



## THE AESTHETICS OF *KORI KUWADI*

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### Abstract:

**Purpose:** As one of the objects of Balinese cultural heritage, it should be preserved. But in reality, *Kori Kuwadi* is exploited not only as a building component but also as a commodity that is traded and even exported to foreign countries. To obtain maximum profit, *Kori Kuwadi* is mass-produced to meet market demand. Because it is oriented towards high profits, the production process may ignore the *Kori Kuwadi* concept as it should. Ironic while the existence of *Kori Kuwadi* is widely known both by the Balinese people and the people outside Bali, because the shape, model, size, and ornament are so beautiful that they are admired, but it's a shame because there are still many people who don't know what the real name of the door is. which they are familiar with the term "traditional Balinese door". If this condition is allowed to drag on, one of the cultural heritage of Bali may become extinct. Realizing the above conditions, through the momentum of Nangun Sat Kerti Loka Bali, the local government of Bali is trying to preserve local culture so that it is not uprooted from its original values.

**Research methods:** The research method used is interpretive qualitative. Etymologically, qualitative comes from quality which means value.

**Findings:** As a traditional door *Kori Kuwadi* has a unique thing that makes many people interested. *Kori Kuwadi* is used as an architectural part this day it is not placed only at holly place in Bali but as an entrance of the modern building.

**Implications:** Aesthetic aspect does not come from one thing but can be anything. Pintu *Kuwadi* has its authentic beauty that comes from history, ornament pattern, material, and measurement.

**Keywords:** Door, traditional, architecture, Bali

## INTRODUCTION

*Kori kuwadi* is a traditional door that is a relic of traditional Balinese architecture. As one of the objects of Balinese cultural heritage, it should be preserved. But in reality, *kori kuwadi* is exploited not only as a building component but also as a commodity that is traded and even exported to foreign countries. To obtain maximum profit, *Kori Kuwadi* is mass-produced to meet market demand. Because it is oriented towards high profits, the production process may ignore the *Kori Kuwadi* concept as it should.

Ironic while the existence of *kori kuwadi* is widely known both by the Balinese people and the people outside Bali, because the shape, model, size, and ornament are so beautiful that they are admired, but it's a shame because there are still many people who don't know what the real name of the door is. which



they are familiar with the term "traditional Balinese door". If this condition is allowed to drag on, one of the cultural heritage of Bali may become extinct. Realizing the above conditions, through the momentum of *Nangun Sat Kerti Loka Bali*, the local government of Bali is trying to preserve local culture so that it is not uprooted from its original values. To support this government program, it is necessary to conduct research related to the existence of *kori kuwadi*. To synthesize these values, a study of *kori kuwadi* is needed, namely the concept and aesthetics of *kori kuwadi*.

## RESEARCH METHODS

The research method used is interpretive qualitative. According to Ratna etymologically, qualitative (qualitative) comes from quality (quality) which means value. Analysis using this qualitative method is used based on Kant's statement which states that the object of non-empirical sciences, ideographic science is a noumenal reality that can be analyzed using qualitative methods. Meanwhile, according to Ratna, interpretation according to its essence contains the interpretation itself and describes everything that is behind the existing data, with the quality of objectivity as evidenced by understanding, linking objects with relevant references [1].

## FINDINGS

### 1. Balinese Traditional Architecture

Balinese Traditional architecture is the embodiment of human and natural beauty that hardens into the forms of buildings with the decorations they wear. Natural objects that are translated into decorative forms of plants, animals, natural elements, religious values, and beliefs are abstracted into a harmonious embodiment of beauty [2]. The scope of traditional Balinese architecture is very broad, but what will be discussed is the entrance or *pemesuan*. *Pemesuan* or *pemedalan* is one unit of the door of a traditional Balinese house or entrance. *Pemesuan* or *pemedalan* itself, based on the meaning of the word, has the meaning of a place of exit and is not mentioned as an entrance [3].

*Pemesuan* is considered interesting to discuss because, from the science of architecture, *pemesuan* is the same as the building facade which is the outer part of a building that displays the identity of the building. The development of *pemesuan* in Bali has developed various possibilities for the purpose of beauty according to its function and environment.

### 2. Balinese Traditional Ornament

In Bali, there are 3 classifications of decorative motifs, namely *keketusan*, *kekarangan* and *pepatran*. When viewed from the form the three types are classified based on form, location, and function.

In Gelebet [2], steadiness is a pattern or motif that takes the most important part of a plant which is patterned repeatedly with processing to beautify the things that are highlighted.

