

Manifestation of birds in the illumination of Javanese manuscripts

Venny Indria Ekowati^{1*}, Yeni Artanti¹,
Remmy Gedat², Doni Dwi Hartanto¹



AFFILIATION

¹Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Indonesia

²Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, Malaysia

* Corresponding Author:

✉ venny@uny.ac.id

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Abstract: Illuminations are decorative framing ornaments that are related to the contents of a text. Illuminating Javanese manuscripts contain a variety of interesting symbols and ornaments that need to be revealed its meanings. One of the dominant ornaments in the Javanese manuscript illumination is in the form of birds. The aim of the present study is to 1) describe the type of bird motifs used in the illumination; 2) describe the representation of illumination of bird motifs; and 3) interpret the relationship between the symbol in the illumination and the text. The data of this study were 150 Javanese manuscripts with illumination from the collection of the Sonobudoyo Museum and the Library of the Balai Bahasa [Language Centre] of Yogyakarta. The study was conducted using the qualitative method with a hermeneutic approach to describe the manifestation of the bird symbols found in the illumination of Javanese texts. Data were analyzed using the hermeneutic analytical approach because the data used must be understood deeply through the symbols that appear in the illumination. The results of the present research show that: (1) the most common bird species used in illumination are eagles manifested as *Garudha yeksa*, *sawat*, and *mirong*, (2) the majority rationale (91%) of creating illumination of bird motifs is as the representation of the King, and (3) results of the symbol interpretation establish a relationship between the symbol and the text. There were ornaments symbolising the King such as snakes, birds, crowns, batik motifs, leaves, houses, palaces, and others. Most ornaments contain meaning corroborating the contents of the manuscripts. For example, the change of power is symbolised by the *cakra manggilingan*, the HB (Hamengku Buwana) symbol shows the king on the throne, and the bird symbolises and represents the king. The ornaments of birds in particular have the functions of didactic, aesthetic, and legitimacy.

Keywords: *Javanese manuscripts, birds, illumination, symbolization*

INTRODUCTION

Manuscripts are translated as the work of ancestors, the work of the past, and writings from past cultures (Robson, 1978; Vander Hook *et al.*, 1994). Manuscripts are later spread as oral traditions and partially re-copied in written forms (Bak, 2012; Koppel *et al.*, 2016). The limitations of the category of the past, especially for manuscripts that are categorised as cultural heritages, refer to the Cultural Heritage Law No. 11 Year 2010 in Chapter III Article 5 and Law No. 43 Year 2007 concerning the library, which is at least 50 years. Hence, the manuscript is a document that is handwritten and is at least 50 years old. The contents of the manuscripts can also be determined. Not all documents that are 50 years old can be referred to as manuscripts. Only documents with the values of scientific, historical, literary, ethical, cultural, genealogical, legal, linguistic, musical, etc., can be called as manuscripts (Bak 2012:2; T E Behrend & Feinstein 1990a:xv-xvi; Bhattacharjee, 2017:30).

Javanese manuscripts are ones written in various styles of the Javanese language from the beginning time of Javanese or often referred to as the *Kuna* (ancient) Javanese (for general usages) or *Kawi* Javanese (specifically for literary texts), to today's modern Javanese. The use of the early and late Kawi scripts was discovered in 750 and 1250 AD. Initially, this script was used for Old Javanese inscriptions on stone and copper plates, until finally as a language in manuscripts (Yahya & Jones, 2021). As for the scripts, various versions of the Javanese scripts have been written, starting from the Ancient Javanese scripts to the printed Javanese scripts. Similarly, Javanese manuscripts have been written from time to time. The writing of Javanese manuscripts has even continued up to the present day. The Javanese people are known to be consistent in writing Javanese manuscripts, starting before the time of Islam until the years of 1900s (Pigeaud, 1968). These literary works are then scattered in museums, libraries, universities, palaces, institutions, and foundations, both at homeland and abroad.

The number of manuscripts collected by institutions and foundations is around 19,000; in fact, there must be more than 19,000 manuscripts because of difficulties in recording private collections (Behrend, 1993; Chamberbert-Loir & Fathurahman, 1999). Regarding the storage areas, Yogyakarta has many libraries and museums collecting Javanese manuscripts. Based on a study of catalogs and preliminary studies, there were 2,465 handwritten manuscripts stored in seven institutions in Yogyakarta (Pakualaman Palace, Yogyakarta Palace, Sonobudoyo Museum, Dewantara Krti Griya Museum, Balai Bahasa [language centre], and Gadjah Mada University). Among the 2,465 manuscripts, there are about 249 (10%) illuminated and illustrated manuscripts based on readings on the catalog (T E Behrend & Feinstein, 1990), (Seno & Saktimulya, 2005), (Lindsay *et al.*, 1994), as well as direct studies at the museums and libraries in Yogyakarta. The illuminated manuscripts are of great potentials which can further be investigated considering that the illumination in Javanese manuscripts is a manifestation of hundred years old traditional motif application that can be revitalised and reappointed as a contribution to the richness of national decoration.

Illumination is a technical term in the science of manuscripts referring to decorative images in manuscripts (Kramadibrata, 2010: 205). The tradition of providing illumination in a manuscript is known since the time of Ancient Egypt (1550 BC). This tradition then grew and reached its peak in the 15th century AD, especially to decorate the bibles (Toscano, 2020). In subsequent developments, codicology researchers state that illumination is not just a text frame functioning as beautification. Illumination is also related to the content of the texts it frames and is providing symbols and messages regarding the ideas and cultural expressions of its people in each period of its creation (Bland, 1958; Florida, 1995; Folsom, 1990; Kempres, 1959). The present study is conducted on the domain of illumination in regards of the importance of the contents of manuscripts and its illumination. It is to

answer the challenge because the integrity of the illumination seems to be in a race with time, given the age of the manuscripts which is hundreds of years and is exacerbated by the use of corrosive inks (Kolar *et al.*, 2003). One of the dominant ornaments in Javanese manuscript illumination is in the form of birds. Of course, it is interesting to review why the bird is chosen to be revealed, its function, and the form of its depiction in the illumination of Javanese manuscripts.

Birds in various mythologies often appear, although with different names. In these myths, birds have characteristics like humans and their appearance has a different function. For example, in Persian mythology, there are the birds Anka, Hümâ, Simurg, and Hüdhdand Kaknus (Kûknûs) which have different characteristics and interpretations (Aytaç, 2021). So, it can be stated that birds as metaphors are famous throughout the world. Birds appear in various cultural products; for example in oral traditions and beliefs; and are also used as ornaments in handicrafts, literature, art works; and they even appear as ornaments of ancient temples. Birds are always connected with spirits, bearers of messages from Gods, angels, bearers of omens, intercessors between Gods and earth creatures, and bearers of life (Armstrong, 1970; Dove, 1996; Roque, 2010; Saebipour *et al.*, 2018). The frequent appearance of birds in motifs is inseparable from mythological and cultural beliefs that have long existed in society.

