

Ecological Spirituality and Javanese *Weltanschauung*: Iconological Interpretation of Subandi Giyanto's *Pranata Mangsa* (2024)

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Abstract

Original Research Article

This study explores the layers of visual meaning in twelve paintings entitled *Pranata Mangsa: Mangsa 1–12* (2024) by Subandi Giyanto, focusing on: [1] identifying factual elements, [2] interpreting symbols and allegories within Javanese cosmology, and [3] revealing the philosophical meaning and *Weltanschauung* of Javanese culture. The research employs a qualitative–narrative design grounded in the social constructivist paradigm and was conducted in Malang and Yogyakarta from August to September 2025. Data were obtained through document analysis of the twelve paintings and examined using Erwin Panofsky's iconographic and iconological methods, supported by primary literary sources. The pre-iconographical description identifies factual elements such as human figures, mythological beings, deities, animals, plants, colours, and agrarian activities, reflecting ecological continuity between humans and nature as expressed in *candraning mangsa*. The iconographical analysis reveals a symbolic system connecting antagonistic and protagonist figures—such as Gumarang, Wisnu, Narasingha, and Ganesha—to the Javanese agrarian cycle, embodying moral values of patience, self-control, and gratitude. The iconological interpretation uncovers intrinsic meanings that express reflective–cosmological awareness: a Javanese worldview of harmony between humans, nature, and the divine (*hamemayu hayuning bawana*), forming the basis of ecological ethics. The study concludes that Subandi Giyanto's work is not merely a visualisation of an agrarian calendar but a philosophical reflection on Javanese ecological spirituality in a modern context. It bridges agrarian tradition and contemporary environmental discourse through an inculturated visual language linking classical mythology and modern idioms. The main limitation lies in the absence of public reception analysis. Future research should expand through ecosemiotical perspectives and comparative studies to enrich iconological interpretations of *Pranata Mangsa*-based visual art within the discourse of contemporary cultural ecology.

Keywords: *Pranata Mangsa*; *Javanese Cosmology*; *Iconography and Iconology*; *Ecological Spirituality*; *Subandi Giyanto*.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Javanese civilisation is recognised as one of the significant cultural systems characterised by complex structures and rich symbolic values. Its early history was marked by a Brahmana from India, who introduced the *Pallawa* script between the 4th and 5th centuries CE. This event significantly influenced how collective knowledge was recorded and marked the beginning of Indian influence and the establishment of Āiwa–Buddha kingdoms such as Tarumanāgara, Kaling, and Āriwijaya. During the medieval period, the *Pallawa* script evolved into the *Kawi* script, widely used in maritime kingdoms such as Āriwijaya and Majapahit. When Islam reached Java in the 15th century, the political orientation of

Javanese kingdoms shifted from maritime to agrarian. This period also witnessed a transformation in calendrical systems—from the solar-based Hinduism – Āaka calendar to the lunar-based Hijra calendar, implemented by Sultan Agung Adi Prabhu Anyakrakusuma (1613–1645 CE) in 1554 Āaka or 1632 CE, coinciding with 1 Muharram 1043 H (Darsono, 2010, p. 91). During this transition, the *Kawi* script was gradually replaced by the *Carakan* (*Hanacaraka* or Modern Javanese) alphabet of twenty characters. Some sources even suggest that *Carakan* was already used during the Demak Sultanate (1475–1568 CE) (Rochyatmo, 1997, p. 34). These shifts—from maritime to agrarian orientation, solar to lunar calendrics, and

Kawi to Carakan script—profoundly transformed how “collective knowledge” was organised.

Within the agrarian Islamic kingdoms, society required a reliable calendrical system to guide agricultural and livestock activities. Over time, the lunar calendar proved inadequate for farmers. Consequently, in 1855 CE, Adipati Mangkunegara IV (1811–1881 CE) reformed the system by introducing a solar-based calendar known as “*Pranata mangsa*” (Isniyatin, 2014). In the following year, Sri Susuhunan Pakubuwana VII of the Surakarta Sunanate formally adopted *Pranata mangsa* as an agricultural reference to prevent crop losses (Faramadila, 2022; Isniyatin, 2014; Wisnubroto, 1998). According to Primbon Qomarrulsyamsi Addammakna, the system began on 22 June 1855, coinciding with the summer solstice (“*dhawah ing suraya*”) (Soembogo, 1990, p. 16). The calendar comprises twelve *mangsa* (seasons): *Kasa*, *Karo*, *Katelu*, *Kapat*, *Kalima*, *Kanem*, *Kapitu*, *Kawolu*, *Kasanga*, *Kasadasa*, *Dhesta*, and *Sadha*. Each *mangsa* is described empirically through (1) animal behaviour, (2) plant development, and (3) environmental conditions such as constellations, wind directions, and rainfall (Isniyatin, 2014; Wisnubroto, 1998). These empirical traits are known as “*condro*” or “*candraning mangsa*”—metaphorical depictions that qualitatively express seasonal conditions (Wisnubroto, 1995).

