatutkaca, Bimanyu's cousin, rescues him. Puspitawati thinks that is the right time to solve the problem by showing the original letter. The play concludes as Baladewa runs away in shame.

In a nutshell, a *lakon carangan* branch story is the extension of the original story. It can be simple or complex, but it cannot violate the givens of the *kakawin*. In contemporary performance, *dalang* Wija's *Jayantaka* branch story may be describe as follows: Since the story of Jayantaka is the creation of *dalang* Wija, the job of transforming the narration of the *kakawin* format into dialogue in *pakem*-play format was not necessary, although this story is based on the *kakawin* poetry. Jayantaka is an example of a branch story (*lakon carangan*). The driving force is Jayantaka's obsession to be regarded as the supreme ruler. The trunk of this story is the endless hostility that exists between the 100 Korawa brothers and the five Pandawa brothers. To create this branch story, Wija simply expands the passion of the Korawa, through their crafty Prime Minister Sakuni who seek to undermine the Pandawa's supremacy. In exercising Sakuni's passion, which is the sub-text of the driving force, *dalang* Wija is prompted to create a wealthy character, namely Jayantaka. Sakuni exploits Jayantaka's resources and passion to compete with the Pandawas, by strongly encouraging Jayantaka to claim to be

the supreme king. If Jayantaka successfully defeats the Pandawas, Sakuni will push the Korawas to stand at the forefront, otherwise, he will advise the Korawas to rush home immediately. At the base of this branch story is the hostility that exists between the Korawas and the Pandawas. The strongest reaction to the driving force also derives from the base characters, Bima and Kresna, then accompanied by Bima's kingly brother, Yudistira. Thus, the base story is the Korawas versus the Pandawas, while the branch story is an extension, between the newly created dramatic character Jayantaka versus the traditionally existing character Yudistira.

D. 2. Methods of creating stories

In my analysis these *lakon carangan* take two forms, chopped stories (*lakon sempalan*) and hodge-podge stories (*lakon anggitan-angitan*):

- a) Chopped stories (*lakon sempalan*) are fragmented stories arranged in a logical order.

The reference to chopping comes because parts of the story are skipped in order to produce a certain emphasis. In the *Mahabharata*, for example, a *dalang* may begin from the gambling scene between Yudistira (the oldest of the five Pandawa brothers) and Duryodana (the oldest of the one hundred Korawa brothers). After Yudistira loses the game of dice, the next scene skips 15 years to show the Pandawa disguised as servants in the kingdom of Wirata. Sometimes in a chopped story time may go backwards. For example, a *dalang* may begin the play with the heroic Gatutkaca as a young leader in Purubaya kingdom, then he goes backward to show when he was a baby and no implement could be found to sever his umbilical cord. The essential feature in this style of story is that the events of the story are used flexibly rather than being part of a chronological narrative.

- b) A hodge-podge story (*lakon anggitan-anggitan*) is a story wildly developed without consistency of sources, place, and time that tends to violate the main standard story (*lakon baku*). Unlike a dream, however, it has a logical dramatic unity. This type of story is comparable to western dramatic works like the *Hamlet Machine* or other similar works. The story of *Gatutkaca Goes to School*, *The Encounter of Bima and Hanoman*, *The Meeting of Yudistira and Subali*, *Anggaraeni Refuses to Sleep With (diselingkuhi) Arjuna*, are only a few of the numerous *lakon anggitan-anggitan*.⁵⁷

An extreme example of current *anggitan-anggitan* is the one that incorporates the son and daughter in-law of the former Indonesian president, Soeharto. The *anggitan-anggitan* says that the wife of Tommy Soeharto, Regita, is the true reincarnation of Sita (an incarnation of the goddess Sri), who is being trapped by the wealth of Tommy, the “true” transformation of (*siluman*) Rahvana, the notorious demon king of Alengka. The story is a reference to Soeharto’s penchant for corruption. The hodge-podge story violates rational logic by drawing together elements that narratively seem to defy the preset elements of the story. However, they have an inner logic that makes them popular.

D. 3. Stories based on the narrative sources

There are two additional sources which can be tapped by *dalang* for story ideas: comic stories (*lakon komik*) and chronicle stories (*lakon babad*).

- a) A Comic story (*lakon komik*) is a story taken from *wayang*-picture books known as *komik*. Each page of a *komik* book is generally divided into four panels, with two rows and two columns. Each area is filled with *wayang* pictures and its surrounding

⁵⁷ Although many conservative artists frown on *anggitan-anggitan* for its wildness, recently one of the major Indonesian newspapers, *Jawapos*, published numerous *anggitan-anggitan* on the internet to reflect on the current Indonesian political turmoil. Anyone may visit this *wayang* page at www.jawapos.com.

backgrounds: forest, pathways, mountain, and rivers with brief narrative passages or dialogue around the corners. Poerwadarminta (1976) suggests that *komik* is a “pictured story” (517). Numerous *komik* books by RA. Kosasih, Suherla, A. Sulaha, among others, are rented widely at an affordable fee from the many bookstalls that are found throughout the island. Hence, *dalang* have easy access to these materials. Comics indeed give numerous interesting stories that many *dalang* adopt for their performance.⁵⁸ Here, the *komik* story is known as *lakon komik*.

- b) Chronicle stories (*lakon babad*) are concerned with Balinese history which is mixed with mythology. In some instances this material can be tapped by *dalang* in developing a performance. Just as Aristophanes presented *Lysistarata* based on the 27-year Peloponesian war, a *dalang* may perform the *Unarmed Knight (Jelantik Bogol)* based on the war between the Balinese king and the king of Blambangan, at eastern Java. Many of Shakespeare’s works like the *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* are also *babad* ‘chronicle’ in the sense of Balinese dramatic source, because the plays integrate local history and myth.

While these last two sources come from outside the traditional repertoire defined by the *kakawin*, it is important to mention here that there is a conventional decorum in the matter of creating a story. With the exception of the extremely liberal *lakon anggitan-anggitan*, all *dalang*–made stories have to adhere to the rule that every new story may only refer to any previous stories in the *wayang* chronology and may not make reference to events at the end of the epic tales. For instance, when a *dalang* creates a branch story from the fourth canto (*Wana Parwa*) of the *Mahabharata*, he may only refer to all previous stories and characters and cannot foresee their deaths or foresee the outcome of

⁵⁸ Interestingly, *dalang* never pay royalties to the *komik*’s writers for using the story.

their actions. The *dalang* improvises but is not completely free in the story-making. The *dalang* must always refer to the *kakawin* as the rule, with its relevant narrative and philosophical content, even as he elaborates on his branch story.

In summary, we have discussed six fundamental principles that govern a *dalang*'s creativity to select, excerpt, and modify the existing repertoires in order to construct and/or create a play for his performance. The next chapter will discuss a range of other creativities in presentation that are used by *dalang* in Bali.

CHAPTER 4

CREATIVITY IN PRESENTATION

Creativity in presentation applies to the fundamental aspects of the performance such as selecting puppets to represent characters (in accordance with the selection of protagonists and antagonists, the central intrigues that will be the driving force in the selected play), naming the characters and place, puppet construction and manipulation, the choice of scenery and stage business. The more spontaneous and extempore creativity in presentation applies to the jokes, creating puns or word plays, modifying and creating poetry, spontaneous reactions to local issues, including political and social commentary/criticism, and other impromptu embellishments that come to the *dalang* while the performance is in progress. The last creativity includes the creative responses to any unexpected and expected performance situation.

A. Selecting Puppets to Represent Characters in a Performance

Using the principle of *wanda* the performance of *wayang* involves a selection of puppets to represent the dramatic characters which are thoroughly defined by the play that the *dalang* has selected. Although the term and principle of *wanda* is prevalent to the characterization of the Javanese *wayang*, actually the Balinese *wayang* also observes this same principle. *Wanda* means descendants of or belonging to. *Wanda* has to do with appearance by which a *dalang* may present the same character with different puppets in accordance with the shifting moods or status of a character. *Butasiu* or *Wisnumurti*, a

terrifying, multi-faced monster, is a *wanda* of Kresna, an avatar of the god Wisnu, when he is mad. The more customary *wanda* of Kresna is a refined, small-bodied king.

Only a few Balinese puppets have different *wanda* and of those that have multiple *wanda* most have no more than two. Usually *wanda* is a function of the action of the story. The most frequent use of *wanda* is to distinguish before and after a character ascends the throne. The headdress and costumes of the king's *wanda* are typically more ornate than the original *wanda*, though the body posture remains the same. Cupak, Grantang, Sangut, Twalen—all these characters have different puppets/figures to show them as king. Another use of *wanda* is to show a specific episode in the life of a character. Bimanyu, the son of the Pandawa hero Arjuna, generally appears as a refined, youthful prince, but has another *wanda* where arrows pierce his body. The latter figure is used to represent his death at the hands of the cruel Korawa.

Gatutkaca, the son of the Pandawa hero Bima, has five *wandas*—the most of any character—that show specific aspects of his history. First is a baby puppet, Jabang Tatuka. Next he appears encrusted with dirt, steel, and iron for the episode where he is literally forged into a superman to challenge the monster Naga Pracono. Then there is a puppet which represents him in his customary form as a handsome prince. Next he is seen as a huge cloud-monster for the scene where he challenges Karna, the commander in chief of the Korawa army in the *Bharatayuddha*⁵⁹ battle. Finally, he is featured as an abject creature when his armor Antakusuma is peeled away from his body.

⁵⁹ As chapters of *kakawin* poem, *Bharatayuddha* deals with war that includes the periods of Bisma *Parwa*, Drona *Parwa*, Salya *Parwa*, and Karna *Parwa*.

In recent years, the use of *wanda* in the performance has increased in the way that new puppets have been constructed to represent different stages of a character, motivated by the search for more flexibility in puppet manipulation. New *wanda* are created to provide more sophisticated movements, especially for comic characters and animals. For instance, *dalang* Wija constructs a new Hanoman puppet that is far more manipulable than the traditional version. *Dalang* Sudarma constructs a new maid-servant Condong with a manipulable hip that seductively moves for every scene of drunken dance, *genjekan*.

The most important characters in the epic stories like the five Pandawa brothers, have only two *wanda* each. For example, in the last year of the fifteen-year exile, the five Pandawa brothers and their wife Drupadi live in disguise as servants in the kingdom of Wirata. To conceal their identity, each of them changes name, headdress and costumes. Dharmawangsa becomes Dwijakangka, advisor to the king; Bima becomes Belawa, a cook; Arjuna becomes Kedi Wratnala, a transvestite dance instructor; Nakula and Sahadewa become Grantika and Tantripala, caretakers of the king's horses; and Drupadi becomes Silandri, a lady in waiting. Thus, there are separate puppets that correspond to each of the characters in disguise.

As it has been noted, there are about 125 puppets in a *wayang* box. A *dalang* is constrained in his storytelling by the puppets he possesses. When a *dalang* has only a limited number of puppets at his disposal, he is not in a position to make the kinds of substitutions described above. For example, a puppeteer with a limited set might have only one puppet to represent Drupadi and not one to represent Silandri. Thus, the *dalang* is unable to select the play regarding Kicaka, the Prime Minister of Wirata kingdom, who

falls in love and attempts to seduce Drupadi, who is disguised as Silandri. If a *dalang* does not have a puppet of baby Gatutkaca, he cannot tell the story of his childhood. Ideally, a *dalang* will have a large puppet collection, which will include a puppet to represent the god Wisnu as well as those for him in his avatars as Rama and Kresna. These figures are distinguished one from another only by small details in their carving ornamentation and costume.

However, a *dalang* may not always have the precise puppet to stand for a particular character that is needed to appear in the story he is to perform. When that is the case, it is acceptable to substitute a different puppet of the same general type to stand in its place. For example, the puppet for Wisnu might be recast as Kresna in a *Mahabharata* story or substituted for Rama in a *Ramayana* episode. The fact that each is an incarnation of the god Wisnu provides a link which makes this choice appropriate.

Hence, the conniving Srenggi may become either Sang Suratma, the secretary of hell or Sakuni, the Korawa's deceptive minister. The large ogre Kumbakarna is interchangeable with Yama the lord of hell or the demon-like soul of Duryodana, the Korawa's leader. The puppet used for Salya is interchangeable with Arjuna Sastrabahu. The female puppet Supraba, a celestial nymph in the Arjuna Wiwaha story, is interchangeable with princess Subadra, the refined wife of Arjuna in the *Mahabharata*, and princess Sita in the *Ramayana*. Puppet Laksmana in the *Ramayana* story is interchangeable with Arjuna in the *Mahabharata*, and so on and so forth.

The governing principle of this kind of substitution is that the puppet borrowed must suit the general type that is required by the play. A refined knight may represent another refined hero; a refined lady can represent another refined queen; and, an

insignificant demon may represent another less well known ogre. A narrow-eyed soldier can represent any member of the army of the protagonists' group used on the right side of the screen; and, a round-eye soldier can represent any army's member from the antagonists' group at the left side. The names may be changed, as long as the puppet type is correct.

For example, in the contemporary performance of *Jayantaka*, *dalang* Wija has aptly presented three new dramatic characters —Jayantaka, Lingga Subawa, and Kadek Parwati. As a wealthy king, Jayantaka is represented by a handsome puppet with elaborate costumes from his headdress tiara through his foot bracelets. For most *wayang* performances in Bali this puppet is commonly used to present one of the nine Gods (*Dewata Nawasanga*). The rural couple Lingga Subawa and Kadek *Parwati* are aptly represented by a slim male and a female folk characters with bare chest and a piece of plain cloth. Although in most *wayang* performances these two puppets may simply represent poor villagers, in this play these characters appear very significant as their proposition during their debate with the king embody the utmost ideal moral values. This play obviously suggests that a king/leader is not always better than a poor villager.

Presenting different puppets (*wanda*) for the same character in accordance with its situation is briefly observed in this performance. In his final effort to expel his enemy, Jayantaka appears as the nine-eyed mighty ogre (Butha Sia). The most important part of selecting and changing the characters is accomplished through the transformation of characters. The God Siwa transforms himself into a villager, Lingga Subawa; his wife, Goddess Umadewi into Kadek Parwati. Wija assigns the characters new names in accordance with traditional decorum.

