

# Theology of Art in The Text of Ādiparwa

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Ādiparwa is the initial part of the Mahābhārata, which can be viewed as consisting of two distinct parts. The first part presents the framework of the Bhārata epic, and the second part contains the genealogy of the Pandavas and Kauravas. Ādiparwa not only narrates the origins of the Kuru Dynasty and the various early events leading to the great war in Kurukṣetra but also contains many profound theological and aesthetic elements. This study uses the theory of literary reception, which is based on the notion that literary works have always received responses from their readers since their publication. A qualitative research method with a theological approach is used in this study. The theology in the text of Ādiparwa includes the concepts *Nirguna Brahman* and *Saguna Brahman*, in line with His attributes for creating the universe, embodied in Sanghyang Śiwa with Bhaṭāri Pārwaṭī. The aesthetics in the text of Ādiparwa are described in the terms *satyam*, *siwam*, and *sundaram*. *Satyam* in the text of Ādiparwa can be seen in the story of four quails that survived the burning of the Khāṇḍawa forest. The essence of *siwam* in the text of Ādiparwa is described in the concept of God as *Nirguna Brahman* and *Saguna Brahman*. The values of *sundaram* are reflected in the beauty of *Tilottamā*. The influence of theology on aesthetics is evident in the rituals described in the text of Ādiparwa through *the mabebasan* tradition, usually performed during the *atma wedana* ceremony, via the Āṣṭikacarita story using *the palawakya* reading technique.

**Keywords:** *Ādiparwa text; art; theology*

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## INTRODUCTION

The Mahābhārata is a part of the Itihāsa that narrates the story of the Bhārata family, known as the Pandavas and Kauravas. The Mahābhārata is divided into 18 parts called *aṣṭadaśaparwa*. The story of the Mahābhārata is not only known in India but also Indonesia. The Mahābhārata in Indonesia is in Old Javanese, stemming from *the mangjawaken Byāsamata* project by King Dharmawangsa Teguh of the Kediri Kingdom in the 9th century. *Mangjawaken Byāsamata* means translating the thoughts of Mahārṣi Vyāsa into Javanese. Consequently, many religious literary texts in Old Javanese are found in Indonesia, especially Bali. In Bali, these religious literary texts are preserved as *lontar* manuscripts. In Bali, *lontar* manuscripts are revered as “temple libraries,” sacred places built with selected words. The essence of the hundreds of *lontar* manuscripts in Bali encompasses three main themes according to Agastia (Saitya, 2018b): *jñāna* (knowledge), *susila* (morality), and *rasa* (aesthetic-religious). *The lontar* manuscripts in Bali come in various forms and contents, as seen in the classification of manuscripts at Gedong Kirtya Singaraja, divided into six categories: a. *Weda* (including *Weda Mantra*, *Kalpasastra*), b. *Agama* (including *Palakerta*, *Sasana*, *Niti*), c. *Wariga* (including *Wariga*, *Tutur*, *Kanda*, *Usada*), d. *Itihasa* (including *Parwa*, *Kakawin*, *Kidung*, *Geguritan*), e. *Babad* (including *Pamancangah*, *Usana*, *Uwug*), f. *Tantri* (including *Tantri*, *Satua*) (Cika, 2006). Based on this classification, the Mahābhārata falls under *the Itihasa* category as it consists of *aṣṭadaśaparwa*. The Old Javanese Mahābhārata includes only 9 of the 18 parts, namely *Ādiparwa*, *Wirataparwa*, *Bhismaparwa*, *Sabhaparwa*, *Udyogaparwa*, *Asramawasanaparwa*, *Mausalaparwa*, *Prastanikaparwa*, and *Swargarohanaparwa*. Of these, *Ādiparwa* is the initial part of the Mahābhārata. *Ādiparwa* can be viewed as consisting of two distinct parts. The first part presents the framework of the Bhārata epic, which tells the story of the sacrificial ceremony ordered by King Janamejaya to exterminate the snakes because King Parikṣit, the father of King Janamejaya, was killed by the snake Takṣaka. The second part contains the genealogy of the Pandavas and Kauravas, their birth and youth until the marriage of Arjuna with Subhadrā (Saitya, 2018b).

*Ādiparwa*, as the first part of the Mahabharata, not only narrates the origins of the Kuru Dynasty and the various early events leading to the great war in Kurukṣetra but also contains many profound theological and aesthetic elements. As an ancient text written by Rṣi Vyasa, *Ādiparwa* reflects the

Hindu tradition's rich worldview and spiritual values.

Theology in *Ādiparwa* plays a significant role in understanding *dharma* (moral duty) and *karma* (actions and consequences). These values are spiritually relevant and reflected in various forms of art, including literature, visual arts, and performances. The depiction of gods, moral teachings, and epic stories in *Ādiparwa* provide insights into how art and theology are intertwined and support each other.

Art, in the context of Hindu theology, serves not only as an aesthetic expression but also as a medium for conveying spiritual and moral teachings. Statues, paintings, dances, and music inspired by the stories from *Ādiparwa* are forms of art that carry theological messages to society. Studying how the theological elements in *Ādiparwa* are interpreted and expressed through art can provide a deeper understanding of the role of art in communicating religious and moral teachings.

Research into the Mahabharata, mainly focused studies examining the relationship between theology and art in the *Adiparwa*, remains limited. Most research tends to concentrate on the narrative and historical aspects of this text, as seen in studies by Saitya et al. (2019) titled "Kontekstualisasi Teologi Hindu Teks *Ādiparwa* di UPT Taman Budaya Provinsi Bali," Saitya (2020) titled "Guru Suśrusa dalam Teks *Ādiparwa*," Sutika (2021) titled "Silakramaning "Aguron-Guron" Dalam Teks Cerita Bhagawan Dhomya-Adiparwa," and Sujaelanto (2022) titled "Pesan Dharma Melalui Kisah Mandapāla pada Kitab *Adiparwa*". While these studies contribute essential insights to understanding the narrative and historical aspects, this text's artistic and theological dimensions have not received adequate attention. A deeper analysis of how theological concepts in the *Adiparwa* are expressed through art can fill this gap and significantly contribute to the study of religion and art.

