

Challenging the Truth of the Text: Examining the Intertwining of “Palagan di Kutamaya” in Dramatic Scripts and Sundanese Songs

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ABSTRACT

Every artwork is viewed as a network of interconnected meaning, forming a dynamic structure akin to a spider’s web. This view is reflected in Dance Drama and Sundanese Kawih, both of which adapt the Jaya Perkosa episode from the Babad Sumedang script. To analyze this relationship, the intertextuality approach is employed to trace the interlocking texts and meanings. On the other hand, the critical discourse approach is used to dissect how both voice criticism and discourse are shaped by the historical relations. As a result, the two works reproduce the content of the Babad Sumedang to reflect current social, political, and cultural conditions. Intertextuality contributes to connecting old texts with contemporary contexts, thereby facilitating a meeting between tradition and modernity. This process demonstrates that cultural texts are continually in dynamic negotiation with an ever-evolving reality.

Keywords: Intertextuality, Babad Sumedang, Jaya Perkosa, Dance Drama, Sundanese Kawih.

INTRODUCTION

Performing arts are the actualization, presentation, and expression of the artist’s thoughts and feelings. Based on this, there are at least two fundamental factors that influence the essence and form of an artist’s work. The first factor is the artist’s personal need to actualize their aesthetic experiences and express themselves. Meanwhile, the second factor relates to the needs of society that influence how artworks are socialized, presented, and marketed. Individual needs drive artists to create works as a form of self-actualization, while social needs drive them to respond to

social phenomena in accordance with the tastes and expectations of society (Asyari & Sumiati, 2024). As stated by Tardi Ruswandi, creative artists are adept in reading and responding to developments of the times by producing works that are in line with the tastes of the people of their era (Ruswandi, 2016). Therefore, works of art are not only personal expressions, but also the result of interactions between artists, the environment, and society.

In this context, works of art do not only exist in visible forms but also contain layers of meaning that are highly complex. The idea of artworks as “text” implies that each piece can

be read and interpreted similarly to literary text, even they are not in verbal language. For example, a painting can be interpreted as a “visual text,” offering various layers of meaning based on elements such as composition, color, form, and space. Similarly, a dance can be understood as a “choreographic text,” where every movement, costume, props, makeup, and other artistic elements serves to convey a specific message or idea. Therefore, works of art can be viewed as a “text” that is open to being read, analyzed, and interpreted in various ways by art enthusiasts or critics.

This view is closely aligns with the intertextuality popularized by Kristeva (Baqi, 2025; Hossain, 2025; Saputra & Firismanda, 2025), where every work of art is connected to others, forming an inseparable network of meaning. Kristeva argues that every “text” is an open network in which meaning derives not only from the text itself, but also from the relationships between other texts (Kristeva, 2024). Similarly, in performance art, artworks never stand-alone but are always connected to other works of art within a broader historical, cultural, and social context (Octafiona, 2024).

Through this line of thinking, Adorno affirms that true art does not merely confirms the status quo, but art that is capable of challenging and creating space for critical thinking about the existing world (Gordon, 2021; Kasman, 2024; Wiratno & Sudibyo, 2025). In this view, works of art do not merely speak about what is visible on the surface, but also delve into the hidden layers of the underlying social, cultural, and political structures. This concept aligns with Herbert Marcuse’s perspective in *One-Dimensional Man*, where he adopts Marx’s theory of reification

to explain how individuals in capitalist society lose their ability to think critically. According to Marcuse, the capitalist system and mass culture have alienated individuals, causing them to become objectified and trapped in consumption routines driven by established social norms (Marcuse, 2021; Oskay & Ballard, 2025). As a result, individuals lose the ability to question the existing social order.

Starting on Kristeva’s *post-structuralist* idea of intertextuality (Carter, 2016; Radu, 2022) and drawing from the frameworks of Adorno and Marcuse, Barthes firmly rejects the idea of text as an entity with a single meaning. He asserts that a text is an open network of signs, a battlefield of interpretation that cannot be confined by a single fixed meaning but always offers various subversive possibilities of interpretation (Aelbrecht, 2025; Allen, 2022). In this context, Barthes introduces the concept of *“la mort de l’auteur”* (the death of the author), emphasizing that the meaning of a text does not solely depend on the author’s intent but rather on the reader’s interpretation based on their own context and experience (Griffiths, 2025; Mittal et al., 2025). Barthes believes that a text is an unfinished construct, continually open to new interpretations. As a dynamic entity, a text invites the reader to fill in its evolving meaning, depending on the surrounding social and cultural context (Olsen, 2010).