As another example, in presenting both the incoherent and coherent plots, *dalang* Sudarma invariably employs four pairs of comic servants, plus some additional folk characters, i.e. a female villager Luh Nyoman, her grumpy father, a fat cake vender, and several noisy drunken singers and dancers. In this performance for the tooth filing ceremony, he assigns the comic characters as follows:

1. Kenyot and Tonglang appear in the first act accompanying Bambang Kumbayana.
2. Delem and Sangut appear in the second act and are affiliated with King Drupada.
3. Ngurah and Nani appear in the third act as the servants of the demon Jim Bambang Putri.
4. Twalen and Wredah appear in the fourth act and are the comic servants affiliated with the five Pandawas and the 100 Korawa brothers.

While most *dalang* in south Bali only use Delem and Sangut and Twalen and Wredah in their performances plus several folk characters, these four pairs of comic servants have now become trendy and are featured in most *wayang* performances in north Bali.

In support of *dalang* Sudarma's tendency to invariably feature drunken scenes (*genjekan*) and to assign all love scenes to the folk characters, it is obvious that the four paired-comic servants are always selected. Even in an earlier performance on the same night, enacting the story of *Baby Gatutkaca (Jabang Tatuka)* for a wedding ceremony, he featured the same pair of comic servants, assigning them with the following affiliations:

1. Twalen and Wredah accompanied the Pandawas.
2. Kenyot and Tonglang accompanied Narada, God's emissary.
3. Ngurah and Nani accompanied Sang Radeya/Karna.

4. Delem and Sangut accompanied the demon Naga Procono.

Presenting different puppets (*wanda*) for the same character in accordance with its situation is observed in this performance. From the first exposition until he is tormented and is tossed into the Kenawa forest, the protagonist character Bambang Kumbayana is presented by a puppet with a split headdress. The puppet's potency appears to be young and energetic. After he is rescued and cured by Jim Bambang Putri, he is depicted by an old cripple puppet. Jim aptly changes Bambang Kumbayana's name into that of Drona. The second *wanda* is observed by his son, Aswatama. When he was just born from the disguised horse, Aswatama is presented as a baby puppet. Later when he is rescued and fed with "25 trucks" of bananas, he is represented by an adult-sized puppet.

B. Naming the Characters and Place.

Occasionally, the *dalang* will create the names of places and characters. Based on the guideline that the *kawi* name which is given accurately fits the place or person, a *dalang* may create place and character names for the play. For example, a *dalang* may call a location of the dramatic action Tirta Kadasar. *Tirta* means water and *Kadasar* means the bottom, the base, or foundation. Thus, the name indicates a place underneath a river, sea, or ocean. This mythical place may be inhabited by a character namely Rekata Yaksi. *Rekata* means crab and *yaksi* means female ogre. The name indicates a giant female crab or an ogress disguised as a crab that lives deep in the ocean.

The model for such new minting of names is modeled after practices found in the epics. Many established names of places mentioned in the epics, such as Astina, Amerta, Indra Wiprasta, etc. are identified or associated with a specific situation and atmosphere.

Characters such as Rahwana, Kumbakarna, Meganada, Dharmawangsa, Salya, etc, suggest the specific profile and attribute of the character. For a demonic name, a *dalang* may create the name Detya Laya Berawa, which means a ‘fearful flying terrorist’ (*detya* means terrorist; *laya* means flying; *berawa* means fearful).

Major names in *wayang* theatre often consist of two or three separate words. For example, the name of Rama’s two sons is Kusa and Lawa. *Kusa* means *ambengan* grass and *lawa* means refuse. Thus, the name suggests that the twin babies were born over grass clippings that have been discarded. A name with three separate words like Lata Mahosadi means a super medicine leaf. *Lata* means leaf. *Mahosadi* is a combined word. *Maha* means super and *usadi* means medicine. In the *Mahabharata* we find precedence. For example, the author of the *Mahabharata* is Kresna Dwipayana. His name means the journey through a black island (*kresna* means black; *dwipa* means island; *yana* means travel. This pattern has clearly been adapted from the epics to use in modern extensions of the story created by the *dalang*.

Since a *dalang* is expected to create names that serve specific purposes and suggest particular meanings, there is a need to knit two or more words into one to produce a single new word or name. In doing so, some letters or vowels of the combined words would match and produce a new sound. Consequently, there is a rule leading to the final sound of combining vowel a, i, u, e, and o. Any two combinations of the first three vowels (a i u) becomes either one of the last two vowel (e or o). For example. Vowels a + i = e, so that *nara* + *indra* = *narendra*. *Nara* means human; *indra* means king.

Vowels $a + u = o$, so that *warka + udara* becomes *warkodara*. *Warka* means dog; *udara* means stomach or air. *Warkodara* is the nickname of Bima whose abdomen is like that of a dog's belly. Thus, if I were to combine, say, Bali with Athens, the result would surely become Balethens, because $i + a$ or $a + i = e$.

Any combination of the same vowel becomes the longer version of that vowel. Thus, unlike math, $a + a = \text{long } \bar{a}$, so that *sunya + antara* becomes *sunyāntara*. *Sunia* means quiet; *antara* means in between. Thus, *sunyāntara* signifies a place in between two quiet places. If I were to combine, say, Ameri with Indo, they would surely become Amerīndo, because $i + i = \bar{i}$. In *wayang* theatre this name is enough to signify the America plus Indonesia.

Twisting words like *democracy* into *demo-crazy* and *nostalgia* into *nostalgila* is also often employed. Making vowel and consonant shifts like “Are you a **lawyer** or **liar**?” and eventual assimilation due to daily utterances are common techniques used in composing dialogues, naming a place or character. For example, Salya, a knight who does not follow tradition in honoring his father-in-law, derives his name from *soleh* (strange) + *ya* (he). Salya's previous name was Narakusuma. His father-in-law, Detya Kala Darma, begins to call him Salya since he develops a strange behavior. He ironically wants Kala Darma to die, although he loves his daughter, Kacawati. Thus, based on those practical needs, linguistic rules or descriptions of characters, *dalang* create names of places and characters for the *wayang*. New names are primarily created for original stories, but may also be created for existing branch-story repertoires. When a *dalang* wants to perform the branch story *Bimaniu's Expedition*, for example, he cannot change the *kakawin*-based names like Bimaniu, Duryodana in Astina, Kresna in Dwarawati

kingdom that belong to the trunk or main plot of the story. But he may well change the names of the king Puspadanta, the Simbar Sumedang kingdom, the princess Puspitawati, etc. that belong to the branch or newly created plot. The creation may be needed because the *dalang* forgets the existing names or because the *dalang* needs to create a certain allusion or social commentary with those particular names.

In Wija's *Jayantaka* naming the new place and characters has been very thoughtful and has followed the conventional logic. Jayantaka is composed of two words: *jaya* (victorious) and *antaka* (death). Thus, Jayantaka means the death of his victory, for he does not use his wealth and power correctly. Putu Lingga Subawa is a common name of a man, but the value lies in the literary meaning. *Putu* means the first son. *Lingga* (phallic) refers to the male power of the God Siwa as opposed to *yoni* (vulva) female power of his wife. *Subawa* derived from two words: *su* (excellent) and *bhawa* (aura). Thus, the name refers to and signifies the value of the God Siwa. The name Kadek Parwati is another popular name of a woman. But, when it is combined with Bawaneswari Yonidewi, the name becomes too impressive, too beautiful, and too long a name for a common woman, especially when the character is featured by such an ugly female puppet. In one way, the theatrical purpose is to poke fun at an ugly woman by giving her a beautiful name. Many *dalangs* love to feature conceited female characters. On the other hand, the name is appropriate to the divine origin of the character, the Goddess Umadewi or Giriputri. Kadek means a second child, while Parwati is another name of the goddess Umadewi, Siwa's consort. Bawaneswari is derived from *Bawa-nare-swari*. *Bawa* is the same as *bhawa* which means aura. *Nare* is the same as *nara*, which means human. *Swari* means consort. *Yoni* means vulva and *dewi* means goddess.

Thus, the name basically suggests the second child as the God Siwa's consort, who is now the female power of Siwa in human form. Redundancy is not avoided in Balinese arts but it is rather encouraged as long as it produces a more impressive aesthetic sensibility or emotion. This name well epitomizes the divine value of the character; but at the same time it helps to accomplish the theatrical purpose to make-fun of the character. As the name of the kingdom, *Kencana Pura* means a golden place. *Kencana* means gold, while *pura* means a holy place.

In Sudarma's *Bambang Kumbayana*, the names of places, weapons, and most of the characters are typical. However, the word *putri* in the name of Jim Bambang Putri sounds unusual and is not very appropriate as an allusion for a demonic character, because in the Balinese language the word *putri* means princess. This demon has nothing to do with a princess or a lady, specifically as far as this story is presented. If the word *putri* is meant to indicate its female/mother's constituent for his compassion and salvific role to cure Kumbayana and Aswatama, a better choice of name would have been J. B. Usadhi. Usadhi means medicine for he cures Kumbayana and Aswatama. Or, he may have been called J. B. Sidhi. Sidhi means fruitful for his curing action is very powerful.

C. Puppet Construction and Manipulation (*Tetikasan*)

The construction of puppets and their manipulation is an especially important part of a *dalang*'s ability to introduce creativity into his presentation today. Traditional puppets are often felt to limit developing a more expressive vocabulary of movements (*tetikasan*). In an outburst of creativity, *dalang* have created new puppets with expanded potential for movement. Additional joints are added in the neck, upper arms, waist, upper thighs and knees. Manipulable hindquarters, wings, trunks, and ears have been added to

animal puppets. In addition to the traditional strings and sticks, added means of controls have been explored through the use of rubber bands, velcro, cables and even batteries. Characters that lend themselves to the greatest degree of experimentation are demonic and animal characters because these characters are expected to move more extensively and with more agility than human beings. *Wayang Tantri* is an example of a genre where such innovations have prevailed. Like the Indian *Pancatantra*, *Tantri* (also known as *Tantri Kamandaka*) is a fairy tales that features a smart girl, *Tantri*, who tells 1001 stories within stories about clever animals to prevent the king from seducing her.

In the early 1980s, the National Dance Academy in Bali first produced *Wayang Tantri*, with its extensive animal stories, and *dalang* Nartha was commissioned to carve many animals to be performed by the first school-trained *dalang*, I Made Persib.⁶⁰ Subsequently, *dalang* Wija, redesigned animal puppets allowing for a greater range of movement from a monkey, pig, tiger, duck, etc. Wija's innovations include transforming Legong and Baris dancers into puppets, and making Barong (a lion-like beast) and Jauk (a mischievous demon) as two-dimensional figures. His international and experimental theatre experiences in Japan, Italy and the United States motivated him to carve puppets of dinosaurs, ants, rabbits, giraffes, kangaroos, swans, birds, frogs, fishes, monkeys and villagers with expanded movement possibilities.

⁶⁰ As the first student *dalang* performing *Wayang Tantri*, Persib enacted the story of the *Imposter Priest* (*Pedanda Baka*). Misusing religion like that of Moliere's *Tartuffe* this religious impostor is a big foxy bird that dresses himself with accessories of a priest in order to outwit and catch the fishes. Whenever he comes to the fishpond, the fish throng around him to listen to his preaching: "To save my fishy community from an unavoidable drought I have to carry one fish after another to a better fishpond" he says. In reality, he devours the fish one after another along the way until finally a crab detects his deception and strangles him.

Wija's typical way of reconstructing a puppet is as follows. He cuts and creates joints on the neck, upper arms, waist, upper thighs and knees (plus on the animal's tail, wing, and ears, as appropriate). Many of Wija's puppets have more than three handling sticks and strings. Unlike a traditional puppet, where a single stick fuses legs, upper body, and head, in Wija's puppets the tip of the main-body stick handling is attached to the temple of the puppet and loosely bonded to the foot, freeing the body and head. This allows him to manipulate the puppet in several ways. moving the foot up and down affects the body, hip, and head; pulling a string attached to the head allows for head movements; pulling the string attached to the foot creates kicks; pulling the string attached to the jaw makes the puppet appear to speak. It may be done section by section or simultaneously depending on the desired effect. Many of the animals' ears, wings, rumps, heads, and body parts move. His innovations have been enthusiastically received by local audiences and have now set a standard for others to follow who are interested in expanding the range of movement possibilities of their puppets.

Those who have followed Wija include *dalang* Suwiji and *dalang* Nartha, who produce many Barong puppets. In addition, *dalang* Serama Semadi commissioned Nartha, the puppeteer, to develop a new design *Garuda*, the eagle; one who has flapping wings. In 1986, Nartha also carved a puppet for the final project for my BA degree. He produced a *kayonan* tree-of-life puppet which has the size of a human being. Inspired by an innovative *Parwa* dance-drama, choreographed by I Wayan Dibia, I transformed the two-dimensional *kayonan* dance of the puppet screen into a three-dimensional dance on

the stage without the normal screen. I trained dancer Oka Surya Negara to dance with the puppet, treating it as a dance property.⁶¹

The most remarkable experimentations in puppet manipulation in the last decade appear in some spectacular final projects by STSI (Sekolah Tinggi Seni Indonesia, College of Arts) students to complete their degrees. In 1996, *dalang* Ketut Sudiana (*dalang* Nartha's son) created a Balinese *wayang golek* (three-dimensional rod puppet). Sudiana's version integrated about three dozens half, human-size rod puppets with shadow puppets and human actors. Several students in subsequent years expanded on this *wayang golek* experiment.⁶²

A recent trend employs an eight-meters screen, rather than the conventional two meter one, with figures manipulated by a dozen puppeteers. Manipulation is modified for these performances. Puppeteers shift from the conventional sitting position to standing positions. They also alter the methods of transmitting cues, speaking, and other technical requirements for such performances.

Dalang Sira, one of a score of *dalang* trained at STSI in 1996, created some puppets that remarkably expanded the traditional method of manipulation. These include a puppet riding a bicycle manipulated by batteries, string, cable, and rods, a puppet that can be transformed from a human to that of a witch by pulling a string and another by turning the three-dimensional body, corpse carriers with moving hands and feet, etc.

Appendix B includes photographs illustrating some of these figures.

⁶¹ I was glad to see that this version of *kayonan* dance was soon incorporated in many subsequent dance-drama productions, including the *Sendratari*.

Such innovation in manipulation is a prime interest of many *dalang* and is a *sine qua non* for *dalang* students in STSI. Innovations like these in Bali parallel innovations in manipulation techniques occurring in the *wayang* of Java and Sunda as well. Within forms where stories are constrained by decorum and rules, manipulation, is, perhaps less bound and becomes a focal point of innovative energy.