In North Africa, birds are familiar with various forms of folklore and rituals because of the belief that the bird of heaven is the ruler of the sky (Dederen & Mokakabye, 2018). Birds are also known as the symbol of the resurrection of spirits of the dead (Kang, 2013). In the Etruscan culture (the people who first occupied Rome in the 6th to the end of the 4th century BC), the world of birds was important as a science of divination (Masseti, 2022). In fact, because of the significant role of birds in the science of divination, there is a separate holy book for identifying birds called Ornithomancy which aims to study bird actions to read omens (Grummond, 2013; Masseti, 2022). In the European middle-age and early modern manuscripts, birds also bear certain symbolisms. For example, the owl appears as a *zoomorphic* motif even though its presence is not too frequent compared to lions, deer, and eagles. The owl appears to be an unfavourable symbol in medieval Christian thoughts. The owl carries a negative connotation as the enemy of religion, although this statement cannot be ascertained due to the lack of textual references in the century (Orgad, 2020). The owl is also the symbol of respect to the beliefs of the German Christians in which there is prohibition of the depicting of human figures (Roth, 2014).

In the Javanese society, birds occupy a high cultural position. For example, in *serat-serat primbon* (scripts of Javanese horoscopes), the presence and absence of birds is considered as the prediction of an event. For example, the sound of a crow indicates a bad thing and a *prenjak* (bar-winged prinia) is the signal of the coming of a great guest (Widiyarti, 2013). It turns

out that this belief does not only exist in the Javanese culture. Birds can also be used as ingredients in traditional medication, as mentioned in *Serat Centhini* (Kamajaya, 1992). In addition, from an ethnopragmatic point of view, owning a pet bird is a prerequisite for becoming a *priyayi* (noble man) in Java, apart from other requirements, namely having a woman and a *turangga* (vehicle) (Pranowo & Yanti, 2019). In addition, birds also have a symbolic meaning of wisdom and the preservation of one's youth (Meij, 2019). The facts above are certainly clear evidence of why birds in Javanese manuscript illumination are placed in the dominant position as an ornamental manuscript.

METHOD

The study was conducted using the qualitative method combined with a hermeneutic approach to describe the manifestation of bird symbols found in the illumination of Javanese texts. The hermeneutic approach was used in the analytical analysis because the data used must be understood deeply through the symbols that appear in the illumination. The sources of research data were 150 Javanese manuscripts collected by the Sonobudoyo Museum and the Yogyakarta Language Center Library. Data collection was done by documentation and categorization by reading carefully the symbols in accordance with the research objectives. The validity was carried out by triangulation of the data sources obtained from documents, archives, and related theories. Meanwhile, the reliability measure was inter-rater reliability obtained by reading the data carefully and repeatedly until the data was saturated. This reliability criterion can also be referred to as stability reliability, carried out to obtain stable data. Data analysis was carried out using a qualitative analysis technique with a hermeneutic approach. The steps of the analyses included data condensation, data display, and conclusion and verification. Data condensation was done with the aim of focusing and simplifying the data that appeared in the document corpus. Data display was done by making a display of a collection of information that had been organized into certain categories. The purpose of the data display was to make it easier for the researchers to understand the data and determine the next steps of the analysis. The final step in the data analysis was to verify the conclusion. The researchers made the efforts to conclude the study that led to elements that were explicit (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). Figure 1 illustrates the research data analysis of the study.

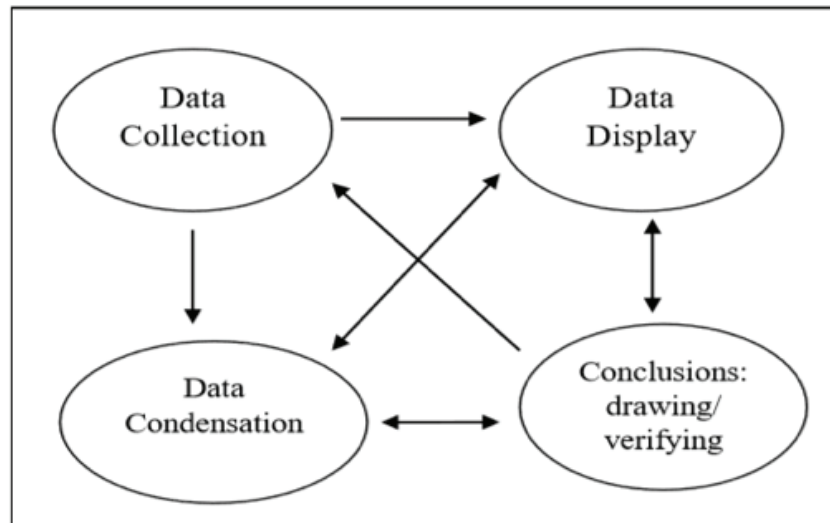


Figure 1. Data Analysis Components
(Source: Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014)

The analysis carried out on the symbols in the illuminations included universal meaning, cultural interpretation, and contexts based on the texts in the manuscripts.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Depictions of Birds in Javanese Manuscript Illumination

There are five types of bird ornaments in the illumination of Javanese manuscripts, namely (1) *Garudha* golden eagle (58%) in the forms of *garudha yeksa* (23%), *sawat* (35%), and *mirong* (42%); (2) peacock (20%) which is divided into two, namely peacock that has been destylised, taken from the tail and wings (56%) and complete peacock with head (44%); (3) united peacock and *garudha* (11%); (4) intact and *mirong* peacocks in unity (2%); and (5) the forms of other birds (9%).

Based on the manuscripts, there are four categories of the background of the illumination creation based on the results of reading the manuscripts and categorisation. The categorisation comprises (1) Category A, illuminations that are deliberately created or drawn based on stories from the manuscript; (2) Category B, illuminations that are created on purpose, and display more than one symbol to represent the manuscript; (3) Category C, illuminations that are intentionally made and only display one symbol to represent the manuscript; and (4) Category D, illuminations that do not display a symbol to present the text and is only decorative or not directly related to the manuscript.

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that illumination is made not only for decorative purposes. It is found that only 5% of the entire illumination does not represent the content of the manuscript directly. Meanwhile, 95% of the illumination represents the manuscript directly. In fact, 45% of the illumination is intentionally created in details, and carefully adjusted

to the contents of the manuscript. Meanwhile, 30% of representations are made by taking only a few important elements, not as detailed as in Category A. Furthermore, in category C, illumination is created by taking only one symbol which is considered to represent the manuscript. Illumination is deliberately made because it has various important functions related to the manuscripts.

It is found in this study that there are at least three functions in the use of illumination. The first refers to personal functions related to the artistic expressions of the illumination makers. The second and third are social (education, politics) and aesthetics functions. Examples of illumination having educational functions can be seen from the various educational values contained in the illuminations kept in Sonobudoyo Museum and Balai Bahasa Yogyakarta, such as love, honesty, leadership, justice, etc. (Ekowati *et al.*, 2017; Ekowati, Wulan, & Handoko, 2018; Ekowati, Wulan, Handoko, *et al.*, 2018). Apart from its educational and social functions, illumination also plays an important role in the legitimacy of the position of kings by engaging symbols of the kingdom and leadership in the illumination such as the selection of ornaments of *garudhas*, dragons, and peacocks. The third function is the physical function aiming at adding the aesthetic element of the script.