In this regard, Bakhtin aligns with Barthes’ view on the importance of social and historical context in the formation of text meaning. Furthermore, he offers the idea that text can function as a tool to respond to or challenge existing views in society, as explained in the framework of Adorno and Marcuse’s thinking. In

The Dialogic Imagination, Bakhtin explains that a text is always in dialogue with other intersecting texts, thereby creating a broader network of meaning (Bakhtin et al., 2011). According to Bakhtin's dialogism, every text is the result of an ongoing dialogue between various voices and perspectives that interact with one another (Bekpenbetova et al., 2025; Hossain, 2025). Therefore, a text is not an isolated entity but is always shaped with other texts, both those that came before and those that come after.

From this context, it is pertinent to examine how the intertextual relationship between the Jaya Perkosa episode and the Sundanese dramaturgy, particularly *kawih* Mang Koko's *kawih* functions to reveal a broader meaning beyond historical narrative. What is most important to emphasize is how these two art forms interact in conveying a more complex and multi-dimensional message to society. Dance drama, with its visuals and movements, presents a physical interpretation of the text, creating a dynamic expressive space that can touch the emotional and intellectual aspects of the audience.

Meanwhile, Sundanese *kawih*, with its rich and varied lyrics and melodies, can explore the depth of narrative in a more poetic form, thereby creating an emotional connection between the audience and their inner experiences. The term "*kawih*" encompasses all forms of vocal art that are alive and thriving within the Sundanese community. *Kawih* material follows two rhythmic patterns: free rhythm (*irama merdeka*) and fixed rhythm (*irama tandak*), naturally reflecting free or constant rhythmic structures. Both are widely spread across nearly the entire Sundanese region (Hendrayana et al., 2020, p.

422). Each *kawih* is rich in symbolic meaning that contains religious, ethical, aesthetic, and philosophical elements, providing relevant and useful values for community life (Fauzi et al., 2025, p. 56). Although different in form, these two art forms work together, complementing, intertwining, and enriching one another, thereby forming a dialogue that is interpreted by contemporary society.

Through an intertextual approach, these works of art are understood not only surface representations, but also about what is hidden behind it. *Palagan di Kutamaya*, as a dramatic artwork, and *Hanjuang di Kutamaya* as a Sundanese *kawih* function not only as representations of history or culture, but also as mediums to challenge, question, and open space for dialogue. This work invites viewers not only to see the visible elements but to contemplate further, interpret more deeply, and uncover the hidden meanings behind the narrative structure.

METHODS

Research in performance art requires a diverse approach. In this study, however, a qualitative approach was chosen to reveal the depth of meaning of the objects. This approach focuses on collecting data from original sources while considering the data quality to understand the phenomenon more deeply. This study specifically highlights the hidden meanings in works of art through subjective and critical analysis of the research objects.

Furthermore, this methodology is applied by reading and translating the intertextual conditions in the analyzed works, using the critical discourse perspective (Godin et al.,

2021; Peradantha, 2024). This approach not only examines the content of the work but also the socio-cultural context that shapes it. This study focuses on the dance drama “Palagan di Kutamaya” and the Sundanese *kawih* “Hanjuang di Kutamaya” by Mang Koko. These two works are inherently connected and explore the themes of disappointment, betrayal, and the inability of leaders to make decisions (*teu panggeur*). Therefore, the analysis not only highlights narrative and aesthetic aspects but also opens interpretations of the social, cultural, and political realities reflected in the work.

To achieve a comprehensive understanding, the analysis is conducted through three stages: *elementary meaning*, *objective meaning*, and *socio-cultural meaning*, as proposed by Sunarni (2016). The first stage, *elementary meaning*, identifies the denotative meaning as the literal representation of the elements of the work such as lyrics, dance movements, or visuals. The second stage, *objective meaning*, examines the function of these elements in constructing the narrative, aesthetic, or symbolic message of the work. This includes the creator’s purpose and the contribution of elements to the main theme. The third stage, *socio-cultural meaning*, explores connotative meaning using cultural codes, values, beliefs, and social norms hidden within the work.

In this regard, the content analysis and data extraction process followed three stages: repeated reading, collecting interrelated data, and data analyzing (Saputra, 2025). Each of the textual references played a vital role in shaping our understanding and interpretation (Herlinda, 2018) of Sumedang’s historical journey, particularly in relation to figures such

as Prabu Geusan Ulun and the major events that shaped it. This analysis enables a critical reading of the implicit meanings that enrich our understanding of the socio-cultural context underlying their creation.

In this context, the research focuses on uncovering underlying meanings in both works through an intertextual approach. Drawing on the perspectives of Kristeva and Barthes, intertextuality suggests that every text is connected to other texts, either explicitly or implicitly (Saputra & Firismanda, 2025). This approach allows for analysis not only of explicit meaning but also of implicit, subjective, and emotional meanings of the works. The works under examination, although seemingly independent, are connected to a socio-cultural network and previous works that shape the interpretation of the themes such as disappointment, betrayal, and leadership failure.