Furthermore, although research on Hindu aesthetics and theo-aesthetics in Hindu teachings has been extensive in the last 10 years, as demonstrated by Saitya (2018a), titled "Estetika Hindu dalam Cerita Sunda dan Upasunda pada Teks *Ādiparwa*," Puspa & Saitya (2020), titled "Estetika Hindu Pada Segehan Manca Warna," Puspa et al. (2020), titled "Teo Estetis Canang Sari," Winiantari & Darmawan (2022), titled "Estetika Hindu dalam Lontar Aji Ghurnnita," and Sintia & Rudiarta (2024), titled "Estetika Hindu dalam Gerakan Sūrya Namaskāra."

Research specifically discussing Hindu texts, especially from an aesthetic and theo-aesthetic perspective, remains scarce. Only Saitya (2018) and Winiantari & Darmawan (2022) discuss Hindu aesthetics in classical texts, and Latra's research (2008) titled "Aesthetics of Kakawin Ekadasasiwa" also highlights the lack of such studies. Therefore, research on Hindu aesthetics or theo-aesthetics with Hindu texts as the research object is rarely conducted.

Moreover, although art theology has the potential to enrich the study of theology in Hindu literary works, research in this field is still minimal. Unlike the concept of Hindu aesthetics or theo-aesthetics, which has been studied more frequently, art theology emphasizes the relationship between artistic manifestations and theological understanding in more detail. The lack of research on art theology in the Adiparwa text indicates that studies linking these two aspects are urgently needed to enrich the treasure trove of Hindu literary and religious research and to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how art and theology interact in this text.

Theology is the study of everything related to religious beliefs, often called the study of divinity (Donder, 2009). Art becomes a part of religion in enhancing social solidarity (Gunada, 2021). Therefore, art theology emphasizes the relationship between art and Hindu theological teachings, where art serves as a medium to convey religious messages. Theo-aesthetics focuses on the connection between aesthetic and religious experiences, aiming at beauty as a pathway to understanding and spiritual experience (Puspa et al., 2020). Hindu aesthetics emphasizes the principles of beauty and art within Hindu teachings, aiming to analyze what makes art beautiful or attractive in a religious context (Puspa & Saitya, 2020). In this case, art theology uses art to deepen understanding of theological teachings and narratives.

Studying the theology of art in Ādiparwa requires an interdisciplinary approach that combines methods from religious studies, literature, art, and culture. This approach will enrich our understanding of Ādiparwa and broaden our perspective on how art can serve as an effective medium for conveying theological teachings. Through comprehensive analysis, this article aims to reveal how art in Ādiparwa functions as an aesthetic expression and a tool for teaching and spreading spiritual values.

Based on the explanation above, the research questions can be formulated as follows: (1) How are

the concepts of divinity and aesthetics manifested and integrated in the Ādiparwa text? (2) How does theology influence aesthetics in the Ādiparwa text, and what are the implications for understanding art in Hindu teachings? This research aims to explore, preserve, and develop the Hindu religious heritage, with results that can be used to understand art theology in Hindu teachings. Additionally, this study is expected to help deepen the understanding, reflection, practice, and appreciation of Hinduism in society.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Theory

In literary reception theory, the main focus is on the readers of the literary work, within the triangular relationship of the author, the literary work, and the reader society (Pradopo, 2013). Literary reception is based on the idea that literary works have received responses from their readers since publication. Literary reception emphasizes readers' reactions, which can be either direct or indirect.

The role of the reader represents a total paradigm shift; readers who know nothing about the creative process are given the primary function because they are the ones who enjoy, evaluate, and utilize the work, while the writer, as the origin of the work must be marginalized, even considered anonymous (Ratna, 2013).

### Research Method

This research uses qualitative research with a text-based research design. The primary data collection method in this research design is to study the theology of art in the text of Ādiparwa. Qualitative research is holistic, complex, dynamic, and meaningful, making it unsuitable for quantitative methods that use tools like tests, questionnaires, or interview guides (Sugiyono, 2012).

Qualitative research aims to understand social phenomena deeply through data collection in the form of words, writings, and behaviors. This data is then analyzed to find patterns that can explain these phenomena.

This research uses a theological approach to understand religion. The theological approach starts from the belief that the empirical manifestation of a religion is the most accurate. Thus, the theological approach uses deductive reasoning, which starts from belief and is reinforced by arguments and evidence (Zulaiha, 2017).

Based on the explanation above, a theological approach aims to understand religion using a framework of religious studies that starts from believing that God's teachings are actual and absolute. This approach allows research to delve deeper into the aspects of divine teachings expressed in religious texts. In the context of the Adiparwa, a theological approach helps to understand the concept of divinity and how these values are reflected in the various artistic elements present in the text. Art, in this case, becomes a medium of theological expression that provides a visual or symbolic form for the teachings of God. Therefore, a theological approach is very suitable for research on the theology of art in the Adiparwa text, as it allows for a comprehensive analysis of the relationship between aesthetic and theological elements and how their integration influences the understanding of art in Hindu teachings.

The data collection techniques in this research are literature study and document study. *Literature study* is a data collection technique that involves reading and analyzing literature relevant to the research. *Document study* is a data collection technique that involves reading and analyzing documents relevant to the research.

In Hindu teachings, there are three ways to acquire knowledge, known as tri pramana. Tri pramana consists of agama pramana, anumana pramana, and pratyaksa pramana. Agama pramana is acquiring knowledge by receiving teachings from a guru or sacred scriptures. Anumana pramana is the method of acquiring knowledge through reasoning. Pratyaksa pramana is the method of acquiring knowledge using the five senses. In this research, although the document study and literature study methods are categorized as agama pramana, it is essential to consider that a deep understanding of art and theology also requires the integration of anumana pramana and pratyaksa pramana. Combining these three approaches will provide a more holistic insight, where knowledge from sacred texts can be further understood through logical reasoning and direct aesthetic experience. Thus, the tri pramana approach in this research will enable a more comprehensive analysis of the relationship between theology and art in the Ādiparwa text and enrich the understanding of how Hindu teachings are realized theologically and aesthetically.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Description of Ādiparwa Text

Literary works in the form of lontar manuscripts in Bali are ancestral heritage consisting of sacred

teachings that deserve to be preserved and studied by Hindus. These manuscripts contain concepts of teachings and knowledge categorized according to their types.

