Symbols and images of Javanese Nobles at the Pendopo Dalem Wuryaningratan

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ABSTRACT

For Javanese people, a house serves as both a shelter and a symbol. A representation of one’s value, dignity, and perfection as a human being, especially for men. According to Javanese philosophy, a man is considered ideal if he already possesses a wisma, wanodya, turangga, curiga, and kukila. The house can serve as both a symbol and a window into the personality of those who live there. The pendopo serves as a gathering place and performs various tasks while displaying the emblem and persona of the owner. The pendopo performs several roles that reflect social standing and the owner’s image in addition to acting as a collaborative or public place. The research aims to examine the Dalem Wuryaningratan in Surakarta. The focus of the study is on the application of the symbol and image of the owner in the pendopo. The research method uses a qualitative approach that produces descriptive data through observing objects, conducting interviews, and reviewing documents. Dalem Wuryaningratan is a well-preserved heritage building in Surakarta. The building is a legacy of KPH Wuryaningrat, the original owner. Meanwhile, the new owner, Haji Santosa Doellah, is a batik entrepreneur in Surakarta. The building is now called the House of Danar Hadi, and it is located in the area of the Danar Hadi batik museum. The building is a mix of Javanese and European (Indische style). Although it is no longer a residential building, the image of Javanese nobility is still maintained to preserve the structure. In particular, the appearance of the pendopo reflects the status symbol and embodiment of Javanese nobility.

Introduction

Symbols have an important role in how people live their daily lives. Similar things can be said for Javanese culture, where the people likewise lead symbolic lives (Tarigan 2023). Due to the energetic and lively manner in which they express themselves, Symbols are frequently employed as intermediary forms of communication when describing things, such as the house as a dwelling (Herusatoto 1991; Ronald 1997). A house is a cultural artifact with purpose, significance, and symbolism (Wardani 2010; Rahmawati, Arifin, and Dwisusanto 2023). There are also homes specifically for the Javanese community.

Another significant aspect of Javanese culture is their relationship with their homes. A man is considered to be complete in Javanese philosophy if he already owns a wisma (home), a wanodya (woman), a turangga (horse), a curiga (keris), and a kukila (bird). What is meant by a perfect family? Whereas wanodya is a wife as a life companion, wisma is a place to live. Of course, mobility, specifically a vehicle, is required to support work (on the go). A husband is in charge of providing for his family through his work, his job, or his...
profession. *Kukila* must live since he is a passion. The general concepts of clothing, food, and shelter are also understood by the locals. Clothing shows the degree of his position; food shows responsibility for his family; and boards show his security. As a result, the existence of a house is more than just a place of shelter; it is also a symbol of dignity and perfection as a Javanese human being. The house is also a symbol of household stability and a reflection of the personalities of its inhabitants. Romo Mangun mentions the house as an image that reflects the soul and aspirations of its inhabitants (Mangunwijaya 2009; Musman and Adam 2019; Ronald 1997).

In Javanese society, different social strata apply, where the highest position is the king, followed by the social strata below it: the nobility, the aristocrats, courtiers, and ordinary people, or what is called ‘*wong cilik*’ (Prasadana and Gunawan 2019). This also applies to the classification of traditional Javanese houses based on the social status of the owner. Beginning with the lowest class (*wong cilik*) and progressing to the Javanese nobility. The shape of the house is also tiered; for the common people, "*wong cilik*" is called a *kampung*, while for the nobility it is generally in the form of a *joglo*. Each has a different layout and architectural elements. The houses of the Javanese nobles were often called 'Dalem', and usually the name of the building was added to the name of the owner behind the word 'Dalem'. For example, *Dalem Brotodininggratan*, *Dalem Jayasuman*, *Dalem Suryahamijayan*, *Dalem Purwodininggratan*, and so on. For *Dalem Wuryaningratan*, the owner is named Kanjeng Pangeran Haryo (KPH) Wuryaningratan (Budiwiyanto 2009; Cahyandari 2017; Widayat 2016).

