Karawitan analytical study: *sekar-gending* "Sungsang" as the *jejer ngawitan* in Sundanese wayang golek purwa performances

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ABSTRACT

Gending "Sungsang" is one of the *gending sekar ageng* commonly performed in Sundanese *wayang golek purwa* productions. It is typically presented at the beginning of the performance, earning its designation as *gending jejer ngawitan*. This study aims to examine the presentational form of *gending* "Sungsang" within the wayang golek purwa context, while also analyzing its musical composition and its functional role within the overall dramaturgical structure of the performance. The research employs a qualitative approach using content analysis. The findings reveal that *gending* "Sungsang" demonstrates notable flexibility in its structural presentation. Its distinctiveness lies in its two-*goongan* structure, which has long served as a defining characteristic of this piece. Initially, the *gending* functioned exclusively as an accompaniment for *murwa* or the dalang's *haleuang*. However, its usage has since expanded, and it is now also performed to accompany wayang dance or *ibingan*. Consequently, *gending* "Sungsang" fulfills multiple functions as a *gending jejer ngawitan,* acting as the musical prelude to the performance, the accompaniment for the movement of the *kayon/gunungan*, the dance sequences, and the dalang's *murwa*. These variations in presentation enrich the artistic landscape of Sundanese padalangan. Therefore, it is essential for artists and scholars to continue exploring this *gending* through research that further investigates its specific musical and performative dimensions.

1. Introduction

The diversity of social environments across Sundanese communities significantly shapes the forms and expressive qualities of Sundanese karawitan. This diversity is reflected in its modes of presentation, thematic content, functions, and embedded cultural values [1], [2], [3]. In terms of performance typology, Sundanese karawitan can be classified into three major categories: karawitan *sekar*, karawitan *gending*, and karawitan *sekar-gending* [4], [5], [6]. *Sekar-gending,* often referred to as a hybrid form, is a synthesis of vocal (*sekar*) and instrumental (*gending*) elements performed simultaneously [7], [8], [9]. In practice, *sekar* functions as the melodic-vocal carrier, while *gending* provides the instrumental accompaniment; both operate interdependently and collectively construct musical cohesion and aesthetic harmony [10], [11]. Within Sundanese karawitan, *sekar-gending* has distinctive functions and is manifested in various artistic forms such as *kliningan*, *wayang golek*, *jaipongan*, *gending karesmen*, *bajidoran*, and *tembang Sunda* (Cianjuran) [12], [13]. One of the most prominent *sekar gending* forms in *Padalangan* is *gending* wayang, also known as *sejak padalangan*, which serves as musical accompaniment in wayang golek performances. According to Ningsih [14], types of *gending* in *sejak padalangan* include *gending tatalu*, *gending panyambat*, *gending puja mantra*, *gending*

bubuka (often referred to as *karatagan*), *gending jejer ngawitan*, and *gending* that accompany specific dramatic sequences [15].

In wayang golek performances, various accompanying *gending* are employed, for instance *Gending Kawitan*, *Gending Karawitan*, *Gending Pawitan*, *Gending Bendra*, and *Gending "Sungsang"*. Among these, *Gending "Sungsang"* stands out for its distinctive musical and structural attributes. Classified as *sekar ageng* or *lagu gede*, it occupies a respected position due to its complex structure and specific stylistic characteristics [16], [17]. Within Sundanese karawitan, *sekar ageng* is widely recognized among academics and practitioners and is frequently used as an evaluative benchmark to assess the musical proficiency of a *wiyaga* [18]. Notably, the performance of *Gending* "Sungsang" in *sejak padalangan* differs from its presentation in *sejak kliningan*; in padalangan, it specifically accompanies dramatic scenes in wayang golek. Other *gending* such as *Gending Kawitan*, *Gending Karawitan*, *Gending Pawitan*, and *Gending Bendra* may also be used, though not necessarily within a single performance. The selection of *gending* often depends on the musicians' mastery of the structure and content of each composition, as well as the dalang's preferences and interpretive tendencies. What makes *Gending "Sungsang"* particularly compelling is its classification as *sekar ageng* with a *lalamba* structural form, a demanding musical architecture requiring high technical skill [19], [20]. Its two-*goongan* structure enhances its flexibility and dynamic quality, further strengthening its functional and aesthetic role within Sundanese wayang golek purwa.

A number of previous studies have examined wayang golek from various perspectives. Muflihatul Salma & Tarpin [21], for example, discuss strategies for preserving and transforming wayang golek performances at the Giri Harja Jelekong Padepokan, while Fauzi and Bahari [22] explore its symbolic and cultural values. Agisfi and Rabbil [23] focus on the use of wayang golek as a medium for development communication in West Java. Although valuable, these studies are primarily concerned with contextual, cultural, or socio-anthropological dimensions. To date, research specifically addressing in-depth musical analysis, particularly of highly complex compositions such as *Gending Sungsang*, remains scarce. This research gap is crucial because musical analysis plays an indispensable role in understanding artistic development. As argued by Tabuena [24] and Vlahopol [25], music analysis enriches comprehension of musical works by deepening knowledge of musical elements and improving the listener's appreciation. It also helps identify unique characteristics within a composition: melody, rhythm, harmony, dynamics, form, timbre, and texture [26]. Such analytical practice sharpens listening skills, situates compositions within their historical and cultural contexts, and supports interpretive, pedagogical, and creative processes.

