

## Conference Paper

# Paradox Aesthetics Blangkon in Yogyakarta and Surakarta

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## Abstract

Mataram kingdom became part of the history of Kraton Yogyakarta, starting from the Giyanti agreement in 1755. Then Mataram kingdom was divided into two regions Solo and Yogyakarta. Each region was headed by one king. The title for the king's Solo palace is Pakubuwono, while the term for the king's palace in Yogyakarta is Hamengkubowono. One of the relics from the palace, which is still preserved until now is *blangkon*. *Blangkon* is used as a headgear by the people in the palace. Yogyakarta Blangkon style is different from Solo blangkon style, although this palace used to be one area. Blangkon have a specific pattern that is related to the lifestyle of Javanese community, especially people of the palace. Blangkon is considered as one of artifacts as it has a philosophy of characteristics and identity of Javanese community. This research used qualitative research in the form of literature study. The method used by the authors is by collecting data source: primary data and secondary data. Blangkon will be examined through the used patterns which is connected in the aesthetic paradox. Basically there are kinds of pattern which are called pattern two, three, four, and five. Eventually it came to a conclusion that Blangkon is the development of aesthetic paradox patterns of patterns three to five patterns.

**Keywords:** Paradox aesthetics, Blangkon

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## 1. Introduction

Mataram kingdom became part of the history of Yogyakarta and Surakarta, starting with their Giyanti agreement in 1755. Mataram kingdom was divided into two regions of Surakarta and Yogyakarta Sultanate. Each region is headed by a king. The Surakarta Sultanate called Pakubuwono, while the king in Yogyakarta Sultanate is Hamengkubowono. Yogyakarta is a special city in the province of Central Java. This area has a special designation because it has special autonomy in organizing his government. The Yogyakarta Keraton have place in Beringan forest with built by Sri Sultan Hamengku Buwono I in 1756. For the timeless of Forest name, then used to name of the market in the city center, the name is market Beringharjo. Region of Kraton Yogyakarta extend between Tugu (northern boundary) and Krapyak (southern boundary), the Code River (east) and Winongo (west), between Mount Merapi and the Southern Sea.

The term of Keraton or Karaton is derived from the word ka-ratu-an, ratu have means of king or queen residence. Meaning is wider, can be described simply that,

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the environment are throughout the structure and a building area of the palace having contains conviction and have a Javanese philosophy essential of life, that supposition Paraning dumadi (where it comes from humans and where eventually humans after death). Keraton Yogyakarta region which extends from in the south of Panggung Krapyak to north Tugu Yogyakarta has a linear inverse dualism that can be means of philosophical symbolic. While the region of Keraton Surakarta is a lowland in basin located on the slopes of the mountains Lawu and Merapi mountain.

Residents of Keraton Yogyakarta and Surakarta area can be divided into three groups: the nobility Bandara, the employee Abdi Dalem, the commoners Kawula Dalem. The nobility still have a relationship with the family of Sultan or Sunan. While the employee or Abdi Dalem is a group of people from walks of life who are assigned based on a decree issued by the Sultan. The employee or the court servants divided into three clerks Abdi Dalem palace, Kepatihan employees, district and subdistrict, as well as employees seconded to the colonial period.

The religion embraced by the people Keraton Yogyakarta and Surakarta in the beginning was Muslim Javanese, but along with the influence of Islam who entered the archipelago at that time so that now the majority of the region's population palace religion is Islam. Nevertheless, local beliefs remain stable and still feels thick region of the palace.

Most of livelihood is farming communities, traders, and craftsmen. No wonder that a lot of the shopping center at cheap prices as well as the artisans of traditional arts; batik, keris, pottery, ceramics and each other's. Besides the geographical position Yogyakarta area adjacent to the beach and the potential for other natural and cultural arts center make this area increasingly showing its existence as a city Specialties.

