

Religious and Cultural Perspectives of Interiors: Gunungan Wayang Wahyu in the Catholic Church of Surakarta, Java, Indonesia

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Abstract

Wayang Wahyu was first created in 1959 as a development of Wayang Purwa from Surakarta and is closely associated with art and performance. Wayang Purwa took stories from the Mahabharata and Ramayana periods that were adapted to Javanese culture and used by Sunan Kalijaga as a medium of Islamic da'wah. Therefore, Wayang Purwa were closely related to Javanese people's social life, politics, religion, education, and arts. While Wayang Wahyu is a kind of wayang (puppet show) whose story is based on The Bible. It resembles Wayang Purwa at some aspects, especially in *pedhalangan* (puppetry) aesthetics which consist of *dalang* (puppeteer), gamelan players, *pesindhen*, *penggerong*, *lakon*, *sanggit*, *catur*, *sabet*, *karawitan pakeliran*, equipments, and audience. The uniqueness of Wayang Wahyu is found in its function as a media to communicate Bible stories based on the concept of Catholicism. However, the present research will focus on searching for the symbolic meaning of the Wayang Wahyu Surakarta in the St. Antonius Purbayan Catholic Church, Surakarta.

The study employed a qualitative research method. An in-depth interview was conducted with the Wayang puppeteer and the church management in 2021. The findings show that Wayang Wahyu has a symbolic meaning related to the Catholic faith and the church's interior. It also shows that the use of Wayang Wahyu as one of the interior ornaments in a Catholic church can help increase the faith of the Catholics due to the presence of the figure of Jesus, as depicted in the Wayang helps in the congregation's prayers. Moreover, Wayang Wahyu is regarded as implementing the church's effort to bring local content and the traditional arts closer to Catholic teachings. Wayang Wahyu is an attempt to mediate the teachings of Christ that are not contradictory to Javanese culture; it is seen as the method to teach how to "read" the teachings of Christ with the understanding the Javanese people. The study provides an elaboration and insight into the symbolic meaning of Wayang Wahyu in a Catholic church.

Keywords: symbolic meaning, wayang wahyu, culture, church, Surakarta

Introduction

Culture and its products are the result of human life processes that affect how people live (Pesurnay, 2018) and national culture is always related to the issue of national identity (Capra, 2004). Indonesian national identity is considered a combination of all local cultures of the Nusantara archipelago, which produce the utmost expression of positive cultural characteristics. Indonesia has abundant cultural diversity from Sabang to Merauke; the various tribes and races contribute to Indonesia's wide variety of cultures (Mahdayeni, Alhaddad and Saleh, 2019). Among such diverse cultural variations, one of the main highlights representing Indonesian culture is the Wayang puppet (henceforth, Wayang). Wayang is a cultural heritage of Indonesian ancestors whose existence has been discovered since approximately 1,500 BC (Sudjarwo, Sumari and Wiyono, 2009).

This discovery is based on the archaeological evidence of the early incorporation of Wayang into human life as elaborated in an inscription of King Balitung (899-911 AD) which tells the story of Bima Kumara when he was young. It also mentions the story of a Wayang puppeteer and the wages he received during a puppet show (Herlyana, 2013). Currently, UNESCO has recognized Wayang as a work of cultural art inherited from Indonesian ancestors who have had noble values for the civilization of Indonesian nations. Wayang has been designated an original oral/non-material Indonesian cultural heritage (The Masterpieces of Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity) since November 7, 2003. The certificate of appreciation from UNESCO has been submitted on April 21, 2005 (Desriyanti and Iskandar, 2017; Purwanto, 2018; Sutaryanto, 2017; Warsito and Kartikasari, 2007).

In literal meaning, Wayang refers to shadow. Wayang in Javanese means *rerupan sing kedadeyan saka barang sing ketaan ing sorot (pepadhang)* or "shadows that occur because of a beam of light" (Purwanto, 2018). Wayang is one of the most highly valued performing art forms that incorporate literature, music, painting, sculpture, and semiotics all in one performance (Cahyono *et al.*, 2022). On top of that, Wayang can also be used as a medium of information, education, entertainment and instilment of philosophical values (Wardani and Widiyastuti, 2013). In recent years, the realm of Wayang has developed not only limited to the performances that create shadows but also as a form of art that features stories, plays, dramatic structures and others, as in the performances of Wayang Beber, Wayang Golek, Wayang Purwa and Wayang Wong (Mulyono, 1982; Guritno, 1988).

As a Javanese cultural heritage, Wayang Purwa provides insights into the mystical Javanese life deeply entrenched in the community's life. The values contained in Wayang Purwa are closely related to social life, politics, religion, education, and arts (Hidajat, 2009). Wayang Purwa takes stories from the Mahabharata and Ramayana periods that were adapted to Javanese culture and used by Sunan Kalijaga as a medium of Islamic da'wah (preaching) in 1443 (Marsono, 2009). In addition, Wayang Purwa has an essential role for the Javanese people as a source of entertainment and to preach proper, noble values that can be applied in everyday life (Herlyana, 2013). Over time, Wayang Purwa has also been developed into other forms of Wayang, i.e., Wayang Wahyu whose story is based on the story of the Catholic religion.

