

Comparative Study of Jepara Carving Design in the Era of Islamic Kingdom and Colonialism Era

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ABSTRACT

Jepara carving experienced the transition of three major cultures, namely Hindu-Buddhist-Javanese to Islam and Islam to the Dutch colonial period. This research uses case studies in the form of artifacts created in each of these periods. In the Demak Kingdom era, the Bledog Door carving design was used in the Kalinyamat Kingdom era, the Kalinyamat Mosque wall ornament carving design was used. In the Islamic Mataram Kingdom era, the Gong Senen carving was used, while in the colonial era or Kartini era, the Kartini Jewelry Box carving design was used. This research hopes to provide answers and analyze whether during these cultural transitions there were significant changes to Jepara carvings, then whether these 3 major cultures had an influence on changes in Jepara carvings and what factors influenced the changes in Jepara carvings. One of the conclusions of this research is that the artifacts made during the golden age of the Islamic Kingdom of Mataram (Gong Senen) do not reflect Islamic culture at all, but instead the principles of Islamic teachings are present in the overall symbolic value of each motif.

Keywords: comparative, design, Jepara carving, Islamic Kingdom, colonial

INTRODUCTION

Jepara has known carving since the time of the Hindu Kingdom (Majapahit). As (Gustami, 2000:55) stated, the beaches of Jepara, which served as a port in the past, encouraged cultural contact between the culture of traders and the culture of the local community. One form of cultural contact is the emergence of carving art which later developed into carving crafts in Jepara.

During the transition from the Hindu-Buddhist Kingdom to the Islamic Kingdom at that time, the art of Jepara carving experienced a very rapid development, both in terms of production design and motifs. The forms of carving in this period are also found on weapons, such as krises and spears, tombstones, mosques, palaces, musical instruments, including gamelan, and puppets. However, there is a slight difference in the carving motifs during the Islamic period, carvers in the Islamic Kingdom period

no longer carved living creatures as in the previous era. This is because in the teachings of Islam, people are prohibited from painting or carving living things or humans.

Table 1 Chronological table of the development of Jepara carving
(Source: Koswara, 1996:36)

CHRONOLOGY OF DEVELOPMENT OF CARVING ACTIVITIES FROM THE JAWA-HINDU PERIOD TO KARTIRI PERIOD				
18TH CENTURY		Javanese Hindu Period VII - IX Century (Majapahit)	Javanese-Islamic IX- XVI Century (Demak-Mataram)	Javanese-Islamic XIX Century (Kartir Period)
<p>Animism, all objects have a soul. All moving objects; alive and has magical powers. Ancestral spirits.</p>	Religious Beliefs	There are gods who rule nature	There is God Almighty The Hindu-Javanese mindset is still alive	There is God Almighty
	Transformation Process	Indian literature is studied and translated with Javanese taste	Islam is studied. Get acquainted with Islamic culture. Forwarded - with adjustments Chinese fine art	Islam is studied. Continuing the exploration of Islamic culture. Forwarded - with adjustments Chinese fine art European carving style
	Religious activity	Belief in, respect and worship of the gods	Carry out Islamic religious law	Carry out Islamic religious law
	Type of facility/ goods made	Temple building	Mosques, palaces, tombs	Mosques, residences, furniture, decoration
	Building equipment/goods	Sculptures, reliefs	Decoration, carving	Decoration, carving
	Meaning Form Composition	Religion, social, and culture. Plants, animals, fantasy, gods, people, people, natural things, mountains. Naturalist, not symmetrical.	Religion, social, and culture. Plants, natural objects, landscapes. Does not describe living things. Stylized, symmetrical.	Religion, social, culture, and economy. Plants, animals (birds), natural objects, geometric shapes. Stylized, symmetrical.