Furthermore, the principle of intertextuality is used to critique how these themes can be translated into contemporary contexts. It seeks to avoid static readings and instead foster more dynamic understandings. Each work of art is seen as part of an ongoing dialogue, in which meaning is shaped by the interaction between the text, cultural context, and broader history.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the world of art, a work is not only created as a product of technique and skill, but also as a reflection of the societal values. Every artistic work represents ideas, feelings, and stories that transcend its physical form. In this context, art as important medium that

not only represents reality but also challenges and criticizes social structures dominated by capitalism and mass culture (Dewi, 2025; Mali, 2024; Wahyudin et al., 2024).

In the context of postmodernism, works of art function as tools to liberate thought, open space for deeper questions, and enable complex understanding of the world beyond existing norms or ideologies. Therefore, this view leads to the belief that artworks are a means and instrument for stimulating critical awareness and encouraging more substantial social change by challenging the understanding widely accepted by society. As stated by Cecep Kusnendi, works of art not only serve to satisfy aesthetic tastes, but also engage to the community, provoke reflection, and touch on relevant social issues (Kusnendi, 2007).

Furthermore, all elements in performing arts need to be managed and crafted carefully with high quality to realize a dynamic new aesthetic expression that is more evocative, attractive, and captivating. This approach also requires openness to innovation, without being rigidly bound by traditional norms or conventions, both in terms of visual and inner aesthetics dimensions. Additionally, the presence of suspense, which can create dramatic tension, is important as it provides an internal stimulus for art enthusiasts (Maryono & Setiyastuti, 2024, p. 582). Therefore, art serves as a medium that not only entertains but also educates, challenges perspectives, and drives social change.

Therefore, the process of analyzing and creating artworks cannot be separated from its sources of inspiration, whether historical texts, culture, or ideas developing in society. In the case of the Sundanese dance drama and *kawih*

oriented towards the Jaya Perkosa episode, three important scripts are used as primary source for content analysis material. However, before further analyzing the intertextuality context found in the Sundanese dance drama and *kawih* Mang Koko, it is necessary to first examine the background of these two objects.

The dramatic performance *Palagan di Kutamaya* is the result of collaborative work by researchers funded by DIPA ISBI Bandung in 2025. This work is based on the toponymy of the region, oriented towards the *Babad Sumedang* manuscript, which is presented in the form of Wayang Wong Priangan. The plot begins with a meeting between Prabu Geusan Ulun from Sumedanglarang and Pangeran Girilaya from Cirebon Girang, who are on their way to Demak to seek knowledge. Conflict arises when Harisbaya, the wife of Sultan Cirebon Girang, falls back in love with Prabu Geusan Ulun and forces him to take her away, triggering a war between Sumedanglarang and Cirebon Girang.

In preparation for battle, Jaya Perkosa—also known as Sanghyang Hawu—planted a Hanjuang tree as a symbol of life or death on the battlefield. He was one of the four Kandaga Lante, along with Nangganan/Batara Dipati Wiradijaya, Sanghyang Kondang Hapa, and Batara Pancar Buana/Terong (Abduracman et al., 1986; Thresnawaty, 2011; Winoto, 2018; Zakaria, 2008). After Sumedanglarang's victory, a misunderstanding occurred. Nangganan believed that Jaya Perkosa had fallen in battle and suggested moving the royal capital from Kutamaya to Dayeuh Luhur, which was later approved by Prabu Geusan Ulun. Upon returning, Jaya Perkosa found Kutamaya empty and felt betrayed. He chased after them to Dayeuh

Luhur, and despite receiving an explanation, his heartache did not subside. Ultimately, Jaya Perkosa killed Nanggan and uttered a curse, marking the climax of the conflict, betrayal, and destruction in this dramatic narrative.

Meanwhile, the Sundanese song *Hanjuang di Kutamaya* is a creative work by Koko Koswara (Mang Koko), with lyrics by Wahyu Wibisana. This song was created in Bandung on 29 November 1963, telling the story of Jaya Perkosa's disappointment with Prabu Geusan Ulun. This disappointment arose after the relocation of the kingdom from Kutamaya to Dayeuh Luhur. The decision was made without considering the symbol of the Hanjuang tree, previously planted by Jaya Perkosa as a sign of whether he was alive or had fallen in battle. The departure of the entire population without considering this further added to the disappointment expressed in the song. This song is not merely an expression of Jaya Perkosa's feelings but also serves as a symbol of the betrayal and destruction haunting the journey of the Sumedanglarang kingdom.