Based on the manuscript, there are several categories of functions in 44 illuminations containing bird ornaments in the illumination of Javanese manuscripts. There are two functions of bird ornaments found in the research findings. The first function is as the depiction of the characters mentioned in the story in the manuscript and the second function is only for decoration. Of the the 44 data, 42 (95%) indicate that the bird ornaments in the illumination of Javanese manuscripts serve as the representation of characters mentioned in the manuscripts, while the rest (5%) serve as decorative functions. This shows that the creation of illuminations is not only to improve the aesthetics of the manuscript, but it also has a purpose related to the representation of the contents of the manuscript, especially the representation of characters. The next findings show that 42 data show that birds are the representation of figures, while 38 (91%) of the figures represent kings. Meanwhile, the rest (9%) represent characters that are adapted to the story in the manuscript. Names of Kings represented by bird ornaments can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Bird Ornaments as the Representation of Kings

No.	Data Number	The Name of the King Represented
	6	Prabu Nusarwan
	7	Sultan Iskandar
	12	King Amir Hamzah

No.	Data Number	The Name of the King Represented
	13	Raden Hadiwinata
	14	King Kelana Jaya
	15	King Puspapipura
	17	King (anonim)
	22	Sri Sultan HB VII
	23	Sri Sultan HB VIII
	24	Sri Sultan HB II
	26	Prince Mangkubumi
	27	King Napoli
	28	King Giri Puspita
	33	Prabu Rama
	34	Rama and Wibisana
	36	King HB VI
	38	Rama dan Wibisana
	73	Prince Mangkubumi
	74	Prince Mangkubumi
	75	Prince Mangkubumi
	87	King Medayin
	88	King Medayin
	89	King Medayin
	90	King Jayenglaga
	91	King Jayenglaga
	92	Prabu Secadiningrat
	94	Kanjeng Susuhunan
	95	Susuhunan Mangkurat
	97	Sultan Pajang
	99	Prince Benawa
	106	Kanjeng Sultan
	110	King seorang wakhidin
	118	King Frederik
	119	King Napoli
	131	R.M. Surya Misena
	136	Sri Narapati
	141	Daud and Sulaiman
	145	Prabu Rama

As it can be observed in Table 1, it can be shown that bird ornaments are not only used as decorative ornaments, but are also directly related to texts. The presence of birds is used as a symbol to represent something the author wants to convey. Based on the data above, it can be concluded that the bird ornament which is a manifestation of the *garudha* and peacock serves as a representation of the king who is part of the text. This is evidenced by the existence of 38 kings out of 42 bird ornaments found in the illumination of Javanese manuscripts. The following is the discussion.

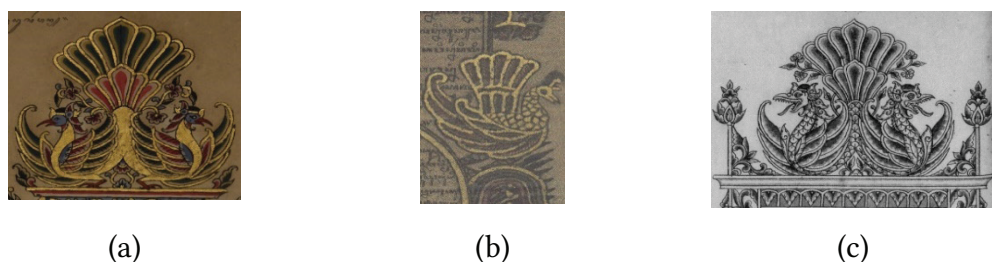
Garudha

The *Garuda* golden eagle is the most-frequently appearing bird compared to the others reaching the percentage of 58%. Garuda is a manifestation of the eagle. The eagle is very famous all over the world. The manifestation of an eagle as a mythological creature is already eminent in the world. Eagles can transform into various kinds of mythological creatures, such as the Phoenix, Griffin, Tengu, and Garuda. Although not all of these creatures are in the form of eagles, most of the forms of these creatures have the main elements of an eagle such as the wings and beak. Each creature of the manifestation of eagles has super powers and becomes a symbol of the power of God in the legend developed in the society. In fact, these symbols represent the psyche and are reflections of all aspects of personality. Symbols can also express the accumulation of human wisdom that has been acquired at both the collective and individual levels, and are also stages of development that will affect the future of the individuals (Kang, 2013).

Garuda is a manifestation of the teacher figure in Buddhism. In Buddhism, all forms of revelation are passed *down* supernaturally through teachers. This fact makes the teacher becomes a significant figure in Buddhism (Baror, 2021). Teachers are like the foundation of the earth, the ocean, the amazing peacock, and the great eagle (Baror, 2021; Thomas Cleary, 1993). The eagle itself has been known in the Javanese culture for a long time. Garuda, which is a part of the decoration in scripts, has actually been applied directly in several standpoints of the Javanese life. The Garuda is often used as a symbol because it is considered as containing certain meanings. Its application is not necessarily in the form of a garuda bird, but it has been modified in such a way that the depiction is able to accommodate the expectation of creating a symbol. This symbol of garuda is the main symbol of the Sultanate of Ngayogyakarta Hadiningrat.

Depictions of the garuda are also quite common in temple relief sculptures. In the reliefs of the temples which are included in the Hindu category, the symbol of garuda can definitely be found. This is because the garuda is known as the vehicle of Vishnu. The Garuda as Vishnu's vehicle is called the greatest bird (Prabhupāda, 2006: 536). The story of the origin of the Garuda as the vehicle of the Vishnu god can even be found in the reliefs of Kidal Temple. The symbol of garuda can also be found in the reliefs of the

temples of Borobudur, Mendut, Prambanan, Suku, Kedaton, and Belahan. In general, the reliefs of garuda found in these temples depict the garuda worshipping Vishnu who is supported by *Naga* [dragon] *Ananta* (Titib, 2009: 387). Garuda is symbolised as the power to be able to free oneself from worldly bonds (Sutriyanti, 2015: 92). Garuda in Hindu tradition crosses the heavenly boundaries (Bhatt, 2010; Greet, 2022). The story of his mother's liberation from slavery illustrates the strength of Garuda in the effort to free from worldly life. The eagle occupies a dominant position as the decoration and metaphor in the illumination of Javanese manuscripts. In accordance with these findings, Garuda in Javanese manuscripts manifests as *garudha yeksa*. The following clarifies the explanation.



(a) (b) (c)
Figure 2. Manifestation of Garuda becoming Garuda Yeksa in Javanese Manuscripts (Source: (a) *Wedana Gapura Renggan Garuda Yêksâ* in *Serat Rama*; (b) *Wedana Renggan Peksi Gauda Asmara* in *Serat Tajusalatin* code SK. 44; (c) *Renggan* in *Serat Babad Giyanti Babad Kartasura*-Sokawati collection of Sonobudoyo Museum, Yogyakarta)

Manifestation of the Garuda Becoming Garuda Yeksa

The ornament found in this Javanese manuscript is called the *Garudha Yeksa* with the shape as shown in Figure 2. *Garudha Yeksa* is a mythological figure in the form of a combination of a bird and a snake that transforms into a winged dragon. *Garudha yeksa* is also the name of the Great Horse Chariot of Yogyakarta Palace. As what the name implies, the chariot is also decorated with large and luxurious ornaments of *Garudha Yeksa* (Wibowo, 2018). The name *Garudha Yeksa* also appears as a character in the *wayang purwa*. Apart from manifesting as *Garudha Yeksa*, the garuda in Javanese manuscripts also manifests in the forms of *sawat* (big-winged *garudha* with the tail) and *mirong* (double-winged *garudha*). The following presents further explanation.

