

The Aesthetics and Meaning of Traditional Paintings: Forbidden Wealth (*Pesugihan*) by Tjitro Waloejo in Surakarta

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ABSTRACT

At present, Javanese culture is increasingly less powerful in facing the changing times, where art that was once familiar in people's daily lives has slowly begun to disappear. But Surakarta was fortunate to have Tjitro Waloejo, a traditional painter who died in 1990. He perpetuated the event of collecting illicit wealth (pesugihan) in the form of paintings as a life lesson portraying how some Javanese gathered their wealth under an agreement with Satan. The problem is what the paintings of Tjitro Waloejo are like, and what they really mean. The approach in this study is the concept of "wangun" (beautiful) which the writers explore from Javanese culture to study the art objects (barang kagunan). "Wangun" or beauty of the Javanese becomes (1) the form of "wangun" (beautiful) based on the perspective of the Javanese, (2) the appearance of "ora wangun" (not beautiful) or "aèng" (strange), (3) the form of "wangun" based on the king's legitimacy or trend, and (4) the forbidden "wangun." The important findings in the study of "pesugihan" painting reveal that there are perpetuated events of collecting illicit wealth (pesugihan) in the form of paintings as life lessons on how some Javanese gather their wealth under an agreement with demons. It was found that the existence of "wangun" elements and arrangement systems which are classified as forbidden "wangun" (new findings), "angger-angger" (rules), and "wewaler" (prohibition), consist of sacred values and meanings in various contexts.

Keywords: *pesugihan paintings, wangun concepts, Javanese culture, traditional paintings*

INTRODUCTION

The phrase, *wong Jawa ilang jawané* or the Javanese lost their identity means it is a sign that the Javanese are slowly abandoning the manners, oppressed by foreign nations, thus causing their self-esteem and manhood to slowly disappear (Hariwijaya 2013: 196). It becomes more specific as *wong Jawa ilang omahé* (Widayat 2016: 6–8) or the Javanese lost their traditional home. Furthermore, it comes to *wong Jawa ilang seniné* or many Javanese people left their traditional arts, be their music, dance, visual arts, and others. It was *wong Jawa ilang seniné* which initiated the study of the Javanese traditional painting which was gradually forgotten.

Pesugihan paintings, in social context refer to people who live together and produce culture (Soekanto 1990: 21) and it can be interpreted that *pesugihan* paintings in people's lives in Java are cultural products of virtue moral values that are always instilled through painting. The stories of people searching for illicit wealth are told from generation to generation as stories that parents tell their children and grandchildren with the intention that their offspring will not take a wrong path so that their lives will be peaceful. It is in line with the Javanese's habits that they are willing to sacrifice themselves for the sake of the realisation of social harmony (Poerwanto 2010: 218). This means that the Javanese love harmony in social life so that when there is one citizen who takes a wrong path, it will shake the peace of the society or cause a stir (*gègèr*). The function of *pesugihan* paintings in Javanese society is to maintain harmony in life.

Pesugihan paintings contain a message which warns all leaders to expel their people from poverty. It reminds humans to pay attention to their fellow human beings in ways that help the poor. It also reminds religious people not to allow fellow humans, especially the poor, to go astray. Ancestral advice says *sakbegja-begjané wong kang lali isih begja wong kang èling lan waspada* (Hariwijaya 2013: 128). No matter how lucky the people who forget are, the people who do not forget and are vigilant are luckier. Those who obtain luck through the wrong path is still less fortunate compared to the person who obtained it by always remembering God and being cautious not to fall into the wrong path.

There are limitations in terms of how we can understand some of these forms of art or visual representation while applying Western theory such as formal aesthetics in studying traditional art. The formal aesthetics view art as it is, and it is the common measure used to interpret the works of art. Aesthetic values are autonomous and are not tied to other values such as religion, economy, society, culture, politics, and other aspects (Marianto 2002: 54). Ordinary aesthetics view the beauty of a work in terms of forms, composition, and colours based on the formula of formal aesthetic perspective, thus the beauty of the work can be justified but the meaning behind the work is not truly revealed. Due to the limitation of the formal aesthetics, *wangun* concept is required to reveal the meaning of works related to the Javanese mind frame. The Javanese give meaning according to the context, which in this case, is related to the context of *pesugihan* or forbidden wealth. Those who obtain wealth with the help of Satan will reap terrible fate, becoming Satan's slave after their death. Such a context cannot be revealed by formal aesthetics.

The act of *pesugihan* cannot be separated from the poverty factor. However, the actual members of the poor social community of Java are difficult to categorise when seen only from the surface such as landless farmers in rural areas or unemployed vagabonds that are mostly found in big cities (Poerwanto 2010: 197–198). Being rich or poor is a fate, which means that the rich are destined to live in luxury, while the poor will experience difficult lives and even worse, to have bad luck. The story of poverty in the past is known as *Dongeng Cariosipun Tiyang Sepuh* or the fairy tale told by parents. The sample story of the destined fate as told by Dr. G. W. J. Drewes is as follows:

Kanjeng Gusti P. A. A. Mangunegara IV, tested the supernatural power of Ngelmu Iladuni. Of course, Kanjeng Gusti had found a teacher who was well-known for his knowledge and at that time had explained about a poor grass seeker who was met at the time of his excursion, who was destined to live in poverty. The king tried to do everything possible to change that fate from being a poor porter to becoming a rich man. But no matter how he puts it, that person was still poor. So it is indeed fate that enjoying worldly wealth is not for him (Hermanu, 2006: 39).

Most Javanese believe that human life in the world has been regulated in the universe so that not a few of them are *nerima*, which means surrendering to destiny (Kodiran 1982: 340). In fact, this attitude is the best attitude for someone in a situation of his/her helplessness (Poerwanto 2010: 232). A more complete attitude is *sabar nerima, pasrah sumarah* or being patient in accepting conditions such as being unlucky in economic matters and resigning everything to the Almighty. For the Javanese, a situation that is not economically favourable is not felt like a disaster (Khakim 2008: 17). Niels Mulder explains more about *nerima*; it means knowing his own place, believing in one's destiny, and thanking God because there is satisfaction in fulfilling what is part of it with the awareness that everything has been established (Mulder 1996: 25).

Some people reject accepting their fate as the poor ones, and although after hardly trying they remain poor, these people then seek shortcuts to enjoy the luxury of the world by making agreements with Satan. Regarding the Javanese culture, it can be said that *mèlik nggéndhong lali* or desire brings along forgetfulness (Suratno and Astiyanto 2009: 175). Humans want to have wealth but forget that they go through the wrong way. Humans, when asking for Satan's help, must pay a very expensive price, not money but life. The life of a loved one wants to be blessed with his wealth like the life of his child. Eventually, the person will also die because of the suffering after being left by the loved one. They will suffer even more because after death they become the followers of Satan.

