

The Aesthetics of Pendopo of the Sumenep Palace in Response to Today's Pressure of Globalization

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ABSTRACT

Sumenep Palace is one of the artifacts of the cultural heritage buildings found on the eastern part of Madura Island. It was founded by the 31st King Sumenep, Panembahan Somala, one of the ulemas in 1762 with the help of an architect of Chinese descent, Lauw Pia Ngo. The Sumenep Palace was established during the occupation of the Dutch government in Indonesia (VOC). Therefore, its design has a blend of cultural values from Hinduism Java, Islam, China, and the Netherlands. The characteristics of these cultural values can be clearly seen in the expression of art, design, and architecture of the Pavilion building. The pavilion as part of the entire building in the palace complex functioned as a meeting area by the members of the palace. Some of the activities that took place in the Pavilion included traditional, religious, governmental, and family activities. The aesthetic aspects of the architecture and design have complex values, because the process of its realization involves many aspects, including economic, social, cultural, technological, ergonomic, anthropological, psychological factors; adaptation processes; and design sustainability to the environment. The Sumenep palace pavilion has potential to be further explored from various aspects of the design. Through this paper, the authors describe the results of the study on Sumenep Palace Pavilion as a means of revitalizing Madurese art and culture through its aesthetic elements.

Keywords: *Aesthetics, Sumenep Palace, layout, Pavilion*

1. INTRODUCTION

Globalization has led to increasing intensity between local and global cultural values. The local value system that has been used as a reference by the community often changes because of the influence of global culture, especially with the advancement of information technology that accelerates the process of change. The process of globalization also affects the mindset of people assessing a form of culture. Perwanto stated that humans and culture are inseparable entities, and human beings are supporters of culture. [1] The issue of local wisdom of a culture becomes an interesting new discourse to discuss.

Local wisdom and tradition are important to be revived in order to find authentic identities, which during the period of modernism's domination, were eliminated and even deliberately abandoned. As a result, many people were unfamiliar with and detached from the authentic identity of their local culture. Madurese people are unfortunately not an exception from this phenomenon. The noble values have been lost from the personalities and figures of the young generation of Madura.

This study attempts to bring out the potential of the cultural artefact of Madura, namely the aesthetic aspects from the Pendopo of the palace which functions as the

space for holding various art and cultural activities and events for the Sumenep people in Madura.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Aesthetics

According to popular opinion, aesthetics is defined as a branch of philosophy that observes or relates to the beautiful symptoms of nature and art. This view contains a narrow sense. The term is derived from the Greek word *aisthētikos*, which translates to "the things that can be detected by the senses" (sense of perception). Alexander Baumgarten (1714-1762), a German philosopher, was the first to introduce the term *aesthetics* as a follow-up on the notion by Gottfried Leibniz (1646-1716). Baumgarten prefers *aesthetics* because he expects to put emphasis on the artistic experience as a means of learning (the perfection of sentient knowledge). In terms of the discipline, it is preferred to not associate *aesthetics* solely with the *aesthetics* philosophy as *aesthetics* nowadays does not exclusively belong to philosophical problems, but a scientific one. When one talks about *aesthetics* today, it is not exclusive to the artistic or *aesthetic* experience, but also refers to the style of art, development of art, etc.

There are plenty of issues in art, including which and what is considered as aesthetics and based on what notions and what kind of characteristics. This is discussed by George T. Dickie in his book, *Aesthetica*. He raised three degrees of problems (questions) to isolate aesthetic problems. First, critical statements that describe, interpret, or value typical works of art. Second, general statements by literary, music or artistic experts which define the characteristics of artistic genres (for example: tragedy, sonata form, abstract paintings). Third, questions on beauty, imitation art, and so on [2].

Meanwhile, according to John F. Pile, in interior design, a room can be measured in its beauty value. Analysis of a space can be done with approaches in the form of: function analysis, visual expression analysis, material and structural analysis [3]. The concept of thought that lies behind the aesthetics of a design form can be understood with the requirements of the design concept, including: size, scale, proportion, harmony, unity, variation, contrast, balance, rhythm, emphasize, pattern, and ornament. According to Heinz Frick, decoration (ornament) are all kinds of elements used to beautify buildings [4]. The background of architecture greatly influences the notion of decoration. According to Soegeng Toekio, the decoration of an object is essentially a makeup applied to obtain integrated beauty and good looks. The decoration plays a role as a means of beautifying or making something more elegant [5].