Pranata mangsa is thus defined as the Javanese seasonal division system farmers and fishers use. (Badrudin, 2014). Sugiyanti (2020) Emphasises that it enables nature to act as a guide for human decisions regarding crops, while Wisnubroto (1995, 1998) notes that it helps farmers adjust planting schedules to avoid pests based on meteorological patterns. Through this system, rural communities understand seasonal rhythms affecting health, plant cycles, and land use. Daldjoeni (1984) highlights *Pranata mangsa* as a synthesis of cosmography, bioclimatology, and agricultural sociology, the dialogue between humans and nature. Consequently, it may be regarded as a form of cultural or indigenous science that interprets natural signs such as the sun’s position, wind direction, weather, and animal or plant behaviour, integrating ecological awareness with spiritual consciousness (Handayani et al., 2023, pp. 1–2; Sarwanto et al., 2010). Hence, *Pranata mangsa* is not merely an agricultural timetable but a philosophical system expressing ecological and spiritual harmony, where human life is inseparable from cosmic order.

In modern contexts, *Pranata mangsa* has undergone semantic and functional shifts. Its accuracy has declined because of technological progress and climate change, while many seasonal indicator species have disappeared (Handayani et al., 2023, p. 48). Modernisation has also reduced its recognition among younger generations, who rely on international calendars (Sarwanto et al., 2010). Nevertheless, integrating tradition, science, and technology can enhance societal

adaptation to climate change while preserving local wisdom (Ahmad & Ramadhani, 2025). Despite such changes, *Pranata mangsa* continues to live within Javanese cultural memory and is often revitalised through applied science, technology, and art. In Indonesian contemporary art, there has been a resurgence of *Pranata mangsa* as a source of visual inspiration and reflection on modernity. Local traditions are reinterpreted as symbolic languages containing ecological, spiritual, and social critiques. For instance, Wibisono & Yuwono (2023) adapted *Pranata Mangsa* into a *wayang beber* composition using “*sungging*” techniques, while Saifulloh & Zaini (2022) designed an illustrated *wayang* book inspired by *Pranata Mangsa* in pop art and anime styles. However, such work remains limited.

During ArtJog 2024, themed “Motif: Ramalan”, an important work entitled “*Pranata Mangsa: Mangsa 1–12*” (2024) by Subandi Giyanto—a painter from Bantul renowned for his exploration of Javanese cosmological symbols—was exhibited. The twelve-panel painting depicts seasonal changes following the *Pranata mangsa* cycle, integrating mythological figures, deities, giant animals, farmers, and agrarian landscapes in harmony with nature’s rhythm. Through the visual idiom of *wayang purwa*, *batik* motifs, and vibrant colour contrasts, Subandi constructs a visual narrative that reflects both the natural cycle and the Javanese worldview of balance between humanity and nature. Within contemporary art discourse, this work stands out for merging near-extinct agrarian traditions with modern visual idioms reflective of present-day ecological concerns.

To date, most studies on *Pranata mangsa* have focused on anthropological, sociological, ethnological, or meteorological perspectives (Antriyandarti et al., 2023; Budiyoko et al., 2025; Salsabila, 2022; Zuhri & Budirahayu, 2025; Zulfa et al., 2025). Research examining *Pranata mangsa* as a symbolic and cultural source in contemporary art remains scarce, even though it holds substantial potential for revealing the interrelations between form, symbol, and Javanese “*weltanschauung*”. Thus, a scholarly gap exists concerning how *Pranata mangsa*, as traditional knowledge, is reinterpreted within visual art through symbolic and mythological imagery. This study aims to uncover the layers of visual meaning in Subandi Giyanto’s “*Pranata Mangsa: Mangsa 1-12*” (2024), with three analytical sub-foci:

- 1) Identifying and describing factual elements, such as figures, colours, compositions, and activities.
- 2) Interpreting symbols and allegories within the context of *Pranata mangsa* and Javanese cosmology.
- 3) Revealing the philosophical and cosmological worldview underlying the artwork.