There are various types of illicit wealth or *pesugihan*, namely *Pesugihan Lintah Kadut, Pesugihan Thuyul, Pesugihan Kodok Ijo, Pesugihan Nyi Blorong, Pesugihan Bulus Jimbung, Pesugihan Kandang Bubrah, Pesugihan Karan Bubrah*, etc. (Hermanu 2006: 55–63). These types of *pesugihan* have been painted by Tjitro Waloejo during 1970–1988. The way Tjitro Waloejo paints is unique, using brushes made from his own hair that is cut and tied to a bamboo brush stalk. Using powder paint and liquid glue as adhesive, the *pesugihan* themes were depicted on 20 cm × 35 cm cardboard paper. These paintings were then sold at low prices at the

*Sekatèn*¹ event and other crowded places such as *Cembèngan* (party for opening the sugar cane milling time at the sugar factory), and the night market. The results of selling his paintings did not make him rich rather his life was very simple, and he lived sincerely. Every midnight, Tjitro Waloejo would hold a mat in front of the yard of his house in Mijipinilihan, Joyotakan, Surakarta to conduct the *tirakat* praying to the Almighty God. In his prayer, he always asked for health, fortune, and safety for himself and his family. This is a very contradictory difference between the painter and the theme of the object he painted even though his life is simple, but he is not tempted to look for illicit wealth.

In relation to the world of art and design, the study of Tjitro Waloejo's works is very important since it has not received attention from academics, even though there are two faculties of art and design in Surakarta located at Sebelas Maret University and the Indonesian Art Institute. Tjitro Waloejo was born in 1912 and died in 1990. Since Tjitro Waloejo died, the paintings of this traditional style had no one to continue, even his family has not kept many of his works. This is what generally happens to the fate of traditional arts if there is no successor—it will eventually be lost in time.



Photo 1 Tjitro Waloejo drawing.
Source: Photographed by Buldanul Khuri.

Mengenang Tjitro Waloejo Pelukis Tradisional was published by Bentara Budaya Yogyakarta in 2006. This is the only previous study of Tjitro Waloejo's paintings to retrace the works of Tjitro Waloejo along with his biography and examine them from the traditional aesthetics view that has not been touched in this book.

Some of Tjitro Waloejo's paintings were uploaded by anonymous customers or viewers on the Internet. However, those uploaded paintings were then misused by several parties on social media to illustrate stories about people who were looking for forbidden wealth or *pesugihan*. The images were also used to advertise the search for wealth using white magic or without the help of the devil, without any sacrifice. That is the fate of the *pesugihan* paintings by Tjitro Waloejo and even though it has penetrated the online media, no one has studied it based on aesthetics.

Sindhunata, in his article entitled "Jangan Hidup Seperti Kancil" (do not live like a mousedeer) that was published in the Kompas daily on 25 September 1982 and then republished in the book, *Mengenang Tjitro Waloejo Pelukis Tradisional* stated that Tjitro Waloejo's paintings inevitably gave a surrealist impression (Hermanu, 2006: 14). Is his work really based on surrealism (as seen from a Western point of view)? There are two surrealist tendencies, namely:

1. Expressive surrealism, when artists go through a kind of unconscious condition, then give birth to symbols and forms from their previous treasury, and
2. Pure surrealism or photographic surrealism, when artists use academic techniques to create an illusion that seems absurd (Susanto 2012: 386).

Tjitro Waloejo's works are not included in these two trends. He worked with full awareness and does not use academic techniques. The interpretation of Tjitro Waloejo's paintings as surreal shows that there is a void in studying traditional works using aesthetic formula extracted from the Javanese culture. Hence, to determine Tjitro Waloejo's style, this study will not take the views from the Western theory approach, but from the Javanese cultural perspective. The observations on Tjitro Waloejo's works, aside from books, were also conducted on his works in a collection that belongs to Taman Budaya Jawa Tengah, Surakarta.

Based on the previous explanation, the question that arises is: What are the aesthetics and meaning of Tjitro Waloejo's forbidden wealth paintings? The purpose of this article is to trace what are the aesthetics and whether it has certain consistency related to rules and restrictions as a traditional painting. It is also to reveal the meanings contained in the *pesugihan* paintings that are sacred and full of mystery. The disclosure of meaning is not only correlated with aesthetics but also meaning in a broader context, such as economic, social and cultural meaning, and in addition, the meaning related to preservation such as re-creation or reinterpretation in visualising a new work. Based on the study of aesthetics and meanings of Tjitro Waloejo's paintings, there is an interesting new finding, that is, the concept of *wangun* (beautiful) but forbidden. This "forbidden *wangun*" finding will complement the previous study and it is hoped that the formulas on the concept of *rupa wangun*, especially in compiling Javanese aesthetic concepts.

INTERPRETATION AND AESTHETICS OF PESUGIHAN

Interpreting means expressing, *njlèntrehké* or *ngoncèki* in Javanese (Ahimsa-Putra 2000: 403). There are two levels of meaning interpretation. They are the interpretation of meaning by looking at art phenomena as a relatively independent text and studies that place art phenomena in a broader context, which is the socio-cultural context of society where the art phenomena emerge or live (Ahimsa-Putra 2000: 400). Palmer (2003: 77, 78) argues that interpretation can be understood narrowly and broadly. Based on this, there are two levels of meaning. The meanings at the first level, which is the Tjitro Waloejo's *pesugihan* painting in a relatively independent related to aesthetic meaning. The meaning at the second level in a broader context is closely related to the phenomenon of *pesugihan* such as economic, social, and cultural meanings. In relation to aesthetic meanings, in Alan Goldman's opinion, aesthetics itself was first used in the 18th century or 1735 by philosopher Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten (1714–1762). The term is to describe knowledge related to the senses. It is then used to explain the response to beauty, especially regarding art (Gaut and Lopes 2005: 255).

The aesthetics theory used to study the *pesugihan* paintings of Tjitro Waloejo's work is the concept of *rupa wangun*. The word *wangun* means *apik*, *pantes*, *patut*, which have equal meanings to *becik*, *élok*, *bagus*, *trep* (Tim Penyusun Balai Bahasa Yogyakarta 2001: 25, 572, 581) and which in Indonesian means: good, beautiful, fit. *Wangun* in Indonesian is equivalent to the word "good" and "beautiful." In the Javanese view, these two words tend to be considered the same as there is no clear boundary that separates between "good" and "beautiful" ideas. Both are the "harmonious" or "appropriate" aspects, which lie in the deepest Javanese cultural roots, so beautiful is good, and good is beautiful (Anderson, 2008: 58). The word "beautiful" relates to the visual contained in the *wangun* concept as follows:

(1) *Rupa wangun* consists of *wangun* elements and the basis arrangement of *wangun* structures that is common in Java, (2) the principle of *wangun* placement patterns arrangement in the context of generally accepted image fields or spaces in Java, (3) *angger-angger* and *wewaler* or local regulations or prohibitions in an area in Java, (4) sacred, and (5) meanings in the context of *rupa wangun* and broader meanings or meanings in various contexts. The concepts outside the visual and placement of *wangun* (beautiful) are called *ora wangun* (not beautiful) or *aèng* (strange) (Widayat 2016: 233–285).

