

# Transforming Wayang-Based Short Stories into Film Screenplays

Rima Firdaus\*<sup>1</sup>, Mochtar Lutfi<sup>2</sup>, Rizal Agung Kurnia<sup>3</sup>, Nuri Hermawan<sup>4</sup>, Lady Khairunnisa<sup>5</sup>, Nadya Afdholy<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1,2,3,4,6</sup> *Departement of Indonesian Laguange and Literature, Universitas Airlangga,*

<sup>5</sup> *Masters study program in literature and culture studies, Universitas Airlangg*

## ABSTRACT

This study examines how wayang-based short stories are turned into movie screenplays, emphasizing how contemporary cinematic techniques and traditional cultural narratives merge. The traditional art form of wayang, which is full with moral and philosophical principles, becomes an engaging story source. Creators can maintain the cultural significance of wayang while making it approachable and pertinent for modern audiences, particularly younger ones, by turning these stories into scripts. In addition to retelling classic tales, this method addresses technical elements including character development, storyline organization, and visual storytelling. By allowing authors to use contemporary topics and imaginative features, the flexibility of interpretation promotes a closer bond between contemporary media and cultural legacy. According to the study's findings, this adaption process is a practical way to cultural preservation, guaranteeing that in the digital age, wayang will still captivate and inspire people.

**Keywords:** Wayang, Short Stories, Film, Screenplays, Traditional Art.

## INTRODUCTION

Yampolsky contends that negative messages propagated by newspapers, magazines, ads, radio, and television bombard the public's mind and attach to the perception that traditional culture and life are backward, primitive, and absurd, which is why traditional arts are frequently perceived as art that is becoming more and more abandoned [1]. According to Margaret Kartomi, a specialist in traditional Indonesian music, the majority of study on traditional arts shows two key findings: first, that traditional arts continue to be exotic, but they are also "crying" as a result of the forces of globalization eroding them. [2]. This unfavorable opinion is made worse by globalization, which puts indigenous identities and cultures in jeopardy and causes an increasing number of individuals to forget and give up traditional arts. [3,4,5]. Indeed, Indonesian Wayang Kulit art is exceptional and unique on a global scale. It is not surprising that the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) listed Wayang Theatre on the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2008. Anyone who

comes into contact with it will fall in love or be astonished. numerous young Indonesian students may not comprehend the profundity of this intellectual heritage. However, those who have studied it appreciate the numerous values it includes. In essence, Wayang encourages all of the obligations that come with experiencing rasa, including knowledge of understanding and the utmost truth [6]. While K.G.P.A.A. Mangkunegoro emphasized that "every play (play) should be considered as a symbol of mystical action - the praise of meditation" Meditation is the concentration of spirit is important to individual character development [7]. This is why Wayang Kulit is timeless and relevant to both the present and the future. In the 'Ruwatan' tradition, wayang has also played a significant role in social and cultural healing. Ruwatan, where a performance of religious puppetry is held, denotes purification or release from curses or disasters. [8,9]. The Ruwatan performance and the Wahyu story serve as illustrations of how wayang, as a tradition, may be crucial in offering direction and curing social and cultural ailments [10]. As a result, wayang must be

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preserved as a source of wisdom and healing. The Sidoarjo Regency Government collaborates with the Sidoarjo Arts Council (Dekesda) to promote the arts and culture of Sidoarjo. Dekesda, which represents Sidoarjo artists and cultural leaders, was established by the Sidoarjo Artists' Conference and established by the Regent of Sidoarjo. The Literature Committee, the Traditional Arts Committee, and the Film Committee are among the committees that are part of the administration system. It is intended that these three committees will serve as special partners for the proposal that has been submitted. The Sidoarjo Regency Government collaborates with the Sidoarjo Arts Council (Dekesda) to promote the arts and culture of Sidoarjo. Dekesda was established by the Sidoarjo Artists' Conference and governed by the Sidoarjo Regent's Decree to serve as a representation of Sidoarjo artists and cultural leaders. The Literature Committee, the Traditional Arts Committee, and the Film Committee are among the committees that are part of the administration system. For the presented proposal, these three committees are intended to serve as special partners. For instance, the challenges stem from Dekesda's extremely limited facilities. The 'old' school building where Dekesda currently resides is naturally divided into classrooms. Naturally, the circumstances and state of classrooms varies greatly from those of art production spaces, including the needs for lighting, soundproofing, power, room size, and other elements. A 'stage' is available for use in the Dekesda yard. This step is still far from meeting performance standards, though. This building's parking lot and entrance are likewise small. Joko Susilo also expressed the youth's lack of desire to actively participate in Dekesda's cultural preservation initiatives. The severe paucity of resources makes program planning and execution challenging. Dekesda attempts to develop innovative and engaging labor programs, however this leads back to the issue of extremely little finance, which makes implementation challenging. In actuality, Dekesda is well aware of our vast cultural and traditional wealth. As a feature of Sidoarjo, the legacy of the Kahuripan kingdom may be a treasure trove to be mined and tended. Furthermore, there is a lot of potential for wayang to be revived and replicated as a global cultural legacy. This is the point at which Dekesda truly needs outside assistance, such as from academic institutions like Unair. In 2022, KSWS and FIB Unair