To address these aims, the study employs Erwin Panofsky's iconographic and iconological framework, which interprets artworks through three levels of meaning: [1] factual forms, [2] conventional symbols, and [3] intrinsic meanings that reflect the artist's worldview. Panofsky (2008, p. 39) emphasises that iconographic–iconological analysis explores how visual signs represent ideas, values, and beliefs within their cultural context. Accordingly, the first sub-focus is addressed through pre-iconographic description, the second through iconographic analysis, and the third through iconological interpretation. This framework bridges the aesthetic dimensions of Subandi Giyanto's "Pranata Mangsa" paintings with the underlying system of Javanese cultural meaning.

2. METHODS

This study employs a qualitative–narrative research design, with data collected through interviews and document analysis. The analytical process involves retelling experiences and events chronologically and developing emerging themes based on their narrative structure. The narrative under study is the visual representation of *Pranata mangsa* in the paintings of Subandi Giyanto (Creswell, 2015, pp. 145–148). The interpretive framework is grounded in the paradigm of social constructivism or interpretivism (Denzin & Lincoln, 2009), which assumes that individuals construct meaning through subjective experiences of the world and its objects (Creswell, 2015, pp. 32–33).

Specifically, this study applies Erwin Panofsky's method of iconographic and iconological analysis, which distinguishes three "layers of meaning"

in a work of art, each corresponding to distinct analytical actions and corrective principles. The first layer, primary or natural subject matter, refers to pure forms representing objects and events, along with their expressive qualities. It includes factual elements (what the objects and events are) and expressive aspects (the implied mood or atmosphere), obtained through pre-iconographic description to produce artistic motifs. To ensure credibility, the corrective principle of practical experience—familiarity with the objects and events—is applied and cross-checked with stylistic history, which examines how forms are expressed across historical contexts (Panofsky, 2008, pp. 29, 35–39).

The second layer, secondary or conventional subject matter, reveals conventional meanings that express specific themes or concepts through images, narratives, and allegories. These meanings are obtained through iconographic analysis, supported by corrective principles involving literary and oral sources, and verified through historical typology, i.e., how a particular theme or concept is manifested through objects or events in various historical settings (Panofsky, 2008, pp. 29–30, 36, 39). The third layer, intrinsic meaning or content, refers to the attitude of mind of an era, class, or individual, which determines both compositional methods and symbolic significance in the previous layers. Panofsky describes this as the "world of symbolic values," revealed through iconological interpretation—an intuitive synthesis rooted in the essential tendencies of human thought, shaped by personal psychology and *weltanschauung* (worldview). This meaning is corrected by the history of cultural or symbolic phenomena (Panofsky, 2008, pp. 31–33, 39–41).

Table 1: Layers of Meaning, Interpretive Actions, and Corrective Principles (Adapted from Panofsky, 2008)

No	Layer of Meaning	Interpretive Action	Corrective Principle
I	Primary or Natural Meaning (Natural Subject Matter)	Pre-iconographic Description: Identification of pure forms that represent objects and events within the artwork, along with their expressive qualities (gesture, mood, tone). This stage produces artistic motifs by recognizing factual and expressional elements directly observable in the work.	Practical Experience – familiarity with objects and events, corrected by the history of style, i.e., how objects and events are expressed visually under different historical conditions.
II	Secondary or Conventional Meaning (Conventional Subject Matter)	Iconographic Analysis: Identify motifs and compositions that reveal particular themes or concepts in the image, narrative, or allegory. This level interprets the conventional meaning shared by the visual language of a specific culture and time.	Literary Sources and Oral Traditions are references, corrected by the history of types, i.e., how visual forms embody themes and concepts across various historical contexts.
II	Intrinsic Meaning or Content (Intrinsic Meaning or Symbolic Value)	Iconological Interpretation: Understanding the underlying "basic attitude" of an era, social class, or individual, which determines both compositional methods and the significance of iconographic forms. This stage involves synthetic interpretation—a process that uses intuition grounded in familiarity with the essential tendencies of the human mind and the artist's <i>weltanschauung</i> (worldview).	History of Cultural or Symbolic Symptoms, which serves to validate the interpretation by situating symbolic meanings within broader historical and cultural dynamics.