Aèng connotes to *anèh* (strange) or *ora njawani* (not Javanese), this happens if it is not guided by the Javanese mindset. *Aèng* stands between *wangun* and *ora wangun*, because *aèng* can belong to *wangun* group, and *aèng* can also belong to *ora wangun* group, or just *aèng* or *anèh*, *ora njawani*. *Aèng* can become *wangun* if loved or become a trend. *Aèng* can also be *wangun* if it has become a habit (*pakulinan*) or is considered normal. Even *aèng* can become *wangun* if it obtains the legitimacy of the king (royal era). *Aèng* that is *wangun* because of being a habit and the legitimacy of the king is outside the Javanese mindset that refers to *angger-angger* and *wewaler* that apply locally (Widayat 2016: 216–217).

Rupa wangun is based on the Javanese mind, that is the visual concept of *telu-teluning atunggal* (three forms in one unit) and the form of *manunggaling kawula Gusti* (likeness from below to the top), and the placement concept of *loro-loroning atunggal* (two forms in one

unit), *telu-teluning atunggal* (three forms in one unit), *papat kéblat kalima pancer* (five forms in one unit), and *nawa rupa* (nine forms in one entity) (Widayat 2016: 273–274).

Through *juru kunci* (caretaker) of a place to look for *pesugihan*, made by Tjitro Waloejo between 1970 and 1988, some of the titles of the *pesugihan* paintings are as follows:

1. *Pesugihan Lintah Kadut*, humans ask for wealth from the demons that took the form of the leeches.
2. *Pesugihan Thuyul*, humans ask for wealth from the demons in the form of children.
3. *Pesugihan Kodok Ijo*, humans ask for wealth from the demons tangible as a pair of *kodok ijo* (green frog).
4. *Pesugihan Nyi Blorong*, humans ask for the wealth of demons in the form of *Nyi Blorong*, which is a stealthful woman with a golden scaly snake tail.
5. *Pesugihan Bulus Jimbung*, humans ask for wealth from the demons in the form of *Bulus* (turtles in *sendhang*² called *Jimbung*,³ in the area around Jombor swamp, Klaten, Central Java).
6. *Pesugihan Buto Ijo*, humans ask for wealth from the demons in the form of *Buto Ijo* (green giant).
7. *Pesugihan Kandang Bubrah*, humans ask for wealth from the demons in the form of a *kandang bubrah* (broken cage).
8. *Pesantihan Jaran Penoleh*, humans ask for wealth from the demons in the form of *Jaran Penoleh* (the horse that is looking back).

The method used is to analyse the data with the concept of *wangun*. Analysis literally means breaking things down into parts to comment or evaluate something in its entirety (Marianto 2002: 15). The analysis of the *wangun* concept includes: (1) visual elements of *wangun*, (2) principles of *wangun* placement patterns, (3) *angger-angger* (rules) and *wewaler* (prohibition), (4) sacred, and (5) meanings.

PESUGIHAN (FORBIDDEN WEALTH) AND ITS CHARACTERS THROUGH VISUALS

Visual Elements of *Wangun*

The visual elements of *pesugihan* paintings consist of humans, demons or objects (talismans), burning anglo (brazier), *ténggok*,⁴ fans, background paintings of land (earth), sky, hill, and puddles of water. The main visual elements in the *pesugihan* paintings are the demon and the item (talisman) that gives *pesugihan*.

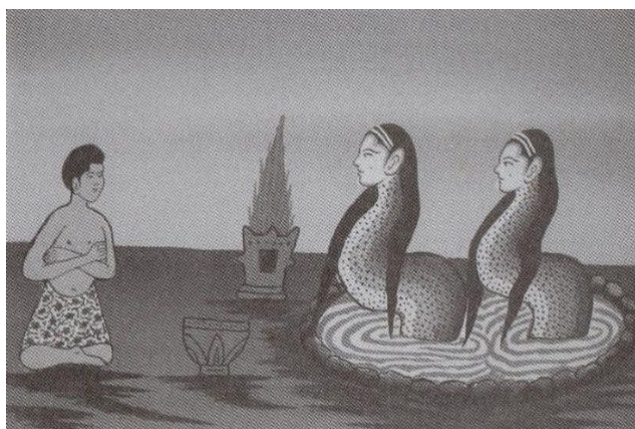


Photo 2 *Pesugihan Lintah Kadut*.
Source: Hermanu (2006).

Satan can be as tangible as a *Lintah Kadut* (leech) (Photo 2). In a *pesugihan* painting, the leech is depicted to have a head of a long-haired female, appearing in a pair out of the puddle of water. People who gain wealth from *pesugihan Lintah Kadut* should provide a special room as their blood is sucked through the chest or neck every 35 days (in the Javanese calendar, 35 days is referred to the term, *sepasar*). The blood is sucked for half an hour until the person becomes pale and weak because they lose 50% of their blood. After the blood is sucked up, the wealth will come by itself. Remembering that the blood is sucked continuously the man will run out of blood and die horribly, then their soul will become a servant of *Lintah Kadut* demon.

In *Pesugihan Thuyul*, *thuyul*⁵ is depicted in the painting of Tjitro Waloejo as a child with three of them in a standing position while dancing. *Thuyul* can be ordered to take other people's money without being seen by ordinary human eyes. The *thuyul* keeper must be patient because *thuyul*'s character is naughty and playful. Usually, the owner of *thuyul* has no offspring. The *thuyul* keeper should not be angry or forget about *sajen* (the offerings) to *thuyul* because if they are scolded or the owner forgets to give them the offerings, they will go or will shame the owner, and as a result, the owner bears the punishment for violating the agreement. The Javanese description of *thuyul* is as follows:

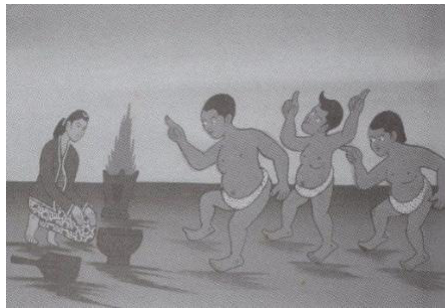


Photo 3 *Pesugihan Thuyul* with a female seeker.
Source: Hermanu (2006).