In this context, to translate and analyze the intertextuality between dance drama and Sundanese *kawih*, three main reference texts are identified. The first text is *Wawacan Babad Sumedang*, written by Abdoerrachman and obtained from the National Library of the Republic of Indonesia with archive number Plt. 29, Peti. 121 (Abdoerrachman, 1907). The second manuscript is *Babad Sumedang* by Raden Arya Adipati (R.A.A.) Martanagara, published by the Cultural Institute of Padjadjaran University in 1978. This manuscript was purchased by Sumadijaya in Majalengka from Haji Muhammad Zain (H. Muh. Djen) in 1932 (Raksakusumah &

Ekadjati, 1978). The third and final reference is *Wawacan Babad Sumedang*, transliterated by Dedi Koswara and Nanin Nurnaningsih in 2008. This manuscript comes from the collection of Aki Tarta from Cisewu, Garut, and was written by Nayamanggala (Koswara & Nurnaningsih, 2008). The focus of this analysis is on three parts narrative important events. Each was selected because it represents crucial stages in the process of change and conflict of the story. Their selection is based on their close relevance to the central characters, internal conflicts, social change dynamics within the community, and the importance of these events, which are still strongly embedded in the collective memory of today community.

The first part highlights the planting of the Hanjuang tree, which not only serves as a flora symbol but also represents the values of the Sundanese people. This tree is a metaphor for resilience, growth, and the connection between humans and their environment. The second part discusses the tragedy of Dayeuh Luhur, specifically the relocation of the Kutamaya community as a result of Prabu Geusan Ulun's decision to follow Nanggan's advice. This event reflects social changes and political structures, which are not merely physical relocations but also shifts in values, collective identity, and power systems. The third part focuses on the emotional disappointment of Jaya Perkosa, which culminates in his curse. This emotional expression reflects the internal conflict of individuals against a system they consider unfair, showing the discrepancy between personal aspirations and the socio-political realities.

The Symbolism of the Hanjuang Tree: Meaning, Belief, and Destiny

The Hanjuang tree in the *kawih* poem and the dance drama dialogue plays the role of a symbolic entity that represents the principles of life and death as well as victory and defeat. In this context, Jaya Perkosa’s planting of the Hanjuang tree is closely linked to his courage and destiny in battle. In Sundanese tradition, this tree is not merely a natural object but serves as a *totonde-a symbolic sign or spiritual address*- (Sunarni, 2016; Wijaya & Cahyanto, 2023) referring to a person’s fate, both life and battle.

The Hanjuang plant (*Cordyline fruticose*) is an perennial shrub with pointed lanceolate leaves, classified to the *Monocotyledonous* class (Wijaya & Cahyanto, 2023). This plant is commonly used as an ornamental plant for gardens, parks, or cemeteries, as well as a hedge plant (Hendarso & Sulistiyowati, 2024; Mada & Sutrisno, 2025; Mukaromah & Imamah, 2021). Ecologically, Hanjuang can adapt well to various environmental conditions. This adaptability is supported by secondary metabolites that provide benefits in addressing pollution. The plant possesses bioactive, antibacterial, and antitumor properties (Elfita et al., 2019; Naher et al., 2019; Tan et al., 2023).

Linguistically, the word “*Hanjuang*” derived from “*hanju*”, meaning life or existence, and “*juang*”, meaning struggle. Its association with the Sundanese term “*ngarenghap*” (taking the last breath) reinforces the tree’s symbolism of breathe and life itself (Sunarni, 2016). Its etymology interprets Hanjuang as a symbol of life’s struggle. It reminds the value that life is a struggle for continuity and dedication to the homeland, nation, and state, in line with the

Sundanese philosophy that life must be fought for the sake of the nation and people to achieve greater good.

Hanjuang, in this interpretation, reflects the dualities of life, namely the concept of life and death, and joy and sorrow. This duality is also present in the Penca motif (Saefurridjal et al., 2025), which reflects the balance between physical and spiritual aspects, aligning with the concept of paradoxical aesthetics (Sumardjo, 2014). This paradox shows that human life is full of contradictions, yet ‘harmony’ can still be achieved through understanding and self-control (Saefurridjal et al., 2025). This idea aligns with the poem Jaya Perkosa: “*mun Hanjuang ieu hurip eta tanda unggul jurit, tapi mun seug ieu tangkal Hanjuang layu atawa pérang, ciciren kaula kasoran di palagan.*” The verse illustrates that the life or death of the Hanjuang tree reflects the fate of a warrior on the battlefield. This demonstrates that Hanjuang does not merely symbolize duality but also represents the intertwined nature of destiny, the spirit of struggle, and the natural world that are interconnected and mutually reflective.

Hanjuang also functions as a metaphor in many aspects of life, including fighting spirit, resilience in the face of challenges, and optimism in striving for a better future. Wijaya and Cahyanto, in their analysis, suggest that “*Hanjuang*” can also be understood as a *siloka* or linguistic expression that describes a call to fight together. The phrase “*Hayu urang berjuang*” (let’s fight) contained the symbolic meaning of the Hanjuang tree (Wijaya & Cahyanto, 2023), showing that this word does not only refer to a tree, but also as a collective call to arouse fighting spirit or a spirit of togetherness in overcoming

all obstacles.