From the above discussion, it can be concluded that Jepara carving experienced the transition of 3 major cultures, namely Hindu-Buddhist-Javanese to Islam and Islam to the Dutch colonial period. For this reason, this research hopes to provide answers and analyze whether during these cultural transitions there were significant changes to Jepara carvings, then whether these 3 major cultures had an influence on changes in Jepara carvings and what factors influenced the changes in Jepara carvings. So that later this research will be able to become literature which answers questions related to the changes in the design of Jepara carvings during the Islamic Kingdom era and the colonialism era.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research, which took place in Jepara Regency, is a qualitative with a descriptive-comparative method. This research also uses aesthetic, historical, and comparative approaches, which are used to obtain clarity about changes in the design of Jepara carvings in the era off the Islamic Kingdom (Demak-Kalinyamat-Mataram) and the Dutch Colonialism era. The analysis method used is the analysis of object changes based on time using 4 indicators, namely, what remains, what is lost, what is new, and what has changed.

This research is also a case study research, to make it easier to compare Jepara carving designs in each period studied, case studies are needed in the form of artifacts created in each period. In the Demak Kingdom era, the Bledeg Door carving design was used, in the Kalinyamat Kingdom era, the Kalinyamat Mosque wall ornament carving design was used, in the Islamic Mataram Kingdom era, the Gong Senen carving was used, while in the colonial era or Kartini era, the Kartini Jewelry Box carving design was used as a case study.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Demak Kingdom Era (1478-1546)

Demak was the first Islamic sultanate on the island of Java founded by Raden Patah in 1478, shortly after the collapse of the Majapahit Kingdom (Ngationo, 2018:17).

In its heyday, Jepara was part of the Demak sultanate. Jepara, which was a port city in a bay, was considered safe for ships to take refuge in, therefore Jepara also functioned as a trade and shipping center for the Demak sultanate. Moreover, Jepara harbor was also the military port of the Demak Sultanate (Supriyono, 2015:31).

During the reign of the Demak Kingdom, carvings which were left behind can generally be found on the wall ornaments of mosques and gebyok ornaments, such as the Great Mosque of Demak. The mosque, which was founded during the reign of Raden Patah, is a complex surrounded by a fence with several gates on each side as access in and out of the mosque.

(Purnamasari, 2014:75-76,97) stated that on the pillars supporting the Mosque, including the sokoguru, there are carvings which still show the beautiful Hindu-style carving style. In addition to the carvings on the pillars, there are also wood carvings

attached to the walls of the Mosque which function as decorations. The entrance to the Great Mosque of Demak is located in the center as a link between the portico of the Mosque and the main room of the Mosque. The door is called the main door or lawang bledeg or lightning door. Lawang bledeg at the Great Mosque of Demak has two carved door leaves. The carving motifs found on the door are in the form of plants, crowns, and dragon heads with open mouths and showing their teeth. Lawang bledeg made by Ki Ageng Selo during the reign of the Sultanate of Bintoro III is considered to have similarities with reliefs during the Singosari and Majapahit periods, but is different in terms of philosophical meaning.

Kalinyamat Kingdom Era (1549-1599)

Before the collapse of Demak Kingdom, Sultan Trenggono, who was the ruler of Demak at that time, appointed Raden Toyib (Sultan Hadirin) as the Duke of Jepara. Raden Toyib or Sultan Hadirin was later married to one of Raden Patah's granddaughters named Retno Kencono. In the political upheaval of the Demak Kingdom, Sultan Hadirin was killed by Ario Penangsang, so that the power of Jepara at that time was replaced by Retno Kencono who was later titled Kalinyamat Queen. In the 16th century AD, Kalinyamat Queen succeeded in raising Jepara to become one of the most important capitals and ports on the North coast of Java.

The most prominent carving heritage of the Kalinyamat Kingdom era is the carved ornaments on the walls of the Mantingan Mosque. The wall ornaments on the mosque built by Kalinyamat Queen have motifs such as floral (flowers, plants), animals, geometry, and so on. (Gustami, 2000:8) said that on the walls of tombs and mosques in Mantingan, there are animal-shaped ornaments which have been composed and disguised in stylized Arabic calligraphy forms, interspersed with tendrils of leaves and flowers so that the embodiment no longer shows a picture of living things. In the field of ornamental art, this way of creating ornaments is called stylization.