At the time of the royal palace or clothing used by courtiers in particular is Sikepan Alit and Langenarjan, Ageng Clothing, Pethok Clothing, Clothing tindak-an. Not complete it if not wearing Blangkon. Blangkon is a complement to the clothes of the foregoing. According to Ayu (in Soegeng T, 1980/1981: 113) Blangkon comes from the word that means printing Blank empty, is a name given to the kinds Iket that have been printed. Blangkon commonly referred to as udheng; Bendo; Ketu. Blangkon used by men as a complementary fashion. Ingredients to make blangkon are shaped batik cloth handkerchief; squares.

The use of blangkon for the public in Keraton not necessarily used so without regard to ethical and aesthetic experience. Blangkon have a specific pattern that is closely related to the lifestyle of the Java community especially people palace. Blangkon called art artifacts due to have a philosophy that characterizes an identity; Java community. The pattern of the relationship of a scientific nature, divine, and artifacts in one unified affirmative meaning to the common life. An identity that was "empty" the need "content" or "content" that requires "container". Identity is the mind behind the object ([4]: 414). So that's where this blangkon has a special position.



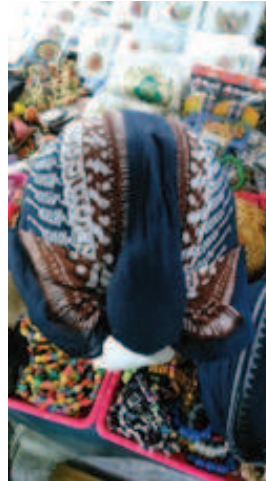
**Figure 1:** Surakarta style (personal documents).

To investigate the existence of blangkon in the area of Keraton Yogyakarta and Surakarta that have meaning of paradox aesthetic, the researchers wrote exposure based on the results of the study of theory and literature that supports these problems, observation use to see that of blangkon practically and final step is to analyze and concludes.

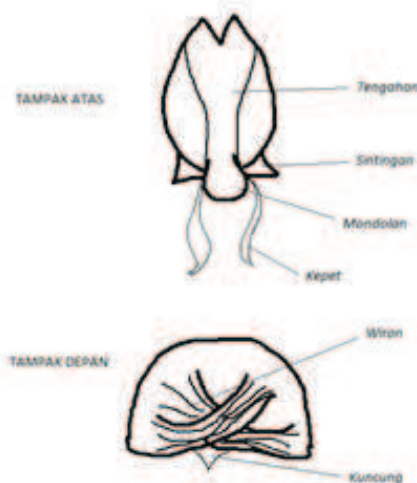
## 2. The Parts of Blangkon

Yogyakarta Blangkon style has a different shape from blangkon in other areas such as blangkon Banyumasan. Blangkon Yogyakarta style is different from the style of Surakarta or Solo blangkon although these two regions was once a royal one. What distinguishes the two is the presence mondholan blangkon shaped curve or bulge of chicken eggs in the back of the head, Surakarta style mondholan shape is not too big, just thin of mondholan. Mondholan existence is not necessarily just there. Although it looks different, aesthetically both have almost the same meaning. Here's a figure of Yogyakarta and Surakarta style blangkon taken by researchers as personal documents, so that will be able to show the difference between the two.

The beginning of Mondholan was the head of hair tied on the back, so it stands out. As the development of technology capabilities, and culture. Long hair is portrayed with a prominent symbol such as we see the figure above it. In various estimates, inflict some negative assumptions with respect to this mondholan difference. Differences were let view in terms of positive, confirming the mindset to not tarnish history. From one of these problems [4] which is a literary and cultural experts expressed his opinion that the pre-modern art artifacts should be returned to their own ethical context. although these artefacts are not "real" again as a result of changes in the context of history, but the average is still storing the patterns and structures that



**Figure 2:** Yogyakarta style (personal documents).



**Figure 3:** Blangkon structure.

can be placed back on the intent of ethics ([4]: 2014). Oppressed of this statement emphasizes the significance deeper than the disputed their mondholan obvious or not so obvious. In essence blangkon style of Yogyakarta and Surakarta have similar patterns and structures in place the intention of ethics.