Manifestation of Garuda in the Form of Sawat and Mirong

The decorations in Yogyakarta batik and in Javanese manuscripts have a close relationship. This relationship can be seen from the motifs of *garudha* in batik which is similar to the motifs of *garudha* in Javanese manuscripts. As in the case of batik motifs, *garudha* rarely appears in its original shape, but more in stylised forms of *sawat*, *lar*, and *mirong*. *Sawat* is the stylised *garudha* with two open wings and a tail, *Mirong* is the stylised *garudha* with two wings, and *lar* is the stylised *garudha* with a single wing (Sunaryo,

2009). Regrettably, only *sawat* and *mirong* were found and discussed in this study. *Lar*, which is commonly found in batik motifs, was not found in the data. Figure 3 is an example of *sawat* and *mirong* in the illumination of a Javanese manuscript.

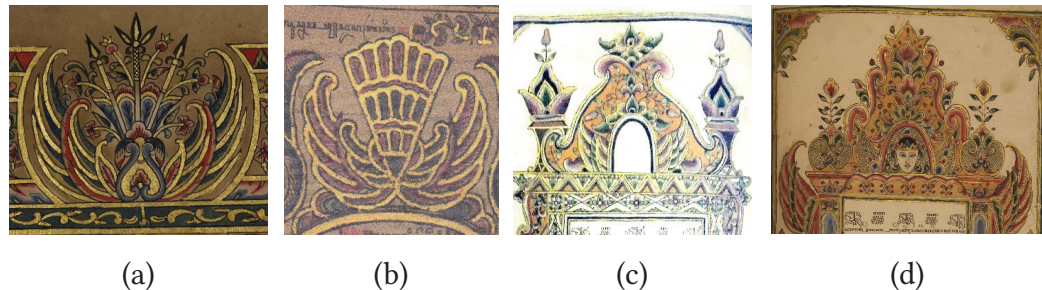


Figure 3. *Manifestation of Garudha in the Form of Sawat and Mirong in Javanese Manuscripts* (Source: (a) *Serat Tajusalatin* code SK. 44; (b) *Serat Babad Giyanti Babad Katarasura-Sokawati*; (c) *Rerenggan* text SK. 133; (d) *Wedana Gapura Simbar Manyura* in *Serat Menak Sarehas dumugi Menak Sorangan* collection of Sonobudoyo Museum, Yogyakarta)

The Manifestation of the Peacock in its Stylisation Form

The peacock comes from India. This graceful bird in its home country is the emblem of the royal family (Gamm, 2014). The peacock is also an animal that is a part of mythology symbols of longevity. Even according to the Greek mythology, the flesh of a peacock is believed to not decay, so that the peacock can live eternally. The peacock is also known in various religions. For example in Hinduism, it is known as the mount of Kama. In Hinduism, the peacock is synonymous with Goddess Saraswati, the peacock as the vehicle for Dewi Saraswati symbolizing an authority for people who have defeated the ego with knowledge and wisdom (Surada, 2019). Meanwhile, according to the Rgveda, the peacock is a symbol of majesty and the omnipotence of God (Titib, 2009: 416). Furthermore, according to the Christians, the peacock is the symbol of the revival of Jesus. Likewise, in Buddhism, the peacock symbolises the revival of Avalokitesvara (Fontana, 2003; Kang, 2013). In the Persian society, the peacock is used as the symbol of the duality of the world, between dark and light, life and death (Fontana, 2003). The peacock in mythology is believed to be the all-seeing, light, resurrection, knowledge, spirit, protector, and alertness (Kang, 2013).

In medieval times the peacock was believed to be a symbol of immortality and its flesh was incorruptible. This belief makes the peacock an attribute of the goddess Juno, one of the goddesses in the Roman mythology. The peacock is seen as the protector of life and is associated with rebirth. This fact makes peacocks often appear on certain sarcophagi or burial monuments, and because of this, this symbol later develops into a textual and iconographic form (Fernández *et al.*, 2023). Almost all of the body parts of the peacock are metaphors. The tough flesh of the peacock is the symbol of determination that is not influenced by worldly passions. The hoarse and

terrifying voice of the peacock is equated to the voice of a priest reminding sinners of the heat of hellfire. The eye on the tail of the peacock symbolises the ability of scholars to predict the future through science. Meanwhile, the tail of the peacock reminds people to stay away from arrogant attitudes (Jordan, 2012).

Like the eagle, peacocks also appear in various forms, including in literature and arts. The sculptures of a peacock can be found in many museums, for example the Rajsahi Museum Bangladesh, Worcester Art Museum United States of America, Madras Museum India, French Guimet Muse, and others. Peacocks are also found extensively in temples in India, such as Kumbhakonam Temple, Parameswara Temple, the *stupa* of Sanchi, and so on. Usually this peacock is depicted with the god who rides on it, namely Kartikeya (Nair, 1974).

Peacocks also appear in literatures in the Sanskrit language. Famous poets such as Walmiki, Kalidasa, and Bhavabhuti have chosen the peacock as the symbol of harmonious relationship between humans and nature. The peacock has also appeared many times in major works such as the Ramayana, Araya Kandha, and Kishkindha Kandha (Nair, 1974). Peacocks are also known as fertility-carrying birds and are able to repel snakes. This bird is widely honoured in several areas including Japan, India, parts of Europe, China, and others (Nair, 1974). The peacock is widely known in Javanese culture, and appears in various aspects of people's life. One of them is in the *wayang* attribute, for example as the attribute of *wayang* characters of *Bathara Bayu gagrak Pakualaman* who uses a peacock coil button (Raharja, 2019).

The peacock also appears as the main ornament in the Yogyakarta *Sawat* batik motif and also in the motif of *Merak Ngibing* in Garut, West Java (Hidajat, 2004; Sutiyati, 2016; Winarno, 2017). India and Java have a very close relationship. So it is not surprising that the use of cultural symbols in these two cultures has many similarities. Peacocks originating from India are also commonly found as decoration in Javanese manuscripts. No less than 39% occurrences of bird icons use the depiction of peacocks. The peacock on the illumination of Javanese manuscripts creates a majestic impression. In line with the metaphor of the peacock in India which symbolises the royal family, the peacock in Java also has the same function. Peacocks are often found in manuscripts of the scriptoria of the Yogyakarta Royal Palace as a representation of the power, wisdom, generosity, and supernatural powers of Javanese kings (Syarif & Kurniawati, 2018). In temples in Java, as in India, peacocks also appear as ornaments, for example on the reliefs of the Borobudur temple (Febrianto & Idris, 2018).

In this study, peacocks were found in two forms, namely (1) peacocks that have been destylised, taken from the tail and wings (56%), and (2) complete peacocks with heads (44%). As in the *garudha* case, peacocks in Javanese manuscripts illumination has also been largely published. The body

part of the peacock that is commonly used as the ornament in illumination is the tail. Figure 4 shows that the peacock is taken from the tail and then used as a decorative motif in the illumination of the Javanese manuscripts. In Figure 4, the tail of the peacock is clearly visible with the presence of spheres indicating the half-expanded tip of the peacock feathers.