The decisions that were identified at the entrance of the Al-Hikmah Mosque were the *masmasan keketan* derived from plants, the *kakul-kakulan* inspired

curvature of the rice snails, and the *bias membah* inspired by the foam of the waves.

*Kekarangan* in Gelebet [2], describes a form of decoration with a design that tries to approach existing flora forms with an emphasis on parts of beauty. Other forms of essays take the form of animals or types of fauna that are written beautifully.

The last type of Balinese ornamental is *pepatran* which embodies beautiful ornate compositions in patterns called *patra* or *pepatran*. *Pepatran* which is also based on many forms of flora beauty and has a repeating pattern and can be realized by developing patterns. Each *patra* has a strong identity and can be easily recognized [2].

### 3. Kori Kuwadi History

In the Balinese era, *kori kuwadi* was a component of a traditional Balinese building that was first made to complement the sacred buildings (*meru* and *gedong*). The next development in the era of Majapahit influence, precisely in the xiv century, the function of *kori kuwadi* was growing apart from being a component of sacred buildings (*meru* and *gedong*), it was also displaced as a complement to residential buildings such as for the *bale meten* door, the *bale loji* door, and the *pemesuan* door. At the time of the arrival of foreigners, the development of the function of *kori kuwadi* became wider, not only as a tool for sacred buildings and traditional Balinese residential buildings but also as components of non-traditional Balinese buildings introduced by foreigners at that time. These buildings include office buildings, attic buildings, and load-bearing buildings [2].



Figure 1. Antique *Kori Kuwadi*  
[Source: Balika, 2022]

The most prominent development of *kori kuwadi* was after the independence era when its use began to penetrate public facilities such as *balai banjar*, school buildings, and government buildings. The most significant development after Bali was declared the center of Indonesia's tourist destination. With the emergence of facilities for the needs of tourists, *kori kuwadi* increasingly dominates tourist accommodation buildings such as hotels, bungalows, restaurants, art shops, and others.

The arrival of expatriates in Bali which is increasing day by day has a significant role in the development of Balinese culture. This happens because those who live in Bali mostly have their own houses, so the building of the house where they live is adjusted to their taste. This is where there is a blend of Balinese culture with the culture of their place of origin. Their building designs that adopt modern culture are often complemented by traditional Balinese architectural styles such as *kori kuwadi*. In order for the combination of the two cultural elements to support each other, the *kori kuwadi* design was modified, especially in terms of dimensions, ornaments, hardware and finishes to match the size standards they wanted. Thus, the "new" modern *kori kuwadi* design emerged, which visually looks like a traditional Balinese door but conceptually follows modern door standards.

The development of the last function of *kori kuwadi*, apart from being a disposable object, was also modified into an art item for domestic and export commodities. This is the most dilemmatic because on the one hand its existence is needed by consumers so that it seems very existent, but on the other hand, its sustainability can be threatened because it is exploited on a large scale in order to obtain the highest profit. With such a shift in function, it is possible to have conceptual deviations so that the basic concepts that are the essence of *kori kuwadi* will become increasingly blurred.

#### **4. Kori Kuwadi Concept**

*Kori kuwadi* is a traditional Balinese door that has two doors in one frame hole, where at the bottom there is a transverse wood called *dedanga*. The name *Kuwadi* comes from the word "Kuwalon" which means combined, in this context it means that there are two doors in one frame hole. While the word "*kori*" means "door", if interpreted through the word epistemology, *kori kuwadi* means a door that has two doors in one frame hole.

##### **a) The Structure of Kori Kuwadi**

An interview conducted with Wayan Taweng who at the time of the interview was 85 years old explained the wood at the top of the square or curved door is called a *petitis* which serves as the holder of two wooden sticks that support the right and left sides and serves as the holder of the two shafts of the upper door leaf. In addition to form and function, *petitis* has the meaning of directing the person who will enter the door.

The support poles on the right and left sides of the door are rectangular, called *adeg-adeg*, which serves as a *petitis* support and at the same time connects it to the wood at the bottom of the door. The meaning of the gestures is to give

the impression that the door is so strong and sturdy that it is safe enough to protect everything that is behind the door.

The transverse wood at the bottom of the rectangular door is called *dedange*, which serves as a support for the stairs, and at the same time as the holder of the door leaf shaft at the bottom. While the meaning of *dedange* is as a sign to signal people who will enter or exit the door to be careful or alert.

The second part of *kori kuwadi* is a door leaf made of two pieces of board, where the top and bottom of one side are equipped with a shaft, which serves as a door hinge. The upper shaft enters the *petitis* and the lower shaft enters the hole in the *dedange*. At the meeting of the right and left door leaves are made *sekoneng* in opposite directions called *silih asih*.