In the realm of Wayang art, Wayang Wahyu is a new type of *pakeliran* that emerged in the 1960s based on the concepts of Catholicism. The stories in Wayang Wahyu primarily discuss God's message through media that the Javanese people appreciate (Poplawska, 2004). Wayang wahyu is a new version of Wayang creation which refers to the *pakeliran* of Wayang Purwa. Wayang Wahyu was born in a church environment in Surakarta based on the church's open attitude towards the local community's traditional arts. Appreciating the church for local culture creates cultural tolerance that strengthens the bond of the surrounding community. Wayang Wahyu is therefore regarded as a manifestation of the church's tolerance, adaptation, and hope that it will become a mediator between the church and the people and between Catholic followers and the Javanese people. The birth of the Wayang Wahyu a few years before the Second Vatican Council is seen as an odd phenomenon that raises substantial questions about the issues underlying its existence.

The Wayang Wahyu story is adapted from the holy books and scriptures and incorporates the language, values, and norms that exist in the surrounding community (Gutama,

2020). In fact, Wayang Wahyu includes the main characters in the holy books of Catholicism, such as Jesus, Peter, Mother Mary, Luke, and other figures. In this regard, Wayang Wahyu has several similarities with Wayang Purwa, but the stories presented in the Wayang Wahyu show differ from those in the Wayang Purwa (Wardani and Widiyastuti, 2013). According to Subono (2015), the rationale that prompted the creation of Wayang Wahyu comprised:

- 1) the awareness of Indonesian culture that grounds on the first principle of Pancasila (monotheism);
- 2) the creation of new Wayang as a medium for disseminating biblical teachings;
- 3) the effort to increase the variation of Wayang in the Wayang art; and
- 4) as an effort to serve the state, nation, and religion in building the mental and spiritual characteristics.

The research object is located in Surakarta city, which has an essential position in the traditional Javanese art as the frontline pioneer of developing cultural heritage and cultural conservation of Javanese culture (Hardiyanti, Antariksa and Hariyani, 2005; Kusumaningtyas, 2011). In addition, in Surakarta, the Kasunanan Palace is one of the centers of Wayang culture in Java that still keeps several Wayang sets (Suwarno *et al.*, 2014).

Chronologically, the development of Catholicism in the Surakarta region was significant when several churches were established and mapped out based on the number of Catholic followers and their development strategies. In the sociological context, church buildings in the Surakarta area resemble a place of worship for the people. However, in an anthropological context, churches in Surakarta resemble a pragmatic functional architecture and the relationship with local values or local cultural characteristics of Java. This tendency gets more robust when it is clarified with various forms of representation of the church interior, both in managing the worship space and the ornamental aesthetic elements surrounding it.

In academia, several studies have begun to discuss Wayang Wahyu. A survey by Subono (2015) analyzed the text of the story of Prophet Elijah in a Wayang Wahyu performance with a brief *pakeliran* music pattern. Moreover, research conducted by Budi (2003) elaborated on the complete specifications of the *pakeliran*, forms, and characteristics of the Wayang Wahyu. In the meantime, Gutama (2020) has examined the revelation of the Wayang Ngajab Rahayu as a medium for instilling the values of social life and the community's response to the disclosure of the Wayang Ngajab Rahayu as well as its understanding and application in social life. Literature shows that only few studies still discuss the symbolic meanings depicted in the Wayang Wahyu Surakarta in the Catholic Church in the region.

This study focuses on searching for the symbolic meaning of the Wayang Wahyu Surakarta in the Catholic Church. In other words, the study aims to unravel the definitions of symbols or signs' to convey a particular idea (Nurchahyo, 2018). This study also focuses on the relationship between the interior of local cultures, such as Wayang Wahyu and the Catholic faith, and between the interior of Wayang Wahyu culture and Catholic symbols. In addition, this study will examine the changes in Wayang from its primary function as a performance to an interior part of the church rooms and as a traditional art that becomes a religious symbol. Purwanto (2018) reveals that in the context of cultural preservation, it is essential to raise the next generation's awareness of the importance of religious values and their applications in everyday life. Therefore, this research must be carried out to preserve cultural values in Indonesia, apply the values contained in the first Pancasila principle of monotheism, and disseminate the noble values contained in the teachings of the Catholic religion.

Literature Review

The word *kayon*, another name for *gunungan* figure in the Wayang Purwa, is presumed to have originated from the Arabic phrase *khayyu*, which means "life," symbolizing the form of life in the universe; believed to have three levels. The *Taman tuwuh* (trees) in *Gunungan* or *Kayon* is regarded as the Kalpataru tree (in Buddhism concept), which means "the living tree" or source of life. In the *pakeliran* of Wayang Purwa, there are two types of *gunungan*, i.e., *Gunungan lanang* (male) and *Gunungan wadon* (female), with almost similar motifs and ornaments but different shapes and sizes; *Gunungan lanang* look slimmer and pointed, while

Gunungan wadon looks a bit wider (Amboro, Wahyuningsih and Prameswari, 2020). Based on the drawings, the *kayon* is divided into *Kayon Blumbangan* and *Kayon Gapuran*.

