

Ornament on the *Pendhok* of the Surakarta Kris

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The type of ornament found on the Javanese kris *pendhok* is rarely discussed from an iconographic point of view. The *pendhok* is the decorative protection plating found on the sheath of the kris, usually made from metals such as silver, bronze, copper, brass, and even gold. The kris is a Javanese dagger. This essay focuses on the *pendhok* ornament of the Surakarta kris, and on its symbolism. The *pendhok* is a 'patronage' art, traditionally manufactured by palace's *mranggi*-s (the sheath maker), and today by kris craftsmen. Its various motifs--vegetation, plants, animals, or other motifs--are combined with *lung-lungan* (curly, vegetation-looking forms) in such a way as to create symmetric-vertical ornaments. The *lung-lungan* and *alas-alasan* (the forest as cosmos) motifs are more numerous than flora, *wayang* puppets, and geometrical motifs. The designs emphasize symmetry, repetition and harmony as their basic principle. The ornament style is believed to embody the 'syncretic-mystique' of Javanese Islam. The ornaments embossed on the surface usually refer to pre-Islamic, Hindu-Buddha notions.

Keywords: *ornament, pendhok, lung-lungan, alas-alasan, style, mranggi, Surakarta, Java*

Ornamen Pada Pendhok Dari Keris Surakarta

Ornamen pendhok keris sebagai ikonografi Jawa jarang dibahas. Pendhok adalah lapisan dekoratif pelindung keris, yang biasanya terbuat dari berbagai logam seperti perak, perunggu, tembaga, kuningan, dan bahkan emas. Keris adalah jenis senjata tusuk Jawa. Artikel ini difokuskan pada hiasan pendhok dari keris Surakarta, dan simbolismenya dalam pencitraan Jawa. Pada awalnya, ornamen pendhok adalah seni 'patron', yang dibuat oleh *mranggi* istana (pembuat sarung), dan saat ini 'diciptakan kembali' oleh para pembuat keris di banyak tempat. Motif bunga, tanaman, hewan, atau figural pada pendhok, adalah komposisi dan penggabungan dengan *lung-lungan* (penggayaan tanaman) sebagai cara untuk membentuk irama ornamen secara simetris-vertikal, ornamen disederhanakan sebagai *lung-lungan*. Motif *lung-lungan* dan *alas-alasan* (kosmos hutan dalam imajinasi spiritual), mendominasi gaya ornamen dibandingkan dengan motif lain seperti tanaman/flora, wayang (boneka), dan geometri. Komposisi simetri, repetitif, dan harmoni menjadi yang paling 'prinsip' pada desain. Gaya ornamen diyakini melambangkan 'sinkretis-mistik' dari Jawa - Islam, ornamen yang 'timbul' pada permukaan yang berdimensi, menjadi ekspresi relief, yang sebagian besar menandakan seni yang diadopsi pra-Islam: Hindu - Buddha

Kata kunci: *ornament, pendhok, lung-lungan, alas-alasan, gaya, mranggi, Surakarta, Jawa*

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INTRODUCTION

The *pendhok* ornament, in particular that of the Surakarta kris, is not often a topic of study. The *kris* comprises: (1) the *Pamor*; the nickel pattern of the blade that is believed to possess a supernatural values; its aesthetic value rests on the forging process. According to Brown, the *pamor* is not an ornament; it has its own power (Brown & Hutton 2011:112). (2) The *Warangka* (the sheath), its value depends on the quality of the wood used to make it; associated to the *warangka* is the *pelet kendit*, a dark brown, black, or white that appears on the sheath's surface (Harsrinuksmo 2004).

The *pendhok* ornament is not taken into accounts when it come to qualifying the style of a kris. Its incorporation on the *pendhok* is simply for beautification purpose. The *pendhok* does not have anything like *pamor*, or *pelet kendhit*, referring to Meyer's concept of style, which includes elements, qualities, and expression – in individual or collective art (Meyer, 287). The 'ukir-ukiran', or wood etching and carving in a tri-dimensional way, is considered as being the foundation of style.

The 'ukir-ukiran' found on the *pendhok* is not the subjects of style in kris made during the Islamic Mataram period, between 1584 (Panembahan Senapati) and 1788 (Paku Buwana III), also known as kris from the *tangguh nom* or young period. The kris made during the Kartasura sub-period are known as *tangguh tengahan* (middle period). Groneman argues that the ornaments found on *pendhok* are just like batik motifs. There are *pendhok* with special motifs such as *semen jlengut*, which may only be used by kings (Groneman, 1910:189). Similarly, following a regulation emitted by Paku Buwono IV, 1788 – 1820 (Margana, 2005:289,292) some motifs are banned on *pendhok*: The *parijata* (swollen rice), the *tatahan sawat* (*sawat* (throw) carved), and the *kemalon abang* (red *kemalon*, referring to the hue of the kemalo's tree). The gaps created by such regulations explains why the style of Surakarta kris is dominated by other sheath motifs, such as the *ladrang* and the *gayaman*, with a hilt of *tunggak semi*.

The making of kris became an important manufacture in the 1800s. This was due to demographic reason, Surakarta being more populated than Yogyakarta, both being native-ruled province under the control of the *Dutch East India Company* (VOC), and the *British East India Company* in 1811-1815. The sheath was produced by specialists called *tukang mranggi* (Raffles 1817). Raffles noted that, compared to kris from other islands, Java kris were the most simple Raffles 2008:188). The Surakarta "kris should have the sheath of the *satrian* (knight) fashion, and the handle should be that of *tunggak semi* (spring stump)" (Raffles, 1817:95). His description referred to the kris culture of the Surakarta Palace court. The *ladrang* and *gayaman* sheath, and the *tunggak semi* hilt (Yuwono 2012) are characteristic of the Surakarta kris. The Surakarta kris is believed to have



Figure 1. The sheath of Surakarta kris:
(a) *Ladrang* (b) *Gayaman*

be conceptualized by PB III in 1749 – 1788, to differentiate it from the *tangguh tengahan* kris of the Kasunanan Kartasura (1680 – 1745). After the Giyanti's agreement of 1755, style had political connotations and, accordingly had to be different there from the style of the Kasultanan of Yogyakarta, the Western half of Mataram. The Giyanti agreement is an important document for understanding the history of Java (Ricklefs, 2014:11).