The Ādiparwa text is the first *parwa* of the 18 *parwas* known as *aṣṭadaśaparwa* that form the Mahābhārata book. This text is available as a book in *Itihāsa* and *Lontar* manuscripts, some of which have been transliterated and translated into Indonesian in book form.

Barthes ([Ratna, 2013](#)) states that a text is merely a methodological space, experienced only in the production process, bound in language, and does not exist on a bookshelf. Although originating from a manuscript, a text is not the result of the amalgamation of a manuscript; a text is the (copy of the) text itself.

There is a difference between a text and a manuscript. A manuscript is a term that denotes its identity as a tangible object, such as a novel manuscript, lontar manuscript, youth pledge manuscript, the 1945 Constitution manuscript, and so on. In this rough form, discourse and text are bound. Therefore, a manuscript differs from a text ([Ratna, 2013](#)).

The Ādiparwa text is a composition by Bhagawān Byāsa in Old Javanese during the reign of Airlangga (1010-1049 AD) ([Saitya, 2018b](#)). This study uses the Ādiparwa text as its data source. The Ādiparwa text was translated by P. J. Zoetmulder and published by Pāramita in 2006. This Ādiparwa text consists of xviii+318 pages and 19 chapters, which include: i-xviii pages of introduction, 1-312 pages of the main content of Ādiparwa text, and 313-318 pages of glossary.

The general contents of each chapter are as follows:

#### Chapter I

Describes the contents and summary of each *parwa* in the Mahābhārata, as well as the summary of the war between the Kaurava and Pandava families, better known as the Bhāratāyudha. Among them, it is mentioned that Bhagawan Bhīṣma served as the Kaurava commander for 10 days, Danghyang Droṇa for 5 days, Sang Karṇa for 2 days, Sang Śalya for half a day, and in the afternoon Sang Duryodhana.

#### Chapter II

It tells the story of Sang Śrutasena conducting a sacrifice under the orders of King Janamejaya.

During the ceremony, a dog named Sārameya, the son of Bhagawan Pulaha and Sang Saramā, comes and is beaten by Sang Śrutasena. Then, Sang Saramā curses King Janamejaya, saying the sacrificial ceremony will not be perfect. To end the curse, King Janamejaya seeks and finds the powerful Brahmana and his son named Sang Śrutaśrawā and Somaśrawa.

### Chapter III

Narrates Bhagawan Dhomya testing the loyalty of his three disciples named Aruṅika, Utamanyu, and Weda. Aruṅika is ordered to farm, but floods repeatedly destroy the field. Eventually, Aruṅika stops the flood with his body and is rewarded with a powerful mantra by Bhagawan Dhomya. Utamanyu, tasked with herding cattle and forbidden from begging or drinking cow's milk, drinks the sap of the waduri leaf out of thirst, causing blindness. He is eventually blessed for his loyalty and obedience to his guru's orders.

### Chapter IV

Describes the origin of Hyang Agni consuming everything indiscriminately, resulting from a curse from Bhagawan Bhr̥gu for false testimony regarding Sang Puloma. Sang Puloma, the wife of Bhagawan Bhr̥gu, is given to the demon Dulomā.

### Chapter V

It tells the story of Sang Āstika, the hero of the serpents who saves them, especially the serpent Tāksaka, from the snake sacrifice. Sang Āstika, the son of brahmana Jaratkāru who initially vowed celibacy, marries Nagaginī, the sister of the serpents, to save his ancestors from a limbo between heaven and hell.

### Chapter VI

Describes Sang Winatā and Sang Kadrū betting on the horse Uccaiśrawā, leading Sang Winatā to become a slave to Sang Kadrū. Sang Winatā is eventually freed by her son, Sang Garuḍa, with amṛta as the condition. It also explains why snakes have forked tongues and why Sang Garuḍa becomes the vehicle of God Wiṣṇu.

### Chapter VII

Describes the serpents' efforts to avoid the snake sacrifice curse laid by their mother. The best suggestion comes from Ailapatra, the youngest serpent, who remembers that the one to save them is Jaratkāru's son. Thus, Sang Bāsuki, the leader of the

serpents, gives his sister Nagaginī to Jaratkāru as his wife.

### Chapter VIII

Narrates the death of King Parīkṣit from the bite of the serpent Tāksaka, commanded by Sang Śṛnggi in revenge for the king's insult to Bhagawan Samiti, Sang Śṛnggi's father. This incident leads to the snake sacrifice by King Janamejaya, Parīkṣit's son.

### Chapter IX

Describes the conclusion of the snake sacrifice after Sang Āstika's intervention.

### Chapter X

Narrates the incarnation of the gods leading to the birth of the Kaurava and Pandava, starting from the origins of Durgandhinī and Matsyapati. It continues with the story of Śakuntala and her son Bhārata, the ancestor of the Bhārata family.

### Chapter XI

It tells the story of a powerful mantra that can revive the dead, even those turned to ash. It also narrates King Yayāti's marriage to Śukra's daughter and later to a maidservant, leading to a curse making him prematurely old. His son Sang Pāru takes the curse for a thousand years, after which Yayāti regains his youth.

### Chapter XII

Details the genealogy of the Pandava and Kaurava, from Sang Pāru to the establishment of Kurukṣetra by Kuru, and Hastinapura by Hāsti, down to Bhīṣma and Vyāsa, leading to the Kaurava and Pandava. It also mentions the incarnation of Aṣṭabasu, one of whom becomes Dewabrata (Bhīṣma).

### Chapter XIII

Describes the incarnation of Hyang Yama as Sang Widura due to his past judgment on a child under fourteen, causing Brahmanas to curse him for being born with a slight limp.

### Chapter XIV

Narrates the birth and childhood of the Kaurava and Pandava, Bhīma's provocations against the Kaurava, and the Pandava and Kaurava studying under Dang Hyang Droṇa. It also covers Karṇa's coronation as king of Āṅga.

## Chapter XV

Describes the Pandava's stay in the lac house (Jatugrha) built by the Kaurava to burn them alive. After escaping, Bhīma kills the giant Hiḍimbi and marries his sister Hindimbi, with whom he has a son, Gaṭutkaca.