Research on Wayang Wahyu has been carried out from several years ago. Scholarly attention has shown concerns about Wayang Wahyu. As Nursanti (2018) elaborates, Wayang Purwa became the initial inspiration for the creation of Wayang Wahyu whose source story came from the holy Bible of the Catholics and Christians. In this study, Nursanti (2018) says that the depiction of Jesus in the Wayang Wahyu is proportional to the artists' level of understanding, background, and creativity. The formation of Jesus is indeed depicted with different illustrations but is still portrayed accurately based on the depiction. Similar to Wayang Purwa, Wayang Wahyu puppet is made using buffalo skin and incorporates gamelan music accompaniment, *gendhing-gendhing*, and other staging equipment in the performance. Subono (2015) explores the Wayang Wahyu performance of the story of Prophet Elijah. The preparation of the story script begins by selecting the vocabulary, *catur*/dialogue, *sabet*, and accompaniment music. In Surakarta, Subono (2015) succeeded in writing the Wayang Wahyu script of the story of Prophet Elijah. The story of the Prophet Elijah contained in the Bible that was transformed into the Wayang Wahyu performance is expected to be a means of socialization of government programs, religious preaching for Catholic followers, a source of environment and education, as well as a product of art tourism.

Gutama (2020) examines the Wayang Wahyu Ngajab Rahayu show in Surakarta, Central Java. He shows that Wayang Wahyu is an entertaining performance as the art form of Christianity for followers in Surakarta. In addition, Wayang Wahyu can be an alternative learning medium that features an exciting condition in the art of Wayang performance. Furthermore, the Wayang Wahyu performance also provides lessons of kindness, caring for fellow human beings regardless of religion, and compassion. Further, Gutama (2020) emphasizes that Wayang Wahyu Ngajab Rahayu must be preserved in the modern society.

According to Yayasan Wayang Wahyu (1975), there are two types of *Gunungan* in Wayang Wahyu: *Gunungan Surya Sengkala* and *Gunungan The Mystery of Catholic Faith*. Several sources consider *Gunungan Surya Sengkala* to be the work of M.M. Atmowiyono, the first puppeteer of Wayang Wahyu. In contrast, other sources state that this *Gunungan* was the creation of R. Roesradi as the designer and maker of other Wayang Wahyu characters. Furthermore, the *Gunungan Misteri Iman Katolik* was designed by Brother Timotheus and made by R. Roesradi. *Gunungan* in Wayang Wahyu also has a relatively similar shape to the Wayang Purwa; the *gunungan* in Wayang wahyu is quite larger in size compared to that of Wayang Purwa. In this regard, the size of the *Gunungan Misteri Iman Katolik* is described as fatter than *Gunungan Surya Sengkala*, but it is not explained whether or not the *gunungan* falls into *kayon lanang* (male) or *kayon wadon* (female).

Research Methodology

The primary purpose of this study is to elaborate on the symbolic meaning of the *Gunungan* Wayang Wahyu contained in the church as an interior decorative element. This research was conducted in 2021 by employing qualitative methods and in-depth interviews. It was carried out a case study of the symbolic meaning of Wayang Wahyu at the Purbayan Church, Surakarta, Indonesia. Qualitative research can be defined as the study of the *nature* of phenomena and is especially appropriate for answering questions of *why* something is (not) observed, assessing complex multi-component interventions, and focussing on intervention improvement (Busetto, Wick and Gumbinger, 2020). Interviews were conducted with four competent resource persons (the puppeteer, the church leaders, the church secretary, and a Catholic congregation) who have adequate knowledge about Wayang Wahyu and the church of the Purbayan Surakarta Church. This study also employed an in-depth interview to collect the opinions and perceptions of several informants regarding the use of Wayang Wahyu as an interior element of the Purbayan Surakarta Church on the topics of the basis of the creation of *Gunungan* Wayang Wahyu; the meaning of each element in the *gunungan misteri iman Katolik*; the relationship between the use of Wayang Wahyu and the Church's Interior; and the relationship between the use of Wayang Wahyu and the Catholic faith.

The study presents several sub-sections to formulate detailed results for an exploratory approach to the topic. The interview results were organized into two main categories. The first included material related to the identification of Wayang Purwa and its development into Wayang Wahyu, as well as the change of Wayang from its primary function as a performance to an interior ornament of the church. The second category focused on interior elements related to faith because Wayang as a regional art became a religious symbol. As mentioned by Padgett (2016), an in-depth interview makes it possible to obtain detailed answers so that it can be used to develop a deeper understanding of the topic used as the research object. Qualitative data analysis is a continuous inductive activity that involves several people in the interview process. The results of the interviews are grouped. Thus, this process is based on reduction, presentation, and extraction to conclude the data (Miles, Huberman and Saldana, 2019).

Table 1: Respondent's profile

Source: Authors

No	Name	Age	Year of Service	Job
1	Johanes Sujani Sabdaleksono	76	28 years	Puppeteer
2	Romo Budiarta, SJ	60	35 years	Leader of Santo Antonius Catholic Church in Purbayan
3	Sugianto	37	8 years	Secretary of Santo Antonius Catholic Church in Purbayan
4	Albertus Bambang Suseno Broto	73	43	Catholic Congregation

As shown in the Table 1, the respondents consisted of 4 people who work as puppeteer, the leader of St. Antonius Purbayan Catholic Church, the secretary of St. Antonius Purbayan Catholic Church, and a Catholic congregation. The respondents age ranged from 37 to 76 years, with a working period of 8 - 43 years.

Finding and Discussion

Identification of St. Antonius Purbayan Catholic Church

The Catholic Church of Santo Antonius Surakarta, better known as the Catholic Church of Santo Antonius Purbayan has existed since June 13, 1913 (Sulistiyono *et al.*, 2022). This church is the first and the oldest Catholic Church in Surakarta, formerly part/station of the Gedangan Church, Semarang. The religious figure who performed the blessing was Father C. Stiphout, SJ., who was later appointed as the first "Parish Father" in Surakarta. This church features an ancient building from the Dutch colonial heritage, which has become an Indonesian Cultural Heritage (Figure 1); thus, the building is protected by law.