As we know that blangkon function as a complement to traditional Javanese dress, as headgear. Materials used in blangkon is basically a batik cloth. According to ([4]: 341) batik cloth is a "fabric" which is the type of clothing for men or women that looped from the navel to ankles. Nonetheless appear other types of batik, such as scarves Ulos and headband. The statement can be seen from the conclusion, that the headband material is essentially a batik.

Blangkon has sections called wiron, kuncung, tengahan, kepet, sintingan, and mondholan. But blangkon in Yogyakarta style worn by Abdi Dalem currently part kuncung, and kepet not so obvious. In the forms blangkon that have the philosophy, namely

wiron or also called folds appear on the front of blangkon look sideways and folded left and right sides facing up. Wiron have odd folds, for small blangkon have folds totaling seven or multiples thereof; 14-17. As for the big blangkon have 19-21 folds. Creases on blangkon this means that the number of prayers philosophy in prayer amounted to 17 cycles, while the numerous creases 19-21 and onwards have a sense that the higher a person maturity is expected can be conducting worship other than the worship obligatory, called the Sunnah worship. Because the majority of the people of Yogyakarta-Surakarta and surrounding areas affected by the spread of Islamic religion at the time. then the artefact forms of this art in this regard blangkon in philosophy cannot be separated from the patterns of belief.

The next shape is sintingan, located on the back of the head among mondholan tapered shape. Sintingan symbolizes that in Islam there are two sentences creed. Two shahada will flank the man in upholding the principle of life. Human denoted by mondholan. Mondholan shape looks like a big round egg shape. The magnitude of this mondholan shape has a meaning that as people must have the determination, a strong intention to carry out the mandate as a leader on earth.

Kuncung and kepet located on the front and rear blangkon in Yogyakarta style used by Abdi Dalem not look so obvious. Because kuncung and kepet symbolizes courage in challenging all the rules, whether the rules of others or himself. This shows that the Javanese society especially Yogyakarta have the properties subject to and comply with all the rules that have become standard in public life. Compliance with the Java community's relation to the basic pattern-forming blangkon will discussed in the next chapter.

There is an tengahan in Yogyakarta style blangkon shows a waton as a human being can not stand alone, always requires a horizontal relationship, relationship with God the creator of nature and everything in it. Prayer request as a manifestation of the weak human and imperfect.

The use of color in blangkon Yogyakarta style is determined by the color of batik which is used as basic materials. Batik to blangkon used black-white-brown-yellowish-brown deep blue. The use of these colors has a meaning that the black color indicates the color of the earth, the color red indicates human color, white color indicates the color of the sky. Brown color is a mixture of red-orange-and a little black. In this case that the use of batik colors are used to create the unity of macrocosm blangkon meaning of life.

In the manufacturing process blangkon by the people of Yogyakarta which when viewed from the base ingredients namely batik, we already know that the making of batik requires certain considerations. Their assessment is good, bad, inappropriate, and inappropriate. Due to the use of the community blangkon also indicate the level of social level is the Batik motifs used by the priyayi is same as for used to the workers.

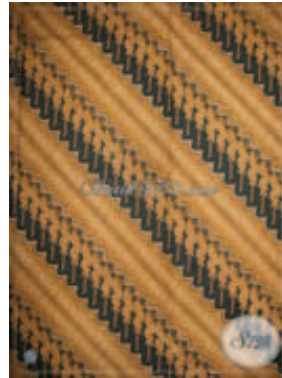


Figure 4: *Parang podang* motif.