Accordingly, the three sub-focuses of this study align with Panofsky's tripartite framework: pre-iconographic description to identify factual meaning,

iconographic analysis to uncover conventional sense, and iconological interpretation to reveal intrinsic meaning. These analytical stages establish a

comprehensive interpretive foundation for Subandi Giyanto's "Pranata Mangsa: Mangsa 1–12" series. The interpretive framework of this study directly draws upon the concept of *Pranata mangsa* itself, defined as the Javanese seasonal calendar system used primarily by agrarian communities to guide agricultural activities and minimise pest damage according to meteorological conditions (Badrudin, 2014; Wisnubroto, 1995, 1998). Etymologically, "*pranata*" means regulation, while "*mangsa*" refers to time or season, determined by the solar movement (solar calendar). *Pranata mangsa* represents a form of cultural imbued with local wisdom that harmonises human–environment relations based on

mutual understanding, respect, and stewardship (Handayani *et al.*, 2023, pp. 29–30).

This system comprises twelve *mangsa*: *Kasa*, *Karo*, *Katelu*, *Kapat*, *Kalima*, *Kanem*, *Kapitu*, *Kawolu*, *Kasanga*, *Kasadasa*, *Dhesta*, and *Sadha*. Each *mangsa* is described empirically through "*condro*" or "*candraning mangsa*"—metaphorical representations that qualitatively characterise the seasonal conditions (Wisnubroto, 1995). The conceptual framework of *Pranata mangsa* and the analytical design of this study are illustrated in Figure 1 and Figure 2, respectively.