Fig. 1: St. Antonius Purbayan Church
Source: Authors

The use of Wayang Wahyu on the altar of the Antonius Purbayan Church accentuates a Javanese feel. This can instigate a grave situation for people who pray using the Javanese language as the Wayang Wahyu portrays Jesus, who appears on the mountain, showing His Glory. The Wayang Wahyu at the Antonius Purbayan Church is not only incorporated as a wall decoration that gives the nuances of Javanese culture. The incorporated Wayang Wahyu can support the appreciation of faith as a Javanese follower of Catholicism who prays in the church. The application of *Gunungan* Wayang Wahyu is in line with the value of the Catholic faith because it is synonymous with the symbol of the Majesty of God. It combines and harmonizes the character of the Catholic Church in general with the local values in the Javanese community.

St. Anthony Purbayan Catholic Church consists of two floors (figure 2). The main floor is a prayer room and storage of liturgical tools. There are four rooms in the ground floor, including the priest's room, the parish room, the sacristy room, and the confessional room. The parlour room is a place to worship and have banquets. The priest's parlour room is a place to lead the worship and banquets, while the sacristy room is a place for storing liturgical instruments. In contrast, the confessional room is a place for prostration and repentance for the Christians. The second floor is a balcony. In the past, the balcony of this church functioned as a choir, but now the choir is in the southern part of the parish room, and the balcony is left empty.

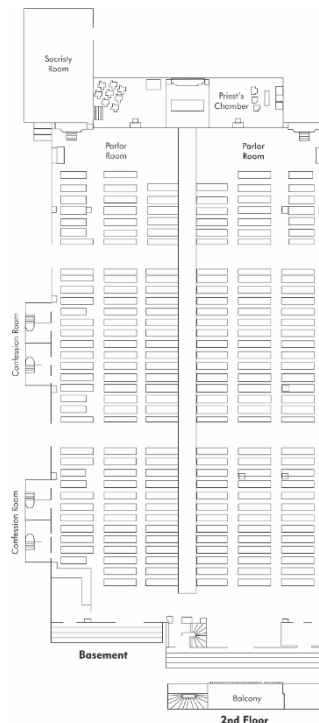


Fig. 2: St. Antonius Purbayan Church plan
Source: Authors

Identification of Wayang Purwa

Wayang Purwa is the main instrument used in Indonesian cultural heritage performing arts from Java. The equipment used in the traditional Wayang Purwa performance is extensive. For example, the puppeteer has at least one hundred Wayang figures, while a palace set might contain approximately six hundred (Solomonik, 1980). In a study by Purwadi (2014), the *gunungan* Wayang Kulit Purwa can be interpreted as a Wayang puppet or figure of a Wayang Kulit Purwa as an imitation of a pointed mountain. *Gunungan* is also called *kayon* because one of the main elements of this Wayang is wood or tree (Purwadi, 2014). In Wayang performances, *kayon* is mainly used to signify opening and closing stories and transition between the scenes.

