

The Symbolic Meaning of *Kayon* Contained in the *Sarad* Offerings within the Balinese Society

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Abstrak. Maintaining art and cultural traditions for the Hindu community in Bali is already a part of their life. None of the religious ritual activities in Bali that do not escape the essence of beauty. *Sarad* is a form of art offering that is unique and full of meaning that needs to be expressed. The purpose of this research is to reveal the symbolic meaning of *Kayon* which contains *Sarad* offerings. This qualitative descriptive study uses *Sarad* as the main case study. *Sarad* as the largest form of offerings in the form of *Kayon*. *Sarad* has a special characteristic with amazing sacred colors and with the theme of the universe in accordance with the philosophy of *Kayon* (*Bhur loka*, *Bwah loka* and *Swah loka*) which is still sustainable and growing.

Keywords: *Kayon*; *Sarad*; offerings

1 Introduction

Researchers were interested in knowing more about *Sarad* when we saw women making this colorful series. Seen the women are sitting on the terrace of the *bale* Loji where Priest (*Pedanda*) lives, forming cake dough then colored and assembled. One woman gives instructions to another woman who helps her, she tells the shapes and how to form the cake. After the series of cakes are finished, then the cake is fried to prevent the colorful cakes from getting moldy.

Sarad is a means of offering that is delivered by the Balinese Hindu community for a religious ceremony. *Sarad's* appeal lies in the very artistic and beautiful shapes and colors. If you pay attention to the shape found in *Sarad*, it is a series of other small shapes, arranged very neatly and intricately. Some shapes look like human shapes, flower shapes, ornaments, and others. The colors contained in *Sarad* become the main attraction when we see it for the first time, especially with a very large size field (3-7 meters) that makes *Sarad* look even more magnificent. *Sarad* is one part of the Balinese cultural arts that is interesting to study. Especially, seeing the large and tall series of *Sarad* shaped like *Kayon*, made researchers interested in knowing about the meaning of *Kayon* and the forms contained in the *Sarad* offerings.



Fig. 1. Women making a series of *Sarad*.

The purpose of this study was to obtain complete information about the symbolic meaning contained in *Kayon* and the meaning of the colors in the *Sarad* offerings. From the results of this study, it can educate the public, especially the younger generation, on the importance of respecting the culture and traditions of the Balinese people and increase public insight and knowledge about the symbolic meaning contained in the *Sarad* offerings. It is hoped that the results of this study can be a reference for similar studies, in relation to the symbolic meaning of the *Sarad* offerings.

2 Method

This study uses a qualitative descriptive method, is case study research, with *Sarad's* artwork as a single case study. This research will explore a single entity for a specific phenomenon that is limited by time and activity (in this case a social group), then collect detailed information based on various procedures, such as interviews, observations, documents, and audiovisual materials. In Sumartono (2017:99) Yin (2003) for case study research there are 6 types of information needed, namely: documents, archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant-observations, and physical artifacts [1]. At the beginning of this research, the researcher was observing three women from social groups in Klungkung distric in Bali making a colorful cake, it was said that this cake was to be offered in a religious ceremony.

To analyze the data using 3 approaches: 1. Interpretive analysis, 2. Structural analysis, 3. Reflective. Interpretational analysis is concerned with examining data to find constructs (abstract concepts), themes and patterns that can be used to describe and explain the phenomenon being studied. Structural analysis is a search for data to find patterns inherent in discourses, texts, events, or other phenomena, with little or no conclusion to the meaning of these patterns. Meanwhile, reflective analysis is related to the use of intuition and assessment of phenomena.

According to Stake researchers must have a strategy in determining the complexity of the case being studied. Research with the characteristics of a single case study requires the researcher to determine the uniqueness of the case for himself. Aspects used in this case study research [1].

3 Results and Discussion

3.1 Kayon

Etymologically *Kayon/kekayon* or *Gunung/Gunungan* (mount), comes from the word 'wood' (the origin of a tree), while *kayon* in *Kawi* language *kayyun* which means 'will'. *Kayon* comes from the word *kayyun* which contains the myth of *Sangkan Paramaning dumadi*, which means origin and finally life. There are two meanings of *Kayon*, namely *Kayon Wadon/female* (symbol of *Yoni*) and *Kayon Lanang/Male* (symbol of *Lingga*). It is called a mountain because it follows the shape of a mountain peak with a tapered top, while *Kayon* is the origin of life. *Kayon* is known in wayang stories. The pictures contained in *Kayon* (*wayang/shadow* puppets) depict the universe complete with its contents. *Kayon* can be likened to the *kalpatatu* tree (the tree of hope), it can also be called a hill or mountain which symbolizes the source of life. The pictures on the *kayon* on *Sarad* show all the life that exists in the universe, namely the forms of plants, animals, human figures (*Cili*), human life and the forms of Hindu gods and goddesses [2].