partnered to offer instruction in the creation of short stories with a wayang theme. In 2023, KSWS and Dekesda joined forces with FIB Unair to provide short story writers with editing training up until the anthology's successful publication. It is intended that the collection of short stories will be adapted into a movie in 2024. SDG 11—"sustainable cities and communities"—is supported and aligned with this activity, particularly with regard to cultural heritage preservation. This service is also in line with the Law on the Advancement of Culture which states that regional culture is a national wealth and identity that is very much needed to advance Indonesian National Culture.

## METHOD

The following actions will be done to resolve partner issues: The Unair community service team reached out to the Sarip Wayang Literature Community (KSWS) and the Sidoarjo Arts Council (Dekesda), inviting them to participate in this activity by expressing their desire to work together. Following approval of the proposal, (a) number of preparations are done, such as informing partners about the scheduled community service projects. (b). Reaching out to the speakers (c) Setting up the space and other tools required to carry out the activities. Completing workshop tasks while keeping the following information in mind: completing workshop tasks while keeping the following information in mind:

- a. Expert on wayang and traditional culture
- b. The workshop material is composed of the following:
  - definition, type, and scenario writing technique
  - Cerpen transformation into a scenario

Depending on the content that needed to be taught, the two-day course included eight sessions in total. Participants were requested to offer input on the training's execution and the training materials at the conclusion of the workshop. At the conclusion of the workshop session, participants directly evaluated how well the activities had been implemented. Additionally, assessments were conducted by analyzing how the activities included in the report were implemented in accordance with the guidelines established by LPPM Unair. Dekesda partners were instrumental in a number of initiatives alongside the Faculty of Cultural Sciences' Community Service team, including: Supporting the process of contact

with local resident; supporting the site's licensing procedure; identifying the community service location; identifying and organizing workshop attendees; supporting the creation of more contextual workshop modules; The main activity implementation method is in the form of a workshop with the following detailed stages:

**Table. 1 Community Service Implementation Methods**

	Activity	Details	Out put
1	Community gatherings	Conducted by the proposer (Unair) and partners (Sidoarjo Arts Council and Sarip Wayang Literature Community)  Strengthening communication that has been established with partners  Determining the main themes and important things that need to be considered during the activity (location, time, equipment needed, resource persons, etc.)  Determining and mobilizing participants	Understanding with partners  Technical clarity of workshop implementation  Names of prospective participants
2	Module compilation	Conducted by a team of proposers and resource persons who are puppet experts and scenario writing experts.	Modules for workshops
3	Implementation of the workshop	Conducted for 2 days (16 hours) with the following themes:  2 hours of understanding scenarios and film making  2 hours of understanding the definition and techniques of writing scenarios  8 hours of writing practice	Screenplay script



**Figure 1. Community Service Activity Flowchart**

### Transferring Narrative from Short Tales to Audio Visual

Transferring narrative from text in the form of short tales to audio-visual medium in the form of movies is the suggested action. Pre-production, production, and post-production are the three primary phases of the filmmaking process, according to Reid and Sanders [11]. In a nutshell, pre-production is everything that happens before the beginning of the picture and sound

recording process, production is the actual image and sound recording process, and post-production is the activity that happens after the recording is complete. Preparation, the launch of screenplay writing support programs, and film script writing contests based on Wayang stories are the activities that comprise this community service. Together with the Sidoarjo Arts Council and the film community, the community service team prepared for the first phase.