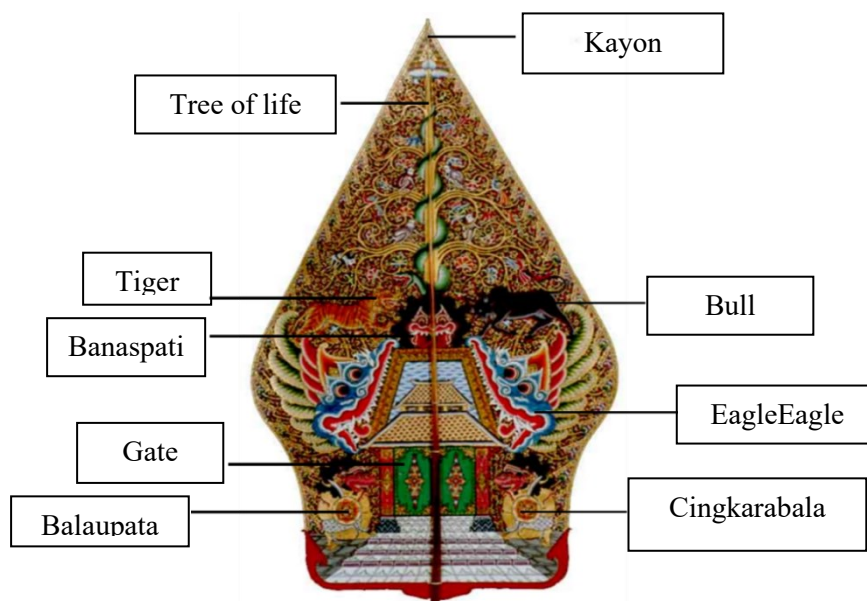


Fig. 3: Kayon / Gunungan wayang Purwa
Source: Authors

In the *gunungan* or *kayon* of Wayang Purwa, several central motifs form the elements that make up the Wayang Purwa (figure 3). These main elements have deep symbolic meanings. *Kudup* is located at the very top of the *gunungan*. The *kudup* motif is shaped like a hibiscus leaf. *Kudup* resembles all things about God and the center of life, the beginning of life, and the peak of Heaven / Nirvana. The tree of life symbolizes the center of life (Sulaksono, 2013). The depiction soars up to the top representing the intermediary between humans and the creator. Banaspati (Head of Kala) is manifested with a giant head with bulging eyes. Banaspati resembles the ruler of the jungle, the ruler of the world, or the God of the Earth (Sudarto, 1994). In this case, vanaspati can be interpreted as the Earth's God with good and bad qualities. The eagle depicted in this *kayon* is a bird's head with wings on the right and left. The wings/eagle is positioned in the *kayon* as, flanking the gate or water (*blumbang*) as an intermediary natural source. The meaning of the wings or garuda is to maintain a stable state of nature (Hartono, 1992). The bull and tiger are symbols of the underworld and overworld of the society since the bull and tiger are animals that both use physical strength rather than mind to survive (Loita, 2018). The gate in the *kayon* is depicted as a house whose door is closed. This symbolizes the boundary between the underworld (*Sakala*) and the overworld (*Niskala*), the mortal world, and the afterlife (Muhajirin, 2010). By nature, death is one of the ways of humans if they wish to meet their God. *Cingkarabala* and *Balaupata* resemble that concentration only aims at the gapura/gate to allow something unwanted to enter it. Purwantoro, Prameswari, and Nasir (2022) stated that the *gunungan* represents the mystical world and human life, which is full of mystery that leads people into an external realm. It manifests the spirit itself and describes the human transcendental experience.

Analysis of the Structure

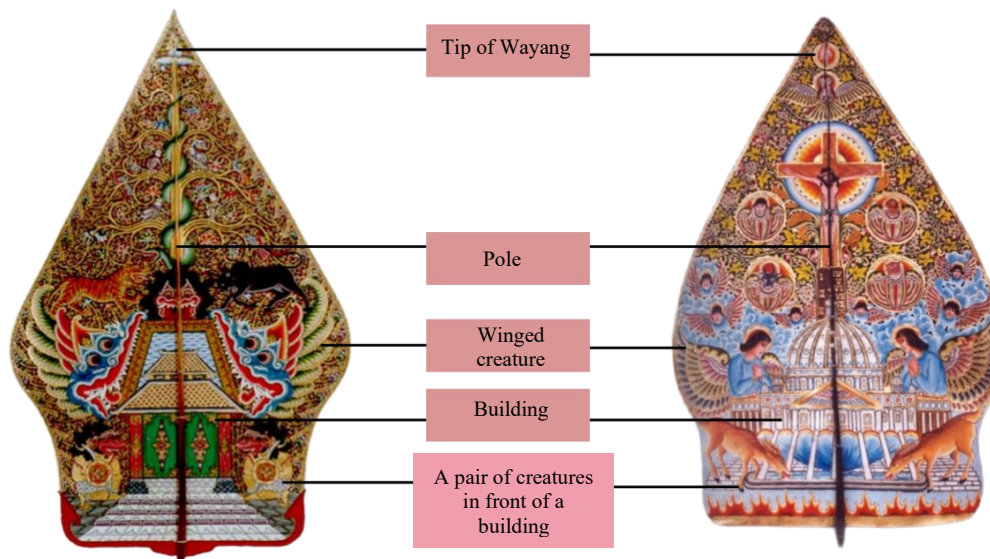


Fig. 4: Structure of Wayang Purwa and Wayang Wahyu elements

Source: Authors

There are similarities in the structure of the elements that make up Wayang Purwa and Wayang Wahyu. At the very bottom, two creatures face each other in front of the building. Both Wayang puppets also have structures. Wayang Purwa has a typical Javanese building as a gate, while Wayang Wahyu has a church where Catholic followers worship. On the right and left of the building are a pair of creatures with wings. The animals were both facing each other beside the building. In the middle of the two Wayang puppets is a pole standing upright from top to bottom. At the end of the upper part of the Wayang is a sign that symbolizes God as the creator of the heavens and the earth (Purwantoro, 2014). The depiction of God in Wayang Purwa and Wayang Wahyu is also different; in Wayang Purwa, God is symbolized by *kudup* or hibiscus leaves, while in Wayang Wahyu, God is represented by the palm with the index finger pointing downwards. The transformation of Wayang Purwa into Wayang Wahyu also affected the primary function of the Wayang as performance into the ornament of the church interior.

Identification of Gunung the Mystery of the Catholic Faith

Wayang Wahyu is a new creation in the art of Wayang whose stories come from the Catholic holy book, the Old Testament, and the New Testament. Brother Timotheus L. Wignyosubroto is a Catholic clergyman who created Wayang Wahyu in 1959 in Surakarta. The symbolic meaning of the catholic faith in *gunungan Wayang Wahyu* can be seen in figure 5.