This study emerges from the limited availability of scholarly work that explores *Gending Sungsang* from a musical-analytical perspective within the Sundanese wayang golek purwa. The researcher's observations based on live performances and extensive audio-visual recordings reveal notable variations in its musical characteristics and structural execution. Due to its complexity, many aspects of its *garap* remain insufficiently understood, particularly regarding its structure and musical functions within wayang golek purwa. Compounding this issue is the lack of written references that analyze the musical phenomena embodied in *Gending Sungsang*. For this reason, the present study aims to examine and articulate the musical characteristics, structural functions, and performance contexts of *Gending Sungsang*, thereby contributing to the enrichment of Sundanese karawitan scholarship and advancing a deeper academic understanding of its musical significance.

2. Method

This study employs a qualitative approach using the content analysis method [27]. This approach was selected to enable an in-depth description of the musical phenomena found in wayang golek purwa Sunda performances, particularly those related to *gending* "*Sungsang*". In line with Krippendorff's [27] assertion, content analysis allows researchers to interpret the meanings embedded within cultural and musical events based on the perceptions and experiences of artistic practitioners. This method is applied to examine the musical structure, modes of presentation, and contextual functions of the *gending*, through the interpretation of

data obtained from both oral and written sources. The research design consists of three stages: the preliminary stage, the implementation stage, and the final stage. In the preliminary stage, the researcher observed various *gending* performed in wayang *golek purwa* and subsequently selected *gending* "Sungsang" as the primary research object based on its distinctive compositional features and dramaturgical significance. This stage also included problem formulation, method determination, and gradual instrument design to ensure a focused and systematic data collection process [28]. Fig. 1 research design flowchart.
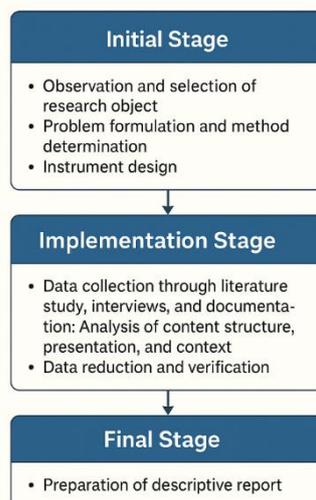
Fig. 1. Research Design Flowchart

Data collection was conducted through three primary techniques: literature study, interviews, and documentation study. The literature study encompassed the examination of books, scores, academic journals, and writings on Sundanese karawitan and padalangan theory. The documentation study involved analyzing the musical score of *gending* "Sungsang" and reviewing audiovisual recordings of performances to assess the alignment between musical practice and written structure. This study involved purposively selected informants who possess direct experience with *wayang golek purwa* performances, including *dalang*, *wiyaga*, students, and senior artists. Key informants included Nana Sukarna (senior artist and *wiyaga*), Soni Tresnadi (*wiyaga* and karawitan instructor), Adhi Khontea Kosasih Sunarya (*dalang* of Putu Giri Harja, and Diynan Prayuga Sutisna (*dalang* and student), each contributing empirical and theoretical insights into the structure and function of *gending* "Sungsang". The research locations Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia Bandung, SMKN 10 Bandung, and the Putu Giri Harja 2 arts group were selected for their strong relevance to the practice, education, and performance of Sundanese wayang golek purwa. These sites served as valuable sources for field data through direct observations, interviews, and documentation. Within the framework of content analysis, the data were processed through the stages of reduction, presentation, and verification. Data reduction was conducted to filter and select the most relevant information from observations, interviews, and documentation. Data presentation involved organizing and categorizing information based on the structural and contextual findings concerning *gending* "Sungsang". Verification was then undertaken to assess the validity and consistency of the data and to synthesize the overall findings into a coherent analytical framework [29]. The primary instrument of this study is the researcher, as emphasized by A. Prastowo [30] and S. Nasution [31], who note that in qualitative research, the researcher functions as an active collector and interpreter of data. Thus, the researcher's full involvement in observation, interviewing, and analysis is crucial for ensuring the depth and precision of meaning captured in every musical element examined. The researcher's subjectivity was controlled through data triangulation and cross-source validation to maintain scientific objectivity. Finally, the results of the analysis are presented in a descriptive report that illustrates the dynamic role of *gending* "Sungsang" in performance, both in terms of its musical structure and dramaturgical function. Through the qualitative approach and content analysis method, this study is expected to contribute to a

deeper understanding of Sundanese *garap* structures and to open new interpretive perspectives in the study of Sundanese *wayang golek purwa* performing arts.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Gending "Sungsang" in Sundanese Wayang Golek Purwa Performance