## Chapter XVI

Narrates the Pandava's journey to Pancala, winning Dewi Dropadī in a contest, and the continuation of Śakuntala's story. It ends with the division of the Hāstina kingdom between the Kaurava and Pandava.

## Chapter XVII

It tells of Arjuna's twelve-year exile for breaking a vow, his marriages to Ulupuy and Dewi Citragandha, and his marriage to Subhadra, Kṛṣṇa's sister.

## Chapter XVIII

Describes the birth of Abhimanyu and the burning of the Khāṇḍawa forest, home to the serpent Tāksaka. Hyang Agni seeks the help of Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna to maintain the fire, allowing four quails to escape the blaze due to their father's plea to Hyang Agni.

**Theology in Ādiparwa**

In the main principles of Viśiṣṭādvaita, God is regarded as the supreme reality that encompasses both the ātma (soul) and the material world. Brahman, or God, is personal and possesses all perfect attributes such as power, wisdom, and compassion (Pranatha, 2024). In other words, Viśiṣṭādvaita is limited monism. Monism is a doctrine or belief that explains the existence of all reality in the universe as originating from a single source of truth (Ilham, 2021). Monism can also be interpreted as the belief in the unity of God, which is the essence of the universe. Limited monism can be understood as the belief in the oneness of God, but this oneness of God can manifest in the gods according to His attributes. The concept of God with attributes like the gods in the Ādiparwa text is described as follows.

*Hana pwa ya mangke wuwusên ikang  
kāla tanhanā āditya candra nakṣatra  
bāywākāsādikia, pralaya riwêkas ning  
sanghāra kalpa, prāpta mwan  
sargakāla pratiniyata mijil  
saprakāranya ngūni, iccā sang hyang  
tinūtnyān hana katêka śabda sanghāra  
dharma, sang hyang Śangkaratah*

*kāraṇanyān hana lāwan bhaṭāri  
dehārdha, kārana nira mapisan lāwan  
bhaṭāra Trinetra sira, an mungging  
kailāśaśikhara sadṛśa utungga siddha  
pratiṣṭa, sāksāt maṇḍalam sabhuwana  
ikā tang parhyangan sthāna sang  
hyang.*

(Ādiparwa I.1)

Translation:

Once upon a time, there was no sun, moon, stars, wind, (because) the sky had not yet been stretched out; the age of emptiness vanished, and the age of creation arrived; it was destined for various creatures to incarnate. The gods were pleased because their commands were followed, and all their words were fulfilled. Sang Hyang Śangkaratah (Śiwa) together with the goddess (Pārwaṭi) created everything. Initially, Batara Trinetra (Śiwa) and the goddess were on the peak of Mount Kailāśa, appearing as if they were the best, the most perfect, truly ruling the world; the place became sacred as the palace of the gods (Zoetmulder, 2006).

The above excerpt from the Ādiparwa text already contains the concept of God as Nirguna Brahman and Saguna Brahman. This is by His attributes for creating the universe manifested in Sanghyang Śiwa with Bhaṭāri Pārwaṭi. In addition, the other attributes of God also occupy the entire universe according to the tasks and functions of each of these gods, as explained below.

*Ādityacandraw anilānalan ca dyaur  
bhūmir āpo hṛdayam yamaśca, ahaśca  
rātriśca ubhe ca san dhye dharmmaśca  
jānāti naraya wr̥ttam.*

*Āditya sang hyang Sūrya, candra sang  
hyang Wulan, anilānala sang hyang  
Hangin mwan Apuy. Tumūt ta sang  
hyang ākāśa Pr̥thiwi mwan Toya,  
muwah sang hyang Yama tamolat ing  
rāt kabeh. Nāhan ta rahinawēngi  
mwan sandhyā, lāwan sang hyang  
Dharma sira, sang dewatā mangkana  
tigawelas kweh nira, sira ta  
mangawruhi ulah ning wwan ring  
jagat kabeh, tan kena winutan, byāpāra  
nireng rāt.*

(Ādiparwa X.37)

Translation:

Ādityacandraw anilānalan ca dyaur bhūmir āpo hṛdayam yamaśca, ahaśca rātriśca ubhe ca san dhye dharmmaśca jānāti naraya wṛttam.

Āditya, the sun god, candra, the moon god, *anilapala*, the wind god, and Agni, the fire god. Also included are the gods of the sky, Akāśā, Pṛthiwi (earth), and Toya (water). Likewise, Hyang Ātma and Sang Hyang Yama occupy the entire world. This is true during the day, night, and twilight. Furthermore, Sang Hyang Dharma, the thirteen deities, always know the state of people in the world and are not ignorant of worldly deeds (Zoetmulder, 2006).

The excerpt above lists the names of gods who occupy the entire world. These gods also govern the time in the world, day and night. Although Hinduism recognizes many names of gods, in essence, the God in Hinduism is singular, as stated in the mantra Rg Veda I.164.46, "ekam sad viprā bahudhā vadanty," which means "Truth is one, though the wise call it by many names." The oneness of God in Hinduism is also reinforced by the mantra in the Chandogya Upaniṣad III.14.1, which states, "sarvam khalv idam is brahma," meaning "All this indeed is Brahman."

The Upaniṣad mantra clearly states that God is one and unique. From the above Ādiparwa text, it can be

interpreted that the mention of the names of the gods is merely a way for Hindus to believe in God through the interpretation of the gods, and Hindus do not worship many gods. The attributes of God also occupy all living beings; in other words, God is within His creation. The attribute of God that is within His creation is called the concept of Viśiṣṭādvaita.

**Aesthetics in Ādiparwa**

Aesthetics in Hinduism are *satyam*, *śivam*, and *sundaram* (Puspa & Saitya, 2020). *Satyam*, or truth, concerns values of honesty, sincerity, and earnestness (Saitya, 2018a). In aesthetics, *satyam* also means truth. The element of *satyam* includes values of honesty, sincerity, and earnestness that align with Hindu teachings. In Hindu aesthetics, the concept of *Siwam* relates to divine values and purity (Saitya, 2018a). The essence of divinity in the Ādiparwa text begins with the concepts of Nirguna Brahman and Saguna Brahman. These two concepts of God are described during the process of cosmic creation. The empty or void state of the universe represents Nirguna Brahman, which signifies an impersonal God. *Sundaram* is an element of Hindu aesthetics formed from values of beauty (Saitya, 2018a). In the story of Sunda and Upasunda, the value of beauty is embodied in Tilottamā, whose beauty captivates the gods, making them focus solely on her.