Era of Islamic Mataram Kingdom (1600-1742)

Although the Kingdom of Jepara had declined after the death of Kalinyamat Queen and the destruction of the Kalinyamat Kingdom, it did not mean that the port of Jepara no longer functioned. Jepara's role as a city and trading port was now taken over by the Mataram Kingdom. (Supriyono, 2015:27) stated that although later Jepara (after the collapse of Kalinyamat) was controlled by Islamic Mataram, the port of Jepara still functioned as a trade center, especially for rice exports by the Mataram

sultanate, and also oversaw other coastal areas such as Jepara, Gresik, Tuban, Rembang, Pati, Kudus, Surabaya, Pasuruan, and so on.

The most prominent carving relic of the Islamic Mataram Kingdom era is Gong Senen. Gong Senen is the name given to a gong musical instrument which also has a support (gayor). Gayor is a support, generally made of teak wood, its function is as a support or a place to hang the gong so that it can still stand. While the core part is the gong itself, in which the gong is one part of an ancient Javanese musical instrument called gamelan. The general function of the gong is to provide one of the sound colors in a series of gamelan musical instruments. Generally, gongs or other gamelan musical instruments are made of a mixture of copper and bronze metal, then formed in a circle with a certain depth and diameter, forged to produce the desired tone and there is a circular protrusion at the top as a place to hit the gong.

Dutch Colonialism Era (1742-1942)

In the 18th century, the center of government was moved by the colonial authorities from Jepara to Semarang. The move caused the port of Jepara to suffer a severe setback, although eventually the city of Jepara retained its status as a regency city. Later, in the 19th and early 20th centuries, Jepara rose again in the international arena with the emergence of Raden Ajeng Ayu Kartini as a figure in the women's emancipation movement. Brilliantly, the young Kartini succeeded in laying the foundations of the struggle for her people. At that time, Kartini also thought about educational issues and the future of her nation, including paying great attention to the welfare of small people. One of Kartini's most prominent concerns was her great concern for the activities of artists and craftsmen, especially those who worked in the field of carved furniture. Kartini's great concern has aroused the spirit of carving craftsmen to work hard, although the struggle was only successful and could be enjoyed by the craftsmen after a long process of growth (Gustami, 2000:4).

Analysis of Change Events

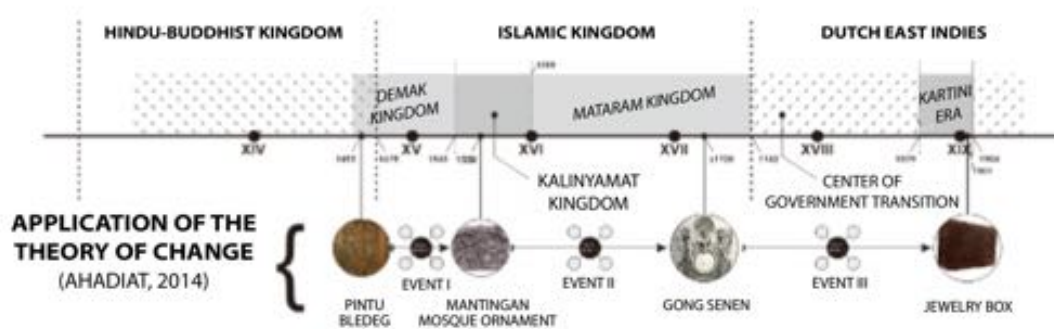


Figure 1 Change event timeline graph
(Source: Author)

Event I is an event of change between artifacts during the Demak Kingdom and artifacts during the Kalinyamat Kingdom, Event II is an event of change between artifacts during the Kalinyamat Kingdom and artifacts during the Islamic Mataram Kingdom, while Event III is an event of change between artifacts during the Islamic Mataram Kingdom and the Dutch East Indies colonial era (Kartini period). Each of these change events has similar and differentiating factors as well as other factors which influence the change event of the carving design. In addition, the factors which influence the change event also have a certain impact on each carving.