2.2. The Culture of Madura

Madura Island consists of four districts, namely Bangkalan, Sampang, Pamekasan and Sumenep, located northeast of Java Island with coordinates of about 7 southern latitudes and between 112 and 114 east longitude. [6] The length of the island of Madura is approximately 190 km, the widest distance is 40 km, and the overall area is 5,304 km. The height of the sea level ranges from 2 meters - 350 meters. The lowest elevation is the coastal areas both in the west, north, east and south, while the highest altitude is spread in the middle of the island in the form of small mountains. The island is surrounded by more than 100 smaller islands, either inhabited or not. Most of these small islands are located in the east.

Although Madura only consists of four districts, judging from the cultural aspects adopted and used as standards in behavior there is no difference between the Madurese residents who inhabit the four districts. Madura is known for its uniqueness and cultural distinctiveness. The use of distinctive terms here refers to the understanding that Madurese ethnic entities have cultural specificities that are not similar to the ethnography of other ethnic communities.

According to Latief Wiyata, the specificity of the culture reflects, among other things, their adherence, subordination and devotion to the four main forms of life, especially in the form of diversity. The four figures are Buppak, Ebuh, Guru ben Rato (father, mother, teacher and leader). Of these four main figures is the hierarchical

adherence of the Madurese in their social and cultural life [7].

3. RESEARCH METHOD

This research is a qualitative type of research by collecting the data through field visits, literature studies, interviews, and directly documenting the objects of the study. Reference studies are conducted through historical research, while problems that arise in the field are explored directly in the social life of the community.

4. THE PENDOPO AESTHETICS AS THE FACILITY FOR ART AND CULTURAL CEREMONIAL ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS IN THE 4.0 INDUSTRIAL ERA

In the history of the kings who ruled Sumenep, there are 4 dynasties with different beliefs ranging from Shiva-Buddhism to Islam. The four dynastic lineages were Arya Bangah (1269-1559), Prince Kanduruan of Demak (1559-1762), Adikoro I of Pamekasan (1672-1762) and finally Bindoro Saod of P. Kanduruan (1762-1929). The Javanese kingdoms that played a role in influencing the realization of various customs, beliefs, and culture in Sumenep both among the palace and the people namely the Kingdom of Pajajaran [8], Majapahit, Demak, and Mataram in particular. This is because during the course of the history of the kingdom of Sumenep there was in the kingdom of Mataram.

4.1. Sumenep Palace

In addition to being the center for government, Sumenep Palace also serves the official residence of the dukes and king of Madura. Sumenep Kingdom was a small kingdom (at the same level as the Duchy) at that time, because before the Sumenep territory was controlled by the VOC, the Sumenep region itself still had to pay tribute to the major kingdoms (Singhasari, Majapahit, and Mataram Sultanate). Sumenep Palace was actually a lot in number, as in addition to being the official residence of the dukes and king in power at the time, the palace was also functioned as a place to regulate all matters of the royal government. At present, the palace buildings that remain and are intact are those built by Gusti Raden Ayu Tirtonegoro R. Rasmana and Kanjeng Tumenggung Ario Tirtonegoro (Bindara Saod) and their descendants, namely Panembahan Somala Asirudin Pakunataningrat and Sri Sultan Abdurrahman Pakunataningrat I (Raden Ario Notonegoro) [9]. As for the palace buildings belonging to the dukes/ other kings, such as the Prince Siding Puri Palace in Parsanga, the Tumenggung Kanduruan Palace, the Prince Lor Palace and Prince Wetan in Karangduak, only the remnants of the building are left, namely the gate

and foundation, i.e. only in the form of a gate and base of the palace building [10].

In regard to the government system in Java at that time, the term 'palace' to describe the Sumenep kingdom was not exactly appropriate because the Sumenep Palace had a smaller strata or level than the sultanate palaces in Jogjakarta and Surakarta. Sumenep Palace is actually a residence building with a simpler pattern of building structuring compared to the large palaces in Jogjakarta and Surakarta. However, the use of the term 'palace' has been going on for a long time by the Madurese community, due to the geographical condition of Sumenep which is located in a foreign area (coastal area of Wetan) far from the Kingdom of Mataram. Likewise, the term for ruler is more familiar among the people as "Rato/ Raja" (queen/king, respectively) [10].

The Sumenep Palace stands on a privately-owned land of Prince Natakusuma I (Panembahan Somala), east of the old palace owned by Ratu R. Ayu Rasmana Tirtanegara. The Sumenep Palace building complex is simpler than the Mataram royal palace complex, as the building only includes the Gedong Negeri building, Palace Court, Paseban, and several private buildings of the royal family.