For a more detailed exposition, Hindu aesthetics will be tabulated below, as manifested in the Ādiparwa text, mainly through the concepts of *satyam*, *siwam*, and *sundaram*.

Hindu Aesthetics	Ādiparwa Text	Translation
Satyam	<p>....kapanggih ta sang hyang Agni ring hawan, ri sêdêng ira mahyun gumêsênganeng Khāṇḍawawana. Mangastuti ta bhagawan Mandapāla, ling nira:</p> <p>Twan antah sarwabhūtānām rūpa swarūpapāwakuḥ, twāṇ dharmāhuśca sādhanam, twām āhus triwidhaṁ punaḥ. Om kamu hyang Agni! Kita hane wêtêng ning sarwabhūta, pinakahurup ning sarwaprāni makādi janma. Rūpanta pinakarūpaning rāt kabeh. Dadi tēlu ling nikang widhi waneh. Tasyasih ta luputaknānak i nghulun patang siki kwehnya, tumolah rikang Khāṇḍawawana, sangka yan agawaya dharma sādhana paksênanya!"</p>	<p>...then he met the god Agni on the way while burning the Khāṇḍawa forest. Bhagawān Mandapāla bowed and said: "Twan antah sarwabhūtānām rūpa swarūpapāwakuḥ, twāṇ dharmāhuśca sādhanam, twām āhus triwidhaṁ punaḥ. O god Agni, you reside in the stomachs of all beings, giving life to all that breathes, especially humans. These are the three qualities you possess. Have mercy on me, my four children are in the Khāṇḍawa forest; save them, for this is an act according to dharma!" So said Mandapāla. The god Agni took pity on him... (Zoetmulder, 2006).</p>

	<p><i>Mangkana ling sang Mandapāla. Asih ta sang hyang Agni ri sira.....</i></p> <p><i>(Ādiparwa XVIII)</i></p>	
	<p><i>....."anaku sang Jārikeya. Prasiddha kitānak atuha, kinon magawaya kabrahmacaryan kita de ning bapanta sang Mandapāla. Kunang arinta sang Sāriṣṛkwa amṛddhyakna santāha pakon ireriya. Si Stambamitra magawaya tapa yajña karma. Sang Droṇa magawaya hayu mangabyāsa wedamantra.</i></p> <p><i>Mangkana pamēkas ning bapantānaku, kamēna nirān laku tumūtakna strī nira sang Lapitā. Mangke pwa kita katēkan bhaya ike patunu niking Khāṇḍawawana. Byakta ta kita pējaha, tan siddhākēn sapakon i bapanta.....</i></p> <p><i>(Ādiparwa XVIII)</i></p>	<p>"...My son Jārikeya, you are the eldest; your father, Sang Mandapāla, instructed you to undertake brahmacari (ascetic life). Your younger brother Sāriṣṛkwa was instructed to continue the lineage, Stambamitra was instructed to perform tapas and yajñas, and Droṇa was instructed to pacify the world by studying the Vedas.</p> <p>This was your father's message before he went to join his wife, Sang Lapitā. But now, there is danger as the Khāṇḍawa forest is burning. Surely you will all perish, and your father's instructions will remain unfulfilled. That is why I am deeply saddened..." <a href="#">(Zoetmulder, 2006)</a>.</p>
	<p><i>.....Matutur ta sang hyang Agni ri kawēkas sang Mandapāla ngūni. Mojar ta sira (ling nira):</i></p> <p><i>Anaku kong puyuh! Wruh aku brāhmaṇaputra kita, brāhmamantra inuccārananta. Haywa ta kitāwēdi! Luputaknangkwi kita, apan huwus pawēkas i bapanta sang Mandapāla ry aku, pamalaku ng anugraha bapa....</i></p> <p><i>(Ādiparwa XVIII)</i></p>	<p>"...Sanghyang Agni then remembered what Sang Mandapāla had previously instructed. He said, 'O my quail child, I know that you are a brāhmaṇa child and you recite brāhmaṇa mantras. Do not be afraid, my child; I will save you from danger, for it was your father Mandapāla's message to me. Accept your father's blessing.'" <a href="#">(Zoetmulder, 2006)</a>.</p>
Siwam	<p><i>Hana pwa ya mangke wuwusēn ikang kāla tanhanā āditya candra nakṣatra bāywākāśādika, pralaya riwēkas ning sanghāarakalpa, prāpta mwan sargakāla pratiniyata mijil saprakāraṅnya ngūni, iccā sang hyang tinūtnyān hana katēka śabda sanghāra dharma, sang hyang Śangcara atah kāraṅanyān hana lāwan bhaṭāri dehārdha, kāraṅa nira mapisan lāwan bhaṭāra Trinetra sira, an mungging kailāśaśikhara sadṛśa utungga siddha pratiṣṭa, sāḡṣāt maṅḍalam sabhuwana ikā tang parhyangan sthāna sang hyang.</i></p> <p><i>(Ādiparwa I.1)</i></p>	<p>In ancient times, there was no sun, moon, stars, or wind, and the sky had not yet spread out. The age of emptiness ceased, and the age of creation began, with various creatures destined to manifest. The gods were pleased, for their words were fulfilled. Sang Hyang Śangcara (Śiva) along with goddess Pārwaṭī created everything. Initially, the deity Trinetra (Śiva), together with the goddess, resided at the peak of Mount Kailāśa, as if they were supreme and perfect, truly ruling the world; thus, the place became sacred as the abode of the gods <a href="#">(Zoetmulder, 2006)</a>.</p>
Sundaram	<p><i>.....manēmbah ta sira mapradakṣiṅa ri bhaṭāra Brahmā (Sanghyang Rudra sira milw anangkil ri bhaṭara Brahmā), kapūhan de ning hayu sang Tilottamā, ginawe nira ta ng muka patang siki, lor, kidul, kulwan, wetan, yatanyan tan anghelānoliḡ, tuminghal i rūpa sang Tilottamā, an mapradakṣiṅa. Mangkana</i></p>	<p>"...worshiping Lord Brahmā (Sanghyang Rudra also turned to Lord Brahmā), captivated by her beauty, created four faces—north, south, west, and east—so he would not have difficulty seeing Tilottamā, who was worshipping. Similarly, Sanghyang Indra, whose gaze was unsatisfied, created a thousand eyes, yet was still not satiated in viewing her. Likewise, all the gods focused</p>