In his performance of *Jayantaka*, Wija's creativity in puppet manipulation is amazing, for he tries to make all puppets dance on the screen, rather than simply arranging them there. This is obvious from his careful treatment to the hand positions of each puppet and his attention to all the sticks controlling the puppets. Each act begins with a song and beautiful dancing puppets. Among those dancing characters in their first entrance, the comic servants Delem, Sangut, and all female characters are allotted a longer time to dance than other characters. Unfortunately, Wija's legendary talent in creativity in puppet construction did not appear during this show. He employed only the traditional *wayang* puppets. His hilarious puppet dancing is only presented through the comic servants Sangut and Delem.

For *Bambang Kumbayana*, *dalang* Sudarma develops two puppets: the lady Luh Nyoman and the folk character who complements and enrich the drunk dances. The puppet Luh Nyoman is specifically constructed to allow the hip moves to be more voluptuous from her hindquarters down. The drunk dancer is specifically constructed to allow the foot moves to kick high and very wildly.

⁶² Unfortunately, the village art venues cannot easily accommodate this spectacular version of *wayang* and more comfortably accommodate only the traditional *wayang* leather puppets.

D. Scenery and Stage Business

Traditional scenery in *wayang* theatre is traditionally minimal. Two large demonic, multi-headed puppets frame the screen. The “one thousand eyes” Butha Siu or Wisnumurti is always placed on the right⁶³ side of the screen, while the “nine eyes” Butha Sia or Ludramurti stands up on the left side. *Dalang* set their very first scene and define their performing area by planting these two puppets in the specific position. Except when these *buta* serve as characters, then puppets remain on their respective side of the acting area from the beginning until the end of the show. As a character, puppet Butha Siu is used to visualize the power of several good characters, while Butha Sia represents the power of many bad characters. Consequently, puppet Butha Siu and Butha Sia symbolize the two opposing forces (*rwa bhineda*), on the right and the left side, respectively.

The slightly smaller *kayonan* or tree-of-life puppet is used to represent other scenic images in a flexible manner. In addition to beginning a *wayang* performance, it is used to shift one scene (*babad*) to another, and to end a performance. This oval-shaped puppet is often used to represent water, fire, wind, ocean, a cloud, either, earth, forest, tree, house, etc. It is set within the acting area without changing the first basic frame of *Buta Siu* and *Buta Sia*. With a specific way of manipulation, the *kayonan* can also be used to represent a great variety of other images. As it is manipulated the oil lamp that creates the shadow is partly covered with a petal of banana's log to enhance the dramatic atmosphere.

⁶³ Right and left directional orientation is always decided from the *dalang*'s sitting position rather from the audience perspective.

Another pair of scenic puppets is the temple-gate *candi* puppet and the *kepuh* tree puppet. The *candi* puppet represents a holy place, heaven, or a meditative space and is always found on the right side of the scene. The *kepuh* tree puppet represents a cemetery. *Kepuh* tree is occupied by many magical ghouls, hell, and other magical sites. When it is used it is conventionally placed on the left side of the scene.

Although many people think that the creation of scenery or any panoramic effect is best left to narration, many young *dalang* students prefer to experiment with scenic panoramas as well as verbal images. For example the prologue *Panyacah Parwa* of a *wayang* show discusses the ancient genesis of the universe from the water, fire, wind, ether, and earth until the poet created the epic which the *dalang* now excerpts the story. This sequence has often been interpreted by young *dalang* with the use of colored lights and sounds. This tendency toward scenic visualization is also employed to depict mystical events, such as in the stories of *Dewaruci*, Bima's discovery of his inner self and searching for the water of eternal life (*kamandalu*), etc. The spiritual intersection of nine roads (seven in the head and two in the body) confronting a soul which goes to heaven, has recently been visualized in Sidia's final project by colorful lights and vocal narration. One of such scenic experiments was also employed in a trans-cultural *wayang* production when *dalang* Sidia collaborated with *dalang* Sri Djoko from Java and a group known as Performing Arts Chicago to produce *Bima Goes to Heaven (Bima Swarga)* in three cities in the United States.⁶⁴

⁶⁴ See The Puppetry Journal 46, 3, 1995: 17, under the title *Visible Religion*, reviewed by Marilyn and Fred Putz.

In 1988, *dalang* Kodi and Wicaksana's final project for graduation from STSI employed moving backgrounds done by moving branches of trees over the screen from right to left to depict the movement of Arjuna and his servants walking from left to right. In 1992, *dalang* Sidia from STSI created a sophisticated movable scenery/diorama to depict a flying scene in the story of *Bima Goes to Heaven (Bima Swarga)*. To visualize Bima flying over the mountain, forest, sea, and clouds, an electric motor (battery) revolved a painted plastic translucent piece of scenery which circulated around a spot light. Each image of mountain, forest, sea, river with its necessary clouds and sky above them passed over the light source projecting the locale on the screen in sequence. Since that time others have emulated his innovation. Recently, *dalang* added moving scenery to the traditional *wayang* traveling scene without the use of electric power. One hand simply moves some trees horizontally across the screen, while the other manipulates the character who seems to be jogging by swinging hands and knees back and forth in the center stage/screen, creating a dynamic feeling of movement. In this area as in manipulation we see significant contemporary work that involves experimentation and creativity.

In Wija's *Jayantaka* creative scenery manifests itself in several verbal allusions. For example, when the comic servant Delem glorifies the palace of Kencana Pura he says to Sangut, "Look at that giant pearl exhibited in the front of the palace's gate! That pearl is derived from the moon's stone (*batu bulan*)."

Another verbal scenery manifests itself when the battle is about to begin. Illustrating the chaos in the palace Kencana Pura, Sangut alludes, "As Bima spins his Gada mace, it causes chaos the cockfighting and gambling. The gamblers frantically rush everywhere accompanied by all invited kings..."

Just as Wija did, *dalang* Sudarma's creative scenery manifests itself in several verbal allusions. For example, when Bambang Kumbayana arrives at the ocean, he talks to his servant Kenyot referring to the ocean.

KUMBAYANA. We quickly arrive on this shore and see the sea. But this beach is so quite. Nobody seems to be around! How can we cross the ocean now Jot?

KENJOT. Yes, my lord, there is no canoe on this seashore, let alone larger boats. I have no idea either how can we get cross the ocean.

Except for the first act, each act begins with a dialogue between two comic servants. Instead of dancing or walking in the first entrance, the two comic servants begin in a frozen sitting posture, facing each other or facing one direction together for about 10 to 15 seconds before they begin to speak or sing. This method of rendering the action is quite traditional in manner, because most *dalang* in contemporary Bali have made their comic servants dance, sing or to do both simultaneously for their first entrance on the screen. As *dalang* Sudarma employs only one *katengkong* 'assistant' who sits behind him, the stage business must necessarily be more simple. But Sudarma has to take care that the puppets that stick or are to be stuck at the extreme right and left of the screen must be fully managed by him alone. He would have been freed of this job if he employed two assistants in his performance.

E. Jokes and Social Criticism

More spontaneous and extempore innovations occur in the humor and social commentary which a *dalang* delivers during a performance. *Wayang* jokes include puns,

malapropisms, humorous voices, and comic puppet movements. Misunderstandings, mistaken identities, sexual innuendo, stupidity, cleverness, trans-linguistic humor, etc.—all of these sources of fun are used by *dalang*. Many (perhaps most) comic dialogues are composed separately and interpolated into a variety of plays. As a *dalang* expands or modifies his jokes, some improvised comic dialogues made up at a particular performance may be retained for other performances, since there is no rules for what comic dialogues can be used with what story.

In creating puns or a play on words a *dalang* may compose a dialogue⁶⁵ that goes as follows.⁶⁶

TWALEN. I like the fry days [sounds like Fridays] much better than the other days.

WREDAH. I bet! Because the day allows you to get off earlier.

TWALEN. No! Because on fry days your mom usually fries my favorite chicken, fish, and potatoes.... Look around here, my son! None of these poor fishermen can eat sand witch [sounds like sandwich].

WREDAH. Oh, because that food is too expensive to fishermen?

TWALEN. Nope! Because these sands of the witch are poisonous and taste yucky.

WREDAH. O...I did not think that way... Hurry up daddy! Our lord has gone too far.

TWALEN. To fart? I don't think our lord is to fart.

⁶⁵ Pursuant to the conventional format of the *pakem* plays, the names of dramatic character are capitalized to suggest that they are involved in dialogue with the following dramatic lines.

WREDAH. No Dad! Your ears were mishearing. I said, our lord is too far,
NOT to fart....

TWALEN. O, sorry, I heard “to fart.” But I am proud of you my boy. I
will send you to FSU next semester.

WREDAH. Are you serious Dad? FSU is Florida State University!

TWALEN. O Oo, I thought Football State University!

Trans-linguistic misunderstanding and sexual innuendo combine in the following
example.⁶⁷

WIJIL. Do you still respect your client?

PUNTA. Not anymore!

WIJIL. But why did you say, “Thank you very much”

PUNTA. Don’t you know English? Stupid! “Thank you very muss” means
Nagih siu maan samas (asking for 1000 but you are given only 400).

WIJIL. That’s the rhyme but not the meaning of the expression.

PUNTA. O really? Then, tell me how to call a woman in English?

WIJIL. Just say. “Halo Miss!”

PUNTA. If I don’t see the woman?

WIJIL. Just say. “the lady is missing” [“missing” in Balinese language
means diarrhea and goes to toilet too frequently]

PUNTA. Woo...ho..ho.. unbelievable!

WIJIL. What are you laughing at?

⁶⁶ This example is compiled from my own shows.

⁶⁷ Paraphrased and compiled from my own play script and shows.

PUNTA. Your English! Just like you laughed at the English of our queen on the last court dinner, I am laughing at your disgusting English.

It's now your turn to get laughed at by me and all audiences.

WIJIL. But I told you the right words. Last time I laughed because the queen offered her domestic noodle to her foreign guest in a mixed English and Balinese language.

PUNTA. Tell me how was that exactly.

WIJIL. Remember, when the queen offered *me* (noodles) she said, "Would you like *me* sir?" Of course the honorable guest could not answer the question immediately because he was embarrassed. Recognizing the Queen's *foix pas*, the king deflected his attention.

PUNTA. But the guest was awkwardly nodding and said "ah ha.. yes" right? Then, what was the next one that prompted you to burst out laughing uncontrollably?

WIJIL. When later she offered the *sambal* (hot, spicy sauce) along with the noodle, she expanded her offer by saying. "Would you like *me* hot sir?" I knew she meant to say, "Would you like . . . noodles with hot spicy sauce sir?"

Jokes may be displayed through dialogue about illogical, fictive, and romantic issues as follows.⁶⁸

TWALEN. My son, I know your voice is excellent, but your size and appearance make everything you have useless. If you take a job as an

⁶⁸ Paraphrased from *dalang* Wija's show.

actor, half of the audience can't see you, because your size is less than a finger or even shorter than an egg. To be a mask dancer, your nose is too big; it doesn't allow the mask to fit and stick on your face.

WREDAH. Well, don't put me down Dad! Just ask yourself who has the works. Check first the machine and factory before blaming the products.

TWALEN. I see your point! But look at my shape, everyone agrees that I am a handsome man and your mom is pretty too. Why doesn't your shape derive from your mom or mine? I am suspicious of the whereabouts of your mom who might have borrowed an ugly-cheap-skate man to create you?

The *dalang* may cause humor by a reversal.

WREDAH. Nevertheless I am a man. I am lucky for being born as a man, the smartest creature in the world.

TWALEN. Yea... but only man can make things worse, never an animal!

Dalang may be prompted by a temporal situation to spontaneously create jokes in response to a given occurrence. For example when a baby in the audience suddenly cries in the middle of the performance, a servant may call. "Mommy...! Give the breast to baby first, NOT daddy! okay?"

Jokes in the *wayang* shows usually embody hot social gossip or issues of interest to the viewers. Parts of those themes may be cited as follows.

Female avarice and sexuality are critiqued in *pantun* verses⁶⁹ from a *wayang Arja*.

CONDONG (Maid servant).

*Kangguang sambel bawang mawadah cawan, ketipatne pelalahang,
Kangguang ngalih somah tadah tuān, sertifikatne utamāng.*
A cup of fried onion delicious, the hot rice will tune,
Let's hunt for older spouses, and enjoy their fortune.

WIJIL (A comic servant).

*Ngulat bedeg di Wangaya, ngulat tikeh di Tampaksiring,
Ulat jegeg sing madaya, suba pepes ngulungin beling.*
Weaving screen in a city, weaving rug in a country,
She really looks pretty, but doing abortion too frequently.

CONDONG.

*Kaja-kaja luwas kagunung, meli gender maimbuh soling,
Tuah saja tiang bingung, kondan nganten suba beling.*
Toward mountain traveling, to buy flute and music percussion,
It's indeed distressing; before marriage I got pregnant.

⁶⁹ Numerous jokes were conveyed through a four-line rhyme (*pantun*). The first two lines often consist of malapropisms that serve as the springboard in order to establish a clear point on the second two lines. The biggest challenge in transcribing the jokes in rhyme lies in finding the correct word that suits both the meaning and rhyme at the same time. Most of the time I can find either only the right translation without the rhyme or only the rhyme without matching the meaning, but can hardly find both at once. As they are translated into English, the rhyme sounds rather awkward and the jokes loses its appealing emotion and fascination considerably. In other words, the jokes were far more sensible and effective in the actual performance than when they are displayed in this written format.

Exaggeration

Feminine pride and body image are the topic of the following exaggerated critique by Yan Pangkur, a servant character in the genre of *Wayang Tantri* performed by *dalang* Wija.

“Long ago when I was a little boy, one piece of cloth is enough; now 50 pieces of cloth is not enough. Women sometimes dress for three days in order to select the most appropriate dress. this piece does not fit; that one is not pretty; this piece is too tight; that piece is too loose, and finally all are canceled. Sometimes a woman doesn’t even eat for three days in order to trim her size. Once she gets the right size of cloth, she squishes her waist with belt. when the front waist is squished in, it pops to the back; squished at the back, it pops to the front. Finally, back and front are squished simultaneously until the woman collapsed comatose.”

As in many cultures, gender ambiguity causes laughter. Here the powerful demon king Rawana is feminized by his servant as he tries to study how to win the heart of Lady Sita.⁷⁰

RAHWANA. Sangut, what should I do in order to win Sita’s heart?