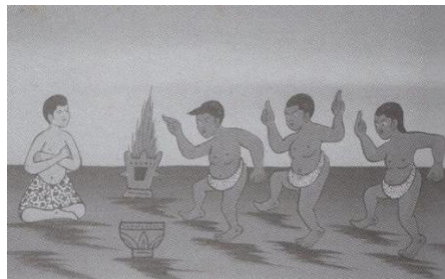


Photo 4 *Pesugihan Thuyul* with a male seeker.
Source: Hermanu (2006).

The Javanese imagine it as a child or a dwarf who is able to make people rich by pouring out others' wealth for them. People can obtain *thuyul*'s assistance through the intercession of a shaman, by fasting, or by meditating on a certain *pepundhèn*.⁶ However, in return for their services, *thuyul* must be given the offerings. The person who cares for *thuyul* must also accept willingly that at any one time they will lose a member of their family, or that they will not live long, or that they will not die peacefully. Javanese who suddenly became rich were often accused by their neighbours for having *thuyul* (Koentjaraningrat 1994: 339).

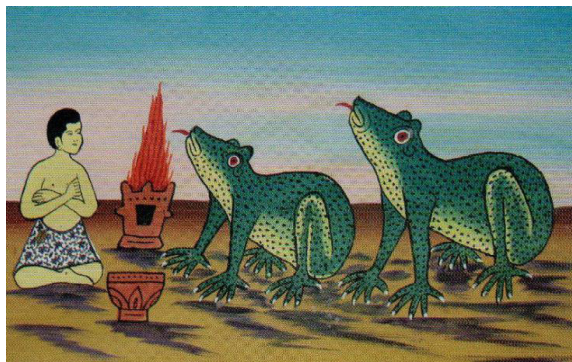


Photo 5 *Pesugihan Kodok Ijo*.
Source: Hermanu (2006).

Pesugihan Kodok Ijo (Photo 5) in the paintings is portrayed as a pair of big spotted green frogs with a protruding tongue. The seekers of *pesugihan* meet the frogs to ask for wealth. Upon returning home and having a dream of meeting *Kodok Ijo*, they will get the requested property within a certain time limit. After the expiration of the agreement and if there is no one to be taken as an offering, then the person will become the next victim or becomes the follower of *Kodok Ijo*.



Photo 6 *Pesugihan Nyi Blorong*.
Source: Hermanu (2006).

Nyi Blorong (Photo 6) is a woman having her upper body which looks like that of a human and the lower parts which look like snakes. It can help people to become rich with something in return (Koentjaraningrat 1994: 340). *Nyi Blorong* who lives on the South Coast (south of Java Island which leads to the Indian Ocean) is depicted in a painting of *pesugihan* to have a head of a woman wearing *jamang* (like the woman's headpiece worn at *wayang wong*⁷ show), a body wearing a *kemben* (traditional Javanese corset), hands holding a tray, and gold scales on her snake body and tail. The *pesugihan* keeper of *Nyi Blorong*, especially a man, is asked to provide rooms and at certain times will be visited by *Nyi Blorong* as his bride. *Nyi Blorong* has her tail wrapped around the man's body in a special room for several hours. After that, *Nyi Blorong* will disappear leaving some scales made of gold. The keeper of *pesugihan Nyi Blorong* is asked to offer a person's life every year. If the *pesugihan* keeper is unable to provide an offering of life, which is usually the case, his own life will be taken, and he will become a part of the *Nyi Blorong* palace structure such as fence, doors, walls, roofs of buildings or other furniture.

In the context of Javanese culture, the bad fate that happens to people who make a deal with Satan, *Nyi Blorong* in this case, will experience prolonged suffering is said to be *ngundhuh wohing pakarti*, meaning that people will reap the fruits of the actions that they sow, a reminder for the people to always try to do good and avoid bad deeds (Suratno and Astiyanto 2009: 207).

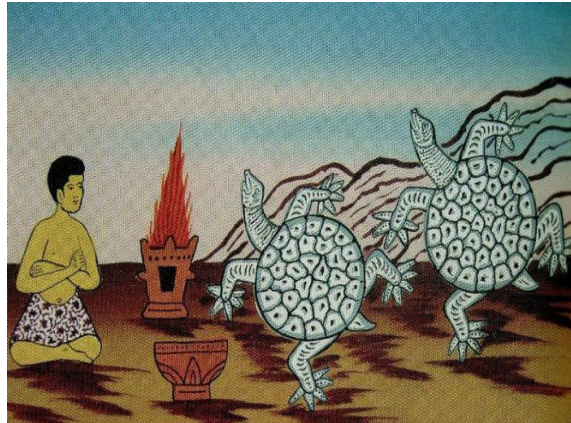


Photo 7 *Pesugihan Bulus Jimbung*.
Source: Hermanu (2006).

Pesugihan Bulus Jimbung (Photo 7) in the painting depicts two large-sized black-spotted turtles in white colour which is called *belang* in Javanese. Someone gets this *pesugihan* by visiting Jimbung spring, Klaten, and is said to have managed to get this *pesugihan* when he has touched the water or the limbs have been licked by the turtle. After that, the skin will be mottled starting from small then becomes wide along with the wealth obtained. After the stripes are evenly spread throughout the body, the *pesugihan* seeker will finally die and his life will become a follower of *bulus* (turtle) *Jimbung*. John Pemberton (2003: 371) describes this *pesugihan* as follows:

In Rawa Jimbun (Jimbung) in Klaten district, for example, large white-spotted turtles guarantee that people who succeed in binding contracts with them will receive wealth. The logic of these contracts lies in a 'service fee', which basically pawns their soul. While people who get wealth with this contract are getting older, their skin is increasingly filled with white spots. If they die, those who take advantage of the Jimbun do not go straight to heaven but turn into turtles and become a source of wealth for the next swamp pilgrims.



Photo 8 *Pesugihan Buto Ijo*.
Source: Hermanu (2006).

Pesugihan Buto Ijo (Photo 8) in a painting is depicted as a green giant carrying a small child who is ready to be eaten. *Pesugihan Buto Ijo* can give people forbidden wealth in exchange for their children. The child will become the green giant's food. Usually, the *pesugihan* seekers will have their own rooms in which there is a large rock.

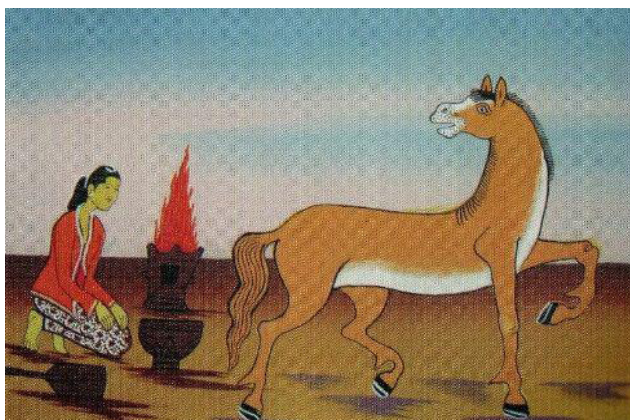


Photo 9 *Pesugihan Jaran Penoleh*.
Source: Hermanu (2006).