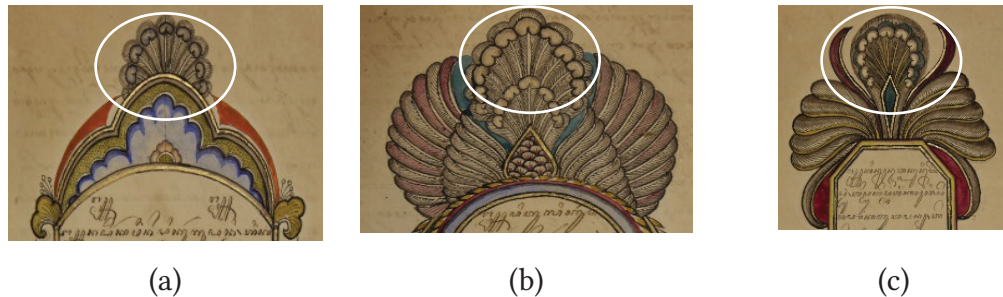


Figure 4. *Manifestation of Peacocks in the Stylisation Form in Javanese Manuscripts* (Source: (a) *Rerenggan Braja Wiwara*; (b) *Rerenggan Manyura Resmi*; (c) *Rerenggan Patra Wiwara* in *Serat Cariyos Aneh-aneh* code SK. 93 collection of Sonobudoyo Museum Yogyakarta)

The Manifestation of Complete Peacocks with Heads

Based on the research findings, in addition to the cropping of the wings and tail, the peacock is also seen as a whole bird with the head. Here is one of the examples of research findings on whole-peacock motifs in the illumination of Javanese manuscripts.



Figure 5. *Manifestation of Complete Peacocks in Javanese Manuscripts* (Source: *Serat Ambya* code SK. 132 collection of Sonobudoyo Museum, Yogyakarta)

In Figure 5, the peacock ornament takes the complete form of a peacock, not only represented by parts of the body as seen in other illuminations taken as the data in this study. The ornament of complete peacocks in Javanese manuscripts is quite rare. Usually the peacock has been stylised and the tail is taken as the decorative ornament.

Manifestation of the Peacock and Garuda, Peacock and Mirong, and other Birds

The present research findings also include the combinations of the peacock and *garudha*, peacock and *mirong*, as well as four other birds besides the peacock and *garudha*. The example of their illuminations can be seen in Figure 6 below.

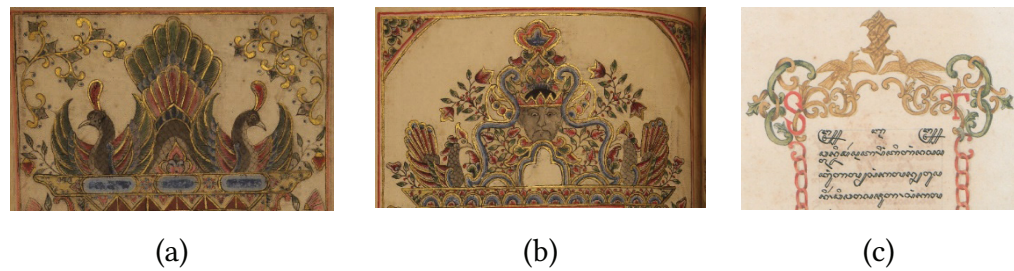


Figure 6. Manifestation of the Peacock and Garudha, Peacock and Mirong, and other Birds (Source: (a) and (b) *Wedana Gapura Renggan* in *Serat Menak Sarehas dumugi Menak Sorangan* code SK. 133/L. 219; (c) *Wedana Gapura Renggan* in text *Serat Suluk Jayalengkara* collection of Sonobudoyo Museum, Yogyakarta)

Figure 6 shows the combination of the peacock and *garudha*. The characteristics of the peacock can be identified from the shape of the head having a crest while the tail used in Figure 6a is the tail which is usually used as the stylisation of the tail of the *garudha*. Figure 6b shows the combination of the peacock and *garudha* with *mirong* on either side of the king's image. Meanwhile, Figure 6c depicts another form of birds besides the peacock and *garudha*. There is no information about the name of the bird in the text. These birds are merely for decoration. In addition, parrots were also found. Parrots do not have a special cultural significance. This kind of bird also does not have a strong symbolic value, either in Java or in other parts of the world.

Parrots are symbolised by their nature. Parrots like to talk without knowing the meaning of its talking. Therefore, metaphorically, parrots are often used to describe people who talk a lot. Meanwhile, in art, especially painting, parrots are considered as the symbol of honesty. Parrots are mystically thought to have the power to heal (Scazzero, 2017). The ornaments of parrots in Javanese manuscripts and the relationship between parrots and texts will be presented in another section of this article.

Meaning of the Symbols in Bird Motifs

Birds as decoration in manuscripts have been known for a long time. Related to its function, the ornament is used as beautification without having a direct relationship with the text; or, it is deliberately chosen to beautify and support the content of the text. The selection of decorative elements is indeed interesting to study, because, psychologically, the selection of decorative elements is almost entirely related to what is intended to be conveyed in the manuscript. For example, to write a love letter to a lover, it is impossible to use the ornament of a knife or a skull. Most people will definitely choose to use a variety of decorations in the forms of roses, hearts, gods of love, and others.

Birds from ancient times have been used as certain symbols. For example, the Simurgh bird is a representation of God in a Persian religion. This symbol decorates several famous medieval writers such as Abu'l-Qa-

sim Firdawsi (1025 AD), Ahmad Ghazali (1126 AD), Shihab al-Din Yahya Suhrawardi (1191 AD), and Farid al-Din 'Attar (1225 AD). The Simurgh bird in these works appears in a mystical and philosophical context (Saber-Najafi, 2022). The following are examples of the interpretation of ornaments of birds in the illumination of Javanese manuscripts in the collections stored in Sonobudoyo Museum and Language Centre of Yogyakarta.

Meaning of Parrots in Rerenggan Gapura Linangse Pura

One of the Javanese illuminations containing the picture of a bird is found in the manuscript of *Serat Cariyos Aneh-Aneh*, code number SK.93. This illumination consists of four words: *rerenggan*, *gapura*, *linangse*, and *pura*. *Rerenggan* means decoration; *Gapura* means the royal gate or the door to a large and luxurious building; *Linangse* is curtained; and *pura* means a palace or a luxurious building (Poerwadarminta, 1939). So, the meaning of the name of this illumination is the royal gate of a curtained palace.



Figure 7. Parrots in *Rerenggan Gapura Linangse Pura*
(Source: *Serat Cariyos Aneh-Aneh* code SK. 93 collection of Sonobudoyo Museum, Yogyakarta)

The main elements of the *Rerenggan Gapura Linangse Pura* are (1) leaves similar to sprouting ferns, (2) a pair of parrots, (3) cloth resembling a curtain in a palace, and (4) door and an old man beggar. The foliage serves as the decorative ornament. Ornaments of leaves and vines are indeed typical ornaments in the illumination of Javanese manuscripts. This ornament takes ideas from plants that exist in nature (Krisnawati *et al.*, 2019). The cloth that resembles a curtain shows the luxury of Mr. Wakhidin's house. The old man beggar is a figure of a beggar asking for mercy at the noble house. The manuscript tells a story framed by this illumination of a wealthy man named

Mr. Wakhidin. The house is very large and luxurious with a large gate, and is covered with beautiful curtains. One time, there comes a beggar, crying and begging for mercy. This beggar tells a story that he is suffering from a strange illness, so he could not stand to tell it. Mr. Wakhidin finally feels sorry for him and gives him large amounts of food, clothing and money. The beggar is happy and then continues his journey.