During *Vorstenlanden* (Princely Lands) era, the royal court sought to maintain authority over society by building up personal symbols for the nobility and public symbols to keep alive tradition (Kuntowijoyo, 2004:22-41). The nobility patronized the arts. The kris became an art manufactured by *pandi* (ironsmiths), whereas the sheaths/scabbards were produced by *mranggi* (Raffles, 1817:163-173). Surakarta's *pendhok* refers to the post-Kartasura period, and retained many differences with its Yogyakarta equivalent. Its style was reproduced by village *mranggi* (the sheath maker).

The legacy of the Surakarta's sheath form is found in the *gayaman* and *ladrang* (called *branggah* in Yogyakarta). The sheath of *ladrang* is commonly used at official ceremonies, as sign of respect toward tradition. There are four main types of *ladrang*, *Kasatriyan*, *Kadipaten*, *Kacir*, dan *Capu*, and each type has subtypes. The *gayaman* complements the dress during unofficial events. In its simplest form, it is used during at war, with its sheath functioning a shield, deflector, and to shovel (Wibawa, 2008:42).

The *pendhok* underlines the notions of ornamentation, beauty and harmony such as valued in the Javanese - Surakarta culture. The ornament usually applied on *pendhok* is the *lung* or *lung-lungan*. Paku Buwono XIII (2005-2011) used a kris in the *gayaman* style when on his throne, and the ornament on its *pendhok* was a rhythmic vegetal motif sweet potato plants, believed to embody the notion of sustainable living (Hidayat, 2012:105). The following carved ornament are: *cukitan*, *wudulan*, and *sunggingan* (the layered/gradation of colors) which are refined and wavy. The first-four techniques use metal such as brass, silver, and

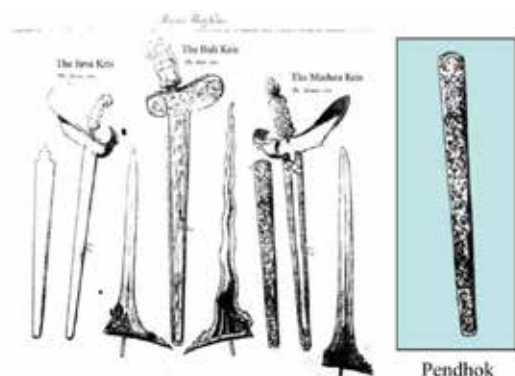


Figure 2. The types of kris and its *pendhok* by Raffles.

Detail based on *The History of Java* (1817: supplement after page 296; 2008:189)

gold. The *sungging*'s technique is on wood. The ornaments are applied on those techniques.

Javanism as the domain of ornament in Surakarta
Ornaments issue from history. While Hindu tradition was retained in Bali, Java underwent an Islamization process. Yet, many Hindu aspects of tradition were preserved in the palace culture of Java. (Priyohutomo, 1953:105-106). Ornaments, be it for houses or clothings, continued being created in a context of patronage as a prerogative of the local royalty (Pigeaud, 1962:384). The kris was adopted and further developed by the *pasisir* rulers revered as 'apostles of Islam (wali sanga) (Lieberman, 1999: 270). With roots in Islamic Mataram, Surakarta synthesizes Javanese and Moslem traditions. Ricklefs says that the synthesis undertaken by Sultan Agung was a "mystical synthesis" between the culture of the Javanese hinterland and that of the coastal area of the same island (Ricklefs, 2013:32). Muslim rulers were more affine with the traditions of pre-Islamic Javanese Majapahit than with the Islamic traditions of the Arabian Peninsula or even of the coast of Sumatra (Vlekke, 2008:xvii-xviii).

The sheath style is *gayaman*, and the *pendhok* types is *bunton*

In literature, "Javanization" refers to the various Indian cultural influences that penetrated Java, which then developed its own literary (Kawi) and religious culture. The kingdom of Majapahit is considered to be a synthesis of Hindu-Javanese culture, in a specific Javanese Mahāyāna way (Banerji, 1989:589; Wiryomartono, 2016:32; Ricklefs, 2013:29; Raffles, 2008:252-264; Kern (in Pigeaud, 1962:3). Its tradition was influenced by pre-Moslem 'old Javanese' and as such contains a large number of Sanskrit loan words (Uhlenbeck, 1964:108, Zoetmulder, 1974:8; Auroux, 2000:187). Interestingly, floral motifs related to Buddhism and Hinduism such as lotus or chakra (Kossak & Watts 2001:25) did not exist in Old Javanese and are therefore 'absent' from the ornamental tradition of Islamic Mataram, as well as of Surakarta.

Traditions such as *slametan raja wedda* and *maesa lawung* inherited from Majapahit were actually passed down through Demak (the first Islamic kingdom in Java) into Mataram-Kartasura in the era of PB II, 1748 (Headly, 2004:292-294; Headly, 1979:49-57). But not all the Surakarta ornamentation rests on the Hindu-Javanese iconography of nature. In Hindu-Buddhist tradition, ornaments features anima motifs such as birds, peacocks, elephants, and horses. Leaf motifs are also widely used, often in curly forms. Flowers are depicted in a naturalistic way, complete with stems and leaves (Wahby 2007). Hindu flora's ornaments are common. Mythological animal figures such as *Ganesha* and *Garuda* are also frequent. Those animals are symbols and vehicles of Hindu imagery (Miyazaki 1988:148).