**Figure 2. Coordination Meeting for Preparation of Wayang Scenario Writing Workshop**

The First Task Wayang short story scripts were used to socialize the Film Script Writing Workshop process. This series of seminars started with the Dekesda and the cinema community coming together to socialize the film script writing process based on Wayang short tale scripts. The purpose of this program is to give attendees a basic grasp of how short stories based on wayang are transformed into movie scenarios. Participants are encouraged to learn how to examine traditional values in wayang and turn them into visually compelling narratives that appeal to audiences in the modern era. An outline of the phases involved in scenario writing, from ideation and screenplay development to the creation of compelling dialogues, is also given by this socialization.

Furthermore, it serves as a platform for fostering communication amongst members from all backgrounds, particularly between the Dekesda community and other film communities. Participant experiences and ideas for creating stories based on local culture are exchanged through participatory discussions. Along with encouraging participants' passion for producing works that are not only aesthetically pleasing but also rich in Wayang cultural values, this event serves as a first platform for them to get ready before moving on to a more in-depth workshop stage. It is anticipated that this partnership would create new avenues for investigation into the fusion of contemporary creativity and tradition.



**Figure 3. Socialization of the Stage I Wayang Scenario Writing Competition and Workshop**

Rima Firdaus., M.Hum presented a socialization of writing cinema scripts based on wayang-based short stories during the first workshop. A Screenplay Writing Competition was then launched to boost the competitors' enthusiasm, and it was warmly received. Many inquiries concerning the concept, which extended beyond traditional wayang, were made by members of the Dekesda film community. The participants were allowed to investigate Wayang from their own points of view. in order for the Wayang preservation concept to be fully realized for the next generation. During the post-socialization conversation, Rima Firdaus., M. Hum also shared their perspectives on how to examine the essence of wayang within contemporary narratives. In order for wayang to be translated into a narrative form that is applicable to modern life, she underlined the significance of comprehending the philosophical ideals it contains, such as justice, sacrifice, and the link between humanity and the world. Participants were encouraged to view wayang as a cultural identity sign that can be easily translated to many story media, such as movies, in addition to being a performing art.

### Workshop Writing Wayang Scenarios Film

Movies are crucial for maintaining customs and culture. Tuurosong discusses how Dagbani movies help northern Ghanaians live in harmony with one another [12]. The movie focuses on how communities settle disputes among themselves by adhering to traditional peaceful living practices. The movie promotes the ideals of cooperation amongst local groupings. In the meantime, Bahk describes how the narrative of the movie "Medicine Man" influenced local perceptions on forest preservation [13]. It is also stated that movies can serve as a tool for moral education and the preservation of culture and values [13].When it was clarified that the competition's theme was subject to imaginative interpretation, the contestants' excitement grew. Some participants even began to share their novel ideas, which included fusing mystery, science fiction, and family drama aspects with wayang characters. It is anticipated that the flexibility to explore wayang would inspire creativity in telling the next generation of traditional stories. As a result, wayang is regarded as both a contemporary creative inspiration that can coexist with popular culture and as a cultural legacy of the past.



**Figure 4. Mentoring and Workshop Phase II Writing Wayang Scenarios**

In his presentation, Dr. Mochtar Lutfi discussed Wayang Scenario Writing and its applicability in the modern day. Given how Gen Z has been influenced by technology, Wayang can be interpreted in many ways today. In his talk, Dr. Mochtar Lutfi explained how scenario writing based on wayang might still be useful in the modern day. He underlined that wayang, one of the archipelago's cultural legacies, is adaptable enough to be used in a variety of contemporary

settings. In the current digital era, when Gen Z is greatly impacted by technology, wayang-based story presentation needs to be flexible enough to accommodate this generation's tastes and way of life. Presenting wayang stories in a more interactive, visual format or even incorporating technology like animation, augmented reality, or other digital media can accomplish this. Additionally, Dr. Mochtar Lutfi clarified that technology presents an opportunity to

spread Wayang tradition rather than being a threat. Wayang people, for instance, can be vividly portrayed in stories that address modern concerns like social justice, environmental sustainability, or identity conflicts. With this strategy, wayang will become a successful teaching tool in addition to grabbing Gen

Z's interest. This change will make wayang relevant and engaging for the younger generation, who live in a society that is becoming more and more connected through digital means, while preserving its philosophical ideals.