	<p><i>ta sang hyang Indra hêla-hêla tinghal nira, ginawe nira tang nera sahasra, tathapinya tan warêg juga tumon, ngūniweh tang dewatā kabeh, kapwa Tilottamā wişaya ning matanya...</i></p> <p>(Ādiparwa XVII)</p>	<p>solely on Tilottamā's beauty..." (<a href="#">Zoetmulder, 2006</a>).</p>
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The element of satyam in the Ādiparwa text, particularly in the story of the four quails, depicts the profound beauty of the value of truth (satya) in fulfilling promises. This story tells of the sage Bhagawān Mandapāla, who pleaded with Sanghyang Agni to save his four sons, who were in the form of quails, from the burning of the Khāṇḍawa forest. This request was fulfilled with Sanghyang Agni's promise not to harm Bhagawān Mandapāla's children.

Mandapāla's four sons, Sang Jārikeya, Sang Sāriṣṭkwa, Sang Stambamitra, and Sang Drona, each received orders to carry out sacred duties representing various paths of dharma in Hinduism. However, before they could complete their tasks, the forest where they lived began to burn due to Sanghyang Agni. Amidst this threat, their mother, Jarikā, was forced to leave her four children for their safety. The four quails then chanted a brahmana mantra, depicting their surrender to a higher will and reminding Sanghyang Agni of the promise he had made to Bhagawān Mandapāla.

The moment when Sanghyang Agni stopped the burning to fulfill his promise manifests the profound value of satya in Hindu aesthetics. Satya here is interpreted as honesty and loyalty to promises and commitments, which creates harmony between humans, nature, and the divine. Truth becomes an invisible but pervasive aesthetic element, where the beauty of this story lies in the moral grandeur of Sanghyang Agni in fulfilling his promise.

The element of siwam in the Ādiparwa text can be understood through the comprehension of the nature of divinity as presented in two primary concepts: Nirguna Brahman and Saguna Brahman. Although these terms are not explicitly mentioned in the text, the implied depiction of emptiness or "sunya" and the creation of the universe illustrates two fundamental aspects of God's existence in Hindu tradition.

Nirguna Brahman, referring to the attributeless or qualityless God (*nirguna*), represents the purest and most transcendent aspect of *siwam*. In this concept, God is understood as absolute existence without the

human mind's ability to comprehend form, qualities, or personality. In the Ādiparwa, the state of *sunya* or emptiness of the universe before creation reflects this condition. *Sunya* signifies physical non-existence and the pure state of unmanifest truth. In this context, truth is understood as something that transcends all forms and names—an infinite and indefinable truth. *Siwam*, in its most profound sense, is the truth that can only be experienced through consciousness that transcends the material world.

When the universe begins to be created, the concept of God transforms into Saguna Brahman, God with attributes and personality. At this point, *siwam* is understood as transcendent truth and as truth manifested in creation. Saguna Brahman is the God who is present and active in the world, creating, maintaining, and destroying the universe. In the context of the creation of the universe in the Ādiparwa, God as Saguna Brahman brings truth into manifested reality, creating the world from *sunya* to existence. *Siwam*, as truth here, refers to the divine order present in the process of creation and cosmic arrangement. Truth becomes the foundation of all that exists, reflecting the patterned and harmonious cosmic order.

From this perspective, *siwam* encompasses two complementary aspects: as the intellectually inexplicable truth (Nirguna Brahman) and as the truth manifested in the phenomenal world (Saguna Brahman). When God is present in the universe as Saguna Brahman, divine truth becomes evident in every creation, giving meaning and purpose to existence. The orderly and harmonious universe reflects *siwam*, the divine truth that permeates and moves everything.

The element of sundaram in the story of Sunda and Upasunda, as depicted in the tale of Tilottamā's beauty, carries a profound meaning about the allure of aesthetics that transcends physical boundaries. Tilottamā's beauty captivated ordinary humans and gods, even transforming their forms. This story illustrates how extraordinary beauty can influence the universe, creating transformations that occur in the realm of the gods and symbolizing the grandeur of the sundaram element in Hindu teachings.

Tilottamā, an apsara of unparalleled beauty, possessed such a powerful allure that gods, including Sanghyang Rudra and Sanghyang Indra, could not take their eyes off her. Sanghyang Rudra even gained four faces, and Sanghyang Indra was blessed with a thousand eyes, solely so that they could continue to gaze at Tilottamā from various angles. This is not merely a physical depiction but reflects the concept of sundaram aesthetics as a beauty that is both stirring and captivating on a spiritual level.

The element of sundaram in this story does not merely lie in Tilottamā's beauty that attracts the gods' attention but also contains a more profound meaning about the connection between beauty and cosmic order. The gods created Tilottamā to stop two giants, Sunda and Upasunda, who were engaged in strife and conflict due to their greed for power. Tilottamā's mesmerizing beauty became a divine instrument that diverted their attention and ultimately led to their downfall. In this case, sundaram serves as an allure and a means to achieve balance and harmony in the universe.

Tilottamā's beauty in this story reflects a beauty that has transformative power, both in physical and spiritual contexts. Sundaram, in Hindu philosophy, is always more than just physical beauty. It encompasses a moving aesthetics that can influence the world's order and spiritual life. The beauty of Tilottamā, so powerful that it could change the forms of the gods, teaches that true beauty can transform perception, create harmony, and awaken the consciousness of something higher.