During the Islamic period in Java, many pre-Islamic elements were incorporated in the new tradition. The form of motifs was stylized to the extreme, as seen in the art of *wayang* (the shadow play), and in ornamental motifs found in mosques and at the royal palace. The advent of Islam did not eradicate figurative representation, but tended to 'abstract' its essence (Wahby 2007). The art of *pendhoks* reveals the resilience of a Hindu 'imaginary', yet bereft of symbols and images such as lotus, chakra, and Hindu gods. The vegetation motifs in found in temples became a stylistic source for ornaments.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The *Mranggi* in Post-Kartasura imagery

During the Mataram dynastic conflict the location of the royal palace was transferred first to Kartasura, then to Surakarta. The Surakarta kris is rooted in Islamic Mataram, but its peculiar proper appeared during the reign of Sunan Pakubuwono III (1749-88), thus after the third Javanese war of succession. Then, the style of the kris and its related components such as the *pendhok* were normalized to better distinguish them from their Kartasura and Yogyakarta equivalents. The Surakarta kris was identified as having a smaller body compared to its Kartasura equivalent, but after the *Palihan Nagari* (Agreement of Giyanti), it was also said to be bigger than the Yogyakarta kris. The kris, which previously was a weapon, became an instrument of identification of aristocratic blood, as a part of Javanese tradition.

Today, the *mranggi* is known as kris and *pendhok* maker. This profession has survived through the days of Majapahit, Demak, and Mataram. In Later Mataram, village names often reflected its people's profession. Thus, in Kotagede, when the royal court was established, the village of *Mranggen* was derived from *mranggi* (Nakamura 2012:40). The villagers' skill were inherited from their "Wong kalang" ancestors---the Kalang people being originally war captives of Sultan Agung. They became part of

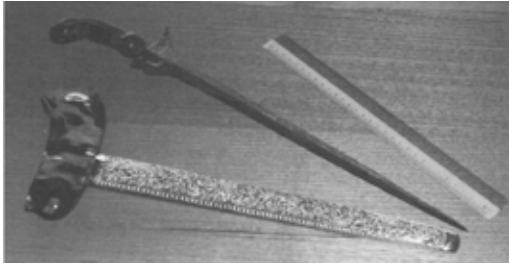


Figure 3. The *Kiai Wali*, 15th or 16th century made by Sunan Giri, the handle of Surakarta from 19th century (Ricklefs, *Islamize Java*, 2013:31)

the palace bureaucracy and of the system of patronage, in particular that of the king (Wiriyomartono, 2016:9). Yasadipura II, the famous poet of Paku Buwana IV's reign insisted that the Javanese *adat* (Hindu-Javanese tradition) should be maintained, and that the *priyayi* nobility should not invent its own *adat* (Riddell & Street, 1997:270). In fact *kejawen* (Javanism) was identified as a form of syncretism, a particular form of Javanese-Islam, different from that practiced by the *santri* (Islamic scholars) (Mulder, 2005:21; Janowski & Kerlogue, 2007: 24-33; Cederroth, 1991:18; Hooker, 1988:63).

The *pândi/pande* (ironsmith) or *empu* (kris masters) manufacture the kris blade; the manufacturer of the *kris* scabbard is called *meránggi/tukang warongko*, a word related to *mergongso* (carpenter) (Raffles, 1817:173, Raffles, 2008:38-39,103,110). The manufacturing of kris has been written in term of industry, with specialists such as *pândi* or *empu* (iron-smith and kris masters), *meráng'gi* or *tukang-weróngko* (kris-sheath maker), *tukang-tambógo* (coppersmith), *kamasán* or *pande mas* (goldsmith) (Raffles 1817:164; Ma Huan 1970:88; Haryono 1991-1992: 62-63; Subroto & Pinardi 1993:210). Kris making has become a traditional industry, and the *pendhoks* were manufactured following the characteristic of the Surakarta *kris*.

The *mranggi* is also popular with regard to *jamás*, the cleaning of heirlooms, which usually takes place on the first of *Sura* (the new year of Java), in a sacred tradition called *jaman* (KRT Sumowijoyo, 2012). In this context, the *kris* is a *waris* heirloom and not a weapons. It carries traditional 'religious' significance and power. The *mranggi* is the person entitled to perform this tradition (Geertz, 1980:229).

The aesthetics of the *pendhok* of the Surakarta kris

Since the early times of *palihan nagari*, the political elites of Yogyakarta and Surakarta have claimed to be the legitimate descendants of the Kartasura dynasty. As military power and politics were controlled by the *Dutch East India Company* (VOC), they looked for legitimacy in culture. The *Babad Kraton* (Palace Chronicle) was composed to legitimize Yogyakarta as the true heir of the *Kraton* Kartasura (Ricklefs, 1974: 213-218), and *Arjunawiwaha* was written to link Pakubuwana (PB) III and Surakarta



Figure 4. The Kris maker

Source: <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/690176711614235378/> (accessed 15 April 2018)

to the Kartasura tradition (Wiriyomartana 1990: 402-409). During the time *Vorstenlanden* (Princely Lands), the political power of Mataram was indeed weakened by the Dutch. The royal courts sought to maintain their authority on society through the use of [1]: Personal symbols such as titles, clothing, honor, star of services, and lifestyle of leisure and hedonism; [2] Public symbols, in the form of support of tradition, nationalism, religiosity, and intercultural behavior (Kuntowijoyo, 2004:22-41).