A wide range of *gending* is performed in wayang golek presentations, particularly those composed specifically for wayang golek purwa Sundanese performances. These include *Gunung Sari*, *Kawitan*, *Gorompol, Sungsang, Bendra, Paksi Tuwung*, and several others, each serving distinct dramaturgical roles within the structure of the performance. *Gending "*Sungsang" has long been recognized both in the *kliningan* tradition and in wayang golek performances commonly referred to as *sejak padalangan*. Its longstanding presence has established it as one of the signature compositions frequently employed in wayang golek purwa. As stated by Nana Sukarna in an interview, *gending* "Sungsang" has existed for generations, yet its prominence within wayang performances became increasingly significant through the artistic innovations of the dalang Dede Amung Sutarya. He popularized its intensive use in *murwa*, a sub-section of the *jejer ngawitan*. This creative decision later became one of his trademark performance characteristics (interview, March 2025). In contemporary Sundanese wayang golek purwa, two primary differences emerge regarding how the *gending* "Sungsang" is performed. Based on direct observation, these differences are clearly evident when comparing the presentations of two groups: Munggul Pawenang Putra and Giri Komara. Munggul Pawenang Putra performs *gending* "Sungsang" only during the *murwa* section, particularly as accompaniment to the dalang's *haleuang*. However, once the performance transitions to the *ibingan wayang maktal*, the group no longer employs *gending* "Sungsang" but instead shifts to *gending Kawitan*. Fig. 2 depicts the *gending* pattern used by Munggul Pawenang Putra.
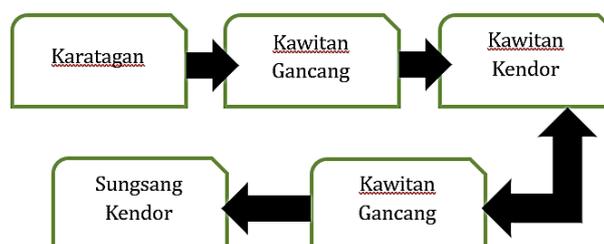

Fig. 2. Pattern of *Gending* Performed by Munggul Pawenang Putra

In contrast, the distinguishing feature of Giri Komara's rendition lies in their presentation of *gending* "Sungsang" as a complete, uninterrupted composition. Their performance begins with *Sungsang Gancang*, followed by *Sungsang Kendor*, and eventually returns to *Sungsang Gancang*. Thus, the *gending* is executed in full accordance with this sequential structure. Their pattern is illustrated in the following Fig. 3.
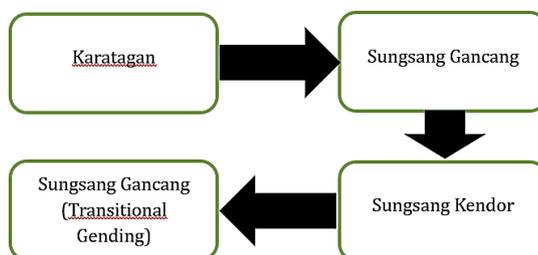

Fig. 3. Pattern of *Gending* Performed by Giri Komara

These differences ultimately reflect variations in stylistic interpretation. While Munggul Pawenang Putra limits the use of *gending* "Sungsang" to the *murwa* section, Giri Komara, through the initiative of Lili Suparli, presents the composition in full, similar to the performance of *gending kawitan*, thereby functioning as accompaniment for wayang dance movements. Today, *gending* "Sungsang" continues to be performed in the Sundanese *wayang golek purwa*, although not all groups employ it, as performing this *gending* requires a nuanced understanding

from both *wiyaga* (musicians) and the dalang. Among the groups that still consistently perform *gending* "Sungsang" are Munggul Pawenang Putra and Giri Komara.

3.2. The Composition of *Gending* "Sungsang" in Sundanese Wayang Golek Purwa Performance

1) Structure of Gending "Sungsang"

Based on findings from the literature review, documentation analysis, and interviews, *gending* "Sungsang" is a composition performed both in *sejak kliningan* and *sejak padalangan*. As stated by Soni Tresnadi, *Gending* "Sungsang" is a *gending sekar ager* a *lagu gede* commonly performed either in *sejak kliningan* or *sejak padalangan*" (interview, April 2025). In Sundanese karawitan, *gending* categories are grouped into *sekar alit*, *sekar tengahan*, and *sekar agen*. Following this classification, *gending* "Sungsang" is placed within the *sekar agen* category. Overall, *gending* "Sungsang" consists of 84 *wiletan*, which are divided into four sections: *sungsang gancang* in *goongan* pitch 3 (*panelu*), *sungsang kendor* in *goongan* pitch 2 (*loloran*) and 3 (*panelu*), and *sungsang gancang* in *goongan* pitch 2 (*loloran*), also referred to as the transitional section. For analytical clarity, the structure is summarized in the following Table 1.