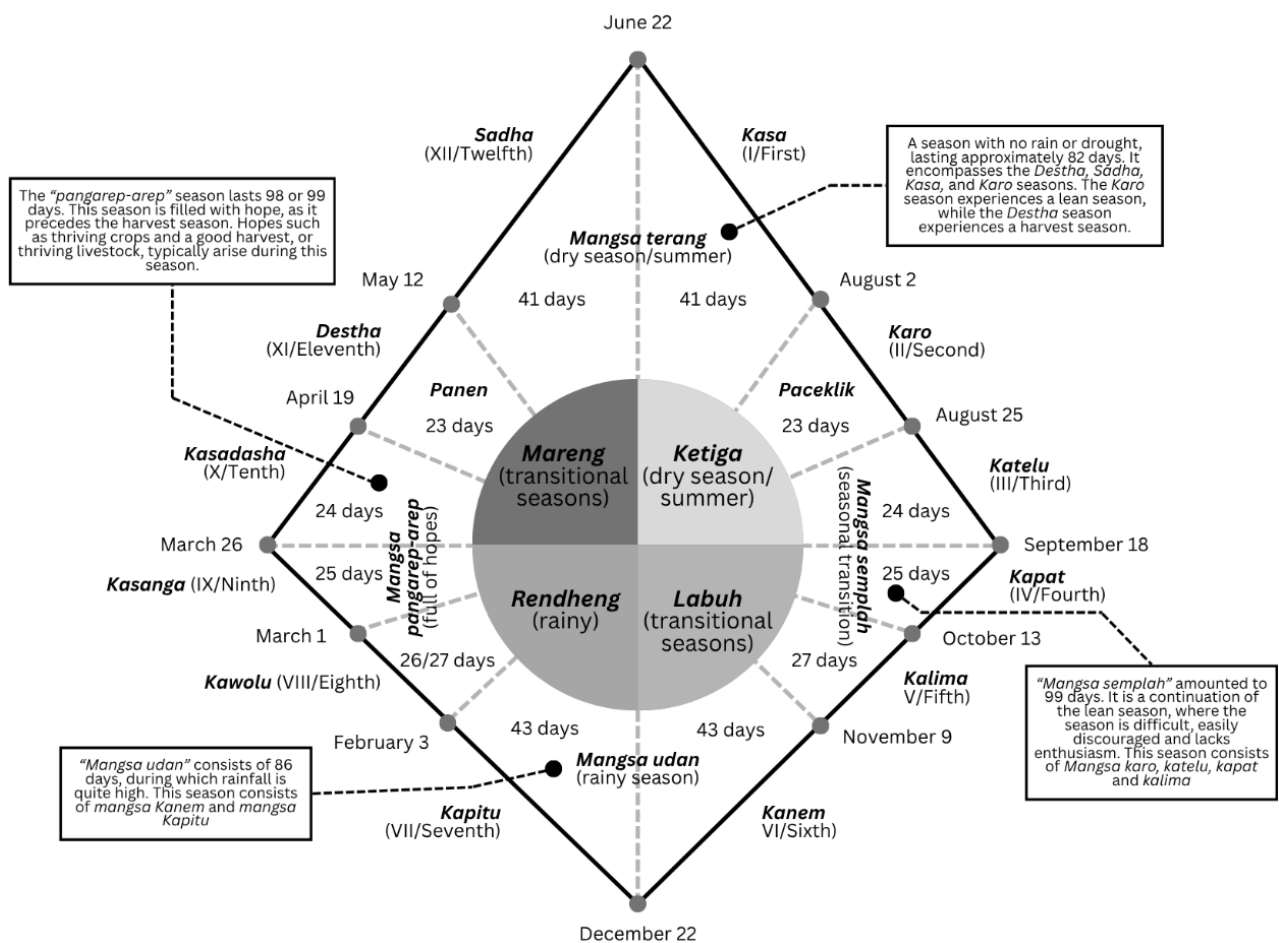


Fig 1. 19th-century *Pranata mangsa*

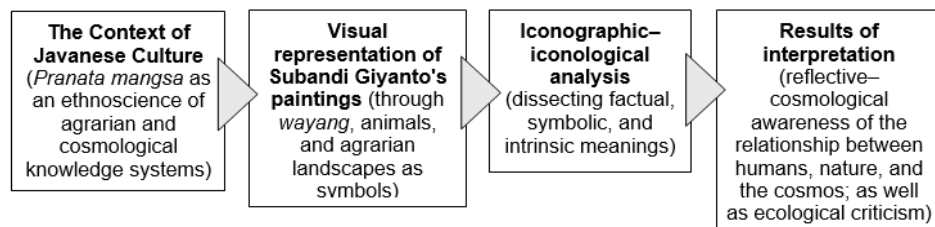


Fig 2. Conceptual framework of the study

3. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Pre-Iconographical Description

The pre-iconographical description stage represents the initial phase of analysis, emphasising the textual aspects of the artwork. At this stage, factual and

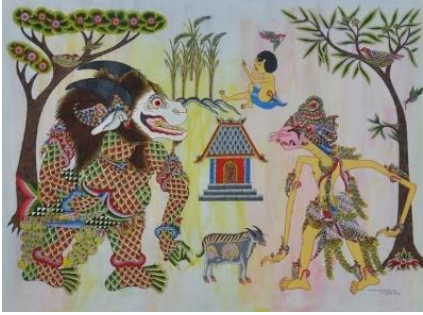
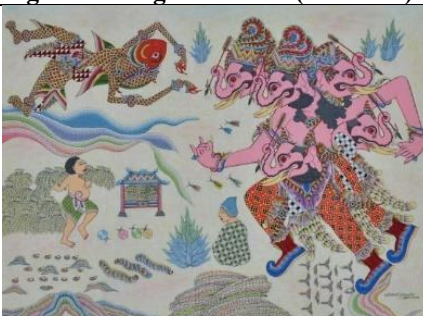
expressional meanings are identified to uncover artistic motifs—primary meaning. This section delineates the observable visual-textual aspects by describing the physical identity and representational content found in

the paintings. Subandi Giyanto's "Pranata Mangsa: Mangsa 1–12" consists of twelve acrylic paintings on canvas (64 × 82 cm). Table 2 identifies and explains the factual and expressional meanings of each painting.

Table 2: Factual and Expressional Meaning of Subandi Giyanto's Pranata Mangsa Paintings

No	Paintings	Factual Meaning	Expressional Meaning
1		A grey-horned giant confronts a slender <i>wayang</i> figure in a dry landscape with mountains, barren trees, and fire below.	A tense, heated atmosphere signifying a life cycle's harsh and destructive beginning.
2		A red giant below faces a <i>wayang</i> figure above; humans carry water as the landscape begins to show moisture.	Transition from drought to fertility, evoking hope and renewal.
3		A five-headed giant and a fish-scaled creature appear amidst humans harvesting <i>palawija</i> in a dry land with bamboo and tubers.	Depicts human resilience and adaptation as nature begins to regenerate.
4		A crawling grey giant beneath a winged deity; farmers plough and plant rice under dark clouds.	The contrast of sky and earth underscores a cosmic struggle between destructive and divine forces.

5		A three-headed lion observed by a wayang figure; butterflies, larvae, and farmers sow seeds in flooded fields.	Warm tones convey vitality, fertility, and nature's vibrancy.
	Fig 7. "Mangsa Kalima" (Fifth)		
6		Male and female wayang figures work in lush fields beneath a rainbow swirl and fruit-bearing trees.	Bright colours evoke productivity, abundance, and the peak of fertility.
	Fig 8. "Mangsa Kanem" (Sixth)		
7		A winged wayang holds scales in the sky; seven giants fall while humans plant crops under the rain.	A dynamic, magical mood suggesting equilibrium between natural forces and human labour.
	Fig 9. "Mangsa Kapitu" (Seventh)		
8		A scorpion-like being on the left, a radiant wayang on the right, humans harvesting with drones and two cats nearby.	Vertical colour rhythm enhances feelings of abundance, growth, and gratitude.
	Fig 10. "Mangsa Kawolu" (Eighth)		
9		Two insect-like creatures and three deities flanked by gamelan players and dancers amid flowering plants and two cats.	Green-blue hues express calm, prosperity, and thankfulness before harvest.
	Fig 11. "Mangsa Kasanga" (Ninth)		