Pesugihan Jaran Penoleh (Photo 9) in a painting is depicted as a horse in a standing position while looking at its back. People who maintain *pesugihan Jaran Penoleh* must provide a special room that they must enter every *Kliwon* (one of five days in Javanese culture) Friday night. In that room, they will be possessed by the spirit of *Jaran Penoleh*. Javanese believed the demon can enter the human body through the crown or the soles of the feet to make the person possessed and unconscious (Koentjaraningrat 1994: 340). After being possessed by the spirit, they will unconsciously behave like a horse by whinnying and pounding its feet to destroy the floor that is done all night. In the next morning, they will look weak and have no energy until a few days later, but after this incident their wealth increases. That is how they do it every *Kliwon* Friday night until they have no more strength and die with their head turned backward that could not be straightened out. After their death, their wealth will gradually run out and the family left behind will fall into poverty, and they themselves become slaves to the demon.

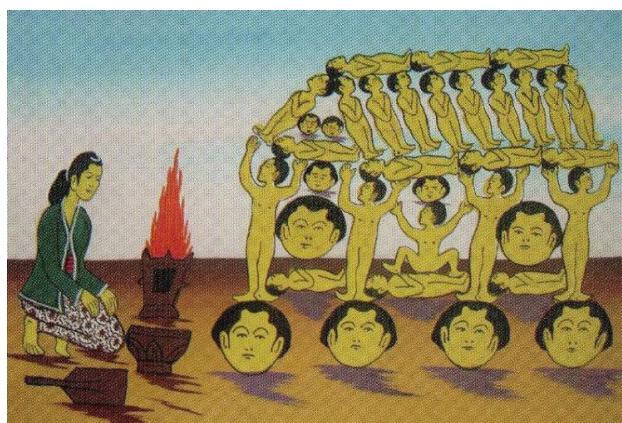


Photo 10 *Pesugihan Kandang Bubrah*.
Source: Hermanu (2006).

The demon that takes the form of objects is *Kandang Bubrah* (Photo 10) or a broken cage of which the building elements are human heads at the base, human floor, human pole, and human roof. The owner of *Kandang Bubrah* has a characteristic when making a house. Even though it is good, they will dismantle it to be built again. That is how it happens; they repeatedly build, dismantle, and rebuild the house as if the money never runs out. When the owner of this *pesugihan Kandang Bubrah* dies, he will be as depicted in the painting of *pesugihan* in the demon realm, which is to be part of a building of which the building structures are humans.

The *pesugihan* seekers, people who ask for *pesugihan*, either female or male, are painted in a sitting position on the floor (the position of a weak person). The supporting elements, such as the brazier (*anglo*) which is lit, *ténggok* (container commonly made from bamboo), and fans are used in the paintings with the female *pesugihan* seeker. For the male *pesugihan* seeker, there is no fan element on it. The depictions of brazier placement, *ténggok*, and fans are arranged near the *pesugihan* requesters using *angger-angger* (rules) which are

always obeyed by Tjitro Waloejo and never change positions even though the demon has been alternated. *Anglo* is used for burning incense as a condition for inviting demons, a fan to light a fire on a brazier, and a *ténggok* to place money from the agreement with the demon. When the seeker is male, Tjitro Waloejo did not put a fan on the painting because the air must be blown from the mouth to light a fire in the brazier.

The background of the painting is in the form of land (earth) and sky. Only for the painting entitled *Pesugihan Bulus Jimbung*, a hill is added to the background of the painting. In addition to the paintings having humans and demons as the main elements, there are also paintings in the form of demons such as *Pesugihan Uler Jedhug* (Photo 11) which are in the form of two caterpillars and a woman with her breasts exposed.

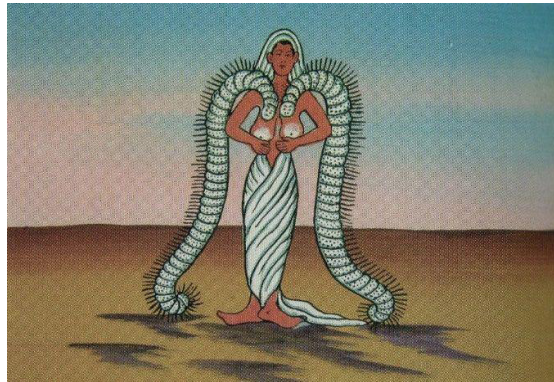


Photo 11 *Pesugihan Uler Jedhug* standing alone (*aèng*).
Source: Hermanu (2006).

There are also *Pesugihan Thuyul* paintings in which one of them is depicted as four *thuyul* dancing in a line with the first of them carrying a torch, and the other three *thuyul* opening a chest to save money.

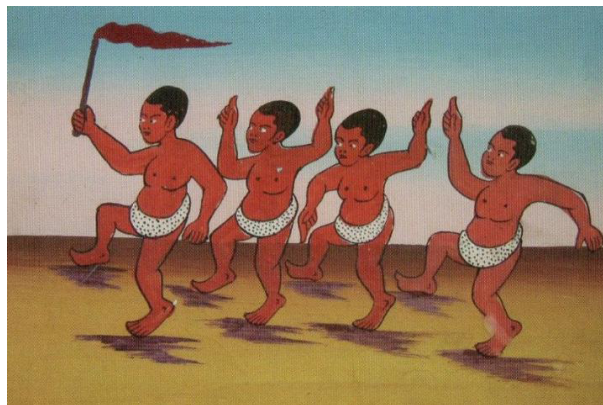


Photo 12 *Pesugihan Thuyul* (four *thuyul*) (*aèng*).
Source: Hermanu (2006).

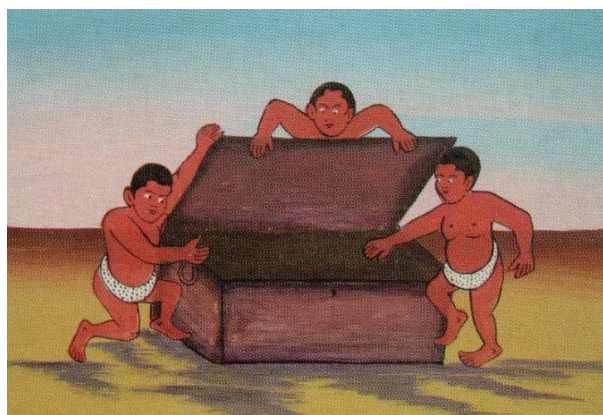


Photo 13 *Pesugihan Thuyul* (three *thuyul* with a chest for saving the money (*aèng*)).
Source: Hermanu (2006).