There are differences in the room systems of *Dalem, Griyo*, and *Omah. Dalem*, one of the three systems, features a fully developed sort of room (Ronald 1997). Terraces (*kuncung*), *pendopo*, *pringgitan*, *dalem ageng*, senthong of right, *senthong* of left, *gandok*, and *gadri* make up the arrangement of the *Dalem* rooms. Different things are done in each room. The front room, or *pendopo*, is more socially and publicly focused. People congregate in the room to greet visitors. The nature of the place is open and intimate, as well as profane. Also known as "*griya ngajeng*, "*which in Indonesian means "*front home*" (Prijotomo 1999). The term *pendopo* comes from the Sanskrit word *mandapa*, which means an additional building, a kind of pavilion, that is located in front of the sacred room (Afriyanto, Putri, and Pradipto 2021; Purnomo 1997). Usually in the *pendopo* for ceremonies and performing arts. Similarly, the pavilion for Javanese nobles also functions as a means of performing traditional arts. The room is located in front so that it functions to indicate the social status, authority, and temperament of the owner (Purnomo 1997). Different from the *Dalem Agung*, which is more sacred and closed.

This study aims to examine the status symbols and images of their owners that are found in the *Dalem Wuryaningratan* *pendopo*. Symbols and images on a building are certainly not just patches; they have a cultural background that influences them. Status symbols and images can be sourced from an outlook on life, an attitude toward life, a lifestyle, a position, a sense of art, material things, intelligence, and dignity (Ronald 1997). Even though the building has changed its owner, the status symbol and image are still reflected through the building elements.

Some of the previous research includes: **Budiwiyanto (2009)** examines the artistic interior of *Dalem Wuryaningratan*. The beauty of Javanese-European-style buildings is studied in the appearance of the building, the function of the space, and the artistic form of the interior. The research was conducted on the condition of the building after it was revitalized by the new owner.

Although Gunawan (2012) has adapted to both Javanese and European cultures in his thesis on the application of cultural values to the structure *The Dalem Wuryaningratan*. Other structures inside the complex housing the House of Danar Hadi are also the subject of the study. The batik museum, located to the east of *Dalem Wuryaningratan*, is the new structure. The museum honors Haji Santosa Doellah’s passion for batik.

**Pratama (2016)**, in his thesis, also examines the acculturation of Javanese and colonial culture in *Dalem Wuryaningratan*. His study on the phenomenon of the acculturation of form and space in the Indische style with archetype theory, the approach employs descriptive, qualitative, and interpretive approaches. And next, **Wudyasti (2017)** examines the existence of *Dalem Wuryaningratan* in relation to the tourism program in Surakarta. This building is a cultural tourism package in Surakarta. *Dalem Wuryaningratan* has historical and unique value,
so it becomes a historical and cultural tourist destination.

Departing from previous research, this research is focused on the status symbols and images of Javanese nobles at the *pendopo Dalem Wuryaningratan*. The focus of the study is on the building before and after it is revitalized.

The existence of a *pendopo* in a *Dalem* is very important. If there is no *pendopo*, it is said that it is not ideal as a Javanese house (*Prijotomo 1999*). Heinz Frick said that the structural pattern of the Javanese house is like the human body (anthropomorphic), that the *pendopo* is the head, and that the *dalem ageng* and *gandok* are like the body. While the *gadri* and the kitchen are like legs (*Purnomo 1997*). The head has a role as the center of the human body because there is a brain. The head also has a face that is seen by others. That way, the *pendopo* acts as the energy center of the whole house and represents the face of the owner. Functionally, the *pendopo* is a place to receive guests and public space. Connotatively, the *pendopo* is a marker of the status and condition of the people in it. The hall is a benchmark for the expression of other rooms because this is the first time you see it (*Fajarwati 2018*). For this reason, it is important to study the symbols and images of Javanese nobles at the *pendopo*, bearing in mind that *Dalem Wuryaningratan* has experienced a change in owner and a shift in the function of the building.