Although very generous, the nobleman is suspicious of the beggar. So he sends his assistant to investigate the truth of the beggar's story until finally the beggar is found eating in a shop. Mr. Wakhidin's assistant also asks about the beggar's illness because he seems to not suffer from any disease. Then the beggar replies that the pain is not visible, but it feels like it attacks the whole body so that he feels tired to work. Finally, the beggar says that the illness he is suffering from is the feeling lazy to work.

A pair of parrots is a symbol of a person who relies only on his speech to gain compassion, because parrots symbolize fluency in speaking (Mos-covich, 2023). The old man beggar is equalised to parrots, with the same words every day, begging for mercy, just like parrots that have the ability to imitate human speech, even though parrots do not really understand their words. The old man beggar is also like parrots, because he says the same sentences all the time. The sentences are memorised only as a means of begging for mercy. The sentences that come out are not fully lived, which is important to get money.

Based on the discussion above, it can be concluded that there is a close relationship between illumination and manuscripts. This is consistent with the theory of text linkage and the illumination of its frame (Bland, 1958; Damayanti & Suadi, 2007; Ekowati *et al.*, 2017; Folsom, 1990). The connection between the illumination and the manuscript on this link is very close, it can even be stated that the illumination is created based on the manuscript.

Meaning of Rerenggan Hamengku Buwana (HB) VIII in the Collection of Yogyakarta Language Centre

One of the Javanese illuminations containing a picture of a bird is found in the manuscript of *Serat Sarasilah*, code number R Ano S. Etymologically, as shown in Figure 8, *serat* means "text" and *sarasilah* means "family tree" (Poerwadarminta, 1939). So, this manuscript is a text containing the explanation of a family tree. The elements associated the illumination in Figure 8 consist of (1) *umbul-umbul* (banner), (2) crowns, (3) grapes, (4) *kawung* batik motif, (5) *garudha*, (6) strawberries, (7) Hamengku Buwana symbol, and (8) the image of snakes. Tendrils, foliage, grapes, and strawberries serve as decorative ornaments. *Umbul-umbul* is the symbol of the greatness of the king.

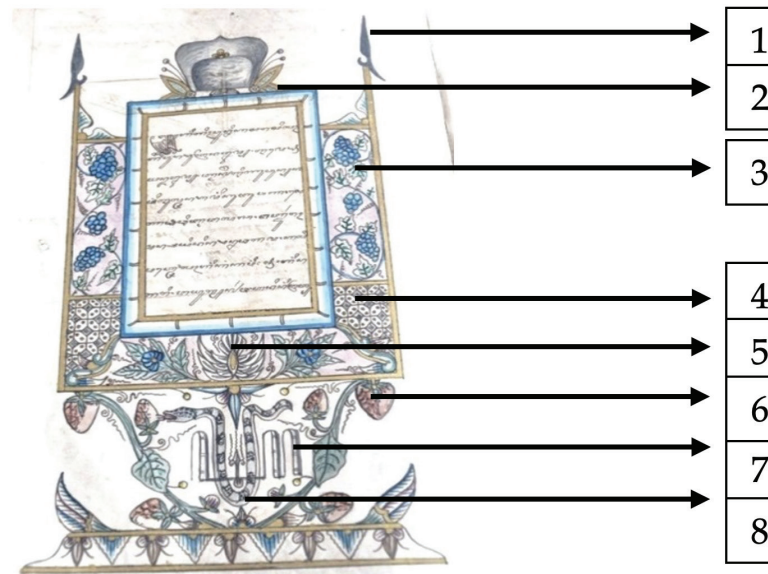


Figure 8. *Rerenggan* Hamengkubuwana VIII
(Source: Serat Sarasilah code R Ano S. collection of Balai Bahasa, Yogyakarta)

The text framed by the illumination of Figure 8 tells about the *sarasilah* (family tree) of Sri Sultan Hamengkubuwana VIII. The textual data show that Sri Sultan Hamengkubuwana VIII had 14 wives and concubines. From these marriages he had 40 sons. Sri Sultan Hamengkubuwana VIII reigned in Yogyakarta Sultanate for about 18 years (1921-1939). Like during the reign of Hamengkubuwana VII, he also prioritised education. *Taman Siswa Nasional* was founded in his era (July 3, 1922). In this era, there were also many renovations/restorations of buildings such as the *Bangsas Pagelaran*, *Tratag Siti Hinggil*, the Gate of *Dana Pratapa*, and the Grand Mosque. He passed away on October 22, 1939 at the Panti Rapih hospital. Apart from the decorative ornaments, one of the several other main ornaments is: Crown. The crown is one of the oldest forms of legitimacy for a royal leader. If the crown is already installed, automatically the whole fate of the people is in the hands of the crowned king. The history of using the crown is recorded in the long history of the archipelago. Even the crown has appeared in the reliefs of Prambanan and Panataran Temples. In the period after that, namely in the era of Majapahit, the crown was also used by kings. In addition, the use of symbols and crowns of the power of kings was also applied during the era of the Islamic kingdoms. The crown was originally reserved only for Lord Krishna, but, in its later development, it became the sign of greatness for kings in the archipelago (Krom, 1912; Muthi'ah *et al.*, 2014; Rosalinda & Kholisya, 2017). The crown symbol in the illumination of the manuscript above depicts the crown of the Sultanate of Yogyakarta. Figure 9 below shows a more detailed comparison.

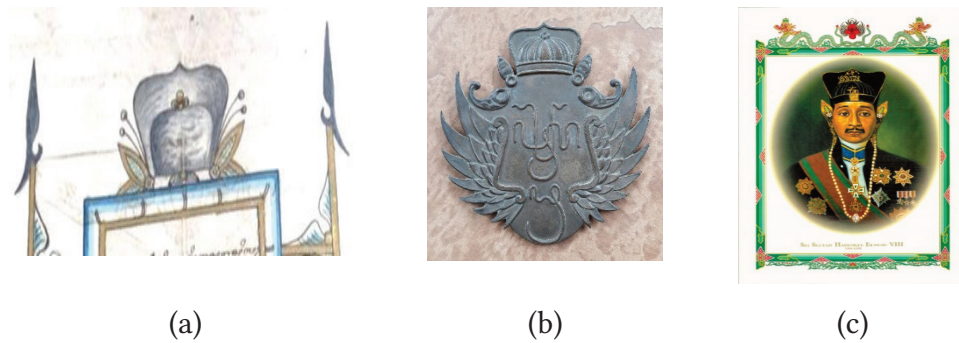


Figure 9. Metamorphosis of the Crown of the Sultanate of Yogyakarta
(Source: (a) Serat Sarasilah code R Ano S. collection of Balai Bahasa, Yogyakarta;
(b) https://1.bp.blogspot.com/-yC9Iphl8ngk/XQc2JhzWC0I/AAAAAAAAAY2I/gfddiIZ-8RysfMKvzzQjRhqlOEpfI9HJ7ACLcBGAs/s1600/20190617_114622.jpg;
(c) https://www.kratonjogja.id/upload/images/rajaraja/img_3hZCBpa.jpg).

