

# Cultural Acculturation in The Ornamental Art of The Kudus Traditional House

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**Abstract.** The decoration made by the Javanese community is a work of art and culture inherited from generation to generation where it has uniqueness and characteristic which contains the content of story and deep values concerning aesthetic, symbolic, and philosophical. The existence of ornamental art that has been there cannot be separated by the acculturation of other cultures where the cultural process takes place in the life of Javanese society who always open themselves to accept change for development. One of the various ornaments created is Wuwungan ornamental art on the roof of traditional house Kudus which has a very distinctive form that is not owned by other areas, so the visualization is very interesting to be studied scientifically. This study provides qualitative explanation, so the method used is qualitative with historical approach method, architecture, philosophy, and aesthetics to analyze and know the concept of ornamental form that visualization of ornamental variety acculturate with previous culture seen in important parts in Kudus traditional house. The results of the study conducted in order to find the shape concept and concept of ornamental art philosophy Wuwungan custom house Kudus that reflects the noble values of Javanese cultural teachings as a strength of local identity in the life of the global community.

**Keywords:** Decoration, ornamental, Wuwungan, Kudus, Acculturation

## 1 Introduction

The existence of ornamental art in Indonesia has had a long history. In the beginning of its presence is made with the needs of the cultural community groups that they need attributes or symbols of existence of these communities. Human life that live in groups also requires interaction with other groups that eventually occur cultural interaction and cultural acculturation takes place. It also affects the creation of decoration, so as to bring up various forms of visualization that have their own functions. The function is related to active function and passive function. Where there are ornamental art that has the purpose of religion, symbolic, until the decoration that has no meaning, they just as a decorative function and only constructive. But it is believed that in the Javanese cultural tradition everything created in this art of ornamental or decorative arts must have an intention and purpose.

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Hereditary traditions essentially mimic what has been inherited from generation to generation in the Javanese culture that inherited the ornament to the next generation to establish the relay stick so that its cultural riches will not simply disappear [1]. Even the well-known Javanese community who has a high tolerance attitude has proven able to accept and adopt the acculturation of decoration from other cultures. Yet the Javanese people still have a reliable bargaining position, so that what appears to this day in various cultural results, especially decoration still has the characteristic of Java. Similarly, in the understanding of making the house as a residence with decorative art in it. One of the various ornaments created is *Wuwungan* ornamental art on the roof of traditional house Kudus which has a very distinctive form that is not owned by other areas, so the visualization is very interesting to be studied scientifically.

## 2 Method

This research tries to find and give qualitative explanation, so that the method used is qualitative. Through this research internally is as one of the scope of the field of fine arts, especially the art of craft that utilize the natural materials around the community that is Javanese culture (*Wuwungan* ornamental art of *Pesisiran*). This will have a sustainable impact, so the richness of Javanese cultural traditions will continue to run as a local genius that enriches the nation's cultural treasures. Externally can be used as information and reference of Javanese ornamentation for academic and non-academic craftsmen, as well as contribution in conservation of Indonesian art and culture.

The data collection in this research is conducted, either directly or indirectly to the original source. The data which collected directly was grouped in to the primary data, while the data collected indirectly was grouped into secondary data. To obtain accurate research data as required, data collection method is required with the following stages: (1) Library studies (library research) do the documentation data collection method, published books, journals / scientific papers, literature, manuscripts , previous studies, and so forth; (2) The Field Study do observation, observe, record and take pictures directly; (3) Interview with the instrument model of the interview guide that will be given to some key informants and competent. Interviews were conducted to obtain data that was not obtained through literature study and observation, then conducted interviews directly by data triangulation ie Javanese cultural experts, some Javanese house researchers, and ornamental art users of *Wuwungan* Java, especially traditional houses of Kudus. Data from resources is processed by triangulation technique of source and data to obtain inter subjective data, so it is expected to get the concept of form and philosophy of *Wuwungan* ornamental art of Kudus traditional house valid; (4) Data analysis is focused on the parts and overall problems related to this research. The analysis conducted in this study using interactive model analysis. Interactive analysis with Grounded Research approach consists of three activities that occur simultaneously those are data reduction, data presentation, and withdrawal of conclusion / verification.

