

The Visual Transformation of Surakarta Style Panji Inu Kertapati and Dewi Candrakirana Masks

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Abstract. Along with the current development, the classical Surakarta style Panji mask has experienced visual transformation. The mask size that usually used to cover face has turned smaller to be sold as souvenirs, or enlarged into city park decorations. Panji Inu Kertapati and Dewi Candrakirana masks was chosen as the focus considering that they are the main characters and the loyalty symbols of married couples in Javanese culture. When the masks experienced visual transformations, a question rises regarding how the standard aesthetic formulations are, as well as their meanings. The method used is the *wangun* concept to study the masks' aesthetics, and denotative and connotative meanings to determine the meaning. The results are that Panji masks have *wangun* aesthetic values, consisting elements such as the *wangun* patterns, *angger-angger* (regulation), *wewaler* (prohibition) and sacredness. The denotative meaning is that the masks is used to cover dancers' faces and for the connotative meanings is very interesting because has relations to various contexts in accordance with the current development. Based on this article, it is expected that a thorough study can be conducted in the future regarding other mask figures in the Panji's folklore in order to preserve the aesthetic formulation and its meaning.

Keywords: *wangun* concept, *panji* mask, visual transformation.

1 Introduction

The visual aesthetic of Surakarta style Panji Inu Kertapati and Dewi Candrakirana masks is essential to study, because they are two of Indonesia's famous masks. Some regions in Indonesia have similar masks such as Yogyakarta, Cirebon, and Malang with their respective characteristics. Mask is not a monopoly of the Indonesian culture because there are many other countries that also have mask cultures. The mask in Surakarta has undergone transformations, from a face cover for dancers into an element of a city park decoration with enormous size. The mask is also used as a decoration of home interiors, restaurants and hotels. The visual appearance of the mask has also changed with the application of batik motif ornaments. The masks of Panji Inu Kertapati and Dewi Candrakirana are a pair of masks from dozens of other masks that depict the characters in the performance of Panji's

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story, a story of love and heroism. The love story of Panji Inu Kertapati, the son of Lembu Amijaya, the king of the Kingdom of Jenggala or Janggala or Kahuripan (estimated in Sidoarjo, East Java Province) with Dewi Candrakirana, the daughter of Lembu Amiluhur, the king of Panjalau or Kadiri or Daha (now Kediri in East Java Province). Panji story was written in the 14th century in Majapahit Kingdom era. This story is famous up to the Malaysian peninsula, Cambodia and Vietnam.

Studies on masks that have been conducted mostly focused only on dance, and very few study focused on the forms of the masks. This shows a study gap in the realm of Javanese traditional art. The question to be answered is how the visuals and aesthetics of Panji Inu Kertapati and Dewi Candrakirana masks are and how the meanings of the mask are. Some of the findings in this study are related to the formulation of the masks' aesthetics to be categorized as *wangun* or aesthetic, and the findings on the meaning of masks in terms of denotative and connotative meanings.

2 Literature and Theory

Literature was used to describe the visuals of Surakarta-style Panji Inu Kertapati and Dewi Candrakirana masks, namely during the reign of Paku Buwana II and III, the face of the masks were adjusted to the facial expressions of *wayang kulit* (Javanese Leather Puppets), especially in the adjustment of carving and coloring techniques [1]. Then the Panji Inu Kertapati mask was made based on the face of Arjuna's character in *wayang kulit*, and Dewi Candrakirana mask was based on Srikandi's character of *wayang kulit* face [2].

The theory that was used to study the visual aesthetics of the masks was the concept of *wangun* (beauty/aesthetics) which is derived from the Javanese mindset (*kejawèn*). *Wangun* concept in the visual context includes 1) *wangun* visual which consists of *wangun* element and basic *wangun* arrangement, 2) principles of *wangun* placement arrangement pattern or *wangun* visual placement in the context of drawing area or space, 3) *angger-angger* and *wewaler* or rules and prohibition, 4) sacredness, 5) meaning in the context of *wangun* visual and meaning in the broader or more various contexts. The concept outside of *wangun* (aesthetic) visual and placement is called *ora wangun* (not aesthetic) or *aèng* (strange) [3].

The concepts of *wangun* and *aèng* have ever been used to study Exploration of Design Development Borobudur Chair with *Aèng* Method (strange and to study *Aèng* Visual Ornament of The Surakarta Palace's Building [4]. In terms of meaning of the masks, this study referred to both denotative and connotative meanings.

3 Data and Methods

The mask data studied were the Panji Inu Kertapati and Dewi Candrakirana Style Surakarta masks by Narimo, a mask artisan from Surakarta, Central Java. The method used for data collection was literature study, interviews with cultural observers, dancers, spectators, mask artisans, interior designers, park specialist, and observations on dance performances.

4 Result and Discussion

4.1. Visual and Aesthetics of Panji Inu Kertapati dan Dewi Candrakirana Masks

Panji Inu Kertapati is also known as Panji Asmarabangun, while Dewi Candrakirana is also known as Dewi Sekartaji. Initially, the visuals of those masks in Surakarta referred to *Wayang Gedog*, namely the mask of Panji Inu Kertapati made based on the face of the *wayang gedog* character of Panji Inu Kertapati, as well as the mask of Dewi Candrakirana made based on

the face of Dewi Candrakirana character in *wayang gedog*. Later, the visual of a Surakarta style masks exemplifies the faces of *wayang kulit purwa* characters. The Panji Inu Kertapati mask is made based on the face of the Arjuna character in *wayang kulit*, and the Dewi Candrakirana mask is based on the face of Dewi Srikandi's character in *wayang kulit*. The mask visuals have experienced development made by artisans, based on the request of dancers, both local dancers and foreign dancers, especially Western dancers. Some changes include the application of *paes* (a makeup ornament) which is based on the makeup of Surakarta traditional brides, and the addition of rhombus ornaments to the forehead of the mask. The change in the mask color from white as a symbol of goodness into brown or creamy brown was done to match the dancer's skin color. Changes in size to be longer faces when the masks are ordered by the Western dancers (Interview with Narimo, 08-03-2018).