Table 1. Structure of *Gending* "Sungsang"

Section Name	Number of *Wiletan*	*Goongan*	Description
Sungsang Gancang	10	3 (Panelu)	Wiletan 1–10
Sungsang Kendor	32	2 (Loloran)	Wiletan 11–32
Sungsang Kendor	32	3 (Panelu)	Wiletan 33–64
Sungsang Gancang / Transitional Section	19	2 (Loloran)	Wiletan 65–84

To further clarify the explanation of this structure, the notation of *sungsang gancang* in *goongan* pitch 3 (*panelu*) is presented Fig. 4.

Fig. 4. Notation of *Sungsang Gancang* in *Goongan* Pitch 3/*Panelu*.

In performance, the *pangkat* is initiated by the *saron 1*, followed by *saron 2* and *peking*, which play the *gending* notation simultaneously (*rampak waditra*). The *demung* typically plays only the *balungan* on each beat. Meanwhile, *rincik* and *bonang* employ the *gumekan* technique. At the sixth *wiletan*, all instruments perform the same pattern except the *demung*. The tempo then accelerates (*dirangkep*) following the *kendang* patterns. Approaching the *goongan*, the tempo slows down in response to the *kendang* cues. Within this phase, the *cabut kayon/gunungan* sequence is performed, structurally located between the seventh and tenth *wiletan*. After the *sungsang gancang* section in *goongan* pitch 3 (*panelu*), the performance transitions into *sungsang kendor* in *goongan* pitch 2 (*loloran*) and 3 (*panelu*). The notation is provided Fig. 5.

Fig. 5. Notation of *Gending Sungsang Kendor* in *Goongan* Pitch 2/*Loloran*

The notation in Fig. 5 represents a simplified version of each instrument's pattern because, in practice, the exact realization varies depending on the *wiyaga*. While each instrument may exercise interpretive freedom, it must still adhere to the established *kenongan* and *goongan* structures. This applies to both *sungsang kendor* sections in *goongan* pitch 2 (*loloran*) and 3 (*panelu*), Fig. 6. The *sungsang kendor* section is typically used to accompany the wayang's *ibingan* (dance). The *kecrek*, played by the puppeteer, signals the emergence of a *wayang* character. The *kendang* patterns follow the character's movement: for example, *tepak keupat* is used for characters such as *resi/pandita* or *satria lungguh*, whereas *satria dangah* characters appear with a preceding dance sequence.

Fig. 6. Notation of *Gending Sungsang Kendor* in *Goongan* Pitch 3/*Panelu*.

This section is still part of *sungsang kendor*, often presented in *kliningan* with a relatively stable tempo. Here, flexibility is given to the *sinden* and *alok* in their vocal delivery (*sekar*), typically performed in the *salendro* and *madenda* tuning systems. The fourth section, *sungsang gancang* or the transitional *gending*, functions as the concluding part of *gending* "Sungsang", as it is typically followed by *gending badaya*, Fig. 7. In this section, each instrument employs

distinct playing techniques similar to the opening of *sungsang gancang*: *saron 1* and *saron 2* perform in unison (*rampak waditra*), *peking* uses the *rangkepan* technique, and *demung* plays the *balungan* according to the notation, ending on pitch 2 (*loloran*).

Fig. 7. Notation of Transitional Section to *Sungsang Gancang*.

In the Sundanese *wayang golek purwa*, *gending* "Sungsang" is performed flexibly. Some puppeteers use it solely as accompaniment for *murwa*, while others perform it fully from the *ibingan* sequence to the *murwa dalang*. Flexibility is also seen in the use of two *rambahan goongan* for accompanying more complex opening scenes with multiple characters. If fewer characters appear, *gending* "Sungsang" is often performed only until the *sungsang kendor* section in *goongan* pitch 2 (*loloran*). Vocal presentation by the *sinden* and *alok* also varies. When using two *rambahan goongan*, the first ending in pitch 2 (*loloran*) is sung in *salendro*, while the second ending in pitch 3 (*panelu*) uses *madenda*. This flexibility results in two performance alternatives, summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Alternative 1 for the Performance of *Gending* "Sungsang"

Section	*Goongan* Pitch	Vocal Mode (*Sekar*)
Sungsang Gancang	3 (Panelu)	None
Sungsang Kendor	2 (Loloran)	Salendro
Sungsang Kendor	3 (Panelu)	Salendro
Sungsang Gancang / Transitional	2 (Loloran)	None
Sungsang Kendor	2 (Loloran)	Madenda
Sungsang Kendor	3 (Panelu)	Madenda
Sungsang Gancang / Transitional	3 (Panelu)	None

Table 3 is alternative 2-Expanded Performance Model for *Gending* "Sungsang"

Table 3. Alternative 2 for the Performance of *Gending* "Sungsang"

Section	*Goongan* Pitch	Vocal Mode (*Sekar*)
Sungsang Gancang	3 (Panelu)	None
Sungsang Kendor	2 (Loloran)	Salendro
Sungsang Kendor	3 (Panelu)	Salendro
Sungsang Gancang / Transitional	2 (Loloran)	None
Sungsang Kendor	2 (Loloran)	Madenda
Sungsang Kendor	3 (Panelu)	Madenda
Sungsang Gancang / Transitional	3 (Panelu)	None