Figure 1 The Isometry Perspective of the Pendopo Building Sudut (source: private documentation)

In front of the palace, to the south stood the Pendapa Agung and right in front of the building stood the Gedong Negeri (now used as the office of the Culture, Tourism, Youth, and Sports Agency) which was established by the Dutch Government. The construction of the Gedong Negeri itself is intended to rival the authority of the Sumenep Palace, as well as monitoring the government that is run by the royal family. Moreover, Gedong Negeri is also functioned as the treasury office and palace meetings which is managed by a Patih (government official) who is assisted by the palace Wedana (regent) [11].

On the east of the Gedong Negeri, stood the entrance gate of the Sumenep Palace called Labang Mesem. The

monumental gate has an attic which is used to monitor all activities in the palace. There used to be five entrance doors into the palace, which is collectively called the Ponconiti. Today, there are only two of them that are still functioning, located in the facade of the facing south. The western gate is in fact a very modest path, while in the east corner to the south of the Labhang Mesem stood the Taman Sare (bathing place of the sons and daughters of the dukes) with high protective walls [11].

4.2. The Palace Orientation System and Spatial Planning

The interior space value in the palace building has a gradation which transforms gradually. The front part is a public space, and the more it goes to the back, the more private it is. More details on the gradation sequence of the building are described below.

- The inner space of the Pendopo building is a spacious and open one as it has no walls. The space is used for the public. The connection between the outside and inside spaces are more intimate.
- The inner space of the Mandiyoso building is also a spacious and open one. It is a semi-public space. The connection between the outside and inside spaces are still intimate.
- The terrace of the Dalem, is a spacious and partly open inner space. It is semi-private. The inner space dominates the outer space as the it feels more solid in the inside.
- The inner space of the Dalem consists of several private inner rooms in the center. They are very private space (bedrooms and attics above them). The inner space is a solid one as there is very little connection with the outer space.
- The back terrace and Gadri are both partly open inner spaces that are only open to the Keputren area and are a semi-private space. Here, the outer space is present again.
- The Keputren area in the back is a very private area.
- Service area such as the kitchen, bathrooms and toilets, garage and others are all closed and private spaces.



Figure 2 The Interior of the Pendopo of Sumenep Palace (source: private documentation)

4.3. Pendopo

The shape of the building is the traditional Javanese triangular prism of Limasan Sinom with ten the central pillars (sokoguru) instead of the common four central pillars in most Joglo houses.

The side pillars (soko pinggir) are plural pillars in Majapahit style. This building serves the way Javanese Pendopo is used, namely to welcome guests of honor. It is an open space (no walls) on all four sides.



Figure 3 The Meeting of the Pillar and the Ceiling of the Pendopo (source: private documentation)

The space is a rectangle shape in which the longest side is crossing perpendicular to the palace complex. In front of the building, there is a Kuncung building (front level) as the main entrance.

The surface of the Pendopo building is lower than the surrounding land, namely 10 cm below the earth surface. The construction, including the ceiling boards, is made from teak. The ceiling is a low angle Limasan Simon (triangular prism) of the Apitan type (long continuity), with the roof tiles that have bubungan from the plesetran that sticks out. The latter shape resembles the roof of the Chinese people in Indonesia and China, which means that the building is influenced by the Chinese culture [11].



Figure 4 The Marble Floor of the Pendopo (left) and the Granite Floor of Madiyoso (right) (source: private documentation)

Each region has its own type of decoration with special features, including different ornaments as well as similarities in motifs or nature. For example, Madurese

ornaments have similar characteristics with Jepara (Central Java) ornaments, which is a coarse-dynamic carving pattern with different characteristics. There are five types of decoration in the Sumenep Palace, namely plants, animals, natural decoration, religious decoration, and other decorations (symbols). The three colors in the Palace decoration include golden yellow, red, and black.

The type of ornament that is most abundant in the palace is the plants. There are several detailed parts, namely flower petals, leaves and tendrils. As for the types of flowers, they are mostly jasmines, roses and sunflowers. The variety of ornamental plants on the main supporting pillar of the Pendopo roof is the sunflower. The interwoven vines give a sense of life, that is a continuous and sustainable life that is maintained as the responsibility of the humans toward God[12].



Figure 5 The Sunflower Decoration on the Pendopo's Pillar (source: private documentation)

4.4. Royal Ceremonies from 1760 to the Present

Madura has a variety of valuable traditional cultural resources. In facing the global era which brings the influence of materialism and pragmatism, the presence of traditional art in the life of the Madurese people is incredibly important to prevent them from being stuck in the foreign morality that is against the national moral values or identity. It is important that the Indonesian citizens learn about Madurese culture that still exists or extinct, and even the culture that may not last any longer. The introduction on these kinds of Madurese culture is expected to encourage out sense of pride and nationalism on traditional art forms.