The foundation of the city of Surakarta dates back to the *Tangguh Nom* proclamation and (Mataram - Kartasura - Surakarta) and to Dutch colonialism. It was further underlined by changes in the judiciary. The *Kraton* Surakarta was founded by Pakubuwana II in 1745, and for almost 250 years represented authentic Javanese culture at its highest level (Florida, 1993:11). During colonization, while Westernization occurred across the board, the kris became for the *Kraton* a symbol of resistance (Lombard, 1990:107-112).

The dialectics of the two "Java" models exemplified in Surakarta by the *Kraton* and the Mangkunegaran produced "Javanese" style. Whereas the Mangkunegaran Palace had its own pleasure retreats and ritual kinks, the *Kraton* Surakarta remained the original post-Kartasura model (Pemberton, 1994:112). Suryono (2012) says that the king's privilege as successor to the kings of Java is to have a kris master and a special *tangguh* (the style). This is only found at the Kasunan; the Mangkunegaran does not have this *tangguh* privilege because its title is only that of *Adipati Anom* (Duke). The Surakarta kris is smaller his Kartasura equivalent, but since the *Palihan Nagari* (Giyanti agreement), the Surakarta kris has always been bigger than his Yogyakarta equivalent. The principalities of Yogyakarta and Surakarta have had separate 'Power' and existence for more than two hundred years, even though they are less than forty miles apart (Anderson, 2006:42).

The *pendhok* types and forms followed the *tangguh* (style) The *tangguh* itself appeared in the post-Kartasura era, and was known as *Tangguh Surakarta* in 1749 during the Pakubuwana IV – X. Its successive *empus* were Brajaguna, Brajasetika, Ki Tirtadangsa, R.Ng Jayasukadga, R.Ng Japan, R.Ng Singawijaya, R.Ng Brajasetama, R.Ng Wira-

sukadga, and Ki Mangunwalela. Some texts say that the PBIII kris were too straight. If the kris in PB IV era were around 37-38cm, then shortened to about 35cm, it was still longer than the Yogyakarta kris.

The *pendhok* have been categorized by materials, techniques, types and forms, as well as function. The material consists of metals such as: brass, silver, gold, or swāsā (a mixture of metals with a gold appearance) (Groneman 1910:188). Based on the form, there are several types of *pendhok*: *blewah/slorok*, *bunton*, *topengan*, and *kemalon* (Groneman, 1910:188; Haryoguritno, 2005:335). Based on the manufacturing technique, *pendhok* are categorized into *pendhok krawangan*, *tretes*, *cukitan*, and *tinatah*. According to Harsrinuksmo and Lumintu, *pendhok* kris relate to ethics. There are certain *pendhoks* which can only be worn by noblemen, such as the *pendhok kemalon*, which has a white background, and the *pendhok tretes* with has a specific sheath and should only be worn by the king.

The *pendhok* is an embossed white metal plate (Stone, 1999:282,392). Groneman defines the *pendhok* serves as a sheath *wārāngkā* protection (Groneman, 1910:188). Haryoguritno (2005:333) defines it as a metal covering for the kris sheath: *kandelan* (confidence). The simplest *pendhok* are usually made of brass or copper, but luxurious ones are made of silver or gold set with diamonds (Purwadi, 2005:381). If the *pendhok* of Yogyakarta kris uses traditional motifs such as *semen tritis* (Andono 1995:19), the ornaments found on the Surakarta *pendhok* is usually the *lung-lungan*. Paku Buwono XIII (2005-2011), wore a kris in the *gayaman* style, and its *pendhok* ornament was as a motif of sweet potato, underlining rhythm and believed to embody the idea of sustainable living (Hidayat, 2012:105).

METHODOLOGY

The ornaments of the *pendhok* in this essay were mostly made by the *mranggi* of the 1980s generation. The form of kris which have been used as a 'model' for those *pendhok* is the Surakarta kris, derived from the *tangguh nom* (young period, Mataram - Surakarta). The *pendhok* chosen is the kris *alusan* (refined) or *ageman*, and not the *kodhian* (unrefined). Technically, the *pendhok* followed the norm of the Surakarta kris, for which ornament is only decorative. According to Read (1936:121), there are three considerations in the making of ornaments: 1) Size, related to its appearance on the object. 2) Form, the way it fills space, and the possibility to repeat it in a linear rhythm, continuing it, multiplying it-up to the infinite 3) Association, related to the application of ornaments. Those principles determine the various 'signs' defining style: elements, qualities, and expression (Meyer, 1953: 287). The analysis of the style of primitive and early historical cultures has been influenced by Western recent standards (Meyer, 1953:290). But, Meyer's argument is used here to see ornaments as a survival of the past, and the motifs are categorized in the



Figure 5. The types of *pendhoks*

form of style, and in the form of expression. The research findings are a signs that have the rights to refers as the signs of the style.

This essay uses a qualitative exploratory approach to investigate the 1980s generation of *pendhok* craftsmen in Surakarta. The study focuses on the ornaments on *pendhok*, also designs, and sketches. There are two kinds of data used: written and visual materials. The written material includes information, ideas and opinions that have been published in journals and books, online publications, and also material written in the form of academic papers. The visual data includes images and photos.

The data was analyzed using a qualitative approach, and the visual exploration focused on the artistic aspects (Meyer, 287), with attention to the iconography, i.e. the link between motifs and compositions with themes and concepts (Panofsky, 1955: 28-31; Panofsky, 1939: 5-8). At this stage the motifs becomes the conventional subject matter, it is necessary to search the text of reference to seek awareness of a certain representation. Finally, this essay studies the *pendhok* ornaments applied to the Surakarta kris, aiming at define the pendok ornaments as a collective sign indicative of the Surakarta style.