The people asking for *pesugihan* are never illustrated all by themselves, but they are completely illustrated when they experience terrible torture as the followers of the demon. The emergence of such an illustration can be said to be *aèng* or strange because it comes out of the depiction of the visual placement for *wangun loro-loroning atunggal* or two beautiful forms in one unit.

The composition of the main human element consists of legs, body, and head, while the demon also has three form elements: legs, body, and head. The building in *kandang bubrah* also has three elements; those are the base of the building, the body of the building, and the roof of the building. The animal demon, on the other hand, consists of feet, body and head or tail, body, and head.

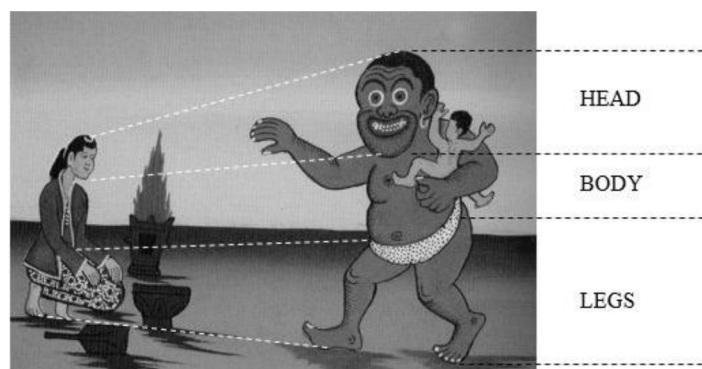


Photo 14 The placement arrangement of main elements in *wangun*: human and *Buto Ijo*, with legs, body, and head structure.
Source: Hermanu (2006).

All these have a three-dimensional structure in the context of visual *wangun telu-teluning atunggal* or three beautiful forms in one unity. These three structures are also in the form of *krobongan*,⁸ statue of *Loroblonyo*,⁹ *songsong*,¹⁰ *tumbak*¹¹ (spear), spear blade, *warangka*,¹² *jagrag*,¹³ *jagrag gambar*,¹⁴ Hindu temple, Buddhist temple, and *keris*, *gunungan*¹⁵ *wayang purwa*, and Javanese house (Widayat 2016: 238–240).

In *pesugihan* paintings, Tjitro Waloejo never reveals a *juru kunci* (caretaker) who actually has a very important role as a liaison between humans and demons. *Juru kunci* is *wong sing pinatah ngreksa papan sing kramat* (Tim Penyusun Balai Bahasa Yogyakarta 2001: 325) or the person in charge of treating sacred or miraculous places. That person will explain the conditions that need to be met by those looking for *pesugihan* and will also explain the human offering to be borne by the wealth seeker. The absence of *juru kunci* in the paintings, in the context of Javanese culture, can be interpreted to have the same role as a puppeteer in a shadow puppet show which does not need to be seen in the *kelir* (screen) of the show. In relation to the *pesugihan* painting, what punishment that *juru kunci* will have when he dies is also unrevealed, remembering that he is the mediator of human fellowship with the demon. Even as an intermediary of the *pesugihan* seekers, this caretaker has already reminded them to undo his intentions due to the consequences of being heavily incurred. But most *pesugihan* seekers have been desperate in their lives so they recklessly bear the risk that will override it like being a demon slave. The forbidden wealth seekers, in relation to Javanese culture, can be said to be the ones who are already kept away from the Almighty's forgiveness or *kinèban lawang tobat* (Suratno and Astiyanto 2009: 154–155).

Layout Principles of *Wangun* Placement Pattern

The *pesugihan* seeker is on the left of the drawing area whereas the provider is on the right side of the image field. The placement pattern of the humans and the demons is *wangun loro-loroning atunggal adu arep* or a two-sided pattern in a face-to-face union.

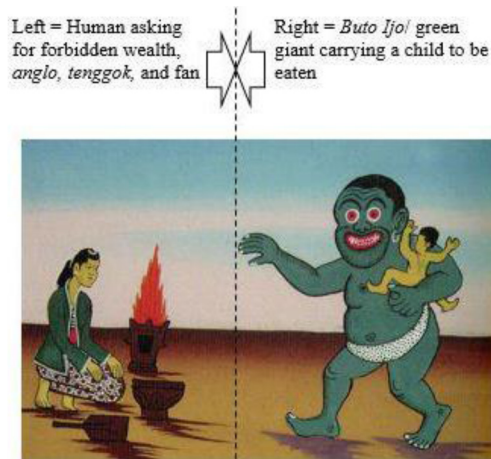


Photo 15 The finding on placement patter of forbidden *wangun loro-loroning atunggal*.
Source: Adapted fom Hermanu (2006).

The background as a main supporter element of *wangun* which consists of the land or earth for the humans and the sky for the powerful demons are the arrangement of *wangun manunggaling kawula Gusti*. *Gusti* (the Lord) in terms of the forbidden wealth or the powerful one is the demon who is the role model. In the *pesugihan* paintings, the earth and the sky are the symbols of the unification of mankind with the demon or associating human with the demon. The right concept is *wangun manunggaling kawula setan* or the beautiful appearance of mankind with the demon. The other supporting objects such as *anglo*, *tenggok*, and fan are depicted in front of a forbidden wealth seeker.

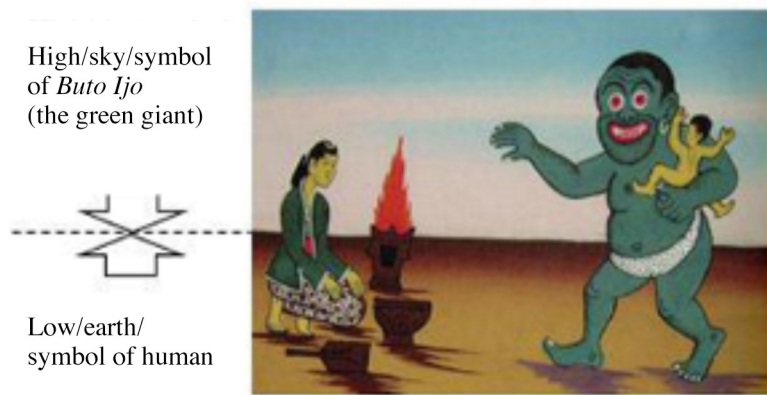


Photo 16 Forbidden *rupa wangun*, the bonding of person and Satan.
Source: Adapted fom Hermanu (2006)

Angger-angger and wewaler

Under *angger-angger* or rules in general in the context of images, Javanese people have a form of *wangun* picture when it seems to be *urip* (alive) like the real one or a realist form (Widayat 2016: 279). Taking a closer look at the images of humans and animals in the *pesugihan* paintings, one can see that they look like the real ones, including the colours and impressions of life. It can be said that *pesugihan* paintings follow *angger-angger* of the image in Javanese culture. *Angger-angger* for the placement pattern of *wangun* basically puts the humans who ask for *pesugihan* on the left side of the drawing area in a position sitting on the ground (kneeling) to symbolise weakness. The demon who gives *pesugihan* is on the right side in a standing position as a symbol of strength. This refers to traditional Javanese forms such as the shadow puppet shows that the ruler is on the right side and the lower level or the guest is on the left. It lives in the minds of the Javanese and when they work, it unconsciously becomes their visual guideline.