Furthermore, in the spiritual dimension, Hanjuang is seen as an element connecting living beings with the Creator. Its presence in various *siloka* such as “*na Handeuleum aya katineung, na Hanjuang aya kamelang*,” and the quote from Wangsit Siliwangi that states, “*saungna di birit leuwi nu pantona batu satangtung, nu dihateup ku handeuleum ditihangan ku hanjuang*,” (Sunarni, 2016) demonstrates that Hanjuang serves as a symbol to maintain harmonious relations between humans and the universe. This tree serves as a spiritual marker that functions as a balancer or neutralizer within the community, acting as a *tolak bala* (protector against harm) and an intermediary in maintaining the harmony of nature and spiritual life (Mada & Sutrisno, 2025; Wulandari & Elmansyah, 2022).

The interpretation of the symbolism of the Hanjuang tree points to the understanding that, in Sundanese cultural tradition, humans view nature as an entity that has a reciprocal relationship with their lives. Nature is not a passive space, but an active force that influences and reflects the journey of human life. In this context, Hanjuang is not merely a plant, but a representation of determination (*tekad*), speech (*ucap*), and action (*lampah*). This is reflected in a quote from the dramatic dialogue depicting the words of Jaya Perkosa:

“Ieu hanjuang baris jadi totonde, mun seug ieu tangkal ajeg nangtung, cirina kaula unggul di medan tempur. Sabalikna, mun ieu hanjuang perang atawa layu, hartina kaula tiwas perlaya di pangperangan.”

The dramatic dialogue above is also connected to the following Sundanese poem:

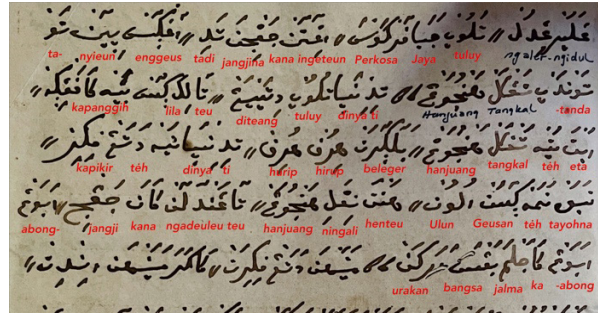


Figure 1. Excerpt from the Babad Sumedang manuscript illustrating the moment when Jaya Perkosa searches for Hanjuang tree upon his return to Kutamaya (the script is read from right to left).

(Source: Asyari, 2025)

“Hanjuang di Kutamaya// Pelak pamuk Sumedanglarang Jaya Perkosa// Hanjuang Ki Kahuripan// Perlambangna hiji jangji satria anu bumela// Mun Hanjuang ieu perang cirina paman kasorang// Mun Hanjuang ieu hurip eta tanda unggul jurit.”

This symbolism of Hanjuang is further documented in the *Wawacan Babad Sumedang*. The verses in the manuscript reveal a strong connection between the physical condition of the tree and the fate of Jaya Perkosa on the battlefield:

“126) Upamina eta teh tangkah Hanjuang, katingalan ku gusti, arulum daunna, atau paeh pisan, eta teh jadi pertawis, kasoran perang, musuh nu unggul jurit; 127) Tapi lamun Hanjuang teh belegeran, montong sumelang galih, ulah kurang-kurang jiad, abdi masih gumelar, Sayang Hawu nyembah indit, nyiar Hanjuang, teh lila enggeus manggih; 128) Sayang Hawu melakeun tangkal Hanjuang, jeung diati-ati, di alun-alun pisan, hanteu aya nu ningal, wantuning lakuna demit, geus kitu mangkat, mangkat rek mapag jurit (Raksakusumah & Ekadjati, 1978, p. 22).”

The Tragedy of Dayeuh Luhur: The Relocation of Kutamaya and Its Social-Political Consequences

This tragic story began with the actions of Nanggan or Wiradijaya, who was considered as betraying for moving the capital of Sumedanglarang after winning a war against the Kingdom of Cirebon Girang. Prior to this, Jaya Perkosa had previously given a clear mandate to Prince Geusan Ulun and other rulers, by planting the Hanjuang tree at the prominent corner of the Kutamaya capital (Wijaya & Cahyanto, 2023; Zakaria, 2008). However, Prince Geusan Ulun and Nanggan decided to relocate the capital to Dayeuh Luhur without considering the Hanjuang tree as a symbol of loyalty to the mandate (Abduracman et al., 1986; Winoto, 2018). This decision ultimately shook the political stability of the kingdom and undermined an important symbol that upheld the kingdom's integrity.