## 3 Discussion

The existence of ornamental art *wuwungan* in Kudus traditional house also cannot be separated from the historical factors of the Demak kingdom. The first Islamic kingdom in Indonesia was founded by Raden Patah on the blessing and support of the Wali Songo which was estimated shortly after the collapse of the Majapahit kingdom (during the reign of King Brawijaya to V / Kertabumi) ie year  $\pm$  1478 AD This fact is characterized by evidence of *Sinengkelan (Condro Sengkolo)* "*Sirno Ilang Kertaning Bumi* " and "*Geni*

*Mati Siniram Janmi* " which means in year of *Soko* 1403/1481 M. Before Demak became the center of the kingdom, formerly Demak was a duchy under the rule of the Majapahit kingdom (Brawijaya V) and before the status of the duchy, better known to people by the name of " *Glagah Wangi* " which became the duchy of Jepara and is the only duchy who the ruler ( *Adipati* ) convert to Islam. The real coastal kingdom caused the fall of the Majapahit kingdom was Demak. This city ( Demak ) became famous in the history of Java Island because of its lucky location on the north coast as it is protected by the mount Muria [2].

The fall of Majapahit in the first quarter of the 16<sup>th</sup> century and the arrival of Islamic forces around Demak were the last days of Hinduistic rule and the start of a new phase of Islamist era power. The Islamic community in Java became strong, they came from the lower and middle classes living on the north coast of Java, so that in 1527 AD, Majapahit fell under Demak rule [3]. The process of making this area of the kingdom took place by establishing the kingdom and of course the houses of the royalty and the people. Also the influence of the western world that also contributes to the color in the understanding of the trading system, the cluster system that affects the understanding in making the house. Then came the forms of traditional Javanese houses that refer to previous forms of houses, especially traditional houses of Kudus as a result of cultural acculturation.

In the era of Hinduism and Buddhism, which is marked by the buildings of the temple, it is clear that the cultural life of the ruler (king) at that time as well as the figure that symbolizes the religious leadership greatly affect the elements of architecture especially when viewed from existing evidence, that the concept of how to build, and the form of their ( people ) work is too highlights the cultural life of the palace. In later times, after the people knew the Godhead of the Supreme God (faham Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa), there was little change and the shift of the king's power over the people became the power of religious leaders over their supporters [4]. The entry of Chinese in Java who came to trade formed a community or villages on the island of Java as on the beaches of Tuban, Surabaya, and Gresik. Some of these settlements still exist, some leaving only traces of history in the form of artifacts such as the forms of building house with the art of Chinese-Dutch architecture.

The Chinese who came bring the traditions, norms, and attitudes of fanaticism to the tradition of their ancestors. Their thoughts are filled with teachings that contain the views of life and philosophy of Chinese people such as Buddhism, Taoism, and Khong Hu Cu. The impression that appears on the surface is that China is not a race which close to Islam, so that most Muslims feel the Chinese group is not Islam. Yet based on the historical record of the development of Islam in Java, Islam and China have a very close relationship. For example, the first king of the Islamic kingdom named Raden Patah is actually a Chinese named Senopati Djim Bun. According to Chinese sources, the words Djim Bun comes from Greek which means powerful [3].

Evidence of the existence of these immigrants who eventually brought changes to cultural changes in Indonesia, especially Java in terms of architectural works characterized by the existence of the Kingdom of Demak as the first Islamic kingdom in Indonesia. The work of architecture shows the cultural life of community groups that still hold the values of ritual and spiritual and still in a group that is not broad of hamlets, suburb, villages, to the city level. Even the history of culture noted that other peoples cultural influences also entered in the making of houses with its ornament art. Koentjaraningrat divides the Javanese culture into several cultural areas, namely Banyumas, Bagelen, Nagaringung, Mancanagari, Sabrang Wetan, and Pesisir. This division is based on regional diversity [2]. These cultural diversity is of course also will be found on architectural formation. In the discussion of Javanese architecture in *Pesisir* (Coastal areas) and remote areas (*Pedalaman*

/ *Nagarigung*), the building feature equation will refer to the characteristic of a large group of Javanese culture while the difference shows the diversity according to local conditions.