The aesthetics of Panji Inu Kertapati mask can be seen from the composition of the mask's facial elements, white or cream face color, the vertical arrangement of the mask consisting of the chin, black jawes, open red lips, 6 (six) golden *prada* teeth, black transverse thin mustache, sharp nose, cheeks, *gabahan* (rice form) eyes, black eyebrows and golden *prada*, rhombus shape on the forehead (not found on the early Surakarta style mask), *jamang* or *irah-irahan* (ornaments) of flora motif with red - pink *sungging* (coloring) technique - white, yellow - light yellow - white, combined with gold *prada* color. Vertical size is adjusted to the dancer's face size grouped by local dancers (standard) and Western dancers (longer). Horizontal arrangement is divided into three arrangements, namely right, middle, and left, covering right: right eyebrow and eye; Middle: nose, mustache, lips; left: left eyebrow and eye. The mask will look *wangun* or aesthetic if the horizontal arrangement looks symmetrical (Interview with Narimo, 08-03-2018).

Dewi Candrakirana's aesthetic mask consists of face mask elements, white or cream face color, chin vertical arrangement, red lips close, sharp nose, cheeks, blurred eyes, black eyebrows and golden *prada*, *patran* on the forehead (not found on early Surakarta style mask), Surakarta style *paes* decorated with red - pink - white, and golden *prada* ornaments, and black hair. Horizontal arrangement consists of right, center and left. Right consists of right eyebrow and eye, middle nose and lips, left consists of left eyebrow and eye. The mask will look *wangun* if it has the similar criteria for the Panji Inu Kertapati mask, which is if the horizontal arrangement is symmetrical.



Fig. 1. Panji Inu Kertapati mask (left figure) and Dewi Candrakirana (right figure) art works Narimo-a collection of Rahmanu Widayat (Picture source: Rahmanu Widayat, 2018)

Table 1. Dimension of Surakarta Style mask with centimeter size coversion

Dimension	Panji Inu Kertapati mask	Dewi Candrakirana mask
Width	14,5	14,5
Length	18	19
Nose forward point	3	3

4.2. The Meanings of Panji Inu Kertapati and Dewi Candrakirana Masks

The denotative meaning of the mask is a face cover for dancers and to strengthen the dancers' characteristics in presenting Panji Inu Kertapati and Dewi Candrakirana characters. The two masks serve as symbols namely the mask of Panji Inu Kertapati symbolizes chivalry while the Mask of Dewi Candrakirana symbolizes of a princess. The connotative meaning of the mask from a cultural perspective serves as a cultural heritage that needs to be preserved. The existence of the mask will remain sustainable if the mask dance performance still exists. Related to the shifting of the function of the mask into an aesthetic element for interior design or park decoration, the masks should not only be placed freely but should also have a clear concept. That is to say the composition of the mask contains stories that can be conveyed to mask lovers.

The meaning of the mask from dancers' point of view means that when a dancer is wearing the mask, he/she will become another character, as if the character's spirit entered the dancer's body. When explained based on the concept of Hindu - Javanese cosmology, namely the existence of the upper realm (head, mountain, place of deity, place of ancestral spirits, sacred), the middle world (body, land, place of man, profane) and the lower realm (feet, sea, ghost, devil, genies), then the head is the symbol of the upper nature. This means that the mask is in the upper realm, not only representing the spirits of the ancestors, but the spirit of the ancestors is presented in the mask dance performance. The spirit of Panji Inu Kertapati and Dewi Candrakirana are present in the dancer's body.

The meaning from the point of view of the mask dance audience is mysterious because they do not know exactly who is behind the mask. The meaning of the mask craftsman's point of view is that it can provide inner satisfaction, when they can complete the mask work. The meaning from the point of view of the collector is that the mask is an accessory or an art object that can provide pleasure. Meaning from the perspective of the interior designer means that Panji's mask is used as an aesthetic element of interior design that can bring the traditional Javanese atmosphere in a space. The meaning from the viewpoint of the park specialist is the mask as a park element can add to the beauty of the park, especially if it is equipped with lighting for the night that can bring up the dimensions of the mask and so it does not appear flat.

5 Conclusion

The mask is currently undergoing an extraordinary form transformation due to the change in its function. Panji Inukertapati and Dewi Candrakirana masks have *wangun* visual criteria because they have visual elements with vertical and horizontal arrangement. The *wangun* placement pattern of the mask visual elements is symmetrical. The masks have *angger-angger* or the Surakarta style mask guidelines in the form of mask patterns, colors, and dimensions. The masks also have *wewaler* or the prohibition so as not get too far out of the visual guidelines of Surakarta style masks. These masks is included in a sacred category related to their placement in Hindu-Javanese cosmology which is located in upper realm or

within the structure of the human body in the head. The meaning of the mask is not singular, but depends on the point of views of those who give the meaning.

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