Equalizing and Differentiating Factors

Table 2 Table of equalizing and differentiating factors.
(Source: Author)



WHAT IS MISSING		
Vase shape, Mythical creature shape (crowned dragon)	Living forms carved by means of decorative depictions	Animal shape, mythical creature shape (Kala)
WHAT HAS CHANGE		
The use of wood materials > natural stone	The use of natural stone materials > wood, stylized forms of living things > naturalist	The shape of a living creature carved by a naturalist turns into an abstractly carved form of a wayang
WHAT IS NEW		
The use of natural stone (yellow padas) as a medium for carving, geometric shapes	The shape of the animal is carved in a naturalist style, the shape of a vase has see through relief dimensions/ krawangan	The shape of wayang depicted in abstract style, letter form, utilization of tatak pembuluk and coret
WHAT WAS KEPT		
Typical Hindu-Javanese motifs (Kala, floral) decorative way of depiction, symbolic and aesthetic meaning, utilization of tatak penuku , penilap & kol , low relief dimensions	Typical Hindu-Javanese motifs (Kala, floral) decorative way of depiction (floral) symbolic and aesthetic meaning, utilization of tatak penuku , penilap & kol , low relief dimensions	Typical Hindu-Javanese motifs (Kala, floral), aesthetic meaning, utilization of tatak penuku , penilap & kol , low relief dimensions

Event I is an event of change between the Demak Kingdom period and the Kalinyamat Kingdom period, in terms of its artifacts as case study objects, namely Bledag Doors and Mantingan Mosque ornaments, the equating and differentiating factors are as follows: the missing element in this change event is the jambangan motif, the motif of mythological creatures namely the crowned dragon head. Jambangan motif is a motif with the shape of a vase or vase of flowers, generally from this vase appears floral motifs, this jambangan motif is also found in some ornaments

of the temple Roro Jonggrang panel or more famously called Candi Prambanan and also found in the Gong Senen ornament. Then, the element which changes is the use of teak wood as raw material, which is replaced by yellow solid stone as raw material. Furthermore, the new element is the use of yellow solid stone material as the carving medium, as well as the presence of geometric motifs which resemble Islamic art styles. Meanwhile, the elements which are maintained are typical Hindu-Javanese motifs such as floral and kala (sengkolo) motifs, the way of depiction which is composed or stylized, carvings have symbolic and aesthetic meanings with carving dimensions in the form of low relief and the use of penuku, penilap, and kol inlay.

Furthermore, event II is an event of change between the Kalinyamat Kingdom period and the Mataram Kingdom period, in terms of its artifacts as case study objects, namely Mantingan Mosque ornaments and ornaments on Gong Senen. The equalizing and differentiating factors are as follows: the missing element in this change event is the loss of the way of depicting stilation on the motif of living creatures. Then, the element which changes is the way of depicting living creatures, which changes from stilation to naturalistic depiction, as well as the reuse of wood material as a carving medium to replace yellow solid stone. Next, the new elements are the motifs of living creatures such as dragons, snakes, peacocks, and human figures carved in a naturalist manner, the reappearance of the jambangan motif, and the dimension of the carving in the form of translucent carving or krawangan. Meanwhile, the elements which are retained are the typical motifs of Hindu-Javanese art such as floral and kala (sengkolo) motifs, the way of depiction which is composed or stylized, the carvings have symbolic and aesthetic meanings with carving dimensions in the form of low relief and the use of penuku, penilap, and kol inlay.

Event III is an event of change between the Mataram Kingdom period on the Dutch East Indies colonial period, in terms of its artifacts as case study objects, namely ornaments on the Gong Senen and ornaments on Kartini's jewelry box, while the equating and differentiating factors are as follows: the missing element in this change event is the loss of carved animal motifs, as well as the loss of mythological creature motifs (sengkalan). Then, the element which changes is the way of naturalist depiction of living beings in the figure motifs changes to the wayang figure motifs which are depicted abstractly. Furthermore, new elements are the appearance of abstractly depicted wayang figure motifs, Javanese script motifs, and the refinement of inlay tools, namely embossing and coret inlay. Meanwhile, the elements which are maintained are typical Hindu-Javanese motifs such as floral motifs, carvings which

have aesthetic meaning with the dimensions of the carvings in the form of low relief and the use of penuku, penilap, and kol inlay.

Indication of Transformation Process

Table 3 Transformation process indication table
(Source: Author)

Diagram illustrating the transformation process from a Bledeg Door to a Jewelry Box through three events (EVENT I, EVENT II, EVENT III).