In the context of dramatics, the following excerpt from Jaya Perkosa's dramatic dialogue interprets the symbolic and emotional message:

"Ieu hanjuang ajeg nangtung, totonde kula jaya di pangperangan. Tapi naha pada ninggalkeun? Emh ... gening kuring bebela teh ukur jadi tumbal keur kasenangan para pangagung karajaan. Gusti, pangeran abdi! Kuring teh ridho, aing teu narima! Awas ... Geusan Ulun! Diteang sia ku aing!"

These emotions are not merely expressions of anger, but a reflection of feelings of betrayal and the loss of symbolic power that was once so strong. In Jaya Perkosa's statement, "*Hanjuang ajeg nangtung*" is not just a tree, but also a representation of the resilience and integrity of the kingdom. When the tree falls (*rubuh*), it means that the symbol of power is beginning

to wither and crumble, along with the collapse of the promises and mandates that have been given. Similarly, the Sundanese *kawih* poem that accompanies Jaya Perkosa's feelings further reinforces this symbolic narrative:

"Pengkuh bari jeung satia ka Nalendra ka Nagara// Ucapan Jaya Perkosa baheula dicatet ku urang Sunda ayeuna// Kunaon raja teu panggeur sakitu Hanjuang seger// Kunaon raja bet cidra kalahka nilar nagara."

This poem reflects on the theme of disloyalty within the royal order. "*Pengkuh bari jeung satia ka Nalendra ka Nagara*" indicates that Jaya Perkosa remains steadfast and loyal to Nalendra (the leader), referring to Prabu Geusan Ulun and the Sumedanglarang Kingdom (Thresnawaty, 2011).

This metaphor reflects the importance of loyalty to the state and royal symbols in Sundanese tradition. Jaya Perkosa's words, which are still remembered today, reflect deep disappointment with the actions of Prabu Geusan Ulun, who was considered a traitor. The line "*kunaon raja teu panggeur sakitu Hanjuang seger*" (why does the king falter, while the Hanjuang tree remains vibrant) illustrates that the king should remain steadfast in his convictions because the Hanjuang tree, as a symbol, is still alive but has been neglected. "*Kunaon raja bet cidra kalahka nilar nagara*" (why did the king betray and abandon the country) shows disappointment in a leader who did not uphold his mandate and trust in Jaya Perkosa, who became *the kingdom* "*piandeuleun*" (counselor).

Additionally, verses 170-173 of *Wawacan Babad Sumedang* in the *Pucung* stanza articulate

Jaya Perkosa's feelings about the relocation of the capital:

"170) *Mentas nempuh nu ngaluruk ti cikadu jol ka Kutamaya, di nagara nyampak jempe, mungsrang-mangsring bus pisan ka padaliman*; 171) *Nyampak rehe, kosong di jero kadaton, sang jaya perkosa ngamanah naha kunaon mana ngalih Hanjuang teh peunggas*; 172) *Sanghyang hawu gura-giru ka alun-alun, Hanjuang di teang, beleger teh pisan paeh, sumawuna rubuh atau ngalakay*; 173) *Ti dinya mah sanghyang hawu bijil nafsu, neangan ratuna, jugjug dayeuh luhur bae, enggalna dongkap jurit jaya perkosa* (Abdoerrachman, 1907, hlm. 42-43)."

Upon learning that Prabu Geusan Ulun had decided to support Nangganan, who was considered manipulative and unworthy, Jaya Perkosa felt that the loyalty and values he had fought for (*satia ka Nalendra ka Nagara*) had been betrayed. In a state of intense emotion, he swore never to serve the ruler who had chosen to support someone he deemed unworthy. The following is recorded in the *Babad Sumedang* as Jaya Perkosa's expression of anger and disappointment:

"20) ... *wates ieu ngawula, moal ngawula deui, nu gumela henteu pisan katarima*; 21) *Sakieu nya ngabélaan, sosoroh ngalebuh pati, angger ngagugu nangganan, manusa bohong jejerih, ngomongna bari eeurik, bari leumpangna téh ngidul, ieu téh panganggeusan, moal rék ngawula deui, kadunungan nu teu boga panarima* (Koswara & Nurnaningsih, 2008, p. 64)."

The relocation of the capital was more than just an administrative or geographical decision. This move was a symbolic strategy designed by Nangganan to influence the policies

of Prabu Geusan Ulun, who was at that time in a liminal state, wavering between awareness and confusion after losing Jaya Perkosa. Across all three reference texts, only Nangganan's name is mentioned by Prabu Geusan Ulun when deciding to relocate the capital, indicating the presence of political maneuvering behind the decision.