### **b) Kori Kuwadi Dimension**

Gede Sudirman 72 years old man, informs that *kori kuwadi* has three structural components consisting of *petitis*, *adeg-adeg* and *dedange* are a unit that is interrelated to each other and form a long rectangular unit with a composition of dimensions, the height of the door is equal to two and a half times the width of the door plus the arch. (Height = 2.5 x Width + Chipper). The number of piercers ranges from 4 to 9 guli (1 guli = 3 cm), depending on where the door will be placed, and for whom the door is installed. For example, for a door width of 60 cm, the height of the door is 150 cm + 4 gullies (12 cm) = 162 cm. The height of the inner door hole is 162 cm and the door is suitable to be installed facing north in a residential building.

The size of the *kurip* in *kori kuwadi* is determined by two factors, namely the direction of the door and the user of the door. The intended direction is that if the door faces north, the *pengurip* = 4 guli, facing east the *pengurip* = 5 guli, to the south the *pengurip* = 9 guli and facing west the *pengurip* = 7 guli. To determine how many multiples of curing are appropriate to use, it can be determined as follows; For temples and other holy places, it is allowed to use multiples of three which are called *main*. For public buildings, houses of kings and *Brahmins* are allowed to use *pengurip* in multiples of two, called *madya*. For ordinary public buildings, the use of *pengurip* is allowed by the contempt which means without giving a multiple of the number in the *pengurip*.

### **c) Kori Kuwadi Material**

The existence of *kori kuwadi* cannot be separated from the element of wood as the main material, the wood element is the first dominant element that influences Interior Design, while in *Asta Kosala-Kosali Asta Bumi* [4]. It is stated that the wood permitted for *kori kuwadi* is teak, jackfruit, *taep*, *sentul*, breadfruit, and *endep* wood. The choice of the type of wood as the door material depends on the designation of the door, for example, the types of cempaka wood, majagau wood, and suren wood are usually special for sacred buildings such as temples, *pemrajan* and *sanggah*. While jackfruit wood, teak wood, *sentul* wood, *taep* wood, breadfruit wood, *endep* wood are usually intended for public buildings and housing.

#### d) *Kori Kuwadi* Ornaments

Ornaments on *kori kuwadi* are a plus in themselves. Existence can determine the value of the door. Balinese ornaments that adorn traditional Balinese doors are a *stiliran* of forms of flora and fauna whose application is adapted to the needs and available space [2]. The presence of an ornament is not merely a filler of empty and meaningless parts, even more so for past ornaments. Various forms of ornament actually have several functions, namely (1) purely aesthetic functions (2) symbolic functions, and (3) constructive technical functions [5].

The types of Nusantara ornaments based on decorative motifs can be grouped into (1) geometric motifs, (2) human motifs, (3) animal motifs, (3) plant motifs, (5) natural objects motifs, (6) motifs of technological objects and calligraphy [5].

Geometric motifs are the oldest motifs in ornament because they have been known since prehistoric times. Geometric motifs use visual elements such as lines and fields which are generally abstract, meaning that the shape cannot be recognized as a form of natural objects. Geometric motifs develop from repeated points, lines, or planes, from simple to complex patterns [5, p. 19].

Archipelago ornaments with human decorative motifs have existed since prehistoric culture. Decorative motifs that depict the human figure, for example, can be seen, among others, in the *nekara*. In bronze drums, you can find ornaments with human motifs depicted as horsemen and soldiers dressed in special clothes, similar to Tartar soldiers. Some *nekaras* may have been imported or brought from the Annam region (North Vietnam) and the Dongson culture. It is possible that there was a transfer of technology and bronze culture in the Archipelago Region, which at that time the population in the Archipelago Region was still a stone culture [5, p. 37]. There are several types of human motifs quoted from Sunaryo [5], namely the motif of the whole human figure, the guise and *kala* motif, the *mamuli* motif and other body parts and the *wayang* motif.

In general, animal motif ornaments appear containing symbolic purposes. The bird nation or ungags represent the upper world, the spirit world, the world of the gods. On the other hand, water and creeping animals represent the underworld, the dark world, but also symbolize the earth and fertility. The middle world inhabited by humans is related to various animals that live on land with four legs [5, p. 67].