DISCUSSION

The types of *pendhok*

It is known that *pendhok* of Surakarta have a certain style such as *bunton*, *blewah*, *topengan*, and *tretes*. The *pendhok bunton* covers all parts of the *gandar* (axle) of *warangka* (sheath), and *pendhok krawangan* usually refers to the carving technique on material which achieves of engraved translucent. While, *pendhok blewah* has a vertical hole on the frontside, the aim is to show the wood pattern. The *pendhok topengan* has a whole decorated ornament on every side-surface with engraved translucent, in classic style, it is said normally uses a motif of *topeng* (mask) or head of *Kala* (giant), and masking all sheath. The *pendhok tretes* is mostly uses a precious stones, at beginning, it was used by nobility only (Harsrinuksmo and Lumintu 1988:130; Wibawa 2008:45).

Although the discussion of an ornaments on *pendhok* is limited, but, according to Groneman, the ornaments is just as motifs in batik. There are some *pendhoks* with a spe-

cial motif such as *semen jlengut* may only use by kings (Groneman, 1910:189), and the *sunggingan* sheath with a motif of *alas-alasan* (jungle) with a white background only be worn by the king (Harsrinuksmo & Lumintu, 1988:189). While the nobilities such as regents, *tumenggung*, and *riya* wore a *pendhok* with *unthuk-unthuk* motif (Groneman, 1910:189).

The ornament in Surakarta is existed in many objects, both functional and cultural. The classic's motifs were applied in batik such as *sawat*, *meru*, *naga*, *geni*, (Siwomihardjo, 2011:15), *semen*, and *parang*. The 'Classic' in batik is referring to the *Kraton* (Dharsono, 2007:50). The *pendhok* is using a carving technique with a patterned pieces of plants or animal, the images of plants carved in the form of flowers, and animals, consist of a bird or a deer (Haryoguritno, 2005:333). There are some 'patronage' patterns in varieties of *lung-lungan*, the embellished shape in stylistic forms, until does not recognize the original vegetation (Haryoguritno, 2005:337). The motifs are: *alas-alasan* (jungle), *garuda* (the steed of Vishnu), *lung-lungan* (vegetations), *pari sawuli* (rice plants-inspired from kris nickle), *wilaya sarimbit* (couple), *modang* (the power to muffle wrath), *menyan kobar* (flaming of olibanum), *gringsing* (repellent reinforcements), *anam gedeg* (a woven bamboo motif symbolizes togetherness), *parang* (patterned like a sword showing power), and others (Harsrinuksmo, 2004:362).

The motifs which found in *pendhok bunton* are variations of *lung* (vegetation), such as: *kembang setaman* (harmony of flower garden), *sari kretarta*, *widasari*, and *kraton* (palace). In *pendhok blewah*, the motifs are variations of *lung*: *anggur* (grape), *kertas* (bougenville), *combrang* (etlingera elatior), *wajik* (diamond), *budha*, *kenanga ginubah* (re-shaped *cananga*), *modang*, and *plisir* (Yunus 2012). The four motifs or its similarities which commonly known in *pendhok* are: *lung/lung-lungan* (vegetations plants), *alas-alasan* (forest and its animals), geometrical shape (*wajik*, *nganam kepanang*, *anam gedeg*), *garuda* or another mythological animals.

The Surakarta kris has been derived from a specific discourse the kris of *Tangguh Nom* (Mataram - Kartasura - Surakarta) and Dutch colonialism, and promoted by changes in court policy. The style of ornament is related with the Surakarta kris as the main object. To identify the style of ornaments on *pendhok*, the craftsmans are referring the kris of *tangguh nom* (young period) as the model of *pendhok*. The kris have length about 35cm, the top-wide is around 4,2 cm and the bottom-wide is 2,5cm, and the tickness of materials around 0,6 mm, with the top of tip is horizontal.

The style of ornament on *pendhok*

It is known two types of ornaments: naturalistic, and stylized. The naturalistic is a form of ornament which has taken the natural phenomena as the source...meanwhile

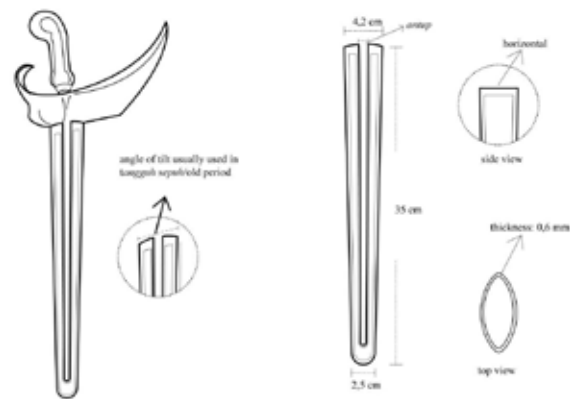


Figure 6. The anatomy of *pendhok blewah* in Surakarta style
Illustration by Dhoni Kustanto

the stylized ornament has a form based on stylizing the basic form, it has a free style to change the previous form (Guntur, 2004:38-40). The naturalistic ornament has an iconographic form such as *sulur-suluran* (the rhythmic vegetation). The motif of plants has been formed into a kind of *sulur-suluran* of wood carving in Classic period of kingdoms in Indonesia (Syafii and Tjetjep, 1987:18). It is said that the classic wood carving in the Court was oriented to the Kings, and the craftsmen or the authors are unrecognized, in the end, only known by the places where the motifs are growing up, such as Surakarta and Yogyakarta (Syafii and Tjetjep, 1987:7). In ornament of wood carving, the Surakarta motifs have been said taken from the stylized of *patra* (leaf) of *pakis* (fern) vines, and later called a *lung-lungan*.