Wewaler says that the characters should not be interchanged, that is, the weak (human) is on the right while the strong (demon) is on the left. The illustration of these scenes can also be seen in traditional *pawukon*

images: *wuku* is on the left and the deities are on the right side. *Pawukon* is a Javanese calculation regarding the time related to the predictions of human life based on its *wuku* that is derived from Hindu mythology. There are 30 *pawukon* photos, from the *Wuku Sinta* to *Wuku Watugunung* accompanied by a picture of their respective deities (Widayat and Studyanto 2018: 421).

Sacred

Sacred refers to something that has magical and psychological effects on others (Susanto 2012: 220). It means that the *pesugihan* paintings by Tjitro Waloejo showing a horrible demonic form have the power to psychologically affect those who see the painting to not do things that are forbidden because actually when someone gets the wealth by means of fellowship with demons, the consequences are fatal. This can harm other people and themselves by dying in a pathetic state and his spirit when he dies will become a follower of the demon. Internalising the *pesugihan* paintings can prevent humans from doing communion with demons. One example of the paintings that can give magical and psychological effects that occurred in the 16th century is as follows:

A Sundanese song tells of a portrait painter sent from Majapahit palace to West Java to paint a famous Sundanese princess because of her beauty. When the painter returned and presented a portrait wrapped in yellow silk to the king, the king was truly fascinated by it. The longer he looked at it ... the greater the impression that was caused to him ... as if the princess had snatched his heart the most, like as if the princess were hovering in front of him ... (Holt 2000: 270).

Meaning

Pesugihan paintings can be interpreted in the *rupa wangun* context and in the broader meaning or meaning in various contexts. The meaning *rupa wangun* is a visual depiction that refers to the Javanese minds (*kejawèn*)¹⁶ by pairing humans and demons in conducting illicit activities. In the concept of *rupa wangun*, it can be said that *rupa wewaler* (prohibition) *loro-loroning atunggal* because humans communicate with demons or go astray. This type of arrangement can be termed as a conceptual pattern of visual placement of *wangun loro-loroning atunggal* or the placement of two beautiful forms in a forbidden unity. The background of the paintings consists of the earth and the sky—the earth where the humans are, and the sky where the gods are in synergy—have the meaning of *manunggaling kawula Gusti* because if the wrong way is done and the sky becomes a place of the demons, it can be said that the placement pattern of the visual *rupa wangun mainggaling kawula setan* is forbidden. The forbidden meaning refers to humans' relations with demons.

The meaning of *pesugihan* painting is the forbidden *rupa wangun* or a contradiction form because of the *loro-loroning atunggal* which is unusual in life, that is, the human form which blends with the appearance of the demon. This finding is different from the paradoxical appearance, considering that the paradox is created by the presence of two dualistic forces facing each other (Sumardjo 2006: 38), while the contradictory forms are created by the dualistic forces of the weak and the strong.

The meaning of *pesugihan* paintings in a broader context relates to economic, social, and cultural meanings. Regarding the economic problems of *pesugihan* paintings, it can be interpreted that as long as there is pathetic poverty in the world that can be done by humans. The meaning of *pesugihan* paintings in a cultural context can be seen as elements of culture including concepts, behaviour, and artifacts (Koentjaraningrat 1984: 5). In terms of the concept, there is an existence of the life concept that is forbidden because humans ask for help from demons. Furthermore, there is forbidden behaviour that is exchanging wealth for the luxury of living in a world that is only temporary with the lives of others, the lives of their children, the lives of their siblings, the lives of their husbands or wives, and even their own lives. The *pesugihan* paintings by Tjitro Waloejo is a cultural artifact that is very valuable in giving people a warning not to commit prohibited acts in seeking wealth. In the old times, *pesugihan* that is allied with demons is caused by poverty whereas nowadays “corruption *pesugihan*” is done by people who are already wealthy and in Javanese culture, it can be called *ketungkul kadonyan*. *Ketungkul kadonyan* means being overly concerned with wealth, property, jewellery, and various accessories of life that are physical in nature compared to thinking about morality and honesty (Bayuadhy 2014: 222–223). Then the corrupt perpetrators can be said to be greedy or to have communion not

with demons but with their ancestor, the devil. Therefore, the *pesugihan* painting is very appropriate to be a reminder that humans should not commit acts of corruption that harm the state, nation, and other people.

That Tjitro Waloejo held his work at the *Sekatèn* at the Keraton Surakarta Square is interesting. During that time, around the 1980s, the Surakarta Palace had no power because it joined the Republic of Indonesia. On 31 January 1985 the main buildings of the palace, namely Pendhapa Sasanaséwaka,¹⁷ Dalem Prabasuyasa,¹⁸ and Sasana Handrawina¹⁹ were burned down due to electrical short circuits short. Paku Buwana XII as the royal ruler reported to President Soeharto who then ordered to rebuild the buildings and it was completed on 17 December 1987. Since that time, the palace functioned as a centre for the preservation of national culture development, especially Java (Pemberton 2003: 242–247). Based on this, it can be seen from the side of the cultural heritage that the Surakarta Palace still exists. The palace is currently inhabited by aristocratic descendants who continue to preserve their culture as an Islamic Mataram Kingdom heritage. The palace still holds cultural product artifacts that are historically valuable and can be enjoyed by the public through the Surakarta Kasunanan Palace Museum. The *keraton* environment enjoys the puppet world and idolises Arjuna the Pandawa knight and is not reluctant to name the princes of Putra Dalem²⁰ after the knight in the Surakarta Palace.

The *satriya* (knight) photo of the puppet was so powerful that the sons of Paku Buwana IX were named Arjuna (Harjuna, Pamade, and Janaka). Arjuna's naming is used before the king's son becomes prince or immature. B.R.M. (*Bendara Radèn Mas*) Harjuna, his adult name is B.K.P.H. (Kanjeng Harun Prince Harya) Hadiningrat. B.R.M. Pamade does not have any adult name. B.R.M. Janaka, his adult name is B.K.P.H. Notodi (Widayat 2016: 27).