SANGUT. You should learn how to speak softly and act gently. That’s a universal way I know to win a woman. If you agree, let me train you how to achieve it. [Sangut pulls Rahwana to move to another place]

⁷⁰ This example has been a common motif/pattern/model, used by many *dalang* including me and modified into many variants.

Here in my acting studio where you may practice on speech and acting. Ready? Lets practice to say “Hi honey, hi my Sita.”

RAHWANA. Hi honey, hi my Sita.

SANGUT. That’s way too big my lord. You need to adjust your pitch by squeezing your butt my lord. Make your voice small, soft, and sweet okay? “Hi my Sita” common!

RAHWANA. Hi my Sita.

SANGUT. That’s a lot better. But it still need smaller and softer “Hi my Sita; Let’s eat out honey.”

RAHWANA. Hi my Sita; Let’s eat out honey.

SANGUT. Let’s go to a restaurant to play toys honey.

RAHWANA. Let’s go to a restaurant to play toys honey.

SANGUT. Excellent my lord! Now move okay? Can you imitate me to walk gently and swing your hand back and forth smoothly this way....

In the scene, Sangut forces Rahwana to imitate him by speaking and moving in a feminine manner.

Sexual association or love scandal

Village sex scandals can be referred to via clown dialogue. Consider the following example.⁷¹

TWALEN. My son Wredah, you should marry immediately so that I may have a grandchild before I die; otherwise, the god Yama will drag

⁷¹ This example has also been a common motif/pattern/model with many modifications. Nobody cares who is initiated and has the authority.

and torture my soul to hell. The holy teaching of *Yama Purana Tatva* has confirmed that the soul of anyone dies without a grandchild will be tortured in a dreadful fiery cauldron.

WREDAH. I know dad! But I don't even have a girl friend yet to marry with, and it will take another nine months after my wife gets pregnant to have a baby.

TWALEN. You can marry the young-girl neighbor.

WREDAH. The unmarried young-girl who is already pregnant?

TWALEN. Yes! if you marry her tomorrow, it may take you less than a couple of weeks to have the baby, because she is already pregnant and no man shows his responsibility for the imminent baby yet right?

WREDAH. Yes, what a poor girl she is....(after thinking) But if I marry her now, I am afraid in the future when the right man pleads guilty and claims the baby.

TWALEN. No no! my son, don't worry, the right man is too cowardly to claim himself as the father of the baby. Just go ahead, marry her! Trust me your father Dah!

WREDAH. No dad, I am too afraid of infringing on any law or code of decency. It will be a big shame if, after I marry, the policeman catches me and puts me in jail.

TWALEN. Don't worry my son! I can guarantee you that all will be okay.

WREDAH. How dare you say it. Why?

TWALEN. Because ehmm..., because the baby is mine!

Though not overtly recognized, themes of feminism and anti-feminism are also found in *wayang* jokes, although the *dalang* do not recognize the concepts as feminist themselves. For example, *dalang* Sidja never mentions the term feminism, therefore, I may assume that he probably does not know it, but when he performed the story of *Supraba's Expedition*, he intensively brought up the issues or essence of feminism. As this story featuring a female role, to defeat the demon king Niwatakawaca the god Indra sends the celestial nymph Supraba and the human hero Arjuna. Supraba is assigned to seduce the demon into revealing the one spot on his body where he is vulnerable and Arjuna is then to use this knowledge to slay him.

Throughout their traveling scene to Himantaka kingdom, Arjuna continually flirts with Supraba and says. "My adorable angel, would you mind walking ahead so that I can witness and praise all kind of beauties that God has given to you?"⁷² Although Supraba politely respects his suggestion, she is overwhelmed by the thought of the ugly demon pawing her body. But she can only share this information with her maidservant. She hides the fact from Arjuna.

Suddenly, unable to hold it in any more, she sadly speaks to Arjuna. "Do you know my friend that to let the demon king touch my body is the worst thing that any woman can experience, and is even worse than being raped. This task is beyond all my abilities, is even much harder than being required to die. I know that I can seduce almost anyone, but how can I let a demon stroke and pamper my body? I am famous for all kinds of beauty that every human, demon, and even divine beings desire, but nobody in this universe cares about my feelings. I may be lucky that I am surrounded by all the smart

⁷² All lines are paraphrased from *dalang* Sidja's performance.

and wise beings, but no one cares what burden I am now enduring? Alas, I am a mere vulnerable worthless woman that the men can do anything they want at the expense of my dignity.”

Although Arjuna has continuously observed Supraba’s grief at being assigned to seduce Niwatakawaca, he has no courage to respond directly. Instead, he speaks to his servant as he shares his perspective. "I understand and fully respect your proposition my most beautiful friend. But why did not you say it in the meeting with the god Indra in heaven where the expedition was planned? . . . What can I do? Remember when you seduced me in my meditation in the Indrakila Mountain. You showed off your voluptuous body and legs by putting on an unusually sexy short skirt to steal every man’s attention. After they approach you because of your seduction, you accuse them of rape. Now, when the moment to use your seductive skills has come, you moan deeply. Don’t you remember, when you showed me your sexy thighs and pressed your voluptuous breast against my face? Several days ago you also directed my fingers to your soft nipple to distract me from my meditation in the mountains? If you just partly do the same thing to Niwatakawaca, you will certainly outwit him. No need to weep forever; let us do our duty (*dharma*).

There is not time to unravel the feminist and counter-feminist implications of such a scene, but it is clear that such passages touch on issues of gender in contemporary society even as they play out the story.

Similar to the western comedies, marriage, and love scandals appear to be the most extensive themes of jokes and social criticism in *wayang* theatre, while the edification may occasionally also be included. To give a general overview on how

extensive the theme may be, the following description is paraphrased from one of *dalang* Sudarma's performances enacting the popular story of *Baby Gatutkaca (Jabang Tatuka)*.

At the beginning of the second act, the comic servants KENYOT and TONGLANG suggest that marriage is the number one demand and may go through any possible way.

KENYOT. Why does Bima want to marry the ogress Dimbi?

TONGLANG. Because the ogress bribed Bima with six sacks of money.

Later, Kenyot and Tonglang talk about their own marriage.

TONGLANG. I have a trouble with my wife. When I give her more money she serves me only rice. Less money no food at all, while she selfishly eats out alone. Had I known this hardship I would never have sought a wife. She just gives me a blinking-eye orgasm on the expense of yearlong stressfulness.

KENYOT. Oh no, to live properly we all need a spouse. No matter how much treasure one possesses, none-of them is comparable to the bliss you enjoy sleeping with your wife in bed. That is the first thing that everyone seeks in marriage. If you are not suited to your current wife you may divorce her.

TONGLANG. I am thinking about that, but I am afraid of her mother who practices witchcraft.

KENYOT. Let me talk to her for you. Then you find another wife that you may easily manage to control fully.

TONGLANG. But I am afraid that something bad might happen to her
after I divorce her?

KENYOT. I will take her widow.

Numerous love scandals are also featured through the role of Mr. Ngurah, Mr. Nani and the lady Luh Nyoman. The following anecdote essentially features that Luh Nyoman's father threatens Mr. Ngurah and forces him to marry Luh Nyoman because he is one of the many men who made her pregnant.

LUH NYOMAN (sings). Ngurah, why do you unkindly torture me by
letting this shame inflict me? Look at my three-month pregnancy is
already visible. Where is your promise to marry me?

NGURAH (also sings). Don't tell me about that. Didn't I pay you every
time in full for your *barang* 'stuff' [referring to her sexual organ] that
I rent? Have an abortion! and don't offer me your *barang* anymore.

LUH NYOMAN (cries). Well, let me report to the policeman. Let the
police give justice and prosecute you merciless man, for ignoring
your responsibility. (She leaves).

NANI (suddenly appears). See! I told you not to be a mischievous man.
With the police you won't deny to marry the well-experienced
coquettes. That's your *karma*.

NGURAH. But you should also tell the police that you did too.

NANI. I tried only once and not even completely. By the middle I had
powerlessly collapsed, because I got diarrhea at the time. (He exits).

NGURAH (lonely). Before the police arrive, I had better join

transmigration, going to the island of Sulawesi. But before leaving

let me seduce her once again.

(He gently approaches her). My Luh Nyoman, actually I am ready taking

all responsibilities. I will marry you in seven days; I have selected

the most auspicious day, *paniron kala caplokan*, for our wedding.

But now please allow me to borrow you once again.

LUH NYOMAN (resolved/consoled). No problem, as long as you take the

responsibility.

NANI (suddenly appears and talk to Luh). If Ngurah can borrow you, why

can't I?

NGURAH. Wait a minute! (to NANI) You must be the second.

LUH NYOMAN (cries and reports to her father). Dad, this is the man who

must be responsible for my pregnancy.

FATHER (threatens with an uncased sword). Hey, you rascal. For three

months your naughty behavior has humiliated me and left a great

shame on our face. Now chose! marry my daughter or allow me to

chop your neck with this sickle.

NGURAH. Okay, okay, I will marry her in a week.

FATHER (threatens severely). Marry her now!

NGURAH (apologetically). Okay in two days Dad, since I need to wait for

some money.

FATHER (threatens firmly). Now!!! I say now!

NGURAH (obeys and takes Luh's hand.). Huh! (They go away).

FATHER (very delighted). Praise God! My most costly daughter is sold.

Now I can live more economically without having her at home.

NANI (in a different place with Ngurah). From now on you have to cook

50 kg of rice a day to feed her. Where did you take her?

NGURAH. Right there! I soaked her in that river until she cried deeply.

NANI. That's why you need to listen to me! As an old married-man don't

be naughty anymore. Since you built the *karma*, you will also reap

the results. Now you like to treat woman badly; later other men will

also treat your daughters in that same way too. That's *karma*.

NGURAH. Well, before it's birth I have told my baby in her mother's

womb to be born as a boy. If it's a baby girl I will let her starve and

die. That's why all of my dozen children are male. The male even

sold out more expensively than the female (Juxtaposing a child to a

commodity of pet or pig from the financial viewpoint of Balinese

villagers)

Later, when Ngurah and Nani discuss the origin of Sang Radeya in the third act, they suggest the danger of having a son out of wedlock, just as the queen Kunti had experienced in bearing her first boy.

NANI. Various social gossips tend to suggest that our lord Sang Radeya

was an illegitimate son. Who is actually Sang Radeya?

NGURAH. He is actually a special son, for his father is the Sun God and

his mother is princess Kunti. Long ago Kunti studied with priest

Durwasa, who taught her a secret spell and charm of Aji Hredaya which allows her to attract any of the gods. Obsessed by her great curiosity, Kunti tried the Surya 'sun' Hredaya 'attraction,' to allure the Sun God, until she got pregnant. Being pregnant without first getting married was certainly a great shame for her family that led her brother to torture her badly. Fortunately, the priest Durwasa helped her to have the baby who was born through her ear (*karna*) allowing her to remain a virgin. The son was called Karna because he was born through her ear. To avoid a scandal, baby Karna was placed in a basket and put adrift on the Yamuna river. Later he was founded and adopted by Sang Adirata, who called him Sang Radeya, our current honorable employer.

Just as in Brecht's *Three Penny Opera* or Moliere's *Tartuffe*, the object of jokes and social criticism in *wayang* is often aimed at hypocritical aspects of contemporary society or individuals. The theme may be embodied in Sangut's song as follows.

*During the age of Crazy Kaliyuga,
people value anything crazy,
but ignore goodness,
because they are bored.*

*During a political campaign,
each party propagates the peoples' welfare
People are promised all kinds of things
and improvements only so the party can win the election.*

*After being elected
No politician cares about the peoples' difficulties,
The ruling classes close their eyes
To the poverty of citizens.*

*When laws are offered up for auction,
Judge, attorney, and lawyer sell justice.
Money controls the judicial system.
Right and wrong can be had by paying money for it.*

The same theme may be conveyed through dialogue of two servants as follows.

SANGUT. The priest taught us to close our heart to any evil desires, and
recently the government officers close their eyes and ignore the
peoples' poverty.

DELEM. Yes, but in return, they have widely opened their pockets.⁷³

Another example refers to Tommy Soeharto, son of previous president of Indonesia.

PUNTA. The fact that policemen cannot catch Mr. "Crime" for such a
long time proves the lack of capability of our police and intelligence
people.

WIJIL. O that's not true! On the contrary, it proves the capacity of our
policemen to act by playing a theatrical game.

Although the themes and the variety in word usages of *wayang* comedy are
similar to those which are employed in the western comedy, it is important to note that in

⁷³ The audience automatically understands that opening pockets is an allusion to the corrupt officials who steal the social security loan from the IMF.

terms of the characters they are very different. The majority of Western comedies, from the works of Aristophanes to the works of comic writers such as Carlo Goldoni and Carlo Gozzi display a range of character types like the miser, the fool, the parasite, the hypocrite, the impostor, the coward, and behavior that belongs to “human foibles” (see Barranger, 90-91). The four dominant comic characters in *wayang* (the black fat Twalen with his quick-and-sharp son Wredah, the braggart boisterous Delem and his slow skeptical younger brother Sangut) do not fit to the category of “human foibles.” These court attendants known as *Panasar* ‘foundation or base’ embody honesty and truthfulness and suggest ways to end corruption and dishonesty (see deBoer, *The Function of the Comic Attendants* 79-105).

These dominant comic characters in *wayang* often appear as moralistic agents who offer useful suggestions to their kings in times of misery or pressure. When I was a young boy, I thought those four comic characters were merely clowns. But when I learned more about the characters my perspective changed considerably. The psycho-cultural significance of these comic characters to its master practitioners is much more than a mere clown. Historians suggest that these servants are indigenous Indonesian characters, since they are not part of the Indian epics but are always dominant in *wayang* shows presenting the Indian epics. These historians also use the characters as evidence that *wayang* originated in Indonesia.

In tracing the root of those indigenous characters, I came to learn that the ancient manuscript *Dharma Pewayangan* asserts the microcosmic and macrocosmic significant of these characters. In the microcosmos “Delem belongs to the point from which the heart hangs down, Twalen to that of the liver, Wredah to that of the kidneys, and Sangut to that

of the bile” (see Hooykaas, 21-22). In the macrocosmos, they are often identified with four aspects of the Highest Being. Twalen is the god Acintya who occupies the black part of fire. Wredah is the god Sanghyang Tunggal who occupies the white part of fire. Sangut is the Sanghyang Suksma who occupies the yellow part of fire. Delem is the God Brahma who occupies the red part of fire. The clowns are thus in one sense aspects of the performer’s own body, yet simultaneously they make up the cosmic fire of the High God.