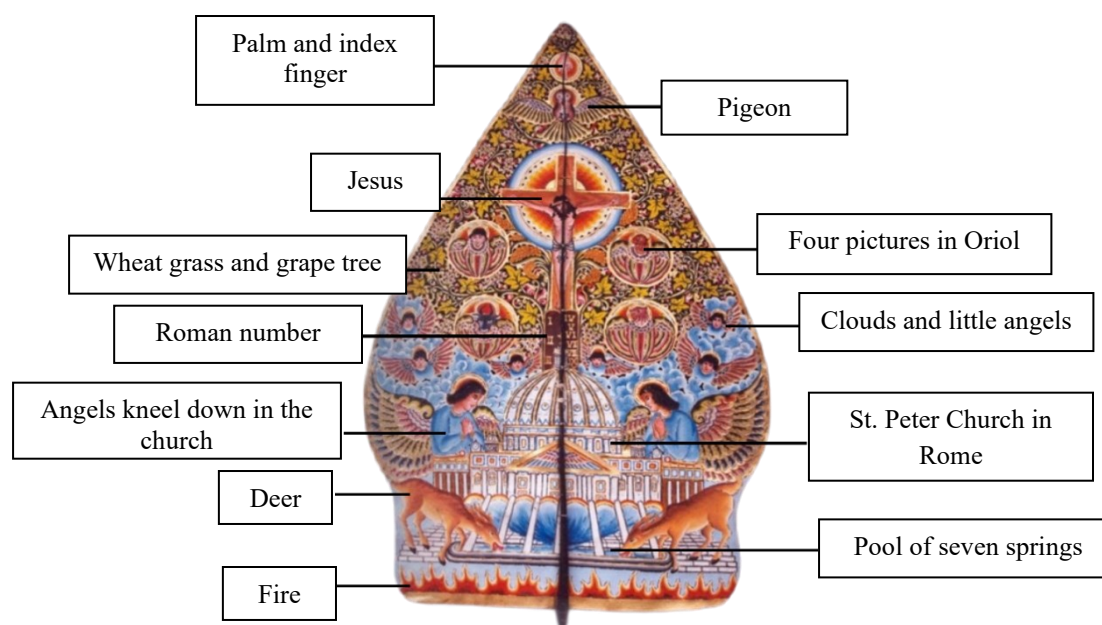


Fig. 5 : *Kayon/Gunungan* The Mistery of Catholic Faith
Source: Authors

Based on the interview with Mr Johanes Sujani Sabdo Laksono as the puppeteer of Wayang Wahyu, the shape of the *Gunungan Misteri Iman Katolik*, which has a symbolic meaning can be traced through its purpose from the bottom up, i.e.:

Table 2: Symbolic meaning of *Gunungan* Wayang Wahyu
Source: Authors

Visual Form (sorted from the bottom of <i>Gunungan</i> up)	Symbolic Meaning
Fire (hell)	Eternal misery and torment will come for those who do not get the Glory for denying God's teachings.
Two deer drinking from under the pond	As depicted by the thirsty deer, by nature, a human must always seek happiness in eternal Glory by always being willing to accept God's love and grace through the sacraments as spiritual strength in carrying out good deeds in life.
A pool of seven springs	Christ sanctifies His people or bestows His grace through the seven sacraments.
Picture of two angels kneeling in the church building	Eternal surrender, obedience, holiness, and love for Allah.
St. Peter Church in Rome	Christ founded His church to carry on His teachings under one Head, the Pope/Holy Father represents the Lord Jesus Himself and the world, enthroned in the Vatican Kingdom of Rome.
Clouds and little angels	Saints and angels in Glory in Heaven.
Wheatgrass and grape trees as the background of <i>Gunungan</i>	Materials used in Holy Mass; the sacrifice of the Holy Mass or the celebration of the Eucharist is a New and Eternal Covenant sacrifice, in which Christ sacrificed himself in the form of bread and wine to become the body and blood of Christ - to God the Father - for the remission of sins instead of sacrificing himself on the cross on the hilltop of Golgotha. Christ said, "Whoever eats my body and drinks my blood will have eternal life."

Four pictures in oriol on the left and right side of the cross:	The Four Apostles who wrote the Gospels:
- Figure of people	- St. Matthew
- Male bull	- St. Marcus
- Lion	- St. Lukas
- Eagle	- St. John
Board with Roman numbers from I to X	The Ten Commandments were revealed to the world through the Prophet Moses; then, by the Lord Jesus, it was taught again, disclosed, and affirmed, all of which were concluded to be one as the Law of Love.
Lord Jesus - God the Son on the Cross	God's love incarnated into a human child to redeem/save the world by suffering and dying on the cross, then rising from the dead in Glory.
Pigeon with Oriol	God the Holy Spirit who cleanses the world with His graces
Palms with index fingers pointing downwards, in an Oriol circle.	God the Father, the creator of the heavens, earth, and everything in them, always bestows His love on the universe.

From the twelve groups of images or objects in *Gunungan Wayang Wahyu*, it is evident that these objects are foreign or unusual in the ethics of *isen-isen* or stuffed photos in *Kayon* or *Gunungan Wayang Purwa* or other Wayang creations in Java. Based on the characteristics of the appearance, it can be divided into three groups of meanings, viz.: 1. A blazing fire, two deer, a pond with seven showers, and a church; means the state of the 'underworld' with all the bad pictures and good hopes; 2. Two angels, clouds, little angels, wheat and vine trees, four evangelists, and a board with Roman numerals I through X, which means 'present world' with all the teachings of faith and belief to reach the 'overworld'; 3. Lord Jesus/God the Son on the Cross, Picture of a dove with a roar, and hands in a circle with a cry; these three images confirm that God is One, but Three People called the Most Holy Trinity; that is the culmination of the meaning of "The Mistery of Catholic Faith" (Yayasan Wayang Wahyu, 1975).