The presence of Tjitro Waloejo in Alun-alun Lor, with his art products that contradict the high art in the palace is extraordinarily brave. *Wong cilik* (ordinary people), whether children or adults, who could not access the palace culture which was *adhi luhung* (of high culture), enthusiastically surrounded Tjitro Waloejo's paintings. They did not discuss the palace idol photos such as Rama or Arjuna, superhumans who were heroes in the puppet stories sourced from the Ramayana and Mahabarata books, but *thuyul*, *Buto Ijo*, *Nyi Blorong* and others became popular and mysterious topics in conversations. This can be interpreted as the phenomenon of "counter-culture" during the independence period or rather the development era of the New Order by the Suharto regime in Indonesia, between the *priyayi agung keraton* culture and *wong cilik* culture, a counter-cultural phenomenon with strange beliefs as Kuntowijoyo (2004: 69) said:

Counter-culture emerged as an alternative to the influence of the power and cultural dominance of the palace which had taken root deeply and the culture of the city that was growing, the rivalry against dominance was seen here and there in the form of strange beliefs.

Since there is no successor to the Tjitro Waloejo painting style, it needs to be interpreted in the context of preservation, one example with reinterpretation. It is done by describing the theme and in accordance with the character or style of each painter in the form of a workshop as a tribute to Tjitro Waloejo. These works are exhibited to be enjoyed and remembered by art lovers more broadly. If the Giddens' opinion as quoted by Lull (1998: 176) is true, that in fact cultural traditions never remain silent; they are always recreated by later generations we are not too worried that *wong Jawa ilang seniné* or the works of Tjitro Waloejo will disappear, but is that really the case? Only time will tell.

CONCLUSION

The visual elements of *wangun* consist of humans and demons or objects or talismans which have the lower, middle, and upper structure that have changed into the legs, body, and head as well as the foundation of the building, the walls of the building, and the roof of the building into *wangun telu-teluning atunggal* vertically.

Based on the aesthetic discussion of the *pesugihan* paintings by Tjitro Waloejo, a concept that has never been revealed and actually lives in the minds of the Javanese people was discovered. There is an interesting finding that is related to the arrangement principle of *rupa wangun*, the forbidden *loro-loroning atunggal* patterns or two forbidden forms in a single unit. *Rupa loro-loroning atunggal* is a forbidden form of humans and demons, which means that humans should not be allowed to ask demons for help in their life. The other interesting finding is the appearance of earth and sky as a symbol of the unity between human and the Almighty or *manunggaling kawula Gusti*. In the *pesugihan* paintings, it becomes the form of forbidden *manunggaling kawula setan*, or more precisely the forbidden *rupa wangun*, or beautiful form which is prohibited.

Angger-angger or regulation of *wangun* illustrates the humans on the left of the image area while the demons are on the right of the image plane whereas the *wewaler* or prohibition asks not to swap the images so that the humans are on the right side, while the demons are on the left side of the drawing area. The *pesugihan* paintings have become sacred because it can suggest painting lovers to be careful in acting and not to associate with demons.

The forbidden *wangun* of *pesugihan* paintings can be referred to as a contradiction because in *loro-loroning atunggal*, one is considered weak and the other one is strong, one asks for something to the other and they ask for something else in return, both facing each other ending fatalistically. This finding is different from the paradoxical appearance created by the existence of two forces facing each other, or opposite but needs each other for balance.

The meaning of the paintings in a broader context is related to economic problems in the form of poverty which makes humans allied with demons to obtain illicit wealth, thus traditional paintings of *pesugihan* are born. The meaning of the paintings in the sociological context relates to the community of moral values that must be followed in order to be safe in their lives in the world. The meaning of Tjitro Waloejo's paintings in the cultural context mark that the wrong life concept leads to wrong behaviour and is given a warning through artifacts in the form of paintings. Through the paintings, it can be interpreted that Tjitro Waloejo wants to maintain harmony so that there will be no chaos and remind the people enjoying his paintings not to take a false path.

Finally, it is suggested that in the aesthetic context, the concept of *wangun* can be used to examine various things related to art and traditional design by anyone and not necessarily the researcher to find and deepen the concept of *wangun*. In relation to *pesugihan* paintings, this work can be interpreted and recreated according to the style of each painter as a tribute to the late Tjitro Waloejo who has contributed to the journey of traditional art and design in Surakarta.

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NOTES

1. *Sekatèn* is an annual event to commemorate the birth of Prophet Muhammad organised by Keraton Kasunanan Surakarta and Keraton Kasultanan Yogyakarta in Alun-alun Lor (north square).
2. *Sendhang* is regarded as a spring with stagnant water.
3. *Jimbung* is the name of a *sendhang* at the south of Klaten which has a *bulus* (turtle) and it is believed to be used in seeking for wealth.
4. Small *senik*; *ténggok* is regarded as small container made of woven bamboo.
5. Spirits (demons) in the form of children, *thuyul* are often asked for help to take other people's money without being seen by ordinary people.
6. *Pepundhèn* is regarded as respected places such as graves, shelters, and others.
7. Performance played by real people as its characters.
8. *Krobongan* is the middle room (*senthong tengah*) of Javanese traditional house. The rooms are beautifully decorated as the residence of Dewi Sri, the goddess of fertility and agriculture.
9. *Loroblonyo*, a statue of a pair of Javanese brides placed in front of the *krobongan* as a symbol of Dewi Sri and Raden Sadana, the lasting symbol of a couple.
10. Umbrella with long handle and equipped with colour. *Songsong* is a symbol of the rank and degree in Javanese nobility.

11. *Tumbak* is a weapon for war and hunting consisting of spear blade and long stick.
12. *Warangka* is regarded as sheath for spear blade or *keris*.
13. *Jagrag* is regarded as a stand to hold *songsong*, *tumbak*, and *watang* (a long stick for dancing and war training).
14. *Jagrag gambar* is a holder for painting/photo, with a three-legged frame.
15. *Gunungan* is regarded as *wayang purwa* or *wayang kulit* (made of buffalo skin) resulting from merging stylisation of the living trees as a symbol of life, originating from India with the mountain as the dwelling place of the Javanese native ancestors.
16. *Kejawèn* is regarded as syncretism of Javanese culture, Hindu-Buddhism, Islam and others.
17. The open building of Keraton Surakarta facing the east. Pendhapa Sasanaséwaka is a place where the King sat on his throne on certain days to pray asking for welfare and safety of the place and its contents.
18. Dalem Prabasuyasa is regarded as a building in the core house of the Keraton Surakarta that faces south for women doing their activities, there is *krobongan* inside the house as the residence of Dewi Sri, the goddess of fertility and agriculture.
19. A building dominated by a glass wall, Sasana Handrawina is a dining hall at Keraton Kasunanan Surakarta.
20. Putra Dalem is the son of the royal palace (Keraton), both from the empress and concubine.

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