### Integration of Theology and Art

The integration of theology and art in the Ādiparwa text is evident in how theological elements are conveyed through aesthetic narration. This integration includes religious symbolism, spiritual meaning, and the depiction of deities. Religious symbolism is used to teach theological values. For instance, the weapons of the gods, used by the warriors, not only enhance the beauty of the story but also symbolize the spiritual and moral strength they possess. The spiritual meaning is conveyed through allegorical stories in the Ādiparwa text, which contain deep spiritual meanings. These allegories help readers understand theological teachings more visually and engagingly. The depiction of deities in the Ādiparwa text is highly aesthetic, enriching the narrative with supernatural elements that add spiritual depth to the story. This depiction also reflects deep religious beliefs and provides ideal examples of virtues to be emulated. The depiction of deities is further detailed below.

*Ādityacandraw anilānalan ca dyaur  
bhūmir āpo hṛdayam yamaśca, ahaśca  
rātriśca ubhe ca san dhye dharmmaśca  
jānāti naraya wṛttam.*

*Āditya sang hyang Sūrya, candra sang  
hyang Wulan, anilānala sang hyang  
Hangin mwang Apuy. Tumūt ta sang  
hyang ākāśa Prthiwi mwang Toya,  
muwah sang hyang Yama tamolat ing  
rāt kabeh. Nāhan ta rahinawēngi  
mwang sandhyā, lāwan sang hyang  
Dharma sira, sang dewatā mangkana  
tigawelas kweh nira, sira ta  
mangawruhi ulah ning wwang ring  
jagat kabeh, tan kena winutan, byāpāra  
nireng rāt.*

(Ādiparwa X.37)

Translation:

*Ādityacandraw anilānalan ca dyaur  
bhūmir āpo hṛdayam yamaśca, ahaśca  
rātriśca ubhe ca san dhye dharmmaśca  
jānāti naraya wṛttam.*

Āditya, the deity Sūrya, the moon deity Candra, the wind and fire deities Anilapala and Agni. Followed by the deities Akāśa (sky), Prthiwi (earth), and Toya (water). Similarly, the deity Ātma and Yama pervade the entire world. In this manner, whether it is day or night or twilight, and furthermore, the deity Dharma, along with the thirteen deities, are always aware of the state of people in the world; they cannot be considered blind to the actions of the world (Zoetmulder, 2006).

In Hindu teachings, the narrative above presents a profound depiction of divinity encompassing all aspects of the universe and human life. The deities mentioned, such as *Āditya* (Sūrya, the sun), *Candra* (the moon), *Anila* (wind), *Agni* (fire), and *Yama* (the god of death), along with other cosmic elements like *Ākāśa* (sky), *Prthiwi* (earth), and *Toya* (water), symbolize the natural forces that play an essential role in maintaining the balance of the universe. These deities serve as regulators of nature and represent manifestations of unlimited divine power, reflecting the interconnectedness between the physical and spiritual realms.

Deities are not only present in the external world but are also omnipresent in everyday human life, whether during the day, night, or twilight. This reinforces the idea that the cosmic order is continuously maintained by divine forces, unrestricted by time or place. The presence of these

deities in different aspects of time, such as day, night, and twilight, illustrates that the universe and human life are under the vigilant supervision of the cosmic law (Rta), which the gods uphold.

The presence of Sanghyang Dharma, one of the thirteen deities mentioned, is also highly significant. In this context, Dharma refers not only to moral obligations or spiritual law but also to the cosmic principle that sustains the order of the universe. Sanghyang Dharma and the other deities, who "always know the state of people in the world," imply that every human action, no matter how small, is constantly supervised by cosmic law. This highlights the critical idea that truth, justice, and morality are always upheld through the universe's natural laws, overseen by the deities.

Furthermore, the narrative emphasizes that humans cannot hide their actions from the watchful eyes of the gods. Every human deed, visible or hidden, will always be known by divine forces. This reinforces the concept of karma in Hinduism, where every action, whether righteous (*dharma*) or unrighteous (*adharma*), will have its consequences. The gods cannot be "blinded" by worldly deeds, meaning they cannot be deceived or avoided, and divine justice always operates according to the laws of nature.

Thus, an analysis of this narrative shows that the deities serve as rulers of natural elements and guardians of morality and cosmic order. The cosmic system they oversee ensures that every human action has its appropriate consequence, and no deed can escape the supervision of the gods. This entire narrative underscores the harmony between the universe and human life, where every aspect of existence is always connected to a more excellent divine principle, ensuring balance, justice, and eternal truth.

### **Influence of Theology on Aesthetics**

Theology in the *Ādiparwa* text not only influences the narrative but also enriches the aesthetics of the text. The impact of theology on aesthetics is evident in the rituals described in the *Ādiparwa*. Stories about various rituals enhance the beauty and depth of the narrative. In the Hindu perspective, art plays a pivotal role and is inextricably linked to the religiosity of Hindu society. Art is always closely associated with Hindu aesthetics. These rituals hold religious significance and provide robust and beautiful visual representations of spiritual life (Prawita et al., 2023). The connection between religion, art, and language is particularly profound in the Balinese Hindu tradition, primarily through

*yajña* ceremonies intertwined with the *mabebasan* tradition.

The *mabebasan* tradition enables the Balinese community to recognize and appreciate works of Old Javanese and Balinese religious literature. This tradition can be seen as a form of "literary criticism," where a work is read, translated, reviewed, and communicated among members according to their abilities. Here, there is a very "democratic" two-way communication among the attendees, leading to a consensus on a value that reflects a noble way of thinking, speaking, and behaving (Latra, 2008).

*Mabebasan* is a branch of art, specifically in vocal and literary arts. As an art form, aesthetics are an essential and inseparable part of *mabebasan*. The aesthetic value in this presentational art, particularly in literature, stands out more than non-literary aesthetics. In literature, aesthetic value is found through the use of language. In vocal art, aesthetics are expressed through the play of sound and meaning, embodied in songs with melodious and resonant tunes, conveyed in a language that is easy to understand (the target language). Sometimes, these songs are accompanied by responses or discussions. This combination creates *mabebasan* as a highly aesthetic art form with profound value (Bawa & Sukartha, 2021).

The *mamutru* tradition is one of the *mabebasan* traditions in Bali. *Mamutru* comes from the word *putru*, a guided or recited melody. It narrates the journey of the soul to heaven. The recitation is performed by the *walaka*, sung with the *palawakya* rhythm. *Palawakya* comprises two words: *pala* (other) and *wakya* (words). Therefore, *Palawakya* refers to words that must be conveyed to others (teachings) in prose form in the Kawi language, a religious text.