**Method**

The research method uses qualitative methods. Qualitative methods will produce descriptive data by observing objects, interviewing informants, and reviewing documents (*Moleong 2017*). The observation of the object is in the form of the *pendopo Dalem Wuryaningratan*, while the documents are in the form of photos of the building before it was revitalized. Secondary data is collected through literature in the form of scientific journals, papers, books, and videos. The data that has been obtained is then analyzed regarding the application of symbols and images of nobility to the elements of the *pendopo*. Also analyzed were changes in the condition of the *pendopo* before and after revitalization.

Preceded by a description of the owner, *Dalem Wuryaningratan*. After that, the *pendopo* analysis stage. Analysis and interpretation are focused on the elements of the *pendopo*, including the façade, floors, ceilings, *soko* (pillars), and ornaments of the *pendopo*. And at the final stage, there is the conclusion.

*Dalem Wuryaningratan* was built in 1890 by KRA Sosrodiningrat IV, involving Dutch architects. And only occupied by Prince Wuryaningrat in 1914 (*Gunawan 2012*). The building is located on Slamet Riyadi Street, 261 Surakarta. It is registered as a cultural heritage building based on Mayor's Decree No. 646/116/1997. In 1998, the ownership status changed because it was purchased by Haji Santosa Doellah, the owner of the Batik Danar Hadi company.

**Result and discussion**

**Owner of *Dalem Wuryaningratan***

In studying a Javanese residential building, it is also related to the owner. The owner of *Dalem Wuryaningratan* is a Javanese nobleman. The image of Javanese nobility is generally: with integrity, respectable, having spiritual values, having a position, being educated, having a title, having objects symbolizing honor, and being loyal to the authorities (*Arimi 2008; Gemilang 2022*).

The first owner of *Dalem Wuryaningratan* was KPH Wuryaningrat. An aristocrat is also the son-in-law of PB X, who served as Regent of Nayaka. He led the Balokretarta Office, a type of government office in the Surakarta Palace at that time (*Carlina 2020*).

![Figure 1. KPH Wuryaningrat Family. Source: (IndonesiaKaya 2014)](image)

Prince Wuryaningrat had studied in Utrecht, Netherlands, and was active in the Budi Utomo national movement, which later turned into the Indonesia Raya Party (*Parindra*). At the *Parindra* congress in 1938, he was appointed chairman of *Parindra* (*Kumalasari 2020; Setialaksana 2017*).
Wuryaningrat, Radjiman Wedyodiningrat, Wongsongoro, Hangabehi, Kusumayuda, and Soemodiningrat played a role in the birth of the Republic of Indonesia. They are members of Badan Penyelidik Usaha-usaha Persiapan Kemerdekaan Indonesia (BPUPKI).

The next owner of Dalem Wuryaningratan is H. Santosa Doellah, owner and founder of Batik Danar Hadi (Natanegara and M. 2017). He was knighted by PB XII because of his active role in developing batik. His title was Kanjeng Pangeran Haryo (KPH) Haji Santosa Doellah, and he was appointed Sentono anon-anon. The term 'Sentono' is a designation for the direct descendants of the palace. While 'anon-anon' is a designation for Abdi Dalem, who comes from outside the palace. Anon-anon can also be interpreted as royal courtiers who come from outside the palace. H. Santosa Doellah is a nobleman who is struggling and developing in the field of batik (Allimin, Taufik, and Moordiningsih 2007).

The change in the status of the building owner also changed the building’s name to ‘House of Danar Hadi’. This building is an icon of the Danar Hadi Batik Museum. In 1999, the building was revitalized and used for public activities. The House of Danar Hadi is also equipped with furniture like the residence of Javanese nobles. Both Prince Wuryaningrat and H. Santosa Doellah were Javanese aristocrats. The status symbol and image of nobility will certainly be reflected in the appearance of the pendopo Dalem Wuryaningratan.