Motifs of plants or motifs of flora in prehistoric times have not developed. This is in accordance with what van der Hoop (1949) stated that in prehistoric times in Indonesia there were no plant ornaments, but later, in the era of Hindu influence who came from India, plant ornaments became very common and since this time also became a major part in the world of ornamentation in Indonesia. The motifs of plants grew more fertile and got a special place after the influence of Islam around the 15th century. On the other hand, the various motifs of humans and animals or living creatures in the Hindu era are decreasing. And plant motifs are also influenced by Chinese culture [5, p. 153].

Flora forms that most adorn *kori kuwadi* are usually the form of Chinese *patra*, *patra sari*, and others. Meanwhile, the faunal shapes usually appear in the door ornaments are *karang boma*, *karang sae*, *karang gajah*, and *wayang* characters such as Rama, Sita, Twalen, Merdah, Krishna and others. There are also door ornaments that take Tantri stories as sources or objects such as lions and cows.



Figure 2. *Kori Kuwadi* Full Ornament  
[Source: Balika, 2022]

### 5. *Kori Kuwadi* Aesthetic

According to Djelantik, the aesthetic in question is a form that is built by a structure from elements of line, plane, space, texture, color, and other elements that are interconnected to form a form that can be captured by the sense of sight, both inspired by the form of living things and inspired by the shape of inanimate objects. Thus, the aesthetics of *kori kuwadi* is formed from the above aesthetic elements.

Raharjo further pointed out that in addition to fulfilling physical interests, humans also have spiritual needs, and this is where *kori kuwadi* fulfills his function because he can fulfill expressions of satisfaction with what he sees. In accordance with the human desire to achieve satisfaction, he wants to get intensification to achieve the satisfaction of something perfect [6].

To be able to study in-depth the shape of *kori kuwadi*, you must first have an understanding of aesthetics. Only after having sufficient aesthetic experience can people determine these aesthetic objects [7]. With the aesthetic theory approach above, each person's understanding of the beauty of *kori kuwadi* will vary according to the level of aesthetic knowledge they have.

Judging from the general theory of value, the notion of beauty is considered one of the values to distinguish it from other types of values, such as moral values, economic values, and educational values. While the value associated with everything that is included in the notion of beauty is called aesthetic value. If *kori kuwadi* is called beautiful, then the designation does not indicate one characteristic, such as balance as a subjective assessment only, but involves the size of the values concerned. The size of the value does not always have to be the same for each *kori kuwadi*. People attach value for various reasons, for example, its usefulness, rare nature, or its own style [7]. The meaning of aesthetic values contained in *kori kuwadi* emphasizes the diversity and uniqueness of the ornament style that adorns the door.

Pamudji Suptandar said that in aesthetic theory we study various elements contained in art forms such as points, lines, fields, space, proportions, harmony, composition, style, rhythm, texture, pattern, dimension, color, tone, shadow, and others. In discussing aesthetics, the elements mentioned above cannot stand alone but must be combined and used in a total and comprehensive manner, arranged in a single unit. It is also said that art does not describe what is seen, but must make it visible. Fine art is not just a reflection of things that are visible to the eye, but from the inner realm or the spiritual realm which is not just a re-statement of nature, but the embodiment of something that was originally intangible, such as an inner mood of joy, anger, and so on [8]. Related to the above theory, *kori kuwadi* was created based on stimuli that come from within and from outside the creator. The accumulation of the two stimuli encourages expression activity so that *kori kuwadi* forms and other supporting elements are born.

For Paul Klee, art is not an imitation of nature, but a statement of ideas that grow from within a person so that a statement is an observable form. Paul Klee's statement starts from the idea that in the creation of works of art, the main thing is to pour out the inner life so that it becomes an art product that contains an aesthetic value. When he is creating, the creator of a work of art is certainly active and creative. Because a work of art is the result of a person's creative activity, a work of art has a moving nature so that it is alive. Paul Klee said this means that observers and connoisseurs of works of art must also be active and creative, just like the behavior of the creator of the work of art [9]. In fact, works of art can only be observed directly with the senses of sight or the senses of listeners, while the recorder is the soul of the observer. Paul Klee's opinion above gives the view that *kori kuwadi* can give birth to a sense of awe and thrill the feelings of those who enjoy it.