### 3. Five Pattern Aesthetics on Batik as Basic Materials Blangkon

According to ([4]: 340) batik art is a product of human thought can be seen in the fields of motives which is a symbol of their cosmology. Proof of their authenticity is a symbol of their cosmology. Proof lies in the authenticity of the symbols of batik images. Additionally also on the piece of cloth that are standardized for batik. Similarly, the process of batik can be read as a form of ritual that dare not infringed by the batik makers. Besides batik is also used for various ceremonies, either by the royal family, nobles, servants of the palace and the government, the girls, the women are married, men, children, and at the time of the coronation in formal occasions, at the time of the death of the king , at the time of the wedding, when advancing the war. All of that leads the natural meaning of human thinking fields. The use of batik when viewed from the manufacturing process has sacred values that have been defined can not be changed, agree with ([4]: 339) with the statement that the ritual it self a process in time and space, then the provisions of the standard can also guide us in the search for the meaning behind the symbols of his art.

So from the above explanation is not surprising that the batik used in blangkon have many motives including the motif truntum, parang podang, kawung, and wirasat. The use of batik motif has a basic pattern as the pattern formation. To clarify the discussion of the aesthetics of the five patterns used for reading blangkon, the author gives an overview as follows:

Although it cannot be denied to the current use of in the manufacture of batik motives blangkon diverse, not only in the basic provisions that alone, a wide variety of motifs used. This is a sign that a culture in the community continues to grow. The artifacts of pre-modern art should be reconstructed in ethics, so that in the modern deconstruction does not stray far from the original meaning ([4]: 335).

Parang pattern equal division by division mandala pattern. Mandala is a unity that is transcendent and immanent ([4]: 342-343). Patterns tilt at parang podang a diagonal

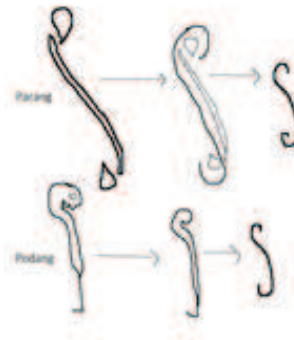


Figure 5: Literary work of parang podang motif.

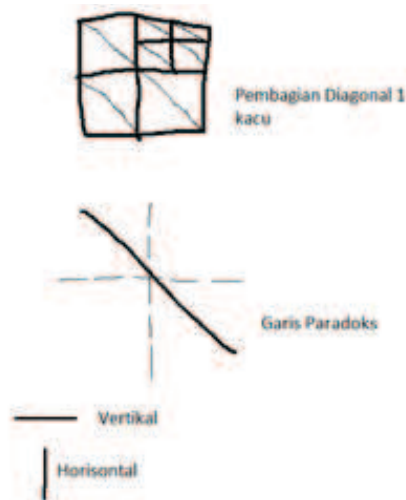


Figure 6: The division pattern of *parang*.

line that fills the entire field of batik cloth. Sloping diagonal lines is a paradox line between vertical and horizontal lines. The vertical lines show the outline spiritual relationship with God is transcendent, while the horizontal line is the line that shows the relationship of the mundane is immanent.

There is a paradox crosses resulting in a diagonal line sloping. This line represents the union between two different properties or antagonistic dualism. In this podang parang pattern using a pattern of five with the concept of mandala. Which is divided into 64 parts. This means that a single piece of fabric used to make blangkon there are 64 motifs that are repeated. 64 parts obtained from multiples of 4 out of 16 parts. The calculations start with a handkerchief, a single piece of batik cloth is divided into 3 parts, namely the front, rear, and wiron. Front and back of each timed section, while wiron counted half. Then the front section is divided into 4 handkerchief. In one sheet of fabric, both front and rear has 4 handkerchief. Each handkerchief divided 4 parts great mandala, which then each mandala is divided into 4 small mandala. Unity among small mandala contained in section 16 amounted at 4 handkerchief, then multiplied by 4 parts handkerchief others that found 64 parts. The initial distribution of five underlies almost



Figure 7: Kawung motif.

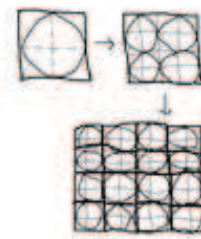


Figure 8: Motif kawung 16 pattern.

all the rice fields of cultural artifacts. All things in their lives patterned into five or nine. In the days of Hindhu Javanese setting this pattern more complex with the inclusion of the concept of Mandala. The division develops into five division nine, seventeen division, the division of twenty-five, thirty-three division, up to sixty-five, which is a multiple of two of the four pairs ([4]: 333).