**Figure 5. Mentoring and Workshop Phase II Writing Puppet Scenarios**

The event took place in the Sidoarjo Health Department on October 25, 2024. Mr. Suwarmin gave the first presentation on "Exploring Wayang Stories, Cinema Inspiration" during the workshop mentorship, followed by Dr. Mochtar Lutfi's presentation on "Writing Wayang-Based Film Scenarios." Alfian from the Film Community provided participants with information on cinematography and wayang production to the screen in the third section. Following the presentation of the material, Rima Firdaus, M.Hum., Nuri Hermawan, M.Hum., and Rizal Agung Kurnia, M.Phil., along with Dr. Nadya Afdholi and Dr. Mochtar Lutfi, who were lecturers from Indonesian Language and Literature at Airlangga University, provided special assistance to the participants in the second workshop. The three of them contributed a great deal, particularly with the story's narrative and logic. Every participant also received feedback on the writing and spelling that had been completed. Each participant had the chance to thoroughly discuss their narrative ideas during this intense, one-on-one mentorship session. Along with constructive feedback, the mentors offered specific remedies to strengthen the participants' work's narrative structure and story logic flaws. Additionally, particular attention was paid to technical elements like spelling, punctuation, and diction choices in order to ensure that the final product was of a caliber that satisfied professional standards. The participants

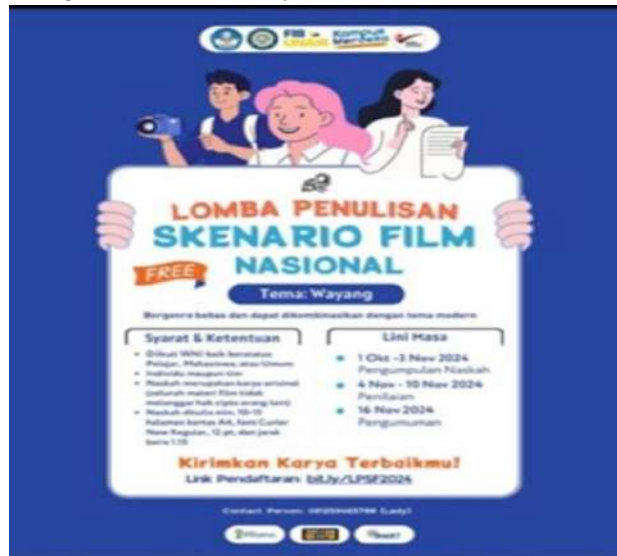
acknowledged that the advice was very helpful, particularly since each professor had a distinct area of expertise and could offer a variety of viewpoints to assist them refine their work. It is anticipated that this will enhance the participants' capacity to compose scenarios that are both technically sound and compelling from a narrative standpoint.

### **The Utilization of Classical and Traditional Wayang in Modernization**

Wayang, a traditional shadow puppetry art form with strong cultural roots in Indonesia, is extremely important as a storytelling tool and art form. Wayang was first used centuries ago as a means of communicating moral, spiritual, and philosophical ideals. However, there are major obstacles to wayang's relevance and preservation given the speed at which modernization and globalization are developing. Younger generations frequently view wayang as a thing of the past, unrelated to their contemporary tastes and lifestyles, especially in the digital age. In light of this, using traditional and classical wayang in contemporary contexts has emerged as a crucial endeavor to close the gap between cultural legacy and modern society. Including wayang in contemporary media like internet, film, education, and popular art enables its classic stories and designs to appeal to fresh audiences. In order to demonstrate how traditional storytelling forms can be adapted to contemporary

frameworks without losing their character, this article examines how wayang may change while maintaining its cultural core. The conversation highlights the significance of wayang as a living tradition that may

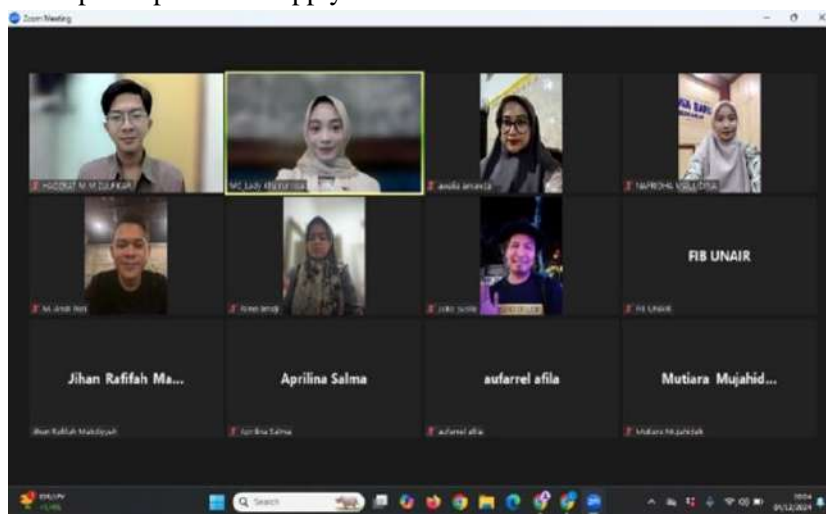
survive in a worldwide society by looking at different modernization strategies. This competition poster for workshop writing competition poster.