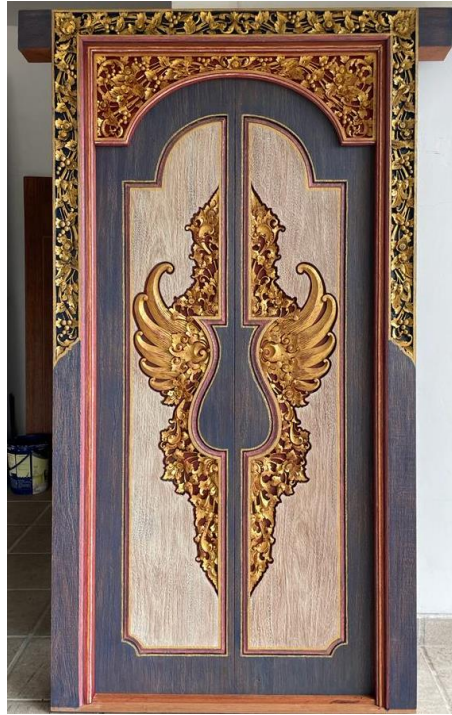


Figure 3. Modern Design Development of *Kori Kuwadi*  
[Source: Balika, 2022]

## 6. *Kori Kuwadi* Types in Bali Region

Bali has 9 regions spread in the North, West, East, and South area. Every region means has a different kind of culture even though still call Bali. Each region is located almost near the beach but there is one region Bangli doesn't have any beach and its culture is influenced by location. West and Nort areas are influenced by Javanese culture and Muslim. Different from the South, they still have Bali authentication because really hard for a foreign culture to come due to the difficulty to access the mountain. The East area Balinese culture already blends with foreign culture because the East is already welcome for tourists.

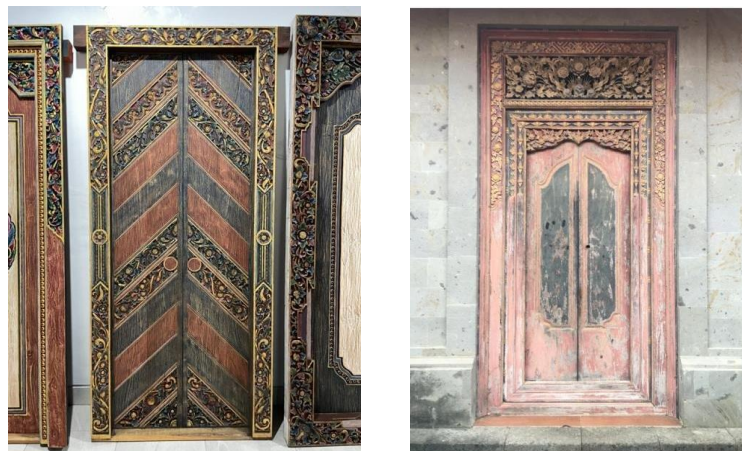


Figure 4. *Kori Kuwadi* style on the North Bali Area  
[Source: Balika, 2021]

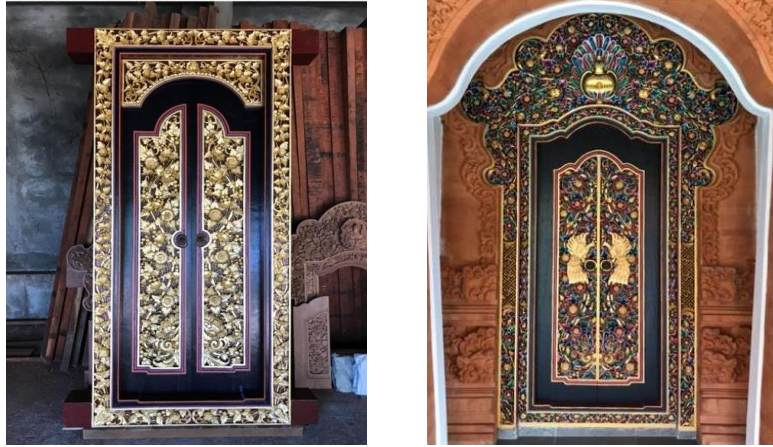


Figure 5. *Kori Kuwadi* Style South Bali area  
[Source: Balika, 2019]

## CONCLUSION

Concluded that the *Kori Kuwadi* concept consists of four fundamental elements, namely Structure, Dimension, Material, and Ornament of *kori kuwadi*. *Kori kuwadi* is built from aesthetic elements supported by various ornaments. *Kori kuwadi* is created based on the accumulation of stimuli from outside and within the creator so that it gives birth to a sense of awe for the audience. Each individual's understanding of the beauty of *kori kuwadi* will vary according to the aesthetic experience concerned.

So that *kori kuwadi*, on the one hand, remains in the corridor of traditional Balinese architectural concepts and on the other hand can develop in accordance with the demands of global culture, the local government must make a policy that will become a sign to be able to control the existence of *kori kuwadi*. Thus, the people who are involved as producers and consumers of *kori kuwadi* have a definite grip so that deviations can be reduced.

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