2) Structure of the Sekar/Song "Sungsang"

The vocal component of *gending* "Sungsang" in Sundanese wayang golek purwa and *kliningan* performances is traditionally presented solely in the *salendro* tuning system. However, one repertoire features a rendition that employs two tuning systems *salendro* and *madenda*. The *madenda* version of the *gending* "Sungsang" vocal line was composed by Lili Suparli, a lecturer at ISBI Bandung. Consequently, both in wayang golek and *kliningan*, the vocal

rendition of *gending* "Sungsang" is frequently performed using these two *laras*: *salendro* and *madenda*. Each presentation of *gending sekar ageng*, whether in *sejak kliningan* or *sejak padalangan*, possesses distinct melodic characteristics that form its expressive identity. Likewise, *gending* "Sungsang" exhibits unique features in both the *sinden* and *alok* parts, reflected through their lyrics (*rumpaka*), the structural organization between the two voices, and the modulatory patterns embedded within the vocal line. The structure of the song is particularly distinctive because both *sinden* and *alok* assume equally significant roles, performing in a call-and-response manner. This dialogic quality is evident in the corresponding *rumpaka*: the opening line delivered by the *alok*, "*Haleuang anu munggaran galindengna lagu sungsang*," is immediately answered by the *sinden* with "*Gelarna kawih munggaran pagelaran pawayangan*." These paired lines demonstrate that the lyrical structure of the song is built as a dialogue, producing the vocal sequence *Alok–Sinden–Alok–Sinden*. Two *laras salendro* and *madenda* are used in the *gending* "Sungsang" vocal material; however, the *madenda* version is a modification by Lili Suparli. In traditional community practice, only the *salendro* version is used, while the *madenda* version does not appear in earlier performance contexts. Modulation between *surupan* is common in Sundanese karawitan, such as transitions from *madenda 4 = Tugu* to *madenda 4 = Panelu*. Fundamentally, these transitions still relate to the absolute pitch framework of *salendro*, with the defining markers of the *madenda* tuning being tones 4 (Ti) or 5 (La). Thus, *4 = Tugu* indicates that tone 4 of the *madenda* system coincides with the absolute "Tugu" pitch or tone 1 (*Da*) in *salendro*. For clarity, the following table provides the conversion of *surupan* positions relative to the absolute pitch system, see Table 4.

Table 4. Conversion of *Madenda Surupan* to Absolute Pitch

Absolute Pitch	S			G	P			L			T			S
Madenda 4 = T (Tugu)	3	.	.	2 1	.	.	.	. 5	.	.	4	.	.	3
Madenda 4 = L (Loloran)	2 1	.	.	.	. 5	.	.	4 3	.	.	.	.	.	2
Madenda 4 = P (Panelu)	.	.	.	5	.	.	4 3	.	.	.	. 2	1	.	.
Madenda 4 = G (Galimer)	5	.	.	4 3	.	.	.	. 2	1	.	.	.	.	5
Madenda 4 = S (Singgul)	4	.	.	3	.	.	2 1	.	.	.	. 5	.	.	4

Notes: The symbols used in this study represent specific structural sections of the composition, namely *T* for *Tugu* (1), *L* for *Loloran* (2), *P* for *Panelu* (3), *G* for *Galimer* (4), and *S* for *Singgul* (5).

The *madenda* version of the "Sungsang" song comprises six phrases and contains 64 *wiletan*. To facilitate detailed analysis, the author constructed a structural diagram indicating the modulatory movements within each phrase. Table 5 outlines the distribution of *surupan madenda* found in each phrase of the composition.

Table 5. *Madenda Surupan* Appearing in the "Sungsang" Song

Phrase	Wiletan Range	Madenda Surupan Present in the Song
Phrase 1	1–12	4 = Tugu, 4 = Panelu
Phrase 2	13–20	4 = Tugu
Phrase 3	21–32	4 = Tugu, 4 = Panelu, 4 = Singgul
Phrase 4	33–42	4 = Panelu, 4 = Singgul
Phrase 5	43–52	4 = Panelu, 4 = Singgul
Phrase 6	53–64	4 = Tugu, 4 = Singgul

This section represents the opening phrase, or Phrase 1, in which the song "Sungsang" is performed in *laras madenda* with *surupan* 4 = *Tugu*, delivered by both the *sinden* and the *alok*. A modulation occurs in *wiletan* 9 and 10, performed by the *alok*. In *wiletan* 9, the *alok* employs *laras madenda surupan* 4 = *Tugu*, while at the end of *wiletan* 10, a modulation appears within the 1/16 value on the fourth beat, Fig. 8.

Fig. 8. Notation of Phrase 1 of the *Sekar/*Song "Sungsang"

In the second phrase, no modulation occurs in either the *sinden* or the *alok* parts. Both consistently perform the melody in *laras madenda surupan* 4 = *Tugu*, Fig. 9.