According to Citowardoyo stated that in Hindu cosmology it symbolizes the microcosm/*bhuwana alit* and the macrocosm/*bhuwana Agung*. The location of *Kayon* or *Gunungan* in the *wayang* story is a parable of a gate guarded by two giants, this *gunungan* is a parable of a palace gate so it can be said that *kayon* is a palace. The function of *Kayon* is as a sign of a change of place, as the start and end of the story, the change of time and describing something that can't be seen such as clouds, air, wind [2].

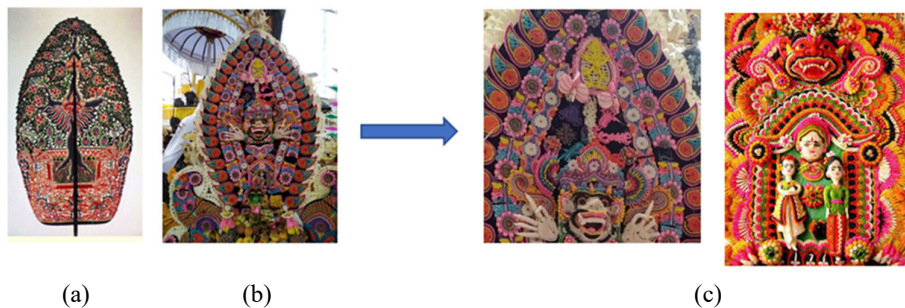


Fig. 2. (a) The Balinese Kayon Wayang, (b) Kayon with Sarad and (c) details of Sarad components.

The shape of the Balinese *kayon* is different from the Javanese *kayon*. The Balinese *kayon* looks oval, especially at the top, while the Javanese *kayon* is pointed at the top. According to Putra, *kekayon* is a picture of the three realms universe and all its contents, *bhur loka* (underworld), *bhwah loka* (middle world) and *swah loka* (upper world). The construction or pattern of laying in the *kekayon* is in accordance with the *bhur bwah swah* location. *Kekayon* symbolizes the universe, namely the great *Bhuwana Agung* and *Bhuwana Alit*. *Bhur loka* symbolizes the bottom creatures of the world of tortoises and dragons. The tortoise known as *Bedawang Nala* symbolizes the base of the earth as 'the incarnation of Lord Wishnu'. The dragons represent the basic earth element, the *Anantaboga* dragon (earth element), the *Basuki* dragon (water and ocean element) and the *Taksaka* dragon (air element). The three dragons are the result of the meeting of the *Trimurti* gods, namely Brahma, Wishnu, and Shiwa (representing land, water, and air).

Bwah Loka: the middle world symbolizes the abode of humans and living elements such as plants, animals, and humans. *Dinia* is being analogized as an intermediate world in *Sarad's*

depiction with the figures of Bhoma and Garuda, and human figures. There are ornaments to complete the decorations such as ornaments of natural creatures, *karang asti* (elephant), *karang wurung*, *karang bentulu*, *karang sae* etc. *Swah loka*: the upper world symbolizes the dwelling of the gods with *Trimurti* figures: Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, and or the single figure of Dewa Indra (king of the gods) or *Sang Hyang Tunggal*.

3.2 *Sarad* and *Pregembal*

Based on the function, *Sarad* is a means of offering the Hindu community in Bali to God Almighty or Ida Sang Hyang Widi Wasa for giving his gift. *Sarad* offerings are made from rice flour, so they can be considered as cakes. The way of making it is like people generally make a cake, then it is rolled, shaped according to the theme to be made. These small components are called *Pregembal* or *Pulegembal*. *Pregembal* are the basic forms or basic ornaments of an intersection flower, such as stems, flower petals, and leaves. If the theme is marine animals such as shrimp, the components are like shrimp claws (shrimp nails). Naming the components of this basic form can be different depending on the region, such as *belanding*, *klongkan*, *sigetas*, *gunting/scissors*, *kaliadrem* and others.



Fig. 3. The *Pregembal/Pulegembal*

The word *Pregembal* comes from the words *Pulogembal*, *Polo* and *gembal*. *Polo* means brain and *gembal* means growing. The *Pulegembal* offering is a symbol of the crown that gives its influence on the left side of the brain which gives intelligence to humans [3]. *Pregembal* is known as *Taman/Garden Pulegembal* because it has illustrations of elements of flowers, plants, animals, and human figures. The human form is called *Cili*. The naming of *Sarad* varies according to its function, such as the *Cili Taya* symbol, which is a symbol of purity of mind, the *Ongkara* script symbol is a symbol of the power of Sang Hyang Widi who resides in *Bhuwana Agung* and *Bhuwana Alit*.



Fig. 4. The components of *Sarad*

The other symbols include cakes/*jajan* in the form of a *Trisula* weapon, a *Gada* weapon, the shape of the Moon (symbol of *Dewi Ratih*), the shape of a *Banyan* leaf which is a symbol of *Hyang Prajapati's* power as the Creator God and others. Therefore, *Sarad's* cake is said to be a symbol of the contents of the earth, which has something to do with all the activities of living things in the world [4].