These comic servants also have a kind of salvific role, as a savior, interceding human with God, likes that of Hindu Avatars and/or Jesus Christ. In the story of *Twalen Becomes a King (Twalen Dadi Raja)*, Twalen discovers his own origin. This story begins from the intention to get rid of all pestilence in the kingdom of Amerta, where Twalen serves as a servant of the king Dharmawangsa. Pursuant to the old scripture, everybody has to shave his/her head that were brought forth from his/her mother’s womb; otherwise the hair may cause impurity. But Twalen does not let anyone shave or even touch his hair. He runs away and hides himself under a waterfall on Yamuna River where he encounters his mother, Diah Rekatawati, who has taken the form of a crab.

The crab tells him that he is the god Ismaya who descended to the world to take care and safeguard goodness and virtue. His brother is the God Siwa who safeguards heaven and the gods. The crab transforms Twalen into a handsome king Jayasemara and tells him to restore human welfare and purity by burying his skin on the main village cross road. This play features semiotic signifiers that embody the local perception of the social life and cosmic law.

In terms of his physical body and his social roles, the character of Twalen seems to be related to a clown found beyond the shore of Bali. In the Javanese *wayang* the character is known as Semar. In European puppetry he may be Mr. Punch, perhaps Brigella in the *commedia dell'arte*, Karegoz in Turkish puppetry, Jan Klaasen in Dutch puppetry, or Tchanchés in Belgium, Don Christobal in Spain, Petrushka in Russia, or Vetez Laszlo in Hungary, Kasperek in Czechoslovakia, Vasilache in Rumania, Pavliha in Yugoslavia, Pulcinello in Italian puppetry, and Policenelle in France.⁷⁴ However Twalen's western cousins while retaining aspects similar to his power and social criticism do not have the same aura of his holiness. Unlike Twalen they do not save the world or serve as an advisor to the ruler who instructs him how to rule.⁷⁵

Thus, the common comic characters in *wayang* are not the hypocrites, imposters, and cowards of the western comic theatre tradition, but are the voice of the civilized and divine. While a set comic character in western comedies may appear in a few separate plays, the comic characters of *wayang* always appear in each and every performance of the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*-based repertoire.

⁷⁴ This interpretation is based on my preliminary investigation of the subject concluded at the beginning of my Ph.D program, during which I read a number of books on puppetry around the world.

⁷⁵ In the story of *Sangut Becomes a King* (*Sangut Dadi Raja*), the king Duryodana ousted Sangut. Eventually, he wins the contest in Medang Kemulan kingdom where he is immediately married to the princess Somawati, daughter of the king Jayakusuma who crowns him as the new king Sutamaya. In the story of *Wredah as a Holy Sacrifice* (*Wredah Dadi Caru*), Wredah is a fellowship of the Sang Hyang Tunggal God. So that when Wredah lets himself be slaughtered for a holy sacrifice, none of the 100 Korawa brothers can kill him. Wredah defeats the Korawa brothers who cruelly decide to take him as a human sacrifice. In the story of *Delem Becomes a King* (*Delem Dadi Raja*) as performed by *dalang* Sidja, Delem was finally inaugurated as a king with the help of God Brahma.

To many reputable Balinese artists and scholars, the philosophically edifying jokes are more respectful to use than the promiscuous jokes. Wija's unique creativities are due to his ability to create and incorporate jokes within serious moments, rather than deliberately employing sexual issues as most comedies do. For example, when Bima emotionally reports to Yudistira about his personal obsession to punish Jayantaka for his misconduct, Twalen mischievously comments, twists, and translates Bima's words. Let me paraphrase as follows:

BIMA to Yudistira (as directly translated by TWALEN). I should deal
with Jayantaka in accordance with my caste as a *satria* 'knight' man.
Sa... Tria...!

TWALEN (shifts from Yudistira to Bima). What does the term mean?

BIMA to Yudistira (as directly translated by TWALEN). *Sa* means one;
Tria means three.

TWALEN (incoherently). One and three equal four, doesn't it?

BIMA (as directly translated by TWALEN). I must unify my three
aspects: energy (*bayu*), speech (*sabda*), and thought (*idep*) into one
action as a consistent knight. Not letting anyone undermine my
dignity like you. Is this how your *dharma* is used to govern the land?

TWALEN (mischievously proposing). Let us sell the land partly!

BIMA (being annoyed) to Twalen. Shut up...! Twalen!

Wija's jokes are primarily supported by his excellent ability and creativity to change his voice in accordance with each specific character.

Social criticism in this performance is very obvious from the beginning. The hot themes range around excessive liberty without ethical behavior, corruption, the rich versus the poor, and defective personality. Several verbal creativities through dramatic dialogues of the show reflect and criticize the contemporary political situation in Indonesia as well. In their first meeting, Yudistira asks Kresna to consider numerous problems that inflict the country caused by the excessive liberty the people exercise without regard to traditional decorum. Yudistira realizes that most of the subordinate leaders begin to ignore his order in favor of another leader (Jayantaka). By the midpoint of the play, the comic servant Delem tells his brother Sangut that the idea of conducting Jayantaka's illegal ceremony came from the 'half-blind (*kecek*) ruler.' Here he refers to Sakuni. Making reference to the eye of the character is more effective than to straightforwardly name him. The audience aptly laughs and associates the 'half-blind (*kecek*) ruler' Sakuni with the contemporary Indonesian president, at the time. Theatrically, the audience also knows that the 'half-blind (*kecek*) ruler' refers to the notorious foxy king Sakuni.⁷⁶

The widespread corruption in Indonesia is criticized in the performance through the following dialogue:

SANGUT (to Subawa). The king's bodyguards would not allow you meet
the king because of your threadbare cloth.

⁷⁶ When the Pandawas lose in the dice game, Bima's thumbnail poked the eye of dice, which transformed himself into Sakuni. That is the reason why Sakuni is always played as a half-blind character, even though in the detail the story of Sakuni may not have reached that period in his life yet. In Balinese culture, a person with imperfection is known as *cenala* 'impurity' and cannot be appointed as a leader, let alone a president.

SUBAWA. Oo.. my plain cloth is a problem to them? Don't they know, if I had a chance to be a corrupter I could also afford to buy a full fancy dress like those elite officers.

Criticizing the impressive clothes of a leader without any moral value and good conduct culminates in the dialogue between Subawa and Jayantaka.

In criticizing and correcting the excessive patriotic conduct and all kinds of suicide attacks, *dalang* Wija makes Sangut approach Jayantaka's armies and talks as follows:

SANGUT. Wait guys! Where are all of you guys rushing to with such frightening weapons?

ARMIES. We are supposed to defend our land/country.

SANGUT. That's good! But instead of bringing those weapons you had better work with your farming implements to plan your crops so you can harvest them and provide for your families.

ARMIES. Oh no, we are supposed to defend our king?

SANGUT. Okay, you all have free will. But do you know who is your king's enemy that you are going to fight now? The invincible Pandawa! Don't you see, all those mighty kings and knights rushed home, afraid to face the Pandawas. If you all die in the battle, who will take care of your children and your family? Will your boss support your children?

ARMIES. Unlikely!

SANGUT. Therefore, you all had better go home. Take care of your children rather than letting the Pandawas kill you as well as your king.

Having seen Yudistira defeat Jayantaka at the end of the play, Subawa reminds Jayantaka (and other rich people) not to misuse their fortunes and power on temporary matter lend to him by God.

SUBAWA (to Jayantaka). This is what you deserve when a king like you don't listen and care about your people. Even though you are blessed and become rich and powerful, you end up in a big trouble like this, just because you abused your fortune and power.

Dalang Sudarma integrates *genjekan* in lieu of the conventional *rebong* 'love' scene. This drunk scene is always achieved by presenting two male comic servants Ngurah and Nani, plus a female folk character Luh Nyoman and her father. Through these characters the *dalang* takes an opportunity to present additional hilarious subject matter. Although most of the theme is about love scandals, the scenario is varied from time to time: The lady Luh Nyoman may be featured as getting pregnant because of her association with many men, yet she claims she is only faithful to Ngurah. Next, she may be featured as a rich old man's young wife, who is seduced by Ngurah. The following is my translation and paraphrase of the performance.

NGURAH (sings). My Luh Nyoman, are you sure that you still love me? I have long been praying every Sunday for the sudden death of your husband.

NANI (scolds his young wife and pulls her off). I say, stay home! Don't stay out late too frequently.

NGURAH. Geez! I thought her husband's ear is deft or dull, but it's still so sensitive. Even though he is now 96 years old he manages to wed a teenager wife, a high school graduate. She is so voluptuous and likes to wear a tiny sexy cloths and doesn't like to wear proper dress. See! From her window she keeps winking at me suggestively. Oh my God... yes my Lord, I pray for the death of her husband so that I can take her widow! I can't wait... Let me keep singing to allure her out. (The song cues the musician to begin the *genjekan* 'drunk' dance)

NANI (while his wife is dancing with Ngurah). I had better tell Ngurah's wife, who will scold him.

NGURAH (keeps dancing). In nutshell, you ought to immediately strangle your old cripple husband, and then I will wed you. Let you get the two stores, the fortunes, and all of your husband's inheritance. Your hip-swing-rear dance has passionately torn my pant off.

NGURAH's WIFE (suddenly appears). You are a fool. For several months you claim to have no energy in the bed with me. How come such a stupid dance has passionately torn your pants off?

In all recorded Sudarma shows, jokes and social criticism in this performance are primarily done by integrating the folk arts of drunk-dance (*genjekan*) and the local social drama with many lewd jokes. Although *dalang* Sudarma hides his lewd jokes through a traditional analogy, it is still vulgar to most audience members. For example, when the young lady Luh Nyoman demands that Ngurah take responsibility for getting her pregnant, the lady describes herself as the hole of a traditional stove (*cangkem paon*). On the other hand, Ngurah is described as the cooker who had inserted his firewood (*saang*) of a whole coconut (*celebongkakang*) into her stove. Ngurah is now sued for carelessly breaking her stove with the whole coconut firewood. In response, Ngurah says: “Didn’t I pay for using your stove?” (*Kaden Beli suba nyewa barang adine?*). Besides, I used it only twice, didn’t I?”

The hot themes of social commentary range around jobless graduates, old hegemonic officers, elicit loves, and respect and disrespect for parents.

BARADWAJA. My son, I am so delighted to see you back home and to learn that you have completed your education.

KUMBAYANA. Thank you, dad, for all your support, but on the contrary I am so aggravated by the fact that I don’t have a job even after getting my degree and diploma. School seems to have been useless for us to spend so much time, money, and energy to study. After all I can get no job.

BARADWAJA. That’s okay my son, perhaps you will get a job sometimes later. The schools seem all right, and in fact, we even need more schools to get everybody well educated. To me the

problem was the fact that the senior officers don't want to retire, although they are already blind and cannot even see the roads and their office, they insist on remaining in their position forever.

KUMBAYANA. Well, dad, it's not my interest to accuse the senior officers since my objective is simply to get a job. I will try to see my previous classmate, Sucitra, who has become a king in Pancala. I hope he will give me a job since we agreed to help each other after graduation.

When Kumbayana encounters the nymph Nilotama, disguised as a horse, Kenyot aptly comments on the scene by originating two other ludicrous stories that are superimposed on the main story. The first story is revealed before the origin of the horse is unknown, and it goes as follows:

KENYOT. The fate of our lord to marry a horse reminds me about the history of our family. Do you know why you have a silly protruding horse-mouth like that one?

TONGLANG. Nope! Why don't you tell me now; I am an illiterate man. How can I find out our familial history?

KENYOT. At the beginning, our father was rich and had two wives. He first married a princess who gave birth to me; and, soon after she died.

TONGLANG. Thus, your mother was a princess?

KENYOT. Yup!

TONGLANG. How about my mother?

KENYOT. Next, our father remarried a common woman. When a misfortune befell our parents, our family income derived solely from leasing a male energetic horse, and very suddenly our father died. Our family became poor and lived extremely frugally. Since I was still a little boy, our mother was the sole person who kept feeding and taking care of the male horse. Eventually, the horse and mother fell in love with each other. Then you were born.

TONGLANG. Thus, my father was a horse?

KENYOT. Yes, that's why you have the mouth of a horse; it was descended from your actual father!

TONGLANG. But virtually and officially my father was also yours, with the only different being our mother, right?

KENYOT. You got it.

After the main story reveals that the origin of the horse was a celestial nymph Nilotama, the second story that was added is as follows:

KENYOT. The fate of the celestial nymph Nilotama to marry a human being reminds me of my own mother.

TONGLANG. You have told me that she was a princess, right?

KENYOT. Don't take it for granted 'Lang.

TONGLANG. So, you are going to revise our family history?

KENYOT. Kind of! Even scholars used to revise history. But this was the real one: My father was a poor firewood collector. Once upon a time, he got a towel in the river drifted by the water. The towel belonged

to a celestial nymph who was bathing up stream. With the condition that the nymph agreed to marry my father until bearing her first child, my father returned her towel.⁷⁷

TONGLANG. Okay! But if your mother is a nymph, why have you got an ugly mouth like this too?

KENYOT. Oh... you're right 'Lang. But, it is just actually like a human being. Not all nymphs are beautiful. Some are medium, not so cute. And the rest are even ugly. Yesterday, I met a nymph too.

TONGLANG. No kidding?

KENYOT. She is a high school student, exceptionally pretty. With a tiny skirt she looked quite voluptuous. When I approached her she smiled. Just when I was about to hug and kiss her, unfortunately I woke up.

TONGLANG. Oh man... I don't need to hear your stupid dream.

It is important to note that although the invocation of holy water is demanded at the end of the performance, this *wayang* performance is done more in an entertaining manner than in an edifying religious manner. Similar to many western comedies, edification is presented by exposing human frailties, so that the audience may be cautious after realizing their own internal weaknesses.

⁷⁷ The audience knows that he refers to another popular story, *Rajapala*, regarding an hunter who married a celestial nymph, Ken Sulasih.