Fig. 9. Notation of Phrase 2 of the *Sekar/*Song "Sungsang"

The third phrase contains several modulations performed by both the *sinden* and the *alok*. In *wiletan* 21, the *sinden* employs *surupan* 4 = *Panelu* until *wiletan* 24, followed by the *alok*, which shifts to *surupan* 4 = *Singgul* on the fourth 1/16 beat of *wiletan* 24 through *wiletan* 26. The *sinden* reenters in *wiletan* 27 and continues until *wiletan* 32. A modulation occurs between *wiletan* 27 and 28, in which the *sinden* transitions from *surupan* 4 = *Panelu* to *surupan* 4 = *Tugu*. Another modulation appears in *wiletan* 31, where after employing *surupan* 4 = *Tugu*, the *sinden* returns to *surupan* 4 = *Panelu*, see Fig. 10.

Fig. 10. Notation of Phrase 3 of the *Sekar/*Song "Sungsang"

Phrase 4 spans *wiletan* 33 to *wiletan* 42 and continues the modulatory movement from the previous phrase, which utilized *madenda surupan* 4 = *Singgul*. In this phrase, a modulation occurs from *wiletan* 33 to 36 through the *sinden*, who employs *surupan* 4 = *Panelu*. This is followed by another modulation in *wiletan* 37 to 40, where the *sinden* shifts to *madenda surupan* 4 = *Singgul*, continuing to the *alok* part in *wiletan* 41 and 42, Fig. 11.

Fig. 11. Notation of Phrase 4 of the *Sekar/*Song "Sungsang"

Phrase 5 exhibits the highest degree of modulation. In *wiletan* 43 to 44, the melody begins in *surupan* 4 = Panelu, then shifts to *surupan* 4 = Singgul in *wiletan* 45 and 46. A further modulation occurs in *wiletan* 47 and 48, where the *sinden* again performs using *surupan* 4 = Panelu. Notably, in *wiletan* 47 the first beat still employs *surupan* 4 = Panelu, but on the second beat a modulation

emerges from *surupan* 4 = Singgul to *madenda surupan* 4 = Panelu, continuing through the *alok* section up to *wiletan* 52, Fig. 12.

Fig. 12. Notation of Phrase 5 of the *Sekar/*Song "Sungsang"

Phrase 6 constitutes the final phrase of *lagu sungsang*, performed in *laras madenda*. Based on the notation, the *sinden* transitions from the previous phrase's *surupan* 4 = Panelu to *surupan* 4 = Tugu in this concluding section. However, the *alok* part demonstrates a different approach, utilizing two distinct *surupan*. In *wiletan* 56, the *alok* enters on the final 1/16 beat and continues to *wiletan* 58 using *surupan* 4 = *Panelu*. At the end of *wiletan* 58, on the fourth beat, the *alok* shifts to *madenda surupan* 4 = *Tugu*, continuing until *wiletan* 60. In the final portion, from *wiletan* 61 to 64, the *sinden* performs using *madenda surupan* 4 = *Tugu*, Fig. 13.

Fig. 13. Notation of Phrase 6 of the *Sekar*/Song "Sungsang"

3.3. The Role of *Sekar-Gending "*Sungsang" in Sundanese Wayang Golek Purwa Performances

1) Gending Jejer Ngawitan

In *wayang golek* performances, *gending* "Sungsang" functions as a *gending jejer ngawitan*, a musical piece traditionally used to open the first scene of the performance. As expressed by Nana Sukarna in an interview, "*Gending jejer ngawitan téh nyaeta lagu gede anu sok biasa dipaké dina muka jejer awal model lagu kawitan; lamun beurang mah biasana nu sok dipaké téh Gorompol jeung sajabana.*" As explained by Nana Sukarna *Gending jejer ngawitan* is a *lagu gede* that is commonly used to open the first scene in the style of song *kawitan*; during daytime performances, the pieces typically used are *Gorompol* and others. This statement indicates that *gending jejer ngawitan* belongs to the category of *sekar agong* and is commonly performed at the beginning of the show (interview, April 2025).

2) Murwa

Within wayang golek purwa, *gending* "Sungsang" holds a similar function to other introductory pieces such as *kawitan*, *bendra*, or *Gunung Sari*. It acts as an opening composition or as the musical accompaniment for the dalang's *murwa*. This means that the piece is performed during the *jejer ngawitan*, the first dramatic scene following the *gending karatagan* wayang. The dalang begins chanting the *murwa* as the *gending* approaches its conclusion, marking the transition into the narrative exposition of the story. The *murwa* itself is not fixed to the melodic or lyrical structure of *gending* "Sungsang"; rather, it adapts flexibly to the thematic requirements of the tale being presented. Consequently, no strict constraints are imposed on the dalang when delivering the *murwa* in a wayang golek performance.