The use of color in parang podang motif that is brown, black, and white. Black shows the color of the earth, a light brown color (red-orange-black) shows the human color, white color indicates the color of the sky. Thus, in a batik cloth have a unity macrocosm. Which tersinergi in blangkon. Cultural society paddy yield artifacts that reflect the culture and life patterns. All things patterned by macapat kalimo pancer, both the spiritual nature of the universe (great universe), human (small universe), culture (the State, the arts, technology, economics). Macapat kalimo pancer is singular and plural paradigm of the relationship. Is a single center, and the plural is a follower, brother, family, and members of the center. Here Dwitunggal. Kawula Gusti. Tunggal is paradoxical because it is a synthesis of the plural members and dualistic ([4]: 334).

The next motif is kawung motif, the motif is a motif kawung material used as a basis for making blangkon. The division kawung motif pattern is as follows:

In the calculation kawung motif pattern is similar to parang podang motif, that there are four times the multiple of 16, is 64 parts. There are 64 motifs that are repeated throughout the batik cloth used on blangkon. This count start of a handkerchief which has 16 sections, and then multiplied by four to 64 parts in a batik cloth used in blangkon. With the size of two Handkerchief, then there are two sets of twins mandala, the mandala of the back of the back of the body and mandala midriff. Half Handkerchief,

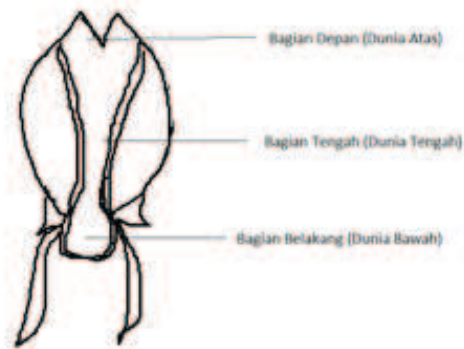


Figure 9: Three pattern.

rest for wiron. The use of color in this kawung motif is largely synonymous with parang podang motif, black-brown-and white. The black color shows the color of the earth, the brown color indicates humans because chocolate is a mixture of red-orange-black, where the color of the actual red color shows human color, and white color which is the color of the sky.

In batik kawung and there parang podang motif is repeated, with twins mandala motif in a batik cloth. As apparent a batik cloth, but there is an engaging two mandala. This is what is called paradoxical pattern. If we look at both the batik motif looks like pancer or center called kalimo mancapat pancer. Thus the pattern of five rice fields. Everything becomes a habit in their daily lives is a centralized, unitary, fused indefinitely. Habits or Yogyakarta Javanese culture, especially as seen from the artifacts of her art shows life identity. The principle of unification without death, principle centered, and merge into one is the pattern of life of the fields.

The division of the five actually refers to the division of four as well. And the division of four is a continuation of a pattern of three. In a pattern of four, setting the village followed a pattern of three, namely public limited (due to farming) are freely once bound to each other ([4]: 332). Referring to the statement if we blangkon analysis could not be separated from the three patterns. Because when viewed in the order form; blangkon has three main parts, namely the front, middle and rear. The parts are united in the form of an entity blangkon shows the three in the middle is the balance of these two polar opposites. Middle world or the human world is born as the realization of a balance between the sacred; world over that is transcendent, spiritual with the underworld which is immanent. Middle world this is called the of aesthetic paradox.

#### 4. Conclusions and Suggestions

Blangkon style of Yogyakarta and Surakarta have the same aesthetic significance, though there are differences in mondholan. Assessment forms blangkon use pattern of

three, as it has a unity of the cosmos. The third entity recognizes the harmonization of the two paradoxes that are contradictory. While the use of materials to make blangkon namely batik, then adopt five. Kapapat kalimo pancer and principles mandala. Where harmonization melt into share a single, no contradiction in five patterns. All of them share a single center.

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