F. Creating Puns or Playing on Words

The spontaneous improvisation of the *wayang* theatre also involves punning and word play. *Dalang* even create new meanings for existing words. For example, the word ‘seminar’ has been treated as the acronym of *sekha minum arak* (a group of people drinking wine and whiskey) [se-min-ar]. When a drunk folk character speaks crazily and claims himself to come from a “seminar,” that word suggests a quite different purpose from that of its conventional meaning, since there is a hidden goal and interest to make fun of a noble boss.

A *dalang* may also twist the pronunciation of a word. For example, *pespa* means ‘scooter’ in daily life, but a *dalang* may mispronounce *pespa* as *pispa*, an acronym of *pis panes*, “hot money.” This points to the fact that many people attain scooters through hard work or “hot” perseverance. The sound of the motor of a running scooter is ‘*cil-cil-cil-cil....*’ The word *cilcil* means buying on an installment. Transforming words into a new meanings is very common in *wayang* shows. The word *bale* means hall and it may be twisted into *bala*, which means people, or power, or home. The word *kayu* means tree but the pronunciation may be deliberately expanded as *kayun*, which means intention.

Dalang often employ the Balinese grammatically-suspect dictionary, known as *Kiratabasa* or *Dwijodah*.⁷⁸ Using it they chop, combine, and transpose words in ways that defy the conventional linguistic rules. For instance, *Rahwana*, according to *Dwijodah*, may mean “big sound” (*ra* = sound, voice, noise), but it can also mean “blood in the

⁷⁸ This dictionary is commonly used for traditional medication by *balian* healer to interpret the medical formula written in the *Usada* manuscript. *Dalang* find the dictionary a good resource to exploit words for theatrical purposes: for the beauty of sound regardless of incorrect grammar, for social criticism and for jokes. To linguistic scholars these puns and plays on words are considered as linguistic violations; hence, they berate *dalangs* for taking liberties with the language.

forest” (*Rah* = blood; *wana* = forest). The word *ratu* (king) becomes *ra* = special, *tu* = man. Hence, the *ratu* king must be a special sort of human. However, another variation of the meaning of *ratu* is, *rat* = world, *tu* = unity. Hence, the king must be able to unify the world. While linguists scoff at such wordplay, the ideas enrich every *dalang*’s performance.

To illustrate just how complex and wild the pun or wordplay in *wayang* may be, let me give a simple example of a conversation between Delem and Sangut.⁷⁹

SANGUT. How come you are so strong ‘Lem?

DELEM. Oh.. it’s a secret formula ‘Ngut. I can’t tell you unless you pay a certain amount for a non-refundable fee.

SANGUT. Come on ‘Lem, tell me! Tomorrow you’ll get your fee but now must be free.

DELEM. Okay tomorrow with a fee. All right. My strength is due to a special diet; my lunch is the Sun God (*Ida Batara Surya*).

SANGUT. Are you crazy? How dare you eat the Sun God?

DELEM. The Sun God has many names. Raditya, Aditya, Surya, and Baaskara; *baas* means rice; *kara* means bean; so I eat rice and beans.

SANGUT. Oh, I see! Yea...rice and beans can also burn your surplus fat.

DELEM. Do you know what is the drink?

SANGUT. What?

DELEM. Multicolor bird (*petingan poleng*)

SANGUT. Don’t go crazy ‘Lem? How can you drink a bird?

DELEM. Multicolor bird is called *Perit*, alias sprite. So I drank Sprite.

SANGUT. What do you have for dinner?

DELEM. I eat a priest (*sang wiku*).

SANGUT. Woo.. be careful, the priest may curse you!

DELEM. Priest is known as *wiku*. *Wiku* becomes *wikucit*, which is pig, so

I eat a roast suckling pig (*babi guling*). Do you know the drink?

SANGUT. What?

DELEM. Blowing wind. *kebir...kebir...kebir...* that is beer

SANGUT. Oh I see; you drink beer.

DELEM. Do you know the vegetable?

SANGUT. What?

DELEM. The Priest's mantra.

SANGUT. You really eat the mantra?

DELEM. How do you hear the mantra sounds. *Ong...sambal...bayem...*

Ong... sambal...bayem... Ong...sambal...bayem....

SANGUT. How can you eat that sound?

DELEM. *Ong* is mushroom; *sambal* is a hot spicy, sauce. *Bayem* is

spinach.

SANGUT. Oh... I got you. Your vegetable was mushroom and spinach

with hot spicy sauce!

⁷⁹ Although this example has also been a common motif with many modifications, the lines presented here are paraphrased from *dalang* Sira's performance.

Thus, as suggested in the dialogue above, the Sun God can mean rice; multicolor bird may mean Sprite; a priest may mean a roast suckling pig. The blowing wind means beer; and the priest's mantra may mean vegetables. This is a typical way of playing on the meaning of words⁸⁰ in a *wayang*.

Dalang may also employ all types of sayings and proverbs according to the Balinese tradition to convey messages in an indirect way. In the book regarding multi-Balinese verbal expression, Aneka Rupa Paribasa Bali, Nengah Tingge briefly describes 13 types of linguistic phenomenology in Bali.

1. Puzzle, riddle, conundrum (*cecimpedan*)
2. "Dragging words" (*bladbadan*). The *bladbadan* way of saying "she will be married" can be "she will be a palm leaf." The palm leaf is *ron*, which is dragged away become *makaronan*, which means married.
3. Multi-meaning words or ambiguous words (*rawos ngempelin*). When somebody say *tum-isi*, it can be *tum isi* (steamed boneless meat) or *tumisi* (snail). Hence, an ambiguous question may be "Can anybody eat *tum-isi* in this house?" To take a similar example in English, one may say. "Along this beach nobody can eat a big sand witch [sounds like sandwich]." Or a boy may say. "My mom has four fry days

⁸⁰ The *Kiratabasa* or *Dwijodah* dictionary mentioned earlier supports those puns because it always gives a "detouring meaning" rather than a "direct meaning." For example, when the Usadha healing manuscript suggests the patient to drink the juice of *Rangda Lumaku*, the *Balian* traditional doctor would find out the meaning from *Dwijodah* dictionary, which tells the meaning is the juice of *Baluntas* leaf (*loloh baluntas*). *Rangda* is the famous mythical figure of a witch used in the performing arts, while *lumaku* is walking or traveling. The meaning of *Rangda Lumaku* is the walking Rangda but nobody can make or find the juice. The detouring reference of Rangda is hidden in the agent, the notorious widow of Dirah, Sri Walu Nateng Dirah, who performed witchcraft by being a Rangda. In Balinese language, character 'W' is interchangeable with "B," so that *walu* is the same as *balu*. *Entas* means passing through or walking. Thus, *Rangda Lumaku* is an indirect way of saying *baluntas*, a type of tree.

- [sounds like Friday] a week.” So, too, the word ‘passenger’ may be pronounced ‘pass anger.’
4. Analogy (*sesawangan*). Her eyes like blue lotus (*palihat manunjung biru*). Her voluptuous breasts like a twin yellow coconut (*susune nyuh gading kembar*).
 5. Satire or parody (*sasimbing*). If a cat is given meat [anyone knows for sure, what would happen].
 6. Proverb (*sloka*). big wave big wind [big challenge for big earning]; How to store smoke? [how a teenager can conceal her un-hidden pregnancy].
 7. Allegory, metaphor, parable, (*sasenggak*). Like feeding (sprinkling) black rice to the chickens [chickens are unable to see black rice, just as people are unable to see a matter correctly].
 8. Seeking the next meaning (*sasonggan*). teaching a duck to swim, contributing salt to the sea.
 9. ‘Praying, wishing, and a-men’ (*Susanna*). when a lizard’s voice interrupts somebody’s talking, one may say “be it true goddess Saraswati.”
 10. Repeating a phrase in full rhyme (*wewangsalan*). Paying deposit for making battle, seeking benefits but losing capital.
 11. Rhyme (*peparikan/pantun/saduran*). Most of the *pantun* rhyme consists of four-lines. The first two lines may be a mere malapropism that serves as the springboard in order to establish a clear point on the second two lines.
 12. Modesty or Litotes (*tetingkesan*). Please accept our little gift.
 13. Symbol-based words (*sesawen*). white flag with Ganesa, an image to prevent obstacle.
-

With these many wordplays we have seen that the *dalang* have considerable flexibility in verbal improvisation. Generally, *dalang* tend to use verbal improvisation to debase words or terms that symbolize hegemonic systems, political parties, and economic forces. But for the terms that symbolize religion or God, they tend to reinforce or upgrade the significance. For example, the local word for religion, *agama*, is said to be an acronym of fire (*Agni*), water (*Gangga*), and air (*Maruta*).⁸¹

Puns are also employed in the contemporary performance of Wija's *Jayantaka*. The comic servant Delem and Sangut debate over the meaning of a word *mas* which has three different meanings: gold, the name of the village, and the 'Javanese men.' The word is combined with another word *salah* 'wrong.' The result is *mas+salah*, which means problem. When the order is reversed into *salah+mas*, it means 'wrong sir.' Let me paraphrase their dialogue as follows:

SANGUT. We may be fortunate for the plethora *mas* 'gold' our king possesses. But, if we *salah* 'mistakenly handle' it, the *mas* 'gold' may become *masalah* 'problem.' We all knew that there have been many *mas* (refers to the Javanese men who stay in the village) around here making mass *masalah* 'problem.'

DELEM. You may say what you like. But how about *salah+mas* 'wrong sir.' (In an orgasmic mood Delem very softly says the 'wrong sir' as though a beloved wife were telling her beloved husband: "Sorry my honey"). In the performance, indicated by the audience's response, it

⁸¹ Hence, the *dalang* may say that religion is for those who need fire, water, and air to live. The reason for degrading hegemonic terms while upgrading religious terms is perhaps because *wayang* is a theatre by and for the people. *Wayang* is a medium for people who trust God better than they trust the government.

worked effectively, although my transcription here may be less eloquent for the lack of intonation and a linguistic limitation.

Most of *dalang* Wija's puns entail previous knowledge of the local culture and issues. He often identifies things or a character by its incomplete name and quickly shifts the context of the deliberately corrupted word for his own advantage. For example, when Sangut mentions the leader of the Korawa brothers, he pretends himself to forget the right name, which allows him to mention only the first two syllables, 'Duryo' (although the audience knows the full name). Delem thinks that he knows the person "Oh I see!" but it later turns out that he mistakenly refers 'Duryo' to the local popular man, "(Mr.) Paktut Duryo?"

The performance also presents a musical creativity. Rather than reciting the traditional *tetandakan* song for the *rebong* 'love scene' Sangut elaborates the piece with his mouth by playing several musical instruments like the Kendang drum, Klenang, Kajar Gong chime, and Cengceng cymbal. So too, in his first entrance with Delem, Sangut elaborates the musical piece while dancing. The simple piece given by the quartet Gender musical instruments is embellished with several rhythmic patterns and melodies, so that the piece sounds as though it is being played by the complete ensemble of the Gamelan Batel music. The funny part lies in the way he promptly changes his voice from one instrument to another. The Klenang instrument is recited by Sangut in an extremely high "nang" voice. Then he imitated the low sound "Sirr..." of the Gong chime.

Sudarma's *Bambang Kumbayana* also employs puns. When the comic servant Kenyot talks about a female horse, he calls it 'a horse carries a lid of jar/pitches/vessel (*Jaran ngaba kekeb*). This pun is presented in a dialogue between Kenyot and Tonglang.

KENYOT. Geez... look what approaches our lord? A big horse “carrying a lid of a vessel (*Jaran ngaba kekeb*).”

TONGLANG. Is there a horse selling a vessel’s lid for kitchen wear?

KENYOT. No stupid! a horse “carries a lid of a vessel” means a female horse.

G. Modifying and Creating Poetry

Part of the improvisation in the performance of *wayang* theatre also involves working with the established *kakawin* verse and composing songs and poetry. Many *dalang* call this activity *ngawi kakawin*, which basically means to reinterpret and give new meaning to the *kakawin*. For example, *prihan temen darma dumeranang sarat* originally means ‘to make sure to obtain *dharma*, causing prosperity throughout the world.’ Recently the phrase has been modified to *prihan temen* (to make sure to seek for) *darma dum* (a chance to derive benefit) *ngeranang sarat* (for which you ought to struggle). This literary modification based on the common memory of pre-existing literature is meant to expose the shift in the thinking about the Indonesian leadership in Jakarta whose function has been to derive benefit from its political power.

Dalang may also use a word in Kawi language in a Balinese sense to transpose the entire meaning of a passage. For example the word *mitra*. In Kawi language *mitra* means good friends; in Balinese language it means extra-marital partner, boyfriend, or girlfriend. Thus, the common passage *Nora hana mitra mangluwihi waraguna maruhur* originally means, “There is no friend better than one’s useful skill/knowledge.” It is corrupted into “There is no fortune more useful than to have an extra boy/girl friend.”

This sentence can easily be applied to any antagonistic character because the character may see the pleasure instantly and ignore the bad consequences.

Editing and combining poetry from several different parts of the same *kakawin* source is a very common way of modifying literature in a *wayang*. The following is a simple combined stanza, type, *mredu komala*, derived from two different stanzas of the *kakawin Arjuna Wiwaha*.

Ong sembahning anatha tinggalana detri loka sarana.

Wakya dyatmika sembahing ulun i jong ta tan hana waneh.

Utpatti sthiti linaning dadi kita ta karanik.

Sang sangkan paraning sarat sekala niskala mara kita.

Om ‘God,’ the creator of three worlds, please witness my purist homage.

I just glorify you materially and spiritually, and no one else.

You cause the birth, life, and death of creatures.

You are the source of the universe materially and spiritually.

The first two-lines are taken from the following stanza.

Ong sembahning anatha tinggalana detri loka sarana.

Wakya dyatmika sembahing ulun i jong ta tan hana waneh.

Sang lwir agni sakeng taken kadi minyak saking dadi kita.

Sang saksat metu yan hana wang amuter tutur pinahayu.

Om ‘God,’ the creator of three worlds, please witness my purist homage.

I just glorify you materially and spiritually, and no one else.

You are like fire coming out from woods, like oil coming out of your coconut milk.

You manifest yourself to those who listen your edifying discourse.

The second two-lines are taken from the third and fourth line of the following stanza.

Wyapi wyapaka sarining parama tatwa durlabha kita.
Icchantang hana tan hana ganal alit lawan hala hayu
Utpatti sthiti linaning dadi kita ta karanika.
Sang sangkan paraning sarat sekala niskala mara kita.