According to Max Weber, in a crisis situation, power does not always manifest itself in coercive forms (such as direct orders), but also through the ability to influence the decisions of others, either by directing or cancelling them (Weber, 2012). In other words, in the liminal condition of Prabu Geusan Ulun, who was dominated by emotional instability, Nangganan utilized power to influence his subjective will and considerations. This means that Nangganan strengthened his position within the political sphere by exploiting this uncertainty to carry out actions that aligned with his desires.

Nangganan's actions are also interpreted as a form of symbolic manipulation. He attempts to gain Prabu Geusan Ulun's trust by presenting suggestions that seem logical but are clearly motivated by personal interests and opportunism. In a crisis, it is often the person who can construct the most convincing narrative who prevails, not the one with the highest structural position. Power in this context is determined more by the ability to create meaning and manipulate discourse than by one's position in the royal hierarchy.

Jaya Perkosa: Unfulfilled Disappointment and Sacrifice

"*Cape gawe teu kapake*" or futile exhaustion became a metaphor that reflected Jaya Perkosa's feelings at that time. He felt that all his efforts

and sacrifices had been unappreciated, even perhaps considered insignificant by those in power. In the dramatization of his story, Jaya Perkosa expresses his despair through an oath, revealing deep disappointment towards the system that has bound him in unrequited devotion.

The oath he uttered firmly was:

“Sumpah aing mun tea aya turunan di Kutamaya, semet dieu ulah hayang babakti ka turunan menak. Sabab kabukti ku aing pribadi kumaha karasana cape gawe teu kapake. Isuk jaganing geto mun seug diri aing dipenta kunu boga, teu sudi layon aing di singharepkeun ka turunan menak, aing menta sangkan layon aing diuk kalayan nyinghareup ka kabuyutan. Mun seug aya turunan aing datang ka pasarean aing, ulah wani-wani make raksukan nu miyuni jeung musuh aing.”

The statement in the oath shows a rejection of traditions that are no longer relevant, as well as a criticism of the injustice that is deeply rooted in the existing social structure. He even prefers that his body be treated according to his own wishes rather than being part of a disappointing system.

Furthermore, the oath is not only uttered as an expression of personal dissatisfaction but is also accompanied by a broader feeling reflected in a dialogue. The dialogue depicts a life journey filled with confusion and uncertainty amid the fragility of the existing system. Nevertheless, Jaya Perkosa is confident in his words. The dialogue is as follows:

“Geusan Ulun! Geus cindek dina waktu ayeuna, kaula udar tina kapangkatan salaku Patih Sumedanglarang! Dengekeun ku arinya sakabeh! Bumi-langit nu jadi saksi yen ti semet kiwari nepika pati. Aing

moal rek ngaula jeung aing moal rek nincak deui ka lemah Sumedang Larang!”

The conditions described in this dialogue align with the narrative recorded in *the Wawacan Babad Sumedang*. In the *wawacan*, Abdurrahman describes deep feelings of injustice faced by Jaya Perkosa, as illustrated in the following excerpt:

“181) Djadi goesti, ngandel ka djalma teh poegoeh, kanoe poera-poera, teu pertjanten kanoe jaktos, henteu ngandel ka elmoe Djaja Perkosa; 182) Ajeuna mah, ngan sakieu njeun toetoeg, ka anak djeung warga, talatah bisi rek niron montong teuing tatapa talak barata; 183) Oelah rek noeroetan aki, tatapa hajang digdadja, pikeun ngaoelaan Katon, noe haat dipoelang mohal, djeung ajeuna soepata, tjadoe ngabela ka Ratoe, anak intjoe boejoet mojang; 184) Enggeus karasa koe aing, anjeuna kieu boektina, sarta emboeng sapakoeon, ajeuna aing djeung Radja, rek njeun pangtjalikan, nya eta di lebah kidoel, noenggoean liang sangkala (Abdoerrachman, 1907, hlm. 44–45).”

The *wawacan* portrays Jaya Perkosa not only a victim of injustice but also ignored by those who should appreciate his contributions. As a result, the sadness, disappointment, and betrayal expressed in the dialogue gain a further understanding through the story recorded in the *wawacan*. The dialogue and the *wawacan* complement each other in depicting the despair and frustration towards the ongoing injustice.

A later *Babad Sumedang* manuscript records Jaya Perkosa’s last words, which reveal his lifelong rejection of injustice:

“Pokna lamun aing ajal, teruskeun pamenta kuring, kubur deukeut kabuyutan, rada béh kalér saeutik, jeung mangkéna mayit

aing, dikuburna sina diuk, jeung ulah sina nangkarak, sabab aing henteu sudi, nyanghuluan ka lebah urut dunungan (Koswara & Nurnaningsih, 2008, p. 65)."