Façade of pendopo

The pendopo is generally an open room without walls and is given a roof. However, the pendopo Dalem Wuryaningratan has a unique, semi-open façade resulting from the acculturation of Javanese and European cultures, often called the Indische style (Budiwiyanto 2009; Sukiman 2000; Wasino 2014). The pendopo has a Joglo Sinom Apitan roof and a front terrace (kuncungan) with a pediment shape supported by pillars like a colonial building. The center of the pediment contains a floral ornament. Kuncungan is a place to stop vehicles such as horse-drawn carriages and cars, and a place to raise or lower passengers.

The pendopo is surrounded by brick pillars as a substitute for soko emper so that it looks semi-open. The brick pillars are influenced by European styles. The distance between the brick pillars as openings is the typical form of an open pendopo. Kuncungan serves as the pendopo's main entrance.

The image of nobility is shown through the façade of the pavilion. The image is shown through a kuncungan with a pediment that is supported by brick pillars made around the
pendopo, and the roof of the pendopo is in the form of a Joglo Sinom Apitan. During the revitalization of the building, the façade of the pavilion was repainted, and glass was installed in each opening between the brick pillars. The use of glass for security aspects while still maintaining an open impression the glass material gives a grand impression. The façade of the pavilion looks dignified and loyal, a symbol of the Javanese aristocratic class.

Floor of pendopo

The pendopo’s floor initially used patterned encaustic tiles. Encaustic tiles were known in the archipelago around the mid-19th and mid-20th centuries. These tiles were often used in colonial buildings, royal palaces, noble houses, and merchant houses (Sarjiyanto 2017). The tiles represent the image of their owner, someone with a higher social status in society at that time.

The image of nobility is also applied through the elevation of the pendopo floor. According to the class, the difference in floor height gives the impression of being more noble, important, and sacred. While the lower is associated with a less good nature, it is the place of the subordinates (Purnomo 1997). The floor of a Javanese house is made of traps, arranged hierarchically in five traps. Trap 1 yard, trap 2 terraces, trap 3 pendopo, trap 4 dalem ageng, and trap 5 senthong. The trapping floor gets deeper and higher, which is a symbol of the mountain. A symbol that teaches that obtaining a high degree requires hard work (Budiwiyanto 2010).

Ceiling of pendopo

The pendopo ceiling, before being revitalized using asbestos cement, was painted white. The ceiling in the terrace area is tilted to follow the shape of the roof. From the outer edge, it is shorter, while the inside (soko penanggap area) is higher. The ceiling of the supporting pillar area to the teacher pillar is installed flat. In the middle of the ceiling, there is a raised ceiling. The middle ceiling is raised as a new form that adapts from Tumpangsari. Tumpangsari is usually found in Joglo buildings, in the form of an arrangement of balok with soko guru. However, the pendopo is made differently in the form of a ceiling elevation that functions as ventilation on the vertical side. Ideally, the room should have good air circulation for comfort. It is no longer a symbolic
Tumpangsari. As for artificial lighting, use chandeliers and light bulbs. Chandeliers are installed in the middle area of the pendopo and the peringgitan, while the terrace area uses a light bulb.

Figure 8. The middle ceiling replaces tumpangsari. Source: (Purnomo et al. 2022)

When revitalizing the ceiling, paint it white. The ceiling installation follows the previous form. The use of new materials looks cleaner, more luxurious, and more contemporary. Artificial lighting added several hanging crystal lamps, and several points installed downlights. The use of new materials and crystal chandeliers give it a luxurious image, very befitting of an aristocratic building.

Soko pendopo

The pendopo cannot be separated from the existence of pillars (soko) to support the roof. Soko in the form of composite wood made of teak wood at Dalem Wuryaningratan, soko guru, soko penanggap, and soko emper/terrace of the European style, namely a combination of Ionic and Corinthia pillars.