10		A red-green scaled, horned creature faces a pink deity; cows, birds, and homes appear nearby.	Soft colours depict serenity and gratitude for agricultural and livestock fertility.
11		A large elephant with fish and deer motifs; water pours from a vessel as farmers harvest and birds feed chicks.	A warm, peaceful tone symbolising domestic joy and abundant harvest.
12		An enormous elephant-headed wayang strides calmly; farmers carry and dry rice beneath a fish-like being.	Gentle hues suggest calm reflection, symbolising closure and renewal.

Each painting by Subandi Giyanto embodies the empirical characteristics of seasonal changes (*candraning mangsa*) observed through animal behaviour, plant growth, and environmental conditions related to agrarian culture—such as star constellations, wind direction, and rainfall. The metaphorical depictions of each season are recorded in the *Primbon*

Qommarulsyamsi Adammakna (Soembogo, 1990, pp. 18–19) and further studied by Handayani *et al.*, (2023, pp. 40–44); and Sindhunata (2011). Meanwhile, the protective deity, who is the deity figure in the *wayang kulit purwa*, can be explained based on literary sources by Hardjowirogo (1965); and Tofani (2013). Table 3 explains these things.

Table 3: Metaphorical Nature, Constellations, Deities, and Natural Conditions

No	Season (<i>Mangsa</i>)	<i>Candraning Mangsa</i> (Seasonal Metaphor)	Constellation (<i>Lintang</i>)	Protective Deity	Natural Conditions
1	<i>Kasa</i>	<i>Setya mursa ing embanan</i> (a gem slips from its ring)	<i>Sapi Gumarang/ Maheza</i> (Taurus)	Bathara Wisnu	Leaves fall, locusts lay eggs, animals metamorphose; time to plant <i>palawija</i> .
2	<i>Karo</i>	<i>Bantala rengga</i> (cracked earth)	<i>Banheng/ Venus</i>	Bathara Sambu	The soil cracks under drought and heat; trees bloom—plant <i>padi gogo</i> .
3	<i>Katiga</i>	<i>Suta manut ing bapa</i> (child obeys father)	<i>Lumbung/ Crux</i>	Bathara Rudra	Bamboo, tubers, and herbs begin to sprout while wells dry.
4	<i>Kapat</i>	<i>Waspa kumembeng jronin kalbu</i> (tears kept in the heart)	<i>Jaran Dawuk/ Rekata</i>	Bathara Yamadipati	<i>Kapok</i> trees fruit abundantly; birds build nests; dry wells; weed <i>padi gogo</i> .

5	<i>Kalima</i>	<i>Pancuran emas sumawur ing jagad</i> (golden fountain spreads)	<i>Singha/ Scorpio</i>	Bathara Metri	Young tamarind leaves emerge, rains return, springs flow again; farming resumes.
6	<i>Kanem</i>	<i>Rasa mulya kasuciyen</i> (noble purity)	<i>Rara Kenya/ Virgo</i>	Bathara Naya	Fruits ripen, nature greens, and insects proliferate.
7	<i>Kapitu</i>	<i>Wisa kenthir ing maruta</i> (disease borne by wind)	<i>Bima Sekti/ Libra</i>	Bathara Brama	Heavy rains, strong winds, overflowing rivers; rice planting season.
8	<i>Kawolu</i>	<i>Anjrah jronin kayun</i> (strong will within)	<i>Mraceka/ Alpha Centauri</i>	Bathara Chandra	Animal mating season: larvae and beetles appear; floods are common.
9	<i>Kasanga</i>	<i>Wedharing wacana mulya</i> (joyful proclamation)	<i>Danuh/ Pleiades</i>	Bathara Wasana	Cicadas sing; rice turns yellow; lightning is frequent.
10	<i>Kasadasa</i>	<i>Gedeng mineb jronin kalbu</i> (the house rests within)	<i>Makara/ Orion</i>	Bathara Basuki	Animals conceive; birds incubate eggs; rice harvest begins.
11	<i>Dhesta</i>	<i>Setya sinarawedhi</i> (a polished gem)	<i>Kumba/ Crux</i>	Bathara Indra	Rice harvest and bird hatching; villagers perform <i>merti</i> <i>dusun</i> .
12	<i>Sadha</i>	<i>Tirta sah saking sasana</i> (water recedes from its source)	<i>Mina/ Venus</i>	Bathara Ghana	Air becomes dry and cold (<i>bedhiding</i>); <i>Dadap</i> trees bloom.