**Figure 6. Wayang Scenario Writing Competition Poster**

This competition poster is meant to boost participants' excitement when their workshop-stage work is also put to the test in order to determine which participants' writing produced the best outcomes. After completing the workshop phase, participants are encouraged to submit their finest work by this competition, which serves as a token of appreciation. In order to improve their work in terms of story logic, plot organization, and writing style, contestants are urged to be more serious and imaginative. This competition's primary goals are to motivate participants to apply the

knowledge they have learned throughout the workshop and to promote a healthy spirit of competition. Furthermore, this contest serves as a platform for. Furthermore, this competition serves as a platform for contestants to showcase their abilities and potential in crafting Wayang-inspired scenarios that are pertinent to the modern period. In addition to being pride pieces for the competitors, the competition's final output should help preserve and promote Wayang culture in the film industry.



**Figure 7. Online Competition Winner Announcement**

Following the competition, the results were ultimately announced. The winners were announced online

through Zoom, and the three winners were Awalia Legita Amanda as Champion I, Hadzrat M.M.

Zulfikar as Champion II, and Nafridha Maulidina as Champion III. With the following premise, I wrote a movie screenplay titled "Kala Sedha" in my capacity as Champion. Instead of using a puppet story, Awalia wrote about the fundamentals of puppetry in the contemporary day, with a particular emphasis on Wayang as the story's theme. Mr. Bramono is a businessman, the leader of the household, and the owner of a sizable wayang collection. His wife once performed at every Wayang show as a dancer. After being married, they were fortunate to have two kids. Before odd things started happening after Mr. Bram's wife passed away, his family was extremely wealthy and frequently served as a place for locals to borrow money. Second-place finisher Zulfikar, whose title was "Daydreaming" This is Zulfikar's summary of the story. In addition to using the names of the characters from Pandhawa, Zulfikar used the story of the five Pandhawa as the backdrop for the narrative. Arjuna, the contest winner, and the Pandavas, who had disguised themselves as Brahmins following the Waranawata event, took Draupadi home after the swayamwara was held in Kampilya. The tragedy of Draupadi began when Kunti was spotted praying upon reaching the hut. Draupadi's sorrow persisted during that period, and she was ridiculed in public as a slave to gambling wagers until Kicaka sexually assaulted her. Draupadi prayed to Krishna (Madhusudana, the Balinese traditional name for Krishna) whenever she was grieving, and once her plea was fulfilled, allowing her to let out her rage to her fullest. Everything was all Draupadi's fantasy till Krishna (Madhusudana) paid her a visit. Last but not least, Nafridha, who won "Shinta: Kisah Akhir Sang Dewi" as the third winner. The popular wayang story from the classical era, which features Rama and Shinta as two well-known lovers, served as the inspiration for Nafridha. Nonetheless, Nafridha incorporates modern components into the setting without disregarding the Wayang concept. A stunning woman named Sinta was there. She and Rama were together for a long time. It is currently being carried out at a more serious level, specifically involvement. However, there came a day when Sinta encountered Rahwana, a different man who was able to catch her eye. Additionally, she found herself in a predicament where she had to decide between fortune and loyalty. Thus, everything she went through had a significant impact on her luck.

## CONCLUSION:

As a result, community service—specifically, the Wayang Short Story-Based Scenario Writing Workshop—is conducted as a means of reaching the younger generation by fusing traditional cultural practices with contemporary inventiveness to create art that is pertinent to the times. Along with the technical translation of short stories to the framework of a movie plot, this method also aims to preserve the wayang's philosophical core and ideals. The wayang heritage can be contextualized to appeal to the younger generation in a media that is more known to them, like film, with creative exploration and freedom of interpretation. This change is an example of cultural preservation that honors its historical foundations while also preparing it to survive in a world that is becoming more and more digital and modern. Additionally, the Sidoarjo Arts Council and the film community benefit from this activity by gaining members who will continue to support the preservation of traditional culture. The younger generation can still learn about traditional culture through the Wayang film scenario.

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