The ideas of ornaments are came from: *alas* (forest), plants, animals, animal mythology, puppetry, geometry, decorating fields, and the beauty of artificial objects. In general, the motifs that mostly used on *pendhok* are *lung-lungan* and *alas-alasan*, and the ornamentation which is used eventually is *pahatan* (engraved). The ornaments have a size gradation from bottom to the top, it is a scaling an appearance of motifs. The motifs which are applied into a form of ornaments, have been designed to have a possibilities to repeat the motifs in a vertical-linear rhythm, continuing it, multiplying it up to the optimum.

The ornaments have a qualities of form, and the materialization of motifs is conceived as an expression. In general, the study of style tends toward a correlation of form and expression. Indeed, ornament has been characterized, or termed like "stylized", "archaistic", and "naturalistic". Some motifs that often found on *pendhok* are described as follow.

The *lung-lungan* as the main pattern of ornament
The *Lung-lungan* is an ornament based on vegetations, and formed in a curly stylized rhythm. The ornament is then 'embossed' into the form of relief, and has an expres-



Figure 7. The pictures of traditional ornament

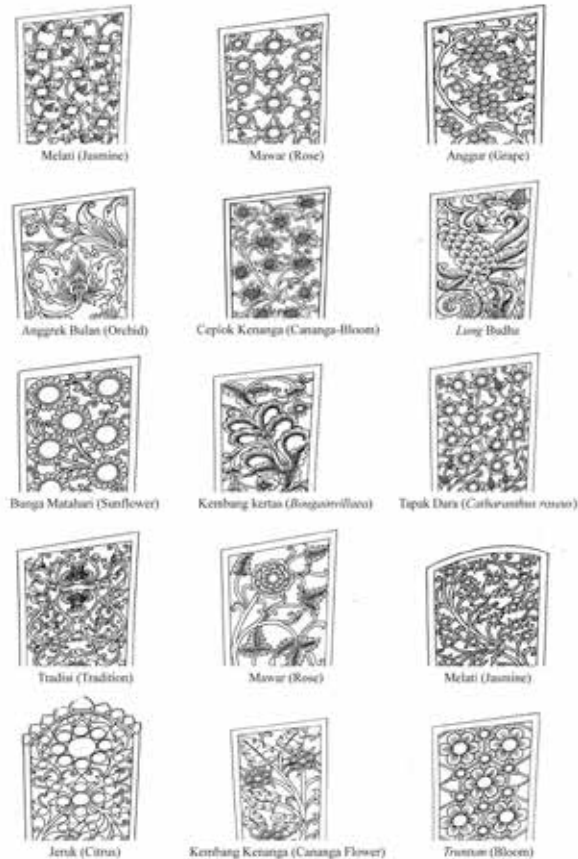


Figure 9. The motifs of plants in *pendhok buntan*

sion of impresses' traces of traditionality. Many motifs are inspired by the form of natural objects, such as vegetations, plants, and trees. The plants motif is manifested in the form of tendrils or *lung-lungan*. Various motives sourced from plants are *lung: kembang sirsat* (soursop), *pakis* (fern), *ceplok kenanga* (cananga-bloom), *kembang kenongo* (cananga), *ceplok permata* (diamond-bloom), *simbar/paku tanduk rusa* (*platycerium bifurcatum*), *tapak doro* (*chantarantus roseus*), *truntum* (bloom), *kembang kertas* (bougenville), *anggur* (grape), *kembang melati - ceplok melati* (jasmine -bloom), *mawar - ceplok mawar*, *anggrek - anggrek bulan*, *bunga matahari*, dan *kembang sirsat*. In the nomenclature of the Javanese language, there is a division of names: *kembang* (flowers), *lung* (vines), *wit* (trees), and *suket* (grass plants). In ornamental forms, the three plant classifications: grass, flower, and trees are then deformed and "categorized" into *lung* or *lung-lungan*. The *pakis* is mostly grows in *Pasisir utara* (northern sheashore) such as Kudus and Pati.



Figure 8. Left: *pendhok blewah* (combined with a jewels) Right: *Pendok Buntan* with a motif of *lung pakis*



Figure 10. *Naga temanten / Peksi dewata*



Figure 11. *Alas-alasan* in *pendhok buntan*

An *alas-alasan* motif based on animals and mythological animals
 This motif took an inspiration from the natural animal and mythological animal as the main source of ornament. The common distinction between animal motif and *alas* (jungle) motif is the presence of animal variations. On the *alas-alasan* motif, there are various animals which composed in the hierarchy of ecosystem layers. The pictures of natural animals are found in several motifs: bird, peacock, the bird and *lung*, butterflies, fish and birds.



Figure 12. Design of *alas-alasan* in *pendhok buntun*

The motifs of mythological animals are: *naga temanten* (the bride of dragon), *peksi dewata* (the deva's bird), *ganesha*, dragon and phoenix, dragon, dragon king, hong bird, crown and dragon, twin dragons. *Peksi Dewata* motif also be found in the sacred place of *Songsong Agem Dalem* which is a sacred place of Surakarta (Marleen ed. 2004, 51). The myth, according to Montagu (1961:148) is a traditional story, accepted historically, that shapes one's beliefs about creation, god, universe, life, and death.