This passage highlights Jaya Perkosa's critique of lack of appreciation for those who have served loyally, as reflected in his statement: "*Pokna lamun aing ajal, teruskeun pamenta kuring.*" This statement shows that even though his sacrifices have been ignored, he still wants his wishes to be respected after his death. This hope reflects criticism of an exploitative and unfair system of service. Through his final words, Jaya Perkosa seeks to leave a legacy of his will, marking a rejection of injustice and affirming the individual's right to maintain control over their fate, even beyond death.

Additionally, the character Jaya Perkosa exhibits signs of *proto-class consciousness*, revealing that one's position within a power system is often subordinate and manipulated for the benefit of those in power. This awareness aligns with James C. Scott's concept of *infrapolitics* (Scott, 2012, 2017), which states that forms of resistance from oppressed groups often emerge symbolically, covertly, or satirically (Massoumi & Morgan, 2024; Scott, 2008). All these suppressed feelings and emotions of conflict, if not channeled constructively, can resurface as violent attitudes and behaviors as a form of retaliation for past experiences of violence (Lestari, 2020). In this context, the Jaya Perkosa oath can be understood as a form of resistance that, although not directly attacking power, erodes the legitimacy of the existing structure from within. This resistance, though not explicit or frontal, remains a gradual

rejection that undermines the credibility of the unfair hegemonic system (Lilja & Vinthagen, 2018).

Drawing on Max Weber's theory of legitimate power, which states that the legitimacy of power can originate from traditional, legal-rational, or charismatic authority (Seputra & Suyatno, 2024), the current situation can be linked to Jaya Perkosa's statement. When a king, such as Prabu Geusan Ulun, loses the trust of his followers, it is not only personal relationships that are shaken but also the legitimacy of his power. This is particularly significant given the period of Prabu Geusan Ulun's reign in the Kingdom of Sumedanglarang, which followed the collapse of the Pajajaran Kingdom due to an attack by the Banten Sultanate in 1579 under Sultan Maulana Yusuf (Alnoza, 2022; Alnoza & Nely, 2024; Zakaria, 2008).

Prabu Geusan Ulun was also the last king of the Sumedanglarang Kingdom dynasty, marking the end of Sumedanglarang's golden age before it was replaced by the Wedana Regent system in 1601 (Lubis, 1998; Zakaria, 2008). Prabu Geusan Ulun's inability to maintain the steadfastness and power that the people expected of him led to the disintegration of his power structure (Lubis, 1998). Previous events and conflicts caused by Prabu Geusan Ulun led to distrust, disappointment, and disrespect from the people towards their leader. This validates that authority based solely on lineage or honor is no longer relevant, as power must be proven through firm, wise, and people-oriented actions, not just favoring those in power.

Weber's idea of the legitimacy of power is closely related to the experiences of Jaya Perkosa, as reflected in the lyrics of the Sundanese song:

“*boa pugur dina tangtungan bebeneran urang ayeuna*,” which means perhaps (the king) fell on his feet. This expression describes the fragility of a leader who loses his steadfastness in the face of crisis, both personally and in terms of the legitimacy of his power. In this context, a clear parallel emerges between Weber’s theory of legitimate power and the crisis of legitimacy experienced by Jaya Perkosa. His disappointment questions Prabu Geusan Ulun’s inability as a leader to uphold his principles and credibility.

A legitimate leader should not be measured solely by lineage or formal position, but by decisions and actions that reflect a commitment to the people (Suyanto & Sunardi, 2024). Thus, leadership is a crucial indicator in human life. A true leader must be able to face challenges and crises with determination and commitment to the interests of the people, not merely to maintain *the status quo* for the benefit of a select few. This perspective reinforces that the legitimacy of power, as stated by Max Weber, must be obtained through actions that genuinely reflect moral responsibility towards the people, rather than the inheritance of power or tradition.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that Sundanese *kawih* and dance drama, while depicting the same historical narrative of Jaya Perkosa, employ fundamentally different strategies of representation. The *kawih* prioritizes a lyrical, introspective mode, focusing on the protagonist’s personal political sentiment and disillusionment.

Conversely, the dance drama leverages its multimodality (visuals, movement, dialogue) to construct an externalized dramatic conflict, designed for public performance and immediate emotional impact.

The significance of this finding is twofold. First, it reveals that the choice of medium dictates the thematic focus of a historical narrative, shifting it from a private lament on political betrayal in the *kawih* to a public spectacle of loyalty and consequence in the drama. Second, this study contributes a specific case analysis to the broader understanding of media specificity in the cultural production of history. It shows that historical consciousness in a society is not monolithic but is formed through a dynamic interaction of different artistic forms, each with its own capacity to shape meaning and affect.

This analytical framework offers potential for further research. Future studies could investigate how audiences with different backgrounds receive and interpret these two distinct representations of Jaya Perkosa. Furthermore, a similar comparative analysis could be applied to other key figures and events in Sundanese history represented across multiple artistic media. Such studies would build a more comprehensive model of how performance and poetics collaboratively construct historical memory.

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