You are omnipresent, yet hard to access.

Your dispositions are visible and invisible, big and small, good and bad.

You cause the birth, life, and death of creatures.

You are the source of the universe materially and spiritually.

A *dalang* may hardly combine some lines from a few different un-matched types of *kakawin* which is actually violating the rule. In this case, however, a *dalang* would typically avoid an obvious violation by not singing them properly, but rather recite them as spoken lines. The following example is combined from the type of *girisa* and *ratri kretu* or *totaka*.

<i>Tuhu buru temaan mong, sangkeng satwa dahat ika.</i>	}	<i>Girisa</i>
<i>Sakatilinganing ambek tan wyarthandaki kapitut</i>		
<i>Ketemunta sireka tan katemu</i>	}	<i>Ratri Kretu or Totaka</i>
<i>Kahidepta sireka si tan kahidep</i>		

A committed hunter must get a tiger, for ultimately seeking animals.

Any goal is accomplished through an ultimate concentration.

(With a full commitment) You find what is not found.

You understand what is not understood.

The first two lines are derived from line one and three of the stanza number 63 of the *kakawin Arjuna's Wedding*. These lines are subtly twisted from the original that fully goes as follows.

Tuhu buru temahan [character "h" was cut out] mong, sangkeng satwa dahat ika.

Tuhurawa wuhayekan dadyaning drda ring iwak.

Sakatilinganing ambek tan wyarthandaki kapitut

Taya mara ya katresnan, byaktekang taya katemu.

The hunter is the reincarnation of a tiger, extremely obsessed by animals.

The fisherman is the reincarnation of a crocodile, overly obsessed by fish.

Any goal is accomplished through an ultimate concentration.

If the ultimate freedom is the searched, it is certain that freedom is accomplished.

The second two-lines are taken from the first two lines of the stanza number 101 of the *kakawin Arjuna's Wedding*.

Ketemunta sireka tan katemu

Kahidepta sireka si tan kahidep

Kawenangta sireka si tan akwenang.

Paramatatwa Siwatwa nirawarana.

You find what is not found.

You understand what is not understood.

You obtain what is unobtainable.

The lore of Siwa is without hindrance.

In addition to editing and reconstructing *kakawin*, some *dalang* often compose *kakawin*-like passages, directly or indirectly based on the pre-existing literature. In

dalang Madra's *Dharmadewa*, a commercial audio cassette of his performance, we find that the bragging court attendant Delem parodies *kakawin* poetry in response to the recitation of an actual *kakawin* recited by his skeptical younger brother Sangut.

SANGUT. *Nguni kala Bhatara Wisnu sira nadi bupati sura sakaning jagat. Sura narendra Kresna pangaran nira tahu, katakutin parangmuka.*

A long time ago, god *Wisnu* became a king, a lord ruling the world.
He was a divine ruler namely Kresna, who scared his enemies.

Sangut's *kakawin* glorifies *Kresna* as the reincarnation of the god *Wisnu*. Delem who does not like Kresna, counters Sangut's *kakawin* by creating an impromptu *kakawin* that glorifies himself and Sangut as "reincarnations of God Siwa and Buddha."

DELEM. *Nguni kala Bhatara Siwa Buddha, mapalemah ka mercapada dadi Delem ajak Sangut.*

A long time ago, God Siwa and Buddha reincarnated themselves and became Delem and Sangut in the world.

Delem in his intention to undermine socially accepted truth, uses *kakawin* forms.

Another senior *dalang*, Sidja, often creates passages that he sings in *kakawin*-like poetry or *geguritan* verse. For example, the following passage is sung in *Pangkur* verse.

*Asing belong katetehan
Dyastun menak twara ngitung sor singgih
Asing pradnyan yata kajungjung
Menadi agung pregarbha mrintah jagat
Manggeh kasatriane telu
Tri kang sinanggeh satria*

Sugih wangsa miwah ririh

Anyone who is ignorant is left behind
Even if one is born of high caste
Anyone clever is glorified,
Becomes great, and rules the country
Assumes three great statuses
Three are known as knight.
Rich, high caste, and smart.

Dalang Sidja also creates several passages that he often recites in *kakawin* mode, but the format, number of lines and syllables do not adhere to the rule of *kakawin*, the *guru laghu*. Of those pseudo-*kakawin* an example is.

Ikang guna muang kapradnyanan ika tumut atra palatra
Yan sampun pradnyan mandraguna
Ikang wibawa teka tan saking pinet
Ikang wibawa tan wiwekang mati
Umeher ri urip juga

Profession and expertise follow the owner to death
When one has expertise,
One gets respect without asking for it.
Respect will not follow the owner to death,
But be confined in this life.

Using other *kakawin* I can complete his passage that.

Karma wusana manuduhaken jiwatma ngungsi sunia merta
Only *karma* accompanies one's soul to the after life.

Dalang Sidja also attempts to create wise words below.

Tri laksana utama ngaran. polos, anteng, mudah.

Panca sesana ngaran. bakti, satya, jujur, adil, patut.

Three acceptable deeds. docile, diligent, and expecting little compensation.

Five ethical habits. respect, faithfulness, honesty, justice, correctness.

The following *kakawin* is often recited by *dalang* with several modifications.

Tan suka yan hana ngastawa

Tan dukha yan hana nyale

Kelana suka lawan duka pada yatna rasa lawan wirasa

Don't be pompous when you are praised

Don't be sad when you are insulted

Respond to happiness and sadness with the same feeling.

Modifying or adding new verses or episodes to the existing poetry violates the western concept of authorship, but is embraced in Bali. Lansing in his The Balinese comments on this practice as follows. "If poetry and stories are constantly being reworked (and the same is true of the other artistic genres, like music and painting), who then is the 'author'? ... There is a constant, on going process of borrowing, which to us might appear to be nothing less than rampant plagiarism. Why don't the 'authors' care?" (56-57). Since the job of a *dalang* demands a great proficiency in literature, poetry, punning, resourcefulness, and is judged for originality, philosophical truth, and linguistic and musical accuracy, only the experienced *dalang* may undertake this *kakawin*-like improvisation. Most younger *dalang* will merely emulate the works of an advanced *dalang*.

H. Making Creative Responses to any Unexpected and Expected Performance Situation

H. 1. Generous and ungenerous stage

Most *dalang* discuss the influence of the “stage,” i.e. place, on their performance. *Dalang* feel there are two categories of performance venues: a “generous” and an “ungenerous” stage. The “generous” stage is typically supportive and lends itself to the success of the performance, while an “ungenerous” stage tends to give a negative influence. This “ungenerous” stage is often referred to as a demon-occupied stage (*panggung gamangan* or *median*), because people (especially *dalang*) believe that demonic spirits—the Indian *Natya Sastra* calls them *vigna*—are being obstreperous and disruptive. The major indication of this demon-occupied stage is that the audience is not attentive. The performance atmosphere is busy and noisy. Jokes fall flat and the *dalang* can feel there is a great pressure to struggle to establish tranquility.

To overcome the problem, a *dalang* must improvise a solution based on his discretion and maturity. Instead of performing for 150 minutes as usual, a *dalang* may attempt to shorten his performance by rendering only the main plot and eliminating subsidiary. The *dalang* may attempt to enliven the performance with many theatrical improvisations and adjustments, expanding the dancing and elaborating fighting scenes and perhaps not giving careful attention to philosophy and diction. The performance becomes more acrobatic and less edifying, and young people typically like this better. A more spiritually-advanced *dalang* would exert extra-theatrical approaches to pacify demonic spirits through dedicating an appropriate offering (*segehan*) and reciting the incantations for demons.

When a *dalang* knows in advance that the performance will take place in an ungenerous stage, he might make special preparations. For example, when *dalang* IB Puja was about to perform at Narigraha auditorium, which is still considered as an “ungenerous performance site” in Denpasar, my teacher *dalang* Sumandhi, told him to be sure to dedicate *segehan* offerings at each corner of the building before the performance.⁸² When I came in at the middle of his performance, *dalang* Puja’s show was going well. Perhaps he had offered the necessary offering and mantra to appease the *butha-kala* demons.

As with all offerings, *dalang* should dedicate *segehan* with a certain incantation. Hooykaas has described and translated many mantra incantations for *butha-kala*. Let me quote just part of them. “*Take the treat [for butha-kala] and offer it. Om, Ogres in the courtyard, Ogres in the field huts, this is what has been prepared for you. When you have finished with the meal, do not return hither, but act as guardians, so that well-being shall result*” (281).

Thus, the response to an “ungenerous” stage may be technical or spiritual. When the stage is generous, a *dalang* may continue to perform for a longer time, often more than three hours, by incorporating more additional plots, jokes, and social commentary. Balinese audiences do not care about performance length in a similar way to western audiences. They are more emotionally involved and respond to the performance

⁸² The talk took place in the van of a judging team for the annual competition of the Balinese *wayang kulit* in 1996. *Segehan* is the simplest offering among all offerings appropriate for *wayang* show. It consists of flowers, cooked rice, onion, ginger, and incense on a piece of banana leaf or a small rag and several containers woven of coconut leaf, sprinkled with pure water, uncooked rice, Balinese wine (*berem*) and whiskey (*arak*). An illustration of the *segehan* offering can be seen in Offering: The Ritual Art of Bali (1996) page 37.

spontaneously or appropriately. They would stay as long as they like and may go anytime whenever they feel bored.

H. 2. Directional orientation

The *dalang* must also respond situationally to his environment. Pursuant to the philosophical foundation of the *wayang*—the *wayang* mythology that is already introduced briefly in the Chapter 2—that the performance was originally directed toward god, the performance follows the directional orientation of Balinese tradition (see Richmond and Sedana; see Bandem and deBoer). The direction *kaja* “north” and *kangin* “east”, toward the highest mountain, is considered the pure dwelling place for god, where temple, shrine, and other sacred places are typically built. Residing in the opposite direction is the sea, the impure *kelod* “south” and *kauh* “west,” where refuse pits and graveyards are traditionally located in the secular dwelling, a fit spot for demonic beings. Humans occupy the place between the mountain and sea, the middle world. When Balinese people sleep, they put their heads toward the heavenly mountain and their feet toward the hellish sea. To win God’s favor, the *wayang* performance is mostly expected to face the shrine, toward the pure direction, to offer the performance for God. In case the booth for any reason does not face the holy direction, the *dalang* needs to adjust his direction internally or spiritually until the right direction is reached and the *dalang* feels (*ngacepang*) that he has shown the proper respect for the dwelling place of God. He tries to feel he himself is the dwelling place of God.

Even when a *dalang* eats his meals, he is supposed to face the pure direction. Let me quote the part of *Darma Pewayangan* manuscript that deals with *dalang*'s appropriate habits, as translated by Hooykaas.

On the occasion of a performance, when eating rice, [turning the face] towards the East is permitted, toward the North is permitted, towards the south is wrong, that means towards Brahma, because then one will experience hindrance, and invoke ogres and discord. Towards the West is wrong, one will then get the plot muddled up and be confused. Next, when one is given food, it is not to be eaten facing the West, for then one's wits will desert one. One is permitted facing the North, but towards the South, for that will result in one's missing the moral of poetry. One is permitted to eat facing the East; facing the North is permissible by Bhattara Acintya, and by Bhattara Guru. One's story will gain by it. (55, 57)

Please note that this description is based on the perspective of people in the Southern part of Bali, with the highest mountain on the Northeast, so *kaja* is north; *kelod* is south. In north Bali where the highest mountain is to the Southeast, *kaja* is south and *kelod* is north.

H. 3. Puppet and performing devices

Most *dalang* do not want to use puppets, gamelan instruments, and performance accessories which are not their own. Should he use puppets from another performer's set, he would still bring his own four penasar servant characters. Wredah, Twalen, Sangut, and Delem. These figures are thought by some *dalang* to be his four guardian spiritual brothers (*catur sanak*) who guide and protect each individual. The more rational reason for this preference is due to his familiarity with the puppets, which are always onstage no matter what part of the story is selected. New puppets demand *dalang* to experience

variables in manipulating puppets demanding improvisation. The fact that the joints of elbows, arms and moveable jaws of new puppets are often jerky and unreliable prompts a *dalang* to use his own old puppets. But no matter what puppets they use they will have to respond improvisationally to the possibilities of the figures they use.

H. 4. Unexpected accidents

The famous motto that says ‘experience is the best teacher,’ is true in improvisation. In describing the power of mistakes Nachmanovitch focuses on the fact that there will never be pearls without a mistake. The oyster is forced to live with irritation (an error that a grain of grit accidentally slips into the oyster’s shell) for an extended period of time. The oyster thereby transforms the intrusion of error into its own system until the pearl comes to be (Nachmanovitch 88). So too, an accident in the performance of *wayang* entails improvisation that may have positive results.

Unexpected minor accidents during the show often include failure to find the correct puppet, its weapons, or accessories at the right moment. Sometimes a part of a particular puppet, usually the hand and mouth, breaks, demanding the *dalang*’s assistant (*katengkong*) to repair it immediately.

Some dalang are flexible when such accidents happen while others are rigid. *Dalang* with high improvisational skills tends to be flexible in facing an unexpected accident. When his assistant cannot find the right puppet immediately, the *dalang* may improvise briefly with the available puppet which comes to hand, usually with either one or a pair of clowns, until the correct puppet is made ready. At other times, if a *dalang* is more meticulous, he may wait until his assistant hands him the correct puppet, allowing

the screen to remain blank for a certain length of time. When a *dalang* is impatient, he may hit his frantic assistant with any puppet he has at hand. Responding to the accidents, too, is part of the *dalang*'s improvisation.

In this chapter we have contemplated many dimensions of the *dalang*'s creativity and focused on how the artist improvises within the rules of the form. We have noted that certain parts of the work require careful pre-planning while other parts require great flexibility and ability to creatively react in the moment. Good *dalang* master both types of improvisation and by careful study of *kakawin* and other philosophical material prepare the way for mastery of this complex form.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

A. Summary

In summary we have seen that creativity is a central part of the *wayang* theatre. In recent times experimental works have come into being, such as the *Wayang Arja* (1976), *Wayang Tantri* (1980) and *Wayang Babad* (1989), while some traditional puppet genres like *Wayang Gambuh*, *Wayang Calonarang*, and *Wayang Sasak* are declining in favor. Although the oldest types of *Wayang Parwa* and *Ramayana* are still prominent, some innovative works like *Wayang Tantri* and *Wayang Babad* are performed occasionally today. Over two dozens *wayang* experimental compositions utilizing modern stage lighting, dancers, and oversize screens have been presented at the Indonesian State College of Arts (STSI) Denpasar. Due to the simplistic apparatus typically available to the traditional playhouses throughout the island, the creative works like *Wayang Golek* (1995) and at least a dozen spectacular experimentations cannot find appropriate venues. Consequently, the spectacular compositions are hardly performed for the time being in Bali, and only rarely performed overseas.