Figure 9a shows a crown that is used as a decoration in the illumination of the text. Figure 9b represents the embodiment of the Yogyakarta Sultanate symbol during the era of Hamengkubuwana VIII. This can be seen from the Javanese number *VIII* placed under the *HaBa* Javanese script (Old Vintage Gallery, 2019). The royal crown worn by Sri Sultan Hamengkubuwana VIII in Figure 9c is also identical to the crown in the illumination.

The *HaBa* Javanese script. In Figure 10a, there is the *HaBa* Javanese script which is an abbreviation of the title of the Sultan: Hamengku Buwana. The *HaBa* Javanese script in the illumination below(10a) is styled by changing the letter *ba murda* into a snake resembling *weling* (blue krait or Malayan krait) or *Bungarus candidus* that is widely known in Yogyakarta.

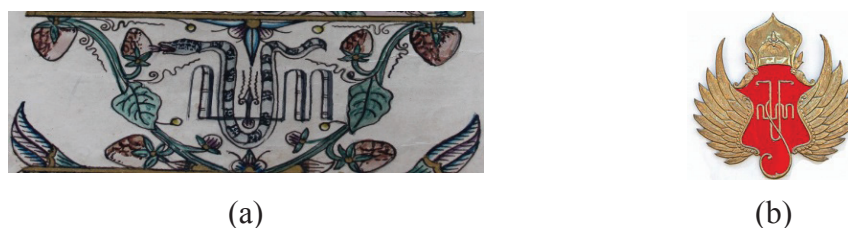


Figure 10. The Metamorphosis of the *HaBa* Javanese script
(Source: (a) Serat Sarasilah code R Ano S. collection of Balai Bahasa Yogyakarta;
(b) <https://www.kratonjogja.id/lambang>

The *Batik Motif of Kawung*. The illumination of the Javanese manuscript in Figure 11 shows the ornaments used is batik with the *kawung* motif. Based on this picture, it appears that the motif of *kawung* in the illumination of the Javanese manuscript is identical to the *kawung* motif depicted in batik. *Kawung* is the name of a palm-like tree (Poerwadarminta, 1939). This tree is often known as the *enau* or *kolang-kaling* or black sugar palm (*Arenga pinnata*). All parts of the *enau* tree are valuable for human life. The leaves to the roots can be used for various purposes; for example, to make tea, musical instruments, anti-germ drugs, sugar, paper, ropes, brooms, cig-

arette paper, decorations, food and beverage ingredients, honey, and others (Mogea *et al.*, 1991). Regarding the various benefits of the *kawung* tree, the motif of *kawung* is included in the illumination representative of Sultan Hamengkubuwana VIII as the king who dedicated his entire life to the people. The motif of *Kawung* is a sacred motif that cannot be used by common people. At the time of HB VII, the motif of *kawung* was only permitted to be used as the clothing of the King's grandchildren (Senibudayaasia, 2020).

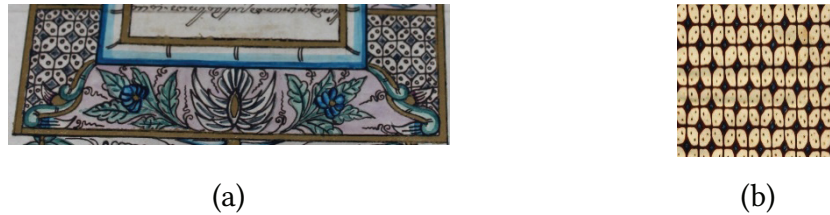


Figure 11. Metamorphosis of *Batik Kawung* in the Javanese Manuscript Illumination
(Source: (a) Serat Sarasilah code R Ano S. collection of Balai Bahasa, Yogyakarta;
(b) <https://batik-tulis.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/batik-kawung-picis.jpg>)

Bird Ornaments. The bird ornament in this illumination can be seen in Figure 11a. The bird ornament appears in the form of *sawat*, which takes up the two wings and the tail of *garudha* (Wessing, 1986). *Sawat* is also the symbol of the greatness of a king. This motif also appears in the emblem of the Royal Palace of Yogyakarta.

Based on the constituent ornaments, this illumination can be interpreted as follows. The existence of fruits and leaves suggests that life at that time was quite prosperous. *Umbul-umbul* represents heirloom objects in the Yogyakarta palace, with the shape like a weapon with a sharp tip resembling a spear. *Umbul-umbul* can also be interpreted as the symbol of the greatness of the *Kraton* (royal palace). In the illumination of the same manuscript located on a different page, an image of *banon bumi* is also found. However, in this manuscript, there is no picture of *banon bumi*. It can be inferred that the barrier between the palace and the common people has begun to be removed. The palace was more open to the public. The symbol of a crown is the symbol of the king. Because the text tells about King Hamengkubuwana VIII, this symbol represents the throne of King HB VIII. The symbol of the *garudha* wings symbolise the majesty, dignity, power, protection, lofty ideals, as well as other majestic cults of the king and his responsibility as the leader of the people in Yogyakarta.

The *Ha-Ba* Javanese script is also the representation of the king because it stands for the title of the ruling king, Hamengku Buwana. The image of a snake in the illumination above is *weling* (*Bungarus candidus*). This snake is known to be venomous (Charoenpitakchai *et al.*, 2018). The snake has been known for a long time, even since the Neolithic era. The snake is considered to be guardians of the underworld and of water which are essential for life. Like the *garudha*, the snake is also considered to have eternal life because

of their ability to molt. The king is identical to the snake because the king is the source and guardian of the life of his people. In addition, the selection of this venomous *weling* snake as the symbol in the *HaBa* Javanese script also indicates that the king has very high accuracy and wisdom in making decisions and the essential restorer of several bad circumstances (Kirno, 2012; Kokkori, 2017; Retief & Cilliers, 2002).

Based on the above discussion, it can be concluded that there is a close relationship between the illumination and manuscripts. The connection between the illumination and the manuscripts on this *rerenggan* is very close as the ornaments are specially chosen to depict the figure of Hamengku Buwana VIII as told in the manuscript.