Church Interior

Interior use with local content in Purbayan Surakarta Church began on 16th September, 1938, when groundbreaking was laid, as explained by the informant:

"The foundation stone was carried out on 16th September, 1938, and was blessed by Rama Verhaar SJ, accompanied by Rama Th. Poesposoeparto SJ and Romo Chr. Hendricks MSF. During the ceremony, successive inscriptions were signed by the Governor, Rama Verhaar, and Rama Hendriks."

Sugiyanto, September 2021: personal communication.

Although the supporting interiors, such as the *gunungan* are not related to the Catholic faith, they feel that the Javanese interior brings the spirit of inculturation of Javanese culture, as expressed by 66-year-old Romo Budiarta Purbayan:

"If it's Joglo... it is a Javanese culture and the Catholic Church with one important thing called inculturation... Joglo is Javanese culture; why not use it with the intention that the people's faith is truly rooted in local culture? The Joglo house is calm, safe, and peaceful. Why is the Eucharist in that place? The Lord Jesus is also present in a place like that. I think the speciality of the Catholic Church is that it brings the spirit of inculturation of local culture not to be discarded, instead of as a foundation of faith the people of that place can better understand it."

Romo Budiarta, September 2021: personal communication.

Although the mountains of wayang Wahyu are not very visible in the interior of the church, the symbols of wayang Wahyu can still be seen in the corners of the church rooms, as stated by Albertus below:

“The Gunungan Wayang Wahyu is not very visible in the church's interior, but there are symbols also found on the Wayang Wahyu mountain, namely the triangular ornament model of Alpha, Omega, and pictures of angels.”

Albertus, September 2021: personal communication.

After that, he also reveals that the background or factors that support and become a source in the interior use of local cultural content are:

“Local wisdom that cannot be separated from culture and tradition is one of the keys to why there is a local element in aesthetics. The church is present and wants to enter people's lives realistically.”

Romo Budiarta, September 2021: personal communication.

In its placement, the interior of the local cultural content is placed on:

“The main building, statues, motifs, doors, chairs, etc., are expected to provide an intimate, familiar, homey atmosphere. People who come are immediately confronted with their daily local realities.”

Sugiyanto, September 2021: personal communication.

Estimates that will occur or the consequences of placing the interior of the local cultural content in that position are:

“The consequence is that people who come do not feel strange and can immediately deem a certain comfort. Even though it might lessen the awe when people see something contemporary or modern.”

Sugiyanto, September 2021: personal communication.

The internal functions of the local cultural content in the church are:

“Its function is to combine and harmonize the character of the Catholic Church in general with the existing locality values.”

Sugiyanto, September 2021: personal communication.

Romo feels that if there is an interconnection with Javanese symbols or elements in the church, it will increasingly support the expression of faith and not as merely possessed:

“I don't think that what is called culture is a patch. That culture is where people stand. There is a way of living with the culture. For example, there is Javanese culture; there is occult, and the church does not pass there. The church, in this case, is selective, which one does support faith so that it can penetrate from there, and this is not possessed. Javanese people have positive and good spiritual values leading to Widhi. So, the point is there: the various other things that the church can sort out, which ones can support the Christian faith and which don't. Hence, we are based on culture, but the Christian faith can also determine which ones are good and bad, not possessed. It supports the appreciation of faith itself as a Javanese. Javanese spiritual values are good.”

Romo Budiarta, September 2021: personal communication.

Gunungan Wayang Wahyu also contributed to the interior design of the church with Javanese nuances, as stated by the congregation, Albertus:

“The contribution of Javanese culture found in Gunungan Wayang Wahyu to the church's interior design is indeed not much because Dutch designs more influence this church. However, Javanese culture is little visible from the main entrance of the congregation to the altar where the king is crowned.”

Albertus, September 2021: personal communication.

Finally, a church administrator inferred that Javanese philosophical values are compatible with or in line with the Catholic faith.

“Of course, there is, for example, a mountain that is synonymous with greatness, then it can be associated with a symbol of Allah.”

Sugiyanto, September 2021: personal communication.

The function of Wayang was originally as a performing art; however, the creation of Wayang *Purwa* into Wayang *Wahyu* also shifted the primary part of Wayang. The change to Wayang *Wahyu* makes Wayang change its function as a decorative element in the church's interior.

Catholicism

The Catholic congregation, when they were in the mass room of the Purbayan Surakarta Church, which contained the local aesthetic elements have felt highly advantaged because they could be more solemn when praying, as expressed by the informant:

“People may say they become more focused in their prayers, or maybe comment and compare the aesthetic concepts found in the church with the aesthetics that exist in their lives.”

Sugiyanto, September 2021: personal communication.

In the Bible and the Semarang Archdiocese (KAS), there is no use of aesthetic elements such as Wayang *Wahyu* in the Church; however, the puppeteer argues that:

“Gunungan, gongs are utilized in consecration, while gunungan in Wayang can have various symbols, such as a forest, etc. Gunungan is a lot of symbols, even for Javanese people. It has multiple interpretations, which are positive and even negative. Jesus appeared on the mountain, Arrogant in the Wayang Wahyu. The Lord Jesus showed his Glory...The mountain is multi-interpreted and exceedingly symbolic.”

Johanes Sujani, September 2021: personal communication.

Not all of the symbols in the gunungan wayang Wahyu are represented in the interior of the church, sometimes these symbols are implied in Catholic forms that the congregation is rarely aware of, as Albertus said:

“I don't see the wayang symbols like in the kayon or Gunungan Wayang Wahyu. Often these symbols are composed implicitly so that the congregation present, including myself, do not delve into the meaning of these symbols. I only know the meaning of the interior arrangement of the people's door. The door of the confessional, and only in the middle of the parlor room to the right of the altar is there many Catholic symbols, such as angels, Jesus, doves, and others which are also in the Gunungan Wayang Wahyu.”