The twelve paintings collectively reflect the natural rhythms described in *Pranata mangsa*, including constellations (*lintang*) and deities (Bathara) as personifications of benevolent cosmic forces. For instance, the third painting shows a dry landscape with sprouting bamboo and tubers, aligning with the *Katiga* season. In contrast, the twelfth shows farmers storing rice and shivering in cold weather, corresponding to *mangsa Sadha*, characterised by dryness and chill (*bedhiding*).

Formally, all twelve paintings employ the *wayang* aesthetic—figures resembling *wayang kulit purwa* and technically extending the *wayang beber* tradition. *Wayang kulit purwa* is a two-dimensional *wayang kulit* theatre depicting the Ramayana and Mahabharata epics (Widagdo, 2018), mentioned in Kakawin Arjunawiwāha by *mPu* Kanwa during Airlangga's reign (1019–1046 CE) (Awalin, 2019; Soekmono, 1981, p. 56). Meanwhile, *wayang beber*, prominent in Pacitan and Wonosari, portrays Panji tales on scrolls accompanied by narration (Nirwana & Nugroho, 2022; Ramadhani, 2021; Sayid, 1980), as also documented by Ma Huan during his 15th-century visit to Majapahit (Mills, 1970).

Based on this pre-iconographical analysis, this study successfully identifies and describes the factual and expressional elements in Subandi Giyanto's twelve *Pranata Mangsa* paintings. The factual elements—human figures, deities, animals, flora, colour, composition, and agrarian activities—reveal ecological and spiritual continuity in Javanese culture. Expressively, the *wayang purwa* style and narrative sequence, akin to *wayang beber*, affirm a cyclical cosmology reflecting *candraning mangsa*. Thus, the pre-iconographical stage elucidates the primary meaning,

positioning Subandi Giyanto's work as a visual text of harmony between humanity, nature, and the cosmos within Javanese cultural consciousness.

3.2 Iconographical Analysis

Following the pre-iconographical stage, which revealed the factual and expressional meanings of the twelve paintings “*Pranata Mangsa: Mangsa 1–12*” by Subandi Giyanto—demonstrating the continuity between natural phenomena, agrarian activities, and visual-emotional rhythm—the next stage focuses on exploring the conventional meanings embedded within the forms, figures, and artistic motifs. At this iconographical level, the interpretation seeks to uncover the symbols, allegories, and narratives rooted in the system of signs and mythology of *Pranata mangsa* within Javanese cosmology. Each figure—human, animal, deity, or landscape element—is no longer viewed merely as a visual form but as a representation of conceptual and spiritual values deeply embedded in tradition. In this sense, the paintings of *Pranata mangsa* function as a cultural text offering a symbolic lexicon to understand the cycles of seasons, the human–nature relationship, and the balance of the cosmos.

As previously explained, Subandi Giyanto's “*Pranata Mangsa*” paintings stylistically follow the *wayang* tradition, particularly in visual character and narrative technique, referring to *wayang kulit purwa* and *wayang beber*. This is evident in the presence of guardian deities (Bathara) in each *mangsa*, who are not merely mythological figures but embodiments of moral and spiritual virtues—protectors, bestowers of blessings, and moral exemplars (Hidajat, 2018). These divine figures also symbolise the human character (Sidhartani *et al.*, 2023). Consistent with *wayang* conventions, deities and

benevolent figures are positioned on the right side, while antagonistic or destructive forces occupy the left (Darmayanti *et al.*, 2022). The “evil” side does not simply denote immoral behaviour but represents human passions and destructive desires opposing spiritual order. This mirrors *wayang kulit purwa* performances where the Pandawa (protagonists) appear on the right, and the Kurawa (antagonists) on the left, as in the Mahabharata

repertoire. Accordingly, in Subandi Giyanto’s “Pranata Mangsa”, right-side figures represent divine guardians and moral order, while left-side figures signify passion, greed, or chaos. Each symbolises a conventional meaning associated with agrarian life in Javanese culture—derived from oral tradition and classical texts. These meanings are summarised in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Conventional meanings of figures and symbols in the paintings