Changes in ornamental art, especially ornamental *Wuwungan* traditional house Kudus can lead to cultural changes, although a change can also occur due to other mechanisms. Such mechanisms may arise in the form of new discoveries or invention, defusion, and acculturation as an effort to study about changes in society. If the source of change comes from within (internal) is called an immanent change whereas if the source of change comes from outside (extern) is called the contact [5]. This influence further impacts on the socio-economic changes in the Kudus region that make the architectural style of the traditional house of Kudus. Not only on the social conditions of society, but also on decorative art products on all ornamental elements contained in the Kudus traditional house created including *Wuwungan* roof decorative art. This *wuwungan* decorative art change is as a result of the touch and role of technology, as Raymond William has noted, "The deepest change came only with the development of new reproductive technologies" [6].

Javanese cultural tradition in making a house is always followed by a top ornament or a roof ornament. Many of the houses in Demak, Kudus, Central Java on the roof of the roof are decorated with terracotta or pottery embodied like figures of *wayang*, rows of sashes or simply painting plants with *gunungan* images in the middle. Each terracotta or pottery is decorated with mosaics or broken glass / mirror, so that daylight reflects a glittering beam [7]. *Wuwungan* Kudus has uniqueness and intrinsic values that are not owned by other regions in Java. *Wuwungan* decorative art is shaped tendrils and in the middle at the top of the roof there is *wuwungan rojo* and *pengapit* with broken glass ornamentation / glass. So it looks like a *gunungan* or a king's crown. On the 4 sides to the top of the buffer *blandar penuwun* there is the same ornamental art called *wuwungan jengger* or *wuwungan cekak*. In this *wuwungan jengger* there is no broken glass / mirror and locked with *wuwungan bulusan* on the lowest side or corner of the house on 4 sides that also do not use the ornamentation of broken glass / mirror. So pieces of glass / mirror that is white to form a triangle / rectangle only found on the top fitting decoration above *blandar penuwun*.

Haryono explained that the artifacts as the fulfillment of spiritual needs, the form and the ornament tied with religious teachings, the hidden meaning behind the decoration because there is a message of living philosophy through the symbols [8]. Decorative variety has the function to decorate an object, thus adding beauty and appreciation value both spiritual and material. In it are found symbolic values or purposes that have something to do with the life view of the creator community, has a meaning more meaningful with certain expectations [9].

*Wuwungan* ornamental art form cannot be separated from the parts of the previous culture. The influence of Hinduism is also still attached to the form of a roof that resembles the shape of a mountain (*Meru*) which later developed by making a stylization that also refers to the art of carving that developed in Jepara. The idea of engraving probably also refers to the shape of the carving on the tomb building behind the Kudus tower. The form of the roof model cannot be separated from Wali Songo's wise aesthetic ideals based on Javanese psychology approach. In the memory of the Javanese, still imagine the greatness and grandeur of the Hinduist Majapahit kingdom. *Joglo* building form, Majapahit palace typology with roof-like mount (*Meru*) form, is a model roof that is used for the construction of mosques and tombs. The concept of mountains and trees is also united with the concept of the world above, the middle world, and the underworld. The World above is the spirit of the ancestors (old belief), *Kahyangan* or *nirvana* (Hindu-Buddhist) and Heaven (Islam). Middle-earth is the realm between (medium) of the upper and lower worlds. While the underworld is the earth all of it [10]. Acculturation produces art products based on religion which in its development show the combination of Hindu and Buddhist tradition from India

and Indonesian art tradition which comes from prehistoric culture and Islam present bring big changes in view of life and their world [11] [12].