BLEDEG DOOR → EVENT I → MANTINGAN MOSQUE ORNAMENT → EVENT II → GONG SENEN → EVENT III → JEWELRY BOX

TRANSFORMATION PROCESS INDICATIONS

TRANSFORMATION

The ornament is dominated by typical Hindu-Javanese motifs (crowned dragon head, vase shape)

The ornament has a tendency similar to the style of Chinese art (medalion) and Islam (geometric stylization)

The ornaments are thick with Javanese Hindu art styles such as mythological animal shapes (crowned dragon snake, kala), floral shapes coming out of vases to living creature motifs carved in a naturalist style

The ornament still has the nuances of Hindu-Javanese art style, with prominent forms in the form of flowers and wayang carved with abstract techniques

MEANING/ FUNCTION

Symbolic & Aesthetic

Symbolic & Aesthetic

Symbolic & Aesthetic

Aesthetic

DIMENSION

Bas Relief

Bas Relief

Bas Relief
Ayour Relief

Bas Relief

SHAPE/ THEME

Mythical creature (dragon head) flora, cosmos (flame)
Symbolic object (crown, vase)

Flora, Fauna (horse, phoenix, peacock, monkey, elephant)
Gemoetric, Mythical creature (Kala) **Real object** (Pura)

Flora (fruit, stem, leaf, and flower)
Fauna (peacock), **Human shape** (Citrosoma, Sentono, and Tunggulwulung)
Mythical creature (snake, dragon, kala)

Geometric, Flora (fruit, stem, leaf, and flower)
Human (wayang)

Based on the discussion of the equalizing and differentiating factors in the previous section, certain indications can be drawn which occur in each artifact in each period. In the first artifact (Bledeg Door), the indication is that the ornamentation is dominated by Hindu-Javanese motifs, as evidenced by the crowned dragon head and jambangan motifs. The dragon head is also a sengkalan or condrosengkolo (typical Javanese) which reads “nogo mulat saliro wani”, which means it shows the year 1388 Saka or 1466 AD. The crown motif is a typical king’s crown worn by Majapahit kings (Hindu-Javanese), and the jambangan (vase/flower pot) motif is evidence that the

Hindu-Javanese style still dominates. In addition, the depiction of living creatures (dragon head) which is composed or stylized is also evidence that the ornament has been adapted to the teachings of Islam.

In addition, the ornaments have symbolic and aesthetic functions. The dimensions of the ornaments are low relief or bas relief carving, and have motifs of mythological creatures (dragon head), flora, cosmos (tongue of fire) and symbolic objects (crown, vase) The ornamentation on this Bledeg Door has a style or way of depicting stilation on each motif. While the technical ornamentation is passive ornamentation.



Figure 2 Bledeg Door picture and its transformation process indication

In the second artifact, the Mantingan wall ornament, the indications include; the ornament has a similar tendency with Chinese (medallion) and Islamic art styles (geometric motifs and the way of depicting the motifs of its living creatures which are stylized). The ornaments have symbolic and aesthetic functions, with the dimensions of the ornaments being low relief (bas relief). The themes are flora, fauna (horse, phoenix, peacock, monkey, elephant), geometric motifs, mythological creatures (kala) and real objects (temple). The style of style of depiction is stilation on each motif. The technical ornamentation is passive ornamentation.

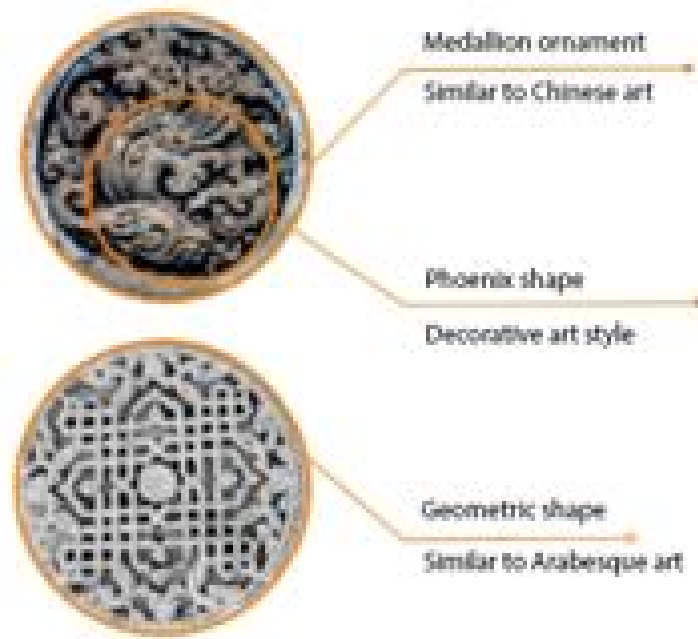


Figure 3 Mantingan Mosque ornament picture and its transformation process indication