The layout of the soko is like that of a pendopo in general. The central part of soko guru, further out/to the edge of soko penanggap and soko emper, and at the very end is the typical European brick pillars. Similarly, in terms of size, the largest is soko guru, followed by soko penanggap, and the smallest is soko emper. Although the appearance of the soko has European characteristics, the placement of the soko is typical of Javanesse buildings, where the center is the most important. In Javanesse cosmology, there is a concept known as ‘mancapat kalimo pancer’ or ‘papat kiblat limo center,’ which refers to the four cardinal points and one central point, or “pancer” (Djono, Utomo, and Subiyantoro 2012).

The four Soko gurus in Javanesse symbolize the four elements of nature, namely: water, fire, air, and earth. These natural elements will strengthen the owner's house physically and mentally. The four soko gurus are also symbols of the four cardinal directions. And the middle is a manifestation of its owner in society (Budiwiyanto 2010).

Figure 9. The layout of the pillars in the pendopo from the middle to the side: soko guru, soko penanggap, and soko emper/terrace. (Source: Drawn by W. D. Utami 2023)

Soko Dalem Wuryaningratan is an image of the aristocratic class, who are more open-minded towards new cultures without forgetting Javanesse culture.

Ornament

The ornaments of the Dalem Wuryaningratan pavilion, until it changed to the House of Danar Hadi, were still maintained in the soko appearance. The soko looks like a combination of Ionic and Corinthian pillars. The pillars can be divided vertically into three parts: heads, bodies, and legs. On the head, there is an ornament with a fern leaf motif and a twist-coil ornament. The body is then circular in cross-section, with vertical profile lines running from top to bottom, and it concludes with a distilled leaf ornament. While the legs have a rectangular cross-sectional shape, the development of the pedestal in appearance, the soko is in European style, but in terms of placement, it is the same as other Javanesse pavilion pillars.

When the status of the building changed to House of Danar Hadi, the appearance of the soko was enhanced by the prada on the head ornament and the lower part of the body on the floral
ornament. Prada's color gives a luxurious impression that portrays the aristocratic class.

![Figure 10](image1.png)

**Figure 10.** Soko Composite before revitalization (left) and after revitalization (right). Source: (Purnomo et al. 2022)

Ornaments are also found on the pediment. The colonial-style pediment is generally plain in the middle without ornamentation. However, the pediment at Dalem Wuryaningratan is filled with floral ornaments. The floral motif ornament is a symbol of fertility, growing life, and prosperity (Budiwiyanto 2010; Wicaksono and Nizam 2016).

![Figure 11](image2.png)

**Figure 11.** Pediment with floral (sulur-suluran) ornament. (A) The beginning of Dalem Wuryaningratan. (B) Change of status to become the House of Danar Hadi. Source: (Purnomo et al. 2022)

The pendopo as a public space can show the social status and image of the owner. The social status of the aristocratic and respected class, the image of an intellectual who is open to new things but also respects Javanese culture. This is reflected in the architecture and interior of Dalem Wuryaningratan (Budiwiyanto 2009; Gemilang 2022; Ronald 1997).

**Conclusion**

Dalem Wuryaningratan is a heritage building that is still being preserved in Surakarta. The unique building of acculturation of Javanese and European culture was originally the residence of Prince Wuryaningrat. Since 1998, it has changed ownership to Haji Santosa Doellah, a batik entrepreneur in Surakarta. Both of them are nobles who were given titles by the king of Surakarta.

Pendopo Dalem Wuryaningratan represents a nobleman. The status symbol and image of nobility in the pendopo through the building elements, including: the façade of the pendopo, floors, ceilings, pillars/soko, and ornaments. The elements of the pendopo display an image of nobility, including: luxurious, open-minded, dignified, honorable, and still maintaining Javanese identity. The pendopo also displays symbols of loyal aristocrats, intellectuals, hard workers, and prosperity. The character of the owner of Dalem Wuryaningratan, while maintaining Javanese culture, is like the saying, "wong Jowo ora ilang Jawane", translated in Indonesian "Javanese people don't lose their Java".

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