Attributes of broken plate is also only used on the roof that is in the middle only on the *wuwungan rojo* and *pengapit*. While on the *wuwungan jengger* that covers on the roof side right and left do not use broken plate / glass. Glass fractional elements are often known as mosaic is the influence of Chinese culture which at that time inlay technique became the easiest and finest finishing techniques because no paint material in finishing has been found as now. This inspiration inlay technique is finally widely used in making gravestone / *mizan* as a sign of dead body / the deceased. Besides, the glass / mirror also gives rise to a leader who shows a class / caste that has a certain intelligence or knowledge that is more (*linuwih*) compared with the head of the region and even the people. Symbols pieces of plates / glass attached to *wuwungan* on the roof of the house is a symbol of a crown with diamond-like diamond crown of the king. In general, the king who reigned in Java wearing a crown shaped *kuluk* or *songkok*. As is known, princess in the Netherlands generally use the crown as the crown of the king in the form of a curved head jewelry. This Dutch influence is also referred to by the palace in creating a crown for a king with diamonds, gold, silver or precious stones. It was also adopted to create attributes for the viceking and the front men and even the royal family as a symbol of nobility. In Islam this ornamental art form turned into an ornamental art of a mosque called *Musthoko*.

The art of *wayang* that lives in the elements of Javanese society life has been blended also in aesthetic life that is visualized in ornamental art forms such as *wuwung* ornamental art to decorate the house. The inspiration of *mahkutho*, *urang supit*, and *gunungan* become the basic idea of creation of ornamental art of Kudus house of Central Java in creating *wuwungan* decorative art of the residence. Although there is also a community who states that the idea of the *Wuwung* Kudus form is stilization of clove tobacco leaves and elephant trunk. The addition of broken glass that follow the ornamentation flow on *wuwungan* ornament art is a form of expression to make the decorative art has more beautiful and great impression. The Javanese in their daily life is laden with messages and “*sanepa*” with what their created as a form of “*pepiling*” and doctrine to the next generation through artwork created [13].

Seeing the location of *wuwung* ornamental art on the upper edge of the house (*wuwung*, roof) with the sky (*awang*), is the meeting point between *wwang* or *wong* (human) with God so they created beautifully. As part of the house, the top of the house is the ultimate goal center of all human action as the center of the supplication (*panyuwunan*, *panuwunan*) to the upper world. The house as the body is the behavior of human life itself (the body) as the middle world. Meanwhile, the foundation of the house (*palemahan*) is the basic form of the whole house building associated with the earth or the underworld. *Wuwung* ornamental art that is on the roof of a house is a union between sky and earth. *Wuwungan* part is *rerenggan* or ornamentation of *wuwung* form symbolizing deep contemplation about a condition. This condition is widely depicted through the top symbols in cultural products such as *keris*, *kayon* peak (*gunungan*), the top of the temple, the top of the mosque (*mustoko*), and the top of the stupa. The symbols chosen in *wuwungan* reflect a basic principle in the life of a society whose position is "cultivated" because it deals with the main things that support their life [14].

## 4 Conclusion

The concept of residential development that is a house in Kudus area is the result of cultural cross between local people and immigrants who finally gave birth to a strong form of building art as a marker of their social status in the life of the community. The sign of life which is a marker that they are in a class with high economic power, makes the concept of a

magnificent house that is not the same as the citizens who occupy the usual class (common people). So they need the ornamental art attributes to be able to show their existence. Kudus traditional house as an inheritance from acculturation of material culture is not just a dead object but full of essential values related to aesthetics, ethics, social, cultural, and also spiritual, when we able to capture the moral message behind the material.

By exploring what is contained in decorative art especially *wuwungan* ornamental art as a sign of culture in Kudus traditional house we will find local wisdom as the basis of character education in society culture widely. The growth and development of traditional art is one of the benchmarks that the artistic essence still exists. The expectation is that *wuwungan* ornamental art of Kudus custom house becomes a part that should not be abandoned as a cultural marker of Javanese society, especially Kudus society. In it there are intrinsic values that can be a guide and learning local character genius for the teachings of Kudus society and the people of Java in general. All of that is on the noble values of human life that believe in the majesty and power of the Almighty God (*Tuhan Yang Maha Esa*).

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