Next, in the third object, namely the ornaments on Gong Senen, indications of the transformation process include: the ornaments are thick with Hindu-Javanese art styles, such as mythological creature motifs (crowned dragon snakes, kala) and floral motifs coming out of jars. The ornaments have symbolic and aesthetic meanings or functions, besides that they also have low relief dimensions (bas relief) and translucent relief or *krawangan* (Ayour Relief). Furthermore, the ornaments on Gong Senen have themes of flora, fauna (peacock), human figures (Citrosumo, Sentono, and Tunggulwulung) and mythological creatures (dragon snake, kala). The style or depiction style is stilation on the floral motifs, naturalism on the motifs of human figures, fauna, and mythological creatures. The ornamentation techniques are active (constructive) and passive ornaments.

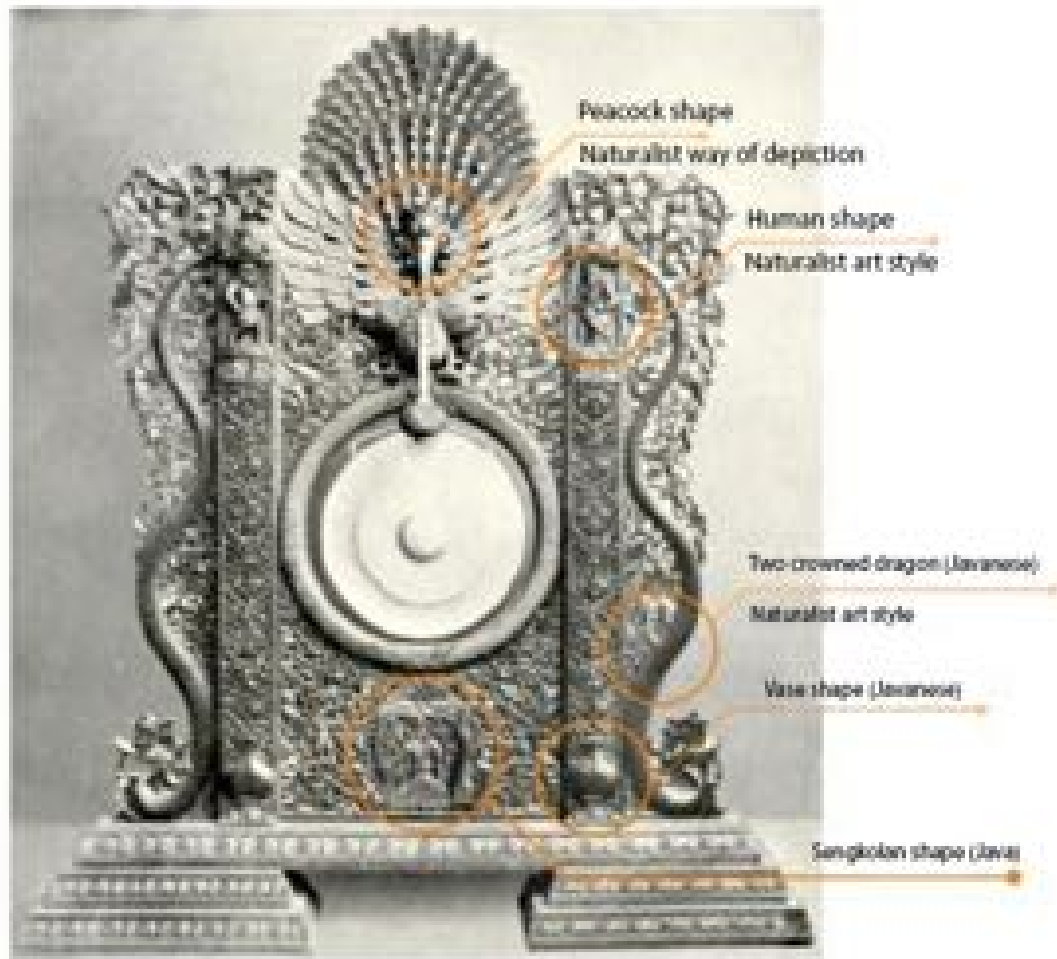


Figure 4 Gong Senen picture and its transformation process indication

And in the last object, namely the Kartini jewelry box ornament, indications of the transformation process include: the ornament is still nuanced in the Hindu-Javanese style of art, with the prominent motifs being floral motifs with the depiction method of stilation and abstract carved puppet figure motifs. The ornaments only have an aesthetic function, with a low carving dimension (bas relief). It also has themes of geometrical motifs, flora and human figures (wayang). The technical ornamentation is passive ornamentation.

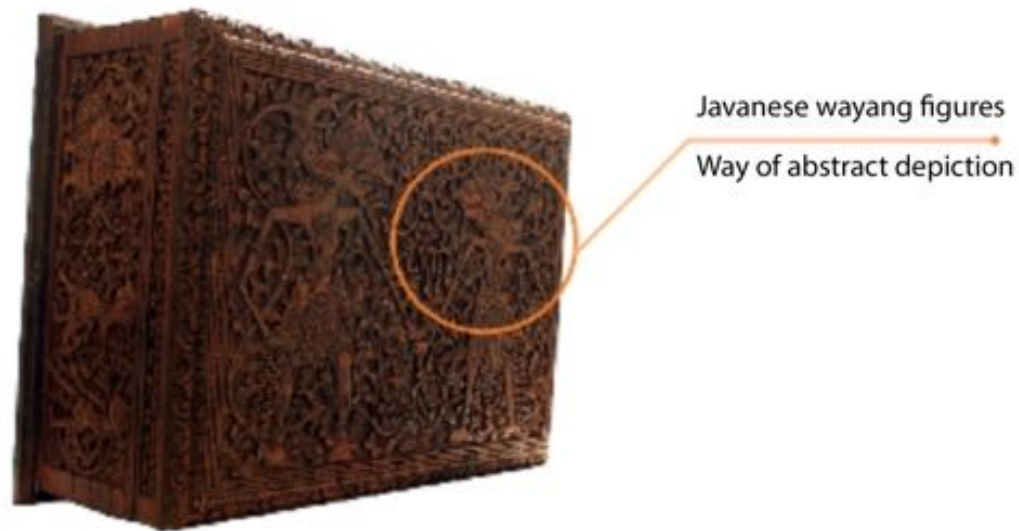


Figure 5 Kartini jewelry box picture and its transformation process indication

CONCLUSION

Some conclusions which can be obtained from this research include, first, in the period of the 15th to 16th centuries, in Javanese history was a transition period of two major cultures, namely Hindu-Buddhist-Javanese to Islam. The lack of availability of historical data and archaeological sites make it difficult to reconstruct the history of that period. In addition, it also makes every historical study not a few which become debates among historians.

Secondly, although the end of the 16th century until the middle of the 18th century was the peak of the Islamic Kingdom (Mataram) ruling in Jepara, it did not mean that Islamic teachings were fully applied in Jepara carving art. This is evidenced in the Gong Senen ornament, in which there are still motifs of living creatures depicted/carved in a naturalistic way, in which this way of depiction is contrary to Islamic teachings.

Thirdly, the Gong Senen artifact, which was made during the golden age of the Islamic Kingdom of Mataram, does not reflect Islamic culture at all, but the principles of Islamic teachings are present throughout the symbolic values of each motif.

Finally, many influences from outside cultures such as China, Islam, and others came to be one of the factors which influenced the changes in the design of Jepara carvings, both during the transition period between Hindu-Buddhist and Islamic times and

between Islam and the Dutch East Indies, but Indonesians have their own way of describing what their artifacts should look like (what comes is always processed so that it has a high local content).

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