*Mamutru* is well-known in Bali and is used as a complement to *Puja Paṇḍita* in the *ātmā wedana* ceremony, which is part of *pitra yajña*. During this ceremony, texts from the *Ādiparwa*, specifically from the *Āṣṭikacarita* section, are usually recited and referred to as *Mamutru* for ancestor worship.

Ancestor worship in Hinduism is one of the practices of sacred scriptures. In Bali, ancestor worship peaked with the arrival of Hinduism in the 8<sup>th</sup> century. Ancestor worship includes offerings to *pitra*, *pitara*, and *dewa pitara*. Ancestors are distinguished by their levels: *preta/pitra* refers to souls of the deceased who have not been cremated, *pitara* refers to souls who have been cremated, and

*dewa pitara* refers to souls who have attained divine status ([Puspa, 2014](#)).

The *ātmā wedana* ceremony involves several stages as part of the *Pitra Yajña* ritual to liberate ancestral souls. This ritual is performed as a debt (*rna*) to the ancestors. *Pitra Rṇa*, or the debt to ancestors, must be fulfilled through *Pitra Yajña*. The stages of *Pitra Yajña* in *ātmā wedana* represent a form of worship to the ancestors.

One of the essential parts of the *ātmā wedana* ceremony is the recitation of the *Ādiparwa*, particularly the story of Sang *Āṣṭika* in *Āstikacarita*. This story depicts how the birth of Sang *Āṣṭika*, the child of Sang *Jaratkāru* and *Nagagni* (the sister of the serpent king *Takṣaka*), enabled his ancestors, who were previously suspended between the earthly realm and heaven, to enter heaven finally. It illustrates that the birth of a devoted and virtuous child can liberate their ancestors from the spiritual hardships they face after death, as described below.

*Ri wijil sang Āṣṭika, samangkana ta  
sang pitara gumantung i tungtung ing  
pātung, mēsāt mulih mareng pitṛloka,  
mukti phala ni tapa nira ngūni,  
makādikang warabrata. Matuha pwa  
sang Āṣṭika, wēnang mangadhyāya  
weda. Wineh ta sira mangajya  
sarwaśāstra, umampil ing Bhr̥gupakṣa  
sira. Mangkana kacaritan sang Āṣṭika.  
Sira ta nimita ning nāga Takṣaka luput  
ing sarpayajña mahārāja Janamejaya.*

(*Ādiparwa* V.20)

Translation:

When Sang *Āṣṭika* was born, the ancestors who were previously suspended were released and ascended to heaven, enjoying the fruits of their past ascetic practices, as well as the results of their chosen path. Sang *Āṣṭika* also became a learned scholar, able to study the Vedas. He acquired all kinds of knowledge following the steps of the sage *Bhr̥gu*. Thus is the story of Sang *Āṣṭika*. He was the one who spared the naga *Takṣaka* from the serpent sacrifice conducted by King *Janamejaya* ([Zoetmulder, 2006](#)).

The *Āstikacarita*, which narrates the birth of Sang *Āṣṭika* as mentioned above, is a mandatory *putru* recited during the *ātmā wedana* ceremony. *Āstikacarita* serves as a complementary element for this ritual, alongside the recitations of *Putru Sangaskara* and *Putru Pesaji*. Those about to perform

*mamutru* typically receive blessings from the officiating *wiku* (priest) and the *yajamana karya* (ritual sponsor).

The story of *Āstikacarita* illustrates that the birth of a child is not merely a physical event but holds a more profound spiritual significance. Sang *Āṣṭika*, through his determination and success in mastering the Vedas, became the cause of his ancestors' ascension to heaven. This reflects the concepts of *karma* and *dharma* in Hindu teachings, where the actions of descendants can influence the fate of their ancestors in the afterlife.

This narrative also depicts the close relationship between life and death within the spiritual context of Hindu Bali. The *ātmā wedana* ceremony, with *Mamutru* as part of its rituals, emphasizes the importance of honoring and worshipping ancestors. Such ritual activities create a spiritual bridge between the living generation and their ancestors while reinforcing social and moral values within the Hindu Balinese community.

Thus, *Mamutru* is not merely an oral tradition but an essential means of building and maintaining the relationship between humans, their ancestors, and the cosmos. This tradition combines theological and aesthetic aspects, where the rhythm and mantras chanted are not only artistically beautiful but also hold profound spiritual meaning. *Mamutru* becomes a symbol of sacred communication that bridges the spiritual and material worlds, affirming that through ritual, humans can influence their ancestors' spiritual destiny while preserving harmony in their own lives.

## CONCLUSION

The study of theology and art in the *Ādiparwa* text demonstrates the profound interconnectedness between divine teachings and aesthetic expressions within Hinduism. Through stories that blend theological concepts like *Nirguna* and *Saguna* Brahman with elements of beauty and truth, the *Ādiparwa* enriches both spiritual and artistic traditions. The integration of theology with aesthetics-expressed in the concepts of *satyam* (truth), *siwam* (divinity), and *sundaram* (beauty)-illustrates how art serves as a powerful medium for conveying religious teachings, enhancing the appreciation of Hindu spiritual values. Despite these findings, the study is limited by its focus on a singular text and its historical-cultural context. It may not fully represent the vast theological and artistic traditions across different Hindu texts and practices. Future research should explore other classical Hindu texts and contemporary

interpretations of theology in modern art forms to provide a broader and more dynamic understanding of how theological teachings continue to influence aesthetic practices.

The impact of these findings on the academic field lies in the potential expansion of theological studies that intersect with the arts, particularly within Hinduism. This work encourages further investigation into *theo-aesthetic* principles, where art and theology inform and enhance one another, thus deepening both spiritual and aesthetic experiences. Practically, the study highlights the importance of rituals and oral traditions such as *mabebasan* and *mamutru*, emphasizing their role not just as religious expressions but as cultural practices that preserve and propagate essential moral and spiritual values. These traditions inspire future research on how rituals and artistic expressions can evolve while retaining their theological significance. This creates avenues for continued exploration into the relationship between art and theology in Hinduism.

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