3) Accompaniment for Wayang Dance (Ibingan Wayang)

Gending "Sungsang" belongs to the *sekar ageng* or *lagu gede* category, characterized by the *lalamba* structural form. In *wayang golek purwa*, gendings with a *lalamba* form are generally used as *gending jejer ngawitan*, performed during the opening scene. These pieces commonly accompany the stylized movements or dances of the puppets, as can also be observed in the consistent use of *gending kawitan* to accompany the initial dance sequences. Historically, *gending* "Sungsang" was not used to accompany *ibingan wayang*; its role was limited to supporting the dalang's *murwa*. However, through the initiative of Lili Suparli, who conceptualized and rearranged the piece *gending* "Sungsang" was adapted into a musical accompaniment for puppet dance movements. This innovation introduced a new development within the tradition of padalangan in West Java. Based on the findings presented above, the study reveals several compelling aspects of *gending* "Sungsang" within Sundanese wayang golek purwa performances. These include both its compositional structure and its functional roles in the dramatic sequence, with particular emphasis on its musical composition as performed in wayang golek purwa contexts. *Gending* "Sungsang" is one of the compositions commonly performed in wayang golek purwa and, according to the classification of Sundanese karawitan, it belongs to the *sekar ageng* category [32]. This aligns with Suparli's [33] view that *gending* "Sungsang" demonstrates a distinctive melodic pattern in its presentation, one that does not share similarities with other *gending* groups. The structure of *gending* "Sungsang" is notably flexible, and within *wayang golek purwa* performances it appears in two alternative structural forms, Fig. 14.
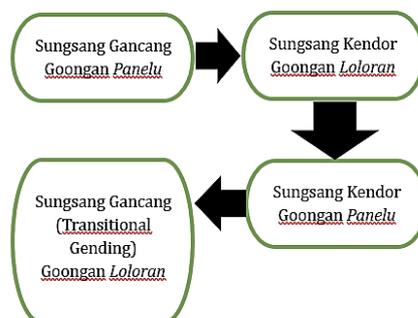

Fig. 14. Alternative 1 of *Gending* "Sungsang" Structural Presentation

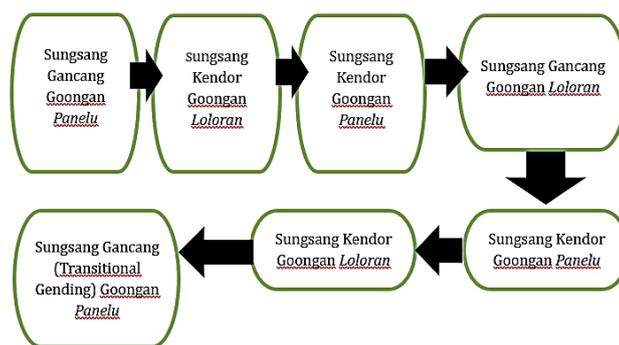The second alternative structure is presented in Fig. 15.

Fig. 15. Alternative 2 of *Gending* "Sungsang" Structural Presentation

The choice between these two alternatives ultimately depends on the *kamotekaran* or creative discretion of the dalang in crafting the musical flow of the performance. Marsel Ridky Maulana [34] explains that Sundanese karawitan recognizes five structural forms of *gending gurudugan*, *ayak-ayakan*, *rerenggongan*, *lenyepan*, and *lalamba*. Among these, *gending* "Sungsang" falls under the *lalamba* form. This classification is based on the number of *kenongan* in its structure: *gending* "Sungsang" contains eight *kenongan* in each *rambahan* of the *sungsang kendor* section, consisting of seven *kenongan* tones and one *goongan* tone. The placement of the *kempul* on the eighth beat and the rhythmic patterns, especially those played by the *saron,* further indicate that *gending* "Sungsang" employs the *embat dua wilet*, which shapes the character of its melodic expression [35]. In terms of *patet*, Pandi Upandi [32], stresses that *patet* serves as a crucial reference for gamelan performers, particularly in academic settings. However, *patet* is typically employed only in *rerenggongan* forms and is rarely applied in *lalamba* structures. This study concludes that *gending* "Sungsang" belongs to the *patet singgul*, as indicated by the final *goongan* tone falling on tone 3 (*Panelu*), which corresponds to the fourth position (*pangrena*) in *patet* theory. The *pangrena* determines the *patet* because a tone falling in this position evokes a sense of closure. Nevertheless, in contemporary wayang golek performances, *gending* "Sungsang" is often rendered with the *goongan* ending on tone 2 (*Loloran*), suggesting a resemblance to *patet sanga*. Despite this variation, the piece fundamentally belongs to *patet singgul*. Sundanese karawitan also includes the concept of *pindah surupan*, which Supriatna and Sutanto [36] describe as shifting the tonal center. In *gending* "Sungsang", the *sekar* section uses the *Madenda* scale, within which *surupan* transitions occur, such as from 4=*Tugu* to 4 = *Singgul*. This aligns with the tonal arrangement of *Madenda*, where only tones 2 (*Mi*), 4 (*Ti*), and 5 (*La*) match the corresponding absolute pitches, resulting in necessary *surupan* shifts during vocal delivery. Every *gending* performed in wayang golek purwa carries its own function, and *gending* "Sungsang" serves as the *gending jejer ngawitan*, performed in the first scene following *gending karatagan* [14], [37]. Initially, *gending* "Sungsang" functioned solely as accompaniment for the dalang's *murwa* and was not used to accompany puppet dance movements. This was largely due to the absence of documentation or references regarding its use for dance accompaniment. However, it has since become increasingly common in academic settings, particularly at the Indonesian Institute of Arts and Culture (ISBI) Bandung, and in groups such as Giri Komara and Munggul Pawenang Putra, demonstrating its growing relevance in modern wayang golek purwa practice.