Creative elements in *wayang* theatre are not a new phenomenon but they are an inherent entity of the art. The traditional term for this creativity is *kawi dalang*, meaning *dalang*'s creativity. The need to present a different play for every performance challenges *dalangs* to continuously modify, create, and reconstruct their compositions. Even the

same play must be refreshed when it is performed again in the same or surrounding villages. Hence, each play is a creative work.

As the “soul” of *wayang* theatre, creativity is governed by the triadic interplay of genre-story-characters (GSC). We have called this interplay *trisandi* (three matching) GSC, a dominant paradigm governing the mise-en-scene of *wayang*. As a traditional ‘rule,’ the *trisandi* GSC must be aesthetically treated and worked to establish and re-establish dynamic harmony within the interrelationships of genre-story-characters (GSC). The dynamic harmony entails a fluctuating configuration in the proportion of GSC based on the aesthetic concept of *wayang*. The principle mechanism of this creativity manifests itself in the recurring works of a *dalang* in which characters are defined by story; story must comply with the format of the conventionalized genre.

As a unifier composer-performer, a *dalang* treats the GSC as the basic ingredients for his creativity, which is dedicated to entertain, edify, and purify people pursuant to the fluctuating socio-cultural impulse. When a *dalang* attempts to establish dynamic harmony within the interrelationships of genre-story-characters (GSC), we identify the works as a *dalang*’s creativity in plot. When a *dalang* dedicates the composed-plots through a performance, we categorize the works as a *dalang*’s creativity in presentation. Therefore, we may broadly divide a *dalang*’s creativity into two parts: creativity in plot and creativity in presentation or additional elements of creativity.

Creativity in plot includes transforming narration into dialogue, selecting a play, constructing a play, and originating stories. We have identified six fundamental principles in the process of play construction:

1. An indispensable need to establish at least two opposing forces (*rwa bhineda*) that serves as the basic dramatic conflict.
2. Trimming and shaping a story to match the convention of the established genre/form.
3. Three methods of play construction: spotting or locating, transposing, combining.
4. Identifying a preferable plot.
5. Selection of the appropriate literary source.
6. Convention of excerpting plays, motifs, and passages from the epics and the *kakawin*

We have also recounted originating a story with an investigation about the specific part of the story which is developed, about the method of creating stories, and about the narrative sources.

There are eight divisions of creativity beyond the creativity in plot. The additional elements of creativity emphasize the presentational activities, which include:

1. Selecting characters and recasting puppets (*Wanda*)
2. Naming the characters and place.
3. Puppet construction and manipulation (*tetikasan*)
4. Scenery and stage business
5. Jokes and social criticism
6. Creating puns or play on words
7. Modifying and creating poetry.
8. Cueing musicians and collaborating with them .

9. Making creative responses to any unexpected and expected performance situations. This creativity specifically deals with the generous and ungenerous stage, directional orientation, puppet and performing devices, and unexpected accidents.

The examples of creativity given in Chapters 3 and 4 have demonstrated the operation of these creative principles. Thus, the interplay scheme of the *trisandi* genre-story-character is the key for creativity in *wayang*.

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 *dalang*’s prepared and spontaneous improvisation in response to the changing performance contexts such as religious celebrations and social conditions.

Among many dimensions of the *dalang*’s creativity that we have contemplated throughout each of the chapters, the performance of *dalang* Wija indicates an attempt to present *wayang* as an entertaining fine art, excluding the incorporation of lewd and dirty jokes. In contrast, *dalang* Sudarma’s creativity suggests a tendency to present *wayang* as a popular entertainment by economizing on its costs. Like the edifying method of western comedy, *dalang* Sudarma’s performance exposes and ridicules social and personal defects by employing many lewd dirty jokes and exploiting love scandals.

The examples may not be entirely representative of *wayang* everywhere in Bali. Thus, it is left to future studies to investigate this field in greater detail and depth and to sort out public response to the wide range of performances that are available in Bali.

B. Conclusion

The method of creating a plot described in Chapter 3 has strongly distinguished the nature of creative improvisation practiced in Bali from that of the common notion of creative improvisation practiced in western theatre. Broadly speaking, the emphasis of creative improvisation in the west lies in the presentation rather than in both constructing a plot and presenting it on stage as we have discussed in the Balinese *wayang* theatre. The western notion of creativity is broadly derived from the varying interpretations by theatrical directors, actors, and designers of a single play. Consequently, western creative improvisations may be perceived as the difference between one performance and another of the same play, whether a given play is directed by the same director in a different context/place or by several different directors of the same play.

Western theatrical directors begin their creative interpretation by first reading then adopting a play to a performance. *Dalangs* begin from the need to establish at least two opposing forces that serve as the basic dramatic conflict. The next essential job of a *dalang* includes reshaping a story to match the convention of the established genre/form, employing a method to construct a play (spotting or locating, transposing, and combining), seeking a dramatically and ritually preferable plot, discussing the literary sources, and excerpting plays, motifs, and passages from the epic and the *kakawin*.

Thus, the fundamental difference of creativity between Bali and the West is this: While the creativity in the west is based on a single definite play that is manifested in various interpretations of performance, in Bali it is based on an infinite dramatic reservoir without definite dialogue and dramatic actions, and hence manifests itself both during the presentation and before the plot is constructed. A *dalang*'s creativity is subordinated by the set structure of the genre, while in western theatre directors are dictated by the dramatic lines of a given play.

Having contemplated many dimensions of the *dalang*'s creativity, this dissertation may open up potentials for other artist-performers and scholars. The dominant paradigm governing the mise-en-scene of *wayang*, the *trisandi* (three matching) GSC may also be used to undertake a similar analysis of other performance genres in Bali, such as *Topeng* masked theatre, *Arja* opera, *Gambuh* dance drama, and so forth. The paradigm might also be applied to the creativity and improvisation in the Japanese rod puppet *Bunraku* or the shadow puppet theatre of Rajasthan, India.

Similarly, researchers may also apply the paradigm to other performance genres like *Noh* and *Kabuki* in Japan or *Kutiyattam* and *Baratanatyam* in India or Beijing Opera and puppet theatre in China or any of the many performing genres of Asia. This conclusion is based on the fact that numerous performance genres throughout Asia integrate and are associated with certain stories and characters drawn from epic literature. Western audiences broadly perceive them as strictly codified genres and overlook the creative and improvisational aspect. Thus, the same or similar creative analysis like the *trisandi* GSC used in this dissertation may yield a new perspective for theatre researchers and practitioners.

Realizing that the creative aspect or the “soul” of *wayang* theatre may be best explained by the artist practitioner rather than by the anthropologists or other scholars, this dissertation may encourage other artists to write about their creative art, so that the artists’ voice may be better heard, rather than to waiting for others to put words in the artists’ mouths.

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<<http://202.149.241.231/jpplus/wayang/^98/index.htm>>

<<http://202.149.241.231/jpplus/wayang/^99/index.htm>>

APPENDIX A

OTHER RELEVANT DRAMATIC LITERATURE

In addition to the nineteen different *kakawin* which have been discussed briefly in Zoetmulder's Kalangwan (1974), other relevant dramatic literature include:

1. *Arjuna Pramada*
2. *Arjuna Pralabda* by Arya Manguwi
3. *Dharmakesuma*,
4. *Parwa-parwa*,
5. *Chandrabirawa/banu*,
6. *Lokapala/Utarakanda*,
7. *Bimaruci/Dewaruci*,
8. *Nitisastra*
9. *Pustakaraja Purwa* by Ronggowarsito (also contains about the *Wariga* calendar)
10. Numerous comic books,
11. Ensiklopedi *Wayang Purwa*,
12. *Kakawin Kangsa* by Cok Gde Pamecutan,
13. Numerous *pakem* play format and all active repertories.

There are also a dozen *gaguritan*, narrative reservoir in *Tembang Macapat* and vernacular Balinese language. Among them the most popular include:

1. *Senapati Salya* by Pranda Gria Teges,
2. *Samba* by Cok Gde Pamecutan

3. *Bimaswarga*,
4. *Megantaka*, and
5. *Ramawijaya*.

The smallest number of narrative repertoires is available in *kidung* song, such as *kidung Sri Tanjung*, *kidung Sapuleger*, dan *kidung Sudhamala*.

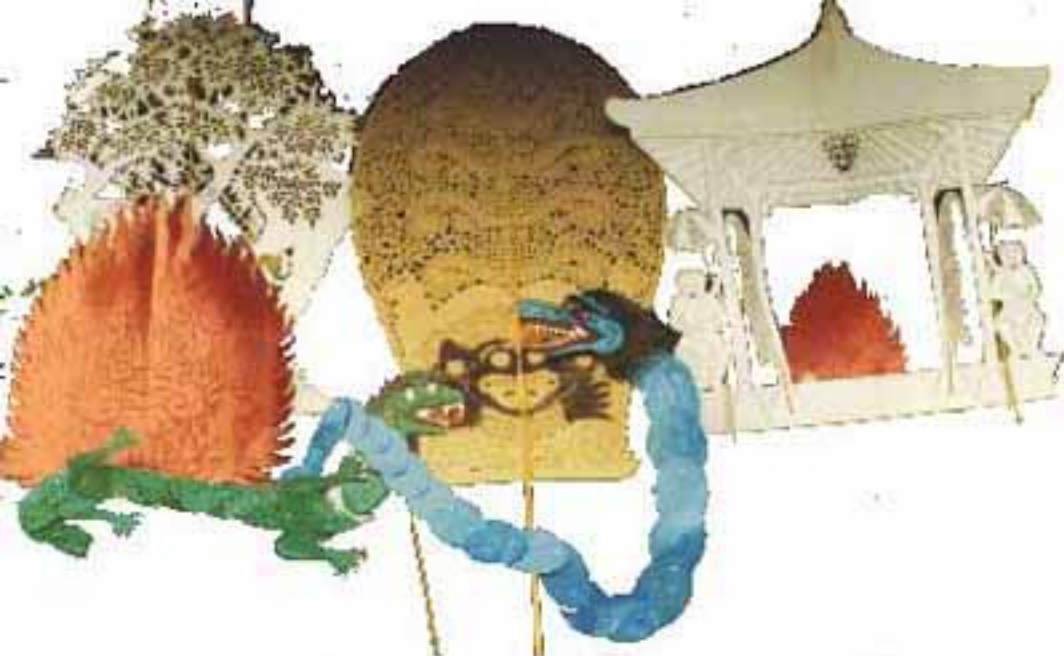
APPENDIX B

PHOTOGRAPHS OF NEW MANIPULABLE PUPPETS

- 1. Quartet Servants**
- 2. Tradition&Innovation**
- 3. Innovative_Puppets**
- 4. Animals**
- 5. Monster**
- 6. Dog**
- 7. Baby**
- 8. Bicycle**
- 9. Farming**
- 10. Monkey&Man**
- 11. Group**



**In comparison with these traditional comic servants,
please observe the following innovative puppets**



A puppet of tree, fire, and Kayonan are tradition
This type of crocodile, Naga-dragon, and house are innovation



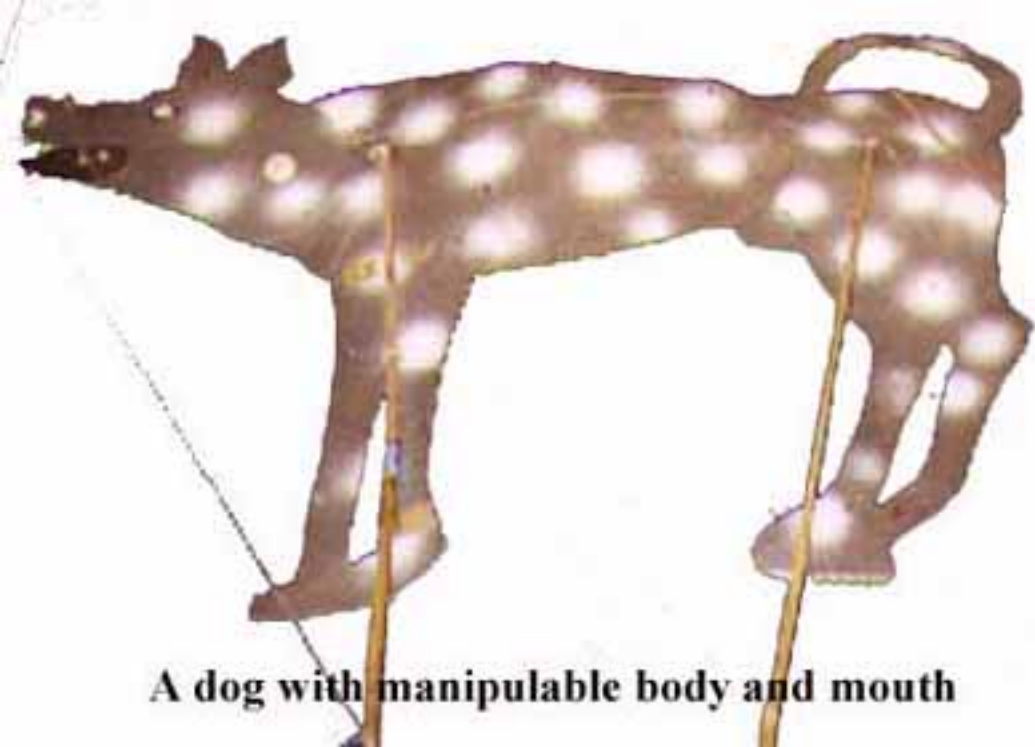
Innovative puppets: 3-D witch, birds, dog, monkeys&demons



Animals with manipulable bodies and mouths



A monster with manipulable head, neck, & gestures



A dog with manipulable body and mouth



A baby who can move up and down on the back of his parent



A puppet riding a bicycle manipulated by batteries, string, cable, and rods



A group of men, ducks, and a cow



A monkey with manipulable tail, feet, and mouth

A man with manipulable head which can face front and back



Corpse carriers with moving hands and feet, manipulated by several rods