The ornament based on *alas* generally presents a number of animals with nature as their habitat. The peculiarities of *alas-alasan* are animals pictorial which arranged displayed on the ecosystem from the bottom to up, namely: water, land, and air. The subject matter is depicted on forest life in which there are various examples of natural animals: fish, crocodiles, tiger, deer, elephant, rhinoceros, bulls, birds, and mythical animals such as dragon, *jatayu*, winged dog, and lion. The bird of *Jatayu* or *garuda* is a mythological animal that can be found in the source of the puppet story. If we look at the *alas-alasan* in Javanese political economy, the forest becomes the embryo of the Javanese court, this becomes the basis an aesthetic inspiration and its expression can be found in various artifacts with various media variations. Forest has become an important reality in the life of Javanese society. Forest not only provides the physical potential of natural resources, but also the spiritual power of life. Forest as a whole becomes an important part of the religious, spiritual and ritual beliefs of the community (Guntur 2015:38).

A motif based on the traditions, *wayang* (the shadow play) tradition

The classic form of traditional ornament can be found clearly on the themes of tradition derived from: *wayang*; animals of mythology: dragon king's motif, *ganesha*, *peksi dewata*, dragon, phoenix, twin dragons; animals and its nature.

"*Wayang* tells the various acts of the gods and the Hindu heroes which are considered to take place in *Djawa* (Java)



Figure 13. *Punakawan* dan *Pandawa Lima*

... The *Kraton* of Java is essentially the treasury of the ancient Hindu periods, called the Javanese" Buddha Period" (Prijuhutomo 1953). The puppet based motif refers to the *wayang* emPurwadi, both in human (figure) puppets, animals, and or, scene situations. The puppet story becomes a kind of mirror of human life. Ornaments based on humans are usually more pointing to the puppet man with the visualization of the form following the puppet tradition, as manifested in the motifs of *punakawan* and *Pandawa Lima* (five pandavas). There are several other motives: goddess, *peksi dewata*, motifs of giants, motif of *jatayu*. Motifs derived from this puppet generally use tradition *lung* motifs. In the epic of *wayang*, *Pandawa* (Pandavas) is a binary opposition to *Kurawa*.

The term five Pandavas refers to five brothers, namely: Yudistira, Bima, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadewa. In the *Encyclopedia Wayang Purwa*, *Pandawa's* story in defending its truthfulness, always tackles everything beyond humanity, cruelty and greed and evil -and Pandavas become the winner in his feud with *Kurawa* (Sudibyoprono 1991:375-377). While *Punakawan* is character popularized in/by the shadow puppets, they play the role of entertainer and advisor, sometimes acting as a helper for the Pandavas who are in the trouble. The puppet function becomes a learning medium of traditional art about the characters in the community that puts the Javanese personality as a communication of wisdom.

A motif based on geometry and objects

The decorating of the space is done by incorporating motifs: 1) processing the geometric elements (dots, lines, and curves) into form on surface, and arranging them in the composition. 2) 'copy' and 'paste' the motif of the articial objects, then applied to the *pendhok*. The first motif is a geometrical plane composed of a combination of dots, lines, and curves without any defined pictorial significance. The result is a parallelogram, which is left empty without *isen-isen* (sweetener pictorial) so that it is plain as a field of geometry. The form is re-duplicated into a series that extends to the area of the decorated field (Read

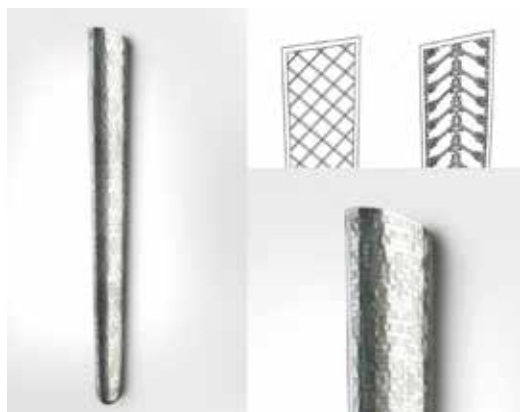


Figure 14. *Nganam kepeng motif*

1935:119).

In addition, there is also a composition of ornaments that pluck only one motif (geometry) and arranged duplicatively, such as the motif of woven *wajik*, and *modang* motif. The second motif is sourced from composition of geometrical surface of artificial objects. The pattern of decoration is re-placed into *pendhok*. The method of replacing the beauty of the surface obtained by imitation of the beauty of artificial objects, such as wicker of object, with the result is *nganam kepeng motif*.

The characteristic of an ornament is done by the way of inclusion of traditional ornament elements such as leaf, flower or fruit, *ukel* (spiral), and transformed the vegetations into the main pattern of *lung-lungan* alone or in combinations with animals. The pattern of *lung-lungan* often found as a background of *alas-alasan* motifs, animals kingdom, and *wayang*. Those motifs are become a specific, have a traditionality of expression compared to others. The ornamentation of motif on *pendhok* are using technique of *pahatan* (engrave) for *pendhok* of *alusan* (refines), and *cukitan* or *wudulan* for *pendhok* of *kodhian* form. The *pahatan* resulted more dimensional on the surface in *pendhok buntan* compared to the others type, and have an expression to the art of relief in temples.

CONCLUSIONS

The legitimation of Palace in making of an identity through kris, from the Kartasura to Surakarta, has shown that the 'form' has been accepted by the *empu*, *pandi*, *mranggi*, and folks, then became a tradition of the palace and outside of palace. That is the way of acknowledging the style of Surakarta kris by recognized its forms of sheath and handle, especially the sheath of *ladrang* and *gayaman*, with the handle of *tunggak semi*. During the colonization, kris is become a resistance in *Kraton* fashion customary, and *Kraton* Surakarta remained the original post-Kartasura trace of cultural authenticity. The *pendhok* in Surakarta style was applied to the kris of *tangguh nom* (young period). Kris *tangguh nom* is identified in the period of Mataram Islam

(Yogyakarta and Surakarta) in Java until the independence of Indonesia. The ornaments are existed in many objects, both functional and cultural. The characteristics and forms of *pendhok* in Surakarta style were tall, and slender. The most techniques in ornamentation of *pendhok's* were used in period of 1970s is *cukitan* (engravings) and *wudulan* (hitting the plate until it becomes a shape). The usual staining technique is practiced is a chromium of gold, silver, copper and *silih asih* (two colors with unified become in compositions of alternating).