A variety of musical interactions occur among the *wiyaga*, *alok*, *sinden*, and dalang, consistent with the perspectives of Brinner [38] and Miell and MacDonald [39], who describe musical interaction as a multidirectional social process involving the composer, performer, and audience. In *wayang golek*, this dynamic is primarily led by the *kendang* player and the *dalang*. For example, when *gending* "Sungsang" begins, the *saron* must wait for cues from the dalang via *kecrek* and *cempala*. Once the piece is underway, the *kendang* player controls the tempo. During the *cabut kayon/gunungan* scene, the *kendang* must follow the dalang's gestures, adjusting the tempo according to the puppet's movement. This illustrates the principle that, in non-dance scenes, tempo is controlled by the *kendang*, while in dance scenes the dalang leads, with the

kendang responding spontaneously through improvisational tempo shifts unique to each performance. Verbal exchanges among the musicians, *alok*, and *sinden* also form spontaneous interactive moments. The lyrics of *Gending* "Sungsang" as examined in the earlier findings represent only one example; *sinden* typically select lyrics according to the context, and the responses from *alok* or musicians vary accordingly, though they convey similar expressive intent. Because *gending* "Sungsang" contains two *goongan*, it influences the *murwa* delivered by the dalang. Traditionally, the first scene uses the *patet Nem murwa*, so if *gending* "Sungsang" ends on tone 3 (*Panelu*), a transitional *gending* is needed to restore the *patet* to *Nem*. If it ends on tone 2 (*Loloran*), no transition is required. However, in principle, the *murwa* selection is not constrained by the final tone of the *goongan*, as each *patet* has its own *murwa*. Ultimately, the dalang adjusts the *murwa* to match the atmosphere of the scene being performed. During the *murwa*, *Kawi*-language phrases are chanted and spoken, creating a musical texture characterized by tonal tendencies toward 1 (*Da*), 3 (*Na*), 4 (Ti), and 5 (*La*), alongside the final tone 2 (*Mi*), following a recitative rhythmic contour [40]. Although the dalang focuses on delivering the *murwa*, he must know when to enter, pause, and which tones to target based on the structure of the *gending*. For this reason, the dalang must understand the tonal layout of *Gending* "Sungsang" *Kendor* [22], [41], [42]. In terms of its functions, *Gending* "Sungsang" operates as an instrumental composition, a vocal–instrumental piece, an illustration and accompaniment during the dalang's *murwa*, and an accentuation during the puppet dance scene. These diverse roles largely unfold within the *Sungsang Kendor* section, while other segments, such as "*Badaya*," serve as reflective musical spaces for both dalang and audience before the core narrative begins.

4. Conclusion

Based on the analysis of *Gending* "Sungsang" within the Sundanese wayang golek purwa performance, this study presents several key findings obtained throughout the research process. The central focus lies on the performance of *Gending* "Sungsang" in Sundanese padalangan, particularly within the context of wayang golek purwa. The discussion highlights both its compositional framework and its functional role as a distinctive musical phenomenon in the Sundanese puppetry tradition. In the field of Sundanese karawitan, the examination of a *gending's* composition is inseparable from its musical structure, classification, presentation format, and the modulatory flow that shapes its melodic progression. Building on this foundation, the present study seeks to investigate the performance of *Gending* "Sungsang" in greater depth within the wayang golek purwa setting. Functionally, *Gending* "Sungsang" is typically performed as a *gending jejer ngawitan*, positioned after the opening piece (*karatagan*). In practical performance contexts, it fulfills several roles: accompanying the movement of the *kayon* or *gunungan*, serving as a vocal and instrumental presentation, accompanying the puppets' choreographed movements (*ibingan*), and supporting the *murwa* or *haleuang dalang*, the dalang's narrative chant that introduces the story. Its presence represents one of the distinctive musical features of *wayang golek purwa* in West Java. The variations in its presentation across regions contribute to the diversity and richness of local padalangan practices, making the documentation and scholarly exploration of *Gending* "Sungsang" crucial for both artists and academics. Research on this *gending* continues to offer wide possibilities for further study, whether in the areas of documentation, methodological refinement, or advanced musical analysis. The researcher acknowledges several limitations encountered during the study, including constraints in data collection, methodological choices, and the application of analytical techniques. For this reason, it is essential for arts students, particularly those in music, to cultivate a deep understanding of the works they study and to develop adequate skills in musical analysis. Such methodological and musical preparedness will significantly influence the quality and rigor of future research in this field.

various YouTube channels that have recorded and disseminated the art of Wayang Golek Purwa Sunda so that it can be used as a digital archive of knowledge.

Declarations

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