Madura is known as a barren region but rich in culture. The cultural resources in Madura are developed from various cultural elements both from the influence of animism, Hinduism and Islam. The marriage of the three elements is very dominant to color the existing culture. In its development, a variety of religious arts, especially

Islamic nuances seem more prominent. The diversity and various forms of traditional culture and art that exist in Madura shows the high culture possessed by the Indonesian people.

Cultures with noble values based on Islamic religious values should be preserved and introduced to the younger generation as they inherit the nation's culture. Local culture is an asset that can protect young people from the negative influences of the globalization era. The influence of such a global culture through electronic media and print media causes the young generation to lose their identity.

There are three cultural activities in the Sumenep Regency that are preserved and held regularly in the Pendopo of the palace, namely Kirab Pusaka (the ceremony of transferring the sacred keris or traditional Javanese blade), Ketupat, and Zakat.

The following is the position configuration of each member of the royal family in the Pendopo during the royal ceremonies.

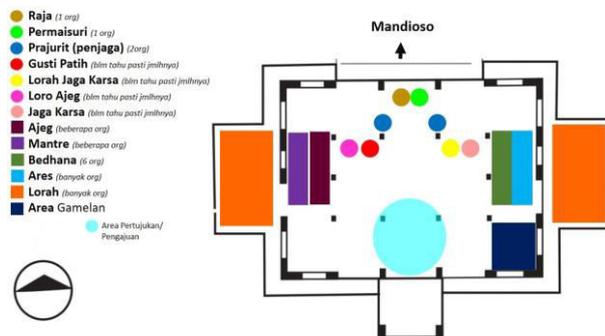


Figure 6 Position Configuration of the Royal Family in the Pendopo (source: interview with Tadjul Arifin, January 2019)

Sumenep Palace is one of the centers of Madurese culture. Ritual ceremonies are the tradition and custom that are still well-maintained and preserved in the palace. The ceremonies are open for public and provides an insight on traditional ceremonies such as Ketupat, Zakat, and Kirab Pusaka. Kirab Pusaka ceremony is open yet sacred. The ceremony involves a space that is filled an understood by those involved. It usually begins with a ceremony at the Pendopo, followed by a route around the palace and outside the palace. The space established during the ceremony may be surrounded by walls or circulations from the attendants.

In 1781 AD the palace building as the private residence of the King was completed. Although it looks modest compared to other palace buildings across the archipelago, it is a symbol of glory for the kingdom which represents authority. In front of the palace, there is the Great Hall of Pendopo Agung as the main place of the King where he conducts his daily duties, e.g. receiving reports, providing instructions and other orders, welcoming guests from other kingdoms, or conducting special meetings within the kingdom. Large doors for people in and out are also built in such a way to look grand and beautiful. The doors are

named Labang Misem (Madurese) meaning “a smiling door,” which brings hope that anyone who enters and exits the palace will bring peace and harmony [13].

From the short summary on the establishment of the Sumenep Palace, there are strong inner bonds and memories among the people of Sumenep on the palace artefacts. This is evident from the high interest from the public in participating every traditional event, ritual, and ceremony. The organization of annual events is an attempt to support the collective power of all levels of society to maintain the unity and oneness, as well as develop the heritage of the past civilization.

The efforts to preserve culture and tradition can at least be done in two ways, namely promotion and attraction. The promotion or campaign of the history of the nation toward the next generation is important to transfer the knowledge, while attraction can be done by organizing more events which support the preservation of the culture of the ancestors.

The predecessors of Sumenep have inherited monumental estate and resources despite of the limitations. One of the heritages is the palace. In the era where everything seems easy, it is hoped that the palace may inspire the people of Sumenep to also create the same equally noble monumental legacy for generations to come.

In the midst of the modern development and modernization in every field, it is imperative that the cultural resources and traditions from the ancestors not be overlooked or sacrificed.

5. CONCLUSION

The culture and custom of the Sumenep palace must be revived to the golden age of the King Bindara Saod or Raden Tumenggung Tirta Negoro and his son Panembahan Sumolo or during the sultanate of Abdur Rahman.

The presence of Pendopo is instrumental to facilitate the art and cultural events of the Sumenep people for the sake preserving the local wisdom values that are passed from the ancestors toward the next generation.

The aspect of aesthetic on the design and architecture of Pendopo has a significant influence on the comfort and experience of the users of the space, whether for the regional events that are sacred or others.

There is a great need to communicate to the public on the importance of appreciating the aesthetic values of a cultural artefact, particularly cultural heritage buildings.

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