The aesthetic of *pendhok* is different compared to the blades, the basis of *pendhok* beauties is ornaments, techniques, and materials. The pattern of *lung* is implementing into others motifs, the composition of the elements, form, and motifs are organizing in repetition, scaling, and gradation (Guntur, 2004:124-130 and Meyer 1957:vii). The pattern of *lung-lungan* is became the general basis in ornaments, either as main or additional elements. The rhythm of *lung-lungan* becomes the "center" in organizing various combinational elements, it is a movement from the left and to the right or vice versa that leads the motifs to the top, following the logic of growing plant, in vertical space of *pendhok*. The shape of *lung-lungan* refers to the ornamental decorations arranged continuously create the rhythm of alternating (Gustami 2007:120). The *lung-lungan* pattern is used primarily as the main visual subject, sometimes has placed as background that support the motion rhythm of the main elements in ornaments. Leaves are widely used, and in many cases, the style tends to turn into curls. The imagery of Hindu-Buddhism in displaying of animals, natural and mythical, is still implemented on ornament.

In process of ornamentation, *mranggi* normally starts from the bottom (base) to the top (tip) of *pendhok*. The size of the ornament usually begins with a small size and gradually getting bigger till reach to the top of *pendhok*. To cover the widened field of space, it has done by multiplying of elements. The tools which used frequently are pencil, paper, pen of various sizes. There is an artistic principle used in making ornaments. Some principles of an arrangement of elements is the dynamic repetition, and the process of dimensionality of the embossed surface.

The principle of dynamic repetition is to create a repetition of motif, it is used more than once in design, the form is standing in a situation of repeating its self, or looping, it is the simplest design (Wong 1972:11). A repetition has regularity, which is sought by looping is the rhythm. The *lung-lungan* is a loop to the left to the right or vice versa with the upward direction, so there is the impression of the rhythm. The loop occurs in the element's shape, size, direction, and position by using the opposite technique (mirroring), scaling the size, and adding elements. The iconography of *lung-lungan* on *pendhok* is symbolizing the rythm of growth and development of life in spiritual nature.

The second principle in ornamentation is to achieve a motif into dimensionality of relief. The *cukitan* technique commonly used as a technique of an embodiment of ornaments on *pendhok*, the result ornament is flat, mostly found in *pendhok* of keris *kodhian*. The technique works in the way of reducing the material by carving up the surface, pointing the instrument movement that is pressed to the metal and then moved upwards in an effort to take the surface of the material, so the surface is reduced.

The level of *cukitan's* technique is going deepened in the *pahatan* technique, and lead to the process the relief's techniques on *pendhok*. To reach the depth of relief, the craftman is using a hammer, chisel, or chisel - relief. The purpose of this technique is to make the shape of ornaments more impressed or protrude by the process of the dimensionality of the embossed surface. The relief technique has been invented to reach the distinction with another *pendhok* craftman, within the imagery of Hindu-Buddhist relief. The ornament is using combination imagery from epics, tradition, and cultural with. Relief is an art which applied in temples of Hindu and Budha. The ornament in form of stylized relief in *pendhok* is expressing the senses to the taste of ancient.

The *tangguh* of Surakarta kris and its formation had leading to the types or form of *pendhok*, and its ornament, which at first is the 'patronage' art of Palace, that accepted by *mranggi*. The tradition of imagery which passed down to Surakarta is mostly of Javanese traditional arts, it is the iconography of natural life. The natural which described here is symbolized in motif of *lung-lungan* (curly vegetation rhythm), *alas-alasan* (animal or animal mythology and its cosmos), and mythical narration in puppetry, others is geometry, and artificial objects. The characteristic of an ornament is done by the way of inclusion of traditional ornament elements such as leaf, flower or fruit, *ukel* (spiral). The style of *pendhok* is then visually 'embossed' alike into the form of relief.

The ornament based on *alas* generally presents a number of animals with nature as their habitat. The peculiarity of *alas-alasan* is the arrangement of animals was displayed on the ecosystem from the bottom to up, namely: water, land, and air. If we look at the *alas-alasan* in Javanese political economy, the forest becomes the embryo of the Javanese court, this becomes the basis an aesthetic inspiration and its expression can be found in various artifacts with various media variations. The jungle has become an important reality in the life of Javanese society, not only provides the physical potential of natural resources, but also the spiritual power of life. Forest as a whole becomes an important part of the religious, spiritual and ritual beliefs of the community (Guntur 2015:38).

A cultural ornament in the kris of Surakarta does not appear suddenly, but through the history, which could be

refers back to the Hindu-Budha-Javanism's iconography of nature. The form of vegetations which transformed into embellish where found on many temples become a cultural source of motifs of *lung-lungan*. Seeing the way of stylization, Hinduistic flora seems to be a common form of ornaments. The ornament on *pendhok* in practical ritual, it has a cultural meaning. During the Islamic period in Java, a traditional art shown the adoption of the pre-Islamic. The forms, sometimes after further process and extreme stilization, the advent of Islam does not really eradicate figural representation in ornaments of *pendhok*. Today, *pendhok* is signifying the ornament as beautify, or harmonicity in form of dressing. But, more important, the ornament on *pendhok* is represents the important part of the spiritual and ritual beliefs of the imagined community of "Java".

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