Albertus, September 2021: personal communication.

The initial idea of using Wayang *Wahyu* as one of the Church interiors of the church needs to be seen again from a historical perspective, as stated by the informant:

“Talking about the church’s interior cannot be separated from the pattern of preaching the missionaries’ faith at that time. Where the missionaries immediately try to be present in people’s lives. Nevertheless, when asked who had the initial idea, we have to look back at the historical view of the church building, and it could be related to the first indigenous priests, brothers, and sisters.”

Romo Budiarta, September 2021: personal communication.

The church interior is used in the form of Wayang *Wahyu* based on the following puppeteer below:

“The rationale is, of course, more on bringing faith closer to existing local realities.”

Johanes Sujani, September 2021: personal communication.

The symbols of Gunungan Wayang *Wahyu* contained in the interior of the church also affect the level of religiosity of the congregation, as stated by Albertus:

“If we enter the living room of the people’s home, then we will see several symbols in the Wayang Wahyu mountains that can remind the congregation of their sins and remember God. So it is enough to affect our level of religiosity.”

Albertus, September 2021: personal communication.

Wayang *Wahyu* is an alternative medium that promotes retelling the contents of the Bible. Although the performances use Javanese artistic tools and universal values that appear to be Javanese, the values contained in them are Christian values, not the Wayang philosophy. Now, Wayang *Wahyu* continues to be preserved as a symbol of Catholicism. Wayang *Wahyu*, placed in the worship room for Catholics, also helps appreciate prayer.

Nevertheless, it is undeniable that the appearance of Wayang *Wahyu* cannot be separated from the existence of Wayang *Purwa* (Surakarta) because the traditional style of Wayang *Purwa* has influenced its birth. Wayang *Wahyu* has emerged as an experimental effort in the form of a new form of *pakeliran*, both from the initial style, systematics of *pakeliran*, and the imagery referring to the use of the Wayang *Purwa*. The sense that studying Wayang *Wahyu* cannot be separated from the pattern or *pakeliran* standard of the Wayang *Purwa* tradition. However, Wayang *Wahyu* cannot be compared with Wayang *Purwa*, which has been recognized as classic and noble. The symbolism and meanings of *Kayon* or Surakarta Gunungan Wayang *Wahyu*, and its values cannot be understood without the context of space and time of the culture that overshadows it. Wayang is one of the regional arts that comes from Java. The primary function of Wayang is as a regional performing art that contains the values of life. However, Wayang *Wahyu*, a new form of creation from Wayang *Purwa*, turns itself into a religious function, a platform for Catholics to retell the stories in the Bible.

The position of Gunungan Wayang *Wahyu* is the potential of the content of ‘truth,’ acceptable to reason, the question of aesthetic taste, to religious truth as Karsten Harries asserts in his book *Art Matters*, that:

- 1) Art is tied to fact;
- 2) The adequate expression of truth can only be thought, which communicates itself in ideally clear and distinct propositions;
- 3) Art is essentially sensuous (Harries, 2009).

Thus, Gunungan Wayang *Wahyu* has an aesthetic potential that conveys the truth in the context of Catholicism. Hence, the representation of symbolic objects is only the language of local communication in Wayang. Overall, it is how the monks and church artists communicate the signs of Christianity (Catholicism) and its truth through the local visual language (Javanese Wayang art) and the conception of the most familiar symbolic structure

when the Wayang was created, namely the *triloka-tribuana*. It should be noted that the adaptation of the religious concept in the presentation of *Gunungan Wayang Wahyu* through the *triloka-tribuana* is a way for the church artists to choose the nature characteristics that are close to the understanding of the old Javanese society, not to fuse Catholic dogma with the concept of locality.

Conclusion

Wayang is always synonymous with art. The change in Wayang *Purwa* to Wayang *Wahyu* creation has also shifted the primary function of Wayang into a Catholic religious facility. As shown, using Wayang *Wahyu* in the church can increase the faith of Catholics while praying. They deem that the Wayang *Wahyu* in which the figure of Jesus is depicted made them more solemn when praying. The performance is also an alternative to recalling the stories in the Bible. Wayang, as one of the cultural heritage of Indonesia, is identical to its versions that contain values of life. However, it is indistinguishable from the show that can turn into decorative elements of the church's interior by creating Wayang *Wahyu*.

Thus, Wayang implements the desire of the church to bring local content (traditional arts) closer to the teachings of Christianity (Catholicism). However, it has never been expected to give rise to understanding new beliefs as a form of cultural acculturation. Wayang *Wahyu* is an attempt to cultivate the teachings of Christ that are not contradictory to Javanese culture, teaching how to “read” the teachings of Christ with the understanding pattern of the Javanese people. *Gunungan Wayang Wahyu* provides a new perspective regarding the interior design of the St. Antonius Purbayan with Dutch-Javanese nuances. However, *Gunungan Wayang Wahyu* is part of Javanese culture and full of Catholic meanings. Knowing the meaning of each symbol in Wayang *Wahyu* can increase the knowledge and religiosity of Catholic church members. Further research regarding the symbols on *Gunungan Wayang Wahyu* and their relation to Bible verses can be done better than this research.

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