3.3 Sacred Colors

There are 9 sacred colors used in *Sarad*, which also signifies or represent the concept of orientation towards the Hindu Gods, called *Nawasanga* (nine Gods guarding direction). Black color represents for Wishnu, Blue color represent for Sambhu, White color for Iswara, Pink color represent of Mahesora, Red color for represent Brahma, Orange color for represent for Rudra, Yellow color represent for Mahadewa, Green for represent for Sangkara and in the center Panca Warna color represent for Siwa.

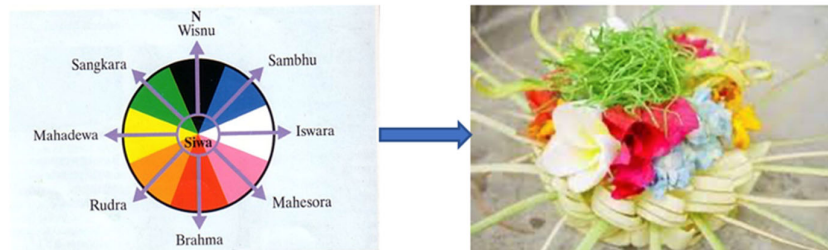


Fig. 5. The *Nawasanga* and the *Canang Sari* offerings

The application of the concept of *Nawasanga* color can be seen in the *canang* offerings presented by Hindus in Bali. Therefore, everything related to the use of color is inspired by the concept of *Nawasanga* (nine gods guarding direction). The use of colors in the *Sarad* offerings, especially on certain themes, refers more to the form of expression, expressing feelings based on the ceremony to be held: the wedding ceremony uses cheerful, festive colors that make people see it happy. But for sacred ceremonies, the focus is more on using the colors and figures of *Dewata Nawasanga* or the colors of *Tri Kona* (black, red, and white). *Tri Kona* is a spiritual teaching about the omnipotence of God. the third omnipotence of God to create /*Utpati* (Lord Brahma/red color), to maintain, protect / *Sthiti* (Lord Wishnu/Black color) and destroy/*Pralaya* (Lord Shiwa/white color).

Based on the interpretational analysis approach, it was found that the concept and theme of the decorations contained in the *Sarad* were the same as the decorations found in the *Kayon* (wayang). Such as forms: Hindu gods, human figures, human life, flowers, animals, and motifs. Based on the structural analysis approach, it was found that the pattern of laying decorations and ornaments on *Sarad* was based on the orientation of the division of the 3 worlds (underworld, middle world, and upper world), and the division of the universe (*Bhuwana Agung* where the gods live and *Bhuwana Alit* where humans and all of God's creation). Based on the reflective approach referring to one of the research objectives, it is hoped that the results of this research will attract the younger generation, care about preserving the art of *Sarad's* offerings, and can be a source of reference related to the meaning contained in *Sarad*.

4 Conclusion

Based on the results of the analysis that *kayon* is a symbol of the tree of life, and the series of *Sarad* offerings contained in *Kayon* is a story of life. Life stories have themes such as: the manifestation of the embodiment of the gods (as seen in the application of the color concept of *Nawasanga* and Tri Kona); human life such as life in the market, farming, fishing; folklore; flower forms, animal forms that live in the sea, land life, everything according to what is on earth, and other ornaments. *Sarad* is a form of offering to God, so that the theme of the story is offering, an expression of human gratitude to God for giving a happy life, health, peace, and prosperity. The pattern of placing *Pregembal* (as a small form of *Sarad*) is adjusted to the symbolization of the universe (*Bhuwana Agung* and *Bhuwana Alit*) in which the creature lives, for example: sacred forms are placed on the top of *Kayon* (*Swah loka*), profane forms - human forms (story, flowers, and animals) are placed in the middle of the *Kayon* (*Bwah loka*), and the forms of other creatures are placed at the bottom of the *Kayon* (*Bhur loka*).

Sarad is a masterpiece of Balinese culture inspired by the philosophical meaning of *Kayon*. The Balinese Hindu community gives the highest meaning to the existence of *Kayon* or in Hinduism it is known as *Kalpataru*, *kalpawrksa*. *Sarad* is the largest and majestic offering that conveys a message of meaning through the symbols contained therein. *Sarad* is the embodiment of the symbols of *Bhuwana Agung* and *Bhuwana Alit* which symbolizes the gods and the *Bhuta* as the ruler of the power of the universe. The depiction of the contents of the world in decorative colors represents the process of human life (birth-life and death). The form of imaginative, figurative decorative symbols that characterize the *Sarad* offerings must be preserved and continued by generations.

Sarad has 2 symbolic functions: religious and social. Religious symbol is proof of the devotion of Hindus to the Creator, and it aims to maintain the balance of the universe. The Social symbol has a positive impact on community social interaction by preserving the *ngayah* (voluntary) culture because making *Sarad* requires a lot of energy, advice, and input from the elder. Based on all the previous elaborations, it is our hope that more documentations and research on *Sarad* will be done in the future, as it is a form of an ancient cultural heritage from Bali that contains philosophies and moral values that must be preserved.

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