The Meaning of the Illumination of Wedana Gapura Renggan Sawat Manyura Resmi

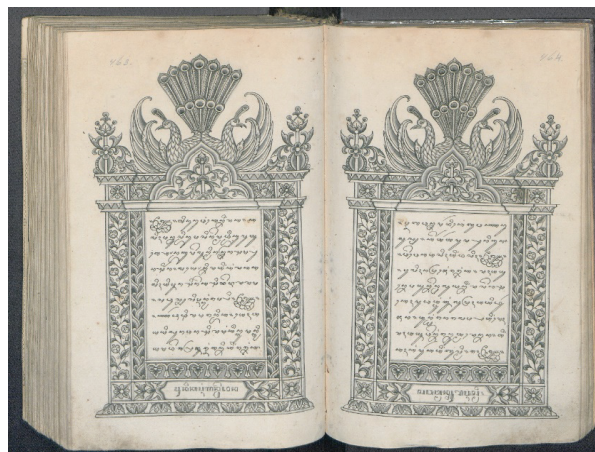


Figure 12. *Wedana Gapura Renggan Sawat Manyura Resmi*
(Source: *Serat Rama* code PBA. 243 collection of Sonobudoyo Museum, Yogyakarta)

The main elements of this illumination are (1) *sawat*, (2) two peacocks, and (3) leaves and vines. The leaves and vines serve as decorative ornaments only, and are not directly related to the manuscript. The *Sawat* and two peacocks in this illumination are combined into one. The *Sawat* is depicted in the right and left wings, while the tail is that of a peacock. Then the ornament is added with two peacocks turning their backs on each other. Based on the manuscript of *Serat Rama*, it is recounted that King Rama was successful in defeating Rahwana. King Rama then asked Wibisana to rule Alangka. King Wibisana is expected to be a leader who loves his people. The symbol of the two peacocks in this illumination can be associated with the twin kings, which, in this context, are Rama and Wibisana. Wibisana is symbolised by the peacock which is logically acceptable as well, because Wibisana is believed to have the power to live eternally, the same as the power possessed by the peacock (Padma, 2019). The elements of this image consist of the *garudha* and peacock combined in the form of *sawat* depict-

ing the symbol of leadership and the status of Wibisana and Rama as kings. The appearance of the peacock decoration in this manuscript is something normal considering that in the story of *Ramayana*, peacocks appear several times (Nair, 1974; Syarif & Kurniawati, 2018).

Based on the above discussion, it can be concluded that there is a relationship between illumination and manuscripts, even though the relationship is not too close. The relationship between the manuscripts and illumination is only limited on the symbolic representation of the character's leadership.

The Meaning of Illumination of Serat Menak Sarehas dumugi Menak Sorongan

The illumination in Figure 13 is an ornament picturing the manuscript of *Serat Menak Sarehas dumugi Menak Sorongan* as the collection of Sonobudoyo Museum code SK 133. The main elements of this illumination are (1) a crown, (2) two pairs of *mirong*, (3) *cakra manggilingan*, (4) lotus, (5) dragons, and (6) leaves and flowers. The leaves and flowers serve as decorative ornaments and are not directly related to the manuscript. This manuscript contains the account of King Medayin who wants to gain supernatural powers by meditating on the seabed. King Medayin has a magical power descended from generations to generations. The manuscript also contains the leadership lineage of the kingdom of Medayin and the process of the royal succession. It is said that the soldiers welcomed him with joy. They still obeyed the previous king, and prepared to receive orders and guidance from the new king.

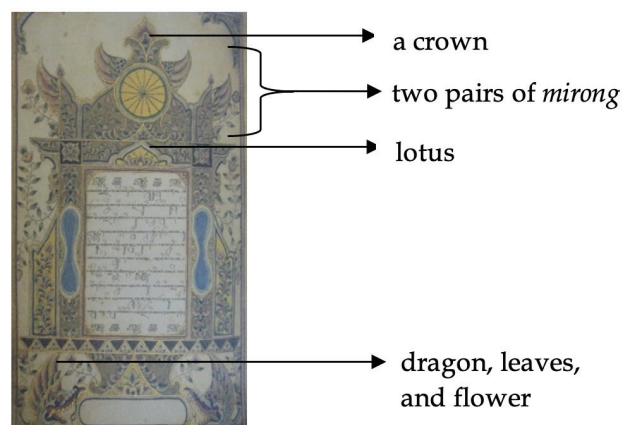


Figure 13. *Wedana Gapura Renggan Serat Menak Sarehas dumugi Menak Sorongan*
(Source: SK 133 collection of Sonobudoyo Museum, Yogyakarta)

The illumination of the manuscript depicts the crown of the king and two pairs of *mirong*. These two symbols depict the leadership of King Medayin in the story. The two pairs of *mirong* can be interpreted as a representation of the two kings, namely the former *Medayin* King, and the new king as the successor. Then, under the image of the king's crown there is an

image of a disc or wheel which is called *cakra manggilingan* in the Javanese culture. The *Cakra manggilingan* is a Javanese philosophy about the human life and destiny that is always changing over time. Humans are not able to fully control their own destiny, because everything happening in the world has been arranged by God Althemighty. This philosophy denotes humans should not be content in life, especially when they are at the top because, when the *cakra manggilingan* rotates, the fate can instantly fully change (Kasnadi., Sutejo., Arifin, 2019; Negoro, 2001). The *chakra* in this illumination is closely related to the manuscript. The *chakra* indicates that the power and leadership of a country will have its time and change to a new leader.

Another ornament that is used as the constituent of the illumination is the lotus. The use of the lotus as a symbol is constantly applied. As in the case of the *kala* ornaments that are usually found at the entrances of temples in Java, the lotus is an element that always exists as the symbolic decoration of the past. Even now, many motifs of the lotus are used to beautify the mosques all over the country. The lotus represents the mystical path to God. The lotus is also one of the four sacred motifs that have lasted since the days of the animist dynamism, Hinduism, Islam, and present days (Lee-Niinioja, 2011). The philosophy of the lotus is that humans are born as beings with beauty and perfection as well as desire to develop in a more advanced direction. This philosophy is similar to the Buddhist philosophy which depicts the lotus as a symbol of rebirth represented in *thangka* paintings (bodhisattvas flying on lotus leaves) (Sharapan, 2022). It is just like a new leadership having the desire to make the kingdom better of power than the former king. In Figure 13 above, there is also an image of two lakes on the right and left of the gate. Around the lakes are decorative flowers and leaves that make the atmosphere feel more beautiful.

Finally, there are the pictures of two dragon heads facing each other at the bottom. In the philosophy, the dragon is the symbol of defence and protection. The image of the two dragons is located at the bottom of the gate because of the functions of defending and protecting. If it is adjusted to the context of the story, the image of the two dragons symbolises the forms of defence and protection from the leader to the people. Dragons are chosen as the ornament because dragons are very close to the Javanese culture. The manifestation of dragons as mythological creatures has been known since the time of Hindu Buddhism indicated by the many dragon ornaments in various forms of the Javanese culture. For example, the image of dragons appears as reliefs in temples such as those in Panataran, Kidal, and others. The dragon also appears in various Javanese literary works, especially in Ancient Javanese (Santiko, 2015). Its appearance is also familiarly seen in the *gamelan* musical instrument, *wayang* shadow puppet, *keris* traditional dagger, and others.

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion of the research findings above, it can be shown that there is a stylised form of the ornaments of birds in the illumination of Javanese manuscripts. At least the percentage of the appearance of bird ornaments is 29%, with the following composition: 58% of them are ornaments of *garudha*, 20% of peacocks, 11% of peacocks and *garudha* appearing together, and 5% of other birds. The ornaments of birds in all these forms play a role in referring to the underlying meaning of the symbols. There are differences in the manifestations between one bird and another in the study of philosophy. However, every single kind of birds has a specific symbolic meaning. In interpreting each form of the bird ornaments, references are made to research on metaphors to explain the meaning frames of each symbol. On the other hand, it is determined through the textual evidence that each form of bird ornaments in the illuminated image has a didactic, aesthetic, and legitimate function. Birds as illumination ornaments symbolise and represent the King with all his positions and powers.

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