Mangsa (Season)	Antagonistic Figures & Narratives	Protagonistic Figures & Narratives	Conventional Meaning
Kasa (1st)	Sapi Gumarang, an evil demon-bull who turns benevolent after being defeated by Sulanjana, becomes the guardian of rice plants.	Bathara Wisnu, who wins the Wijayakusuma flower from a bull to marry Dewi Pertiwi, symbolises determination and steadfastness.	Symbolises patience and self-control amid drought as moral prerequisites for nurturing life.
Karo (2nd)	Arjuna cursed a bull for rejecting Sriwitari’s love, later aiding Kresna in defeating Prabu Siwandakala.	Bathara Sambu is an honest, wise mediator in conflict.	Illustrates life’s trials that demand harmony between earthly energy and inner wisdom to sustain natural balance.
Katiga (3rd)	Mintuna is an immortal fish deity living only in freshwater.	Bathara Rudra, a fierce yet virtuous god of transformation.	Reflects the balance of water and fire as regenerative forces of nature, teaching patience in life’s dualities.
Kapat (4th)	Resi Rekatama or Prabu Yuyut, a crab-shaped giant immortal spirit.	Bathara Yamadipati, god of death and guardian of the underworld.	Emphasises awareness of life–death cycles and perseverance in maintaining life amid impermanence.
Kalima (5th)	Singha or Narasingha, Vishnu’s lion-headed incarnation, falls in battle against Narayana.	Bathara Metri is a Javanese-Islamic ceremonial figure symbolising prayer and gratitude.	Harmonises courage and thankfulness, uniting hard work and spirituality in nature’s renewal.
Kanem (6th)	Rara Kenya is a maiden who preserves chastity and understands masculine nature.	Bathara Naya, a royal counsellor who bravely defends truth and justice.	Represents the equilibrium between feminine restraint and masculine moral wisdom to sustain fertility and harmony.
Kapitu (7th)	Palguna (Arjuna) is an expert archer who symbolises compassion.	Bathara Brama, god of fire and commander of celestial armies, is a symbol of resolve.	Balances love and strength in managing creative energy without turning destructive.
Kawolu (8th)	Mraceka/Wrecika, constellation Scorpius, symbolizes maternal patience and love.	Bathara Chandra, the moon god, was reborn after each eclipse.	Symbolises patience and wisdom in facing abundance with serenity and grace.
Kasanga (9th)	An insect-like giant, likely representing a cicada or cricket.	Bathara Warsasana, a brave warrior, fell in Bharatayuda.	Signifies life’s vitality and readiness for cyclical change.
Kasadasa (10th)	Makara, a hybrid creature (elephant, deer, fish, crocodile), is a protective talisman.	Bathara Basuki is a white serpent deity guarding the underworld and symbolising safety.	Asserts moral responsibility in enjoying the earth’s bounty with gratitude and ecological awareness.
Dhesta (11th)	Kumba/Kumbakarna, a righteous giant warrior, is dying in defence of his land.	Bathara Indra, rain and thunder god, riding the sacred elephant Airawata.	Represents the balance between human sacrifice and divine blessing as gratitude for the harvest.
Sadha (12th)	Mintuna, the immortal fish deity living eternally in water.	Bathara Ghana (Ganesha), elephant-headed god of wisdom and intellect.	Depicts ecological awareness and spiritual reflection at the close of life’s cycle.

The twelve Subandi Giyanto's "Pranata Mangsa" paintings thus construct a coherent symbolic system linking mythological figures, deities, and allegorical beings to the agrarian cycle of Javanese life. Each pair of antagonistic and protagonist figures embodies cosmic duality—destructive and regenerative forces harmonised through virtues such as patience, courage, honesty, self-control, and gratitude. These conventional meanings reveal that agrarian life is conceived not merely as economic activity but as a spiritual practice aligned with cosmic rhythm. The paintings become a visual narrative affirming reciprocal relationships among humans, nature, and divine guardians of fertility, where moral equilibrium ensures environmental continuity—just as seasonal balance sustains life.

In Panofsky's historical framework, Subandi Giyanto's "Pranata Mangsa" paintings' symbols reflect both continuity and transformation of Javanese agrarian themes under contemporary conditions. This is evident in figures of deities and mythic beings wearing roller skates (Figures 4–5), the presence of tractors (Figures 6–8), and the use of drones to monitor crops (Figure 10). Such adaptation recalls Islamic–Javanese court literature that interweaves classical Āiwa–Buddha mythology (e.g., Wisnu, Gumarang, Kumbakarna, Ganesha) with indigenous and Islamic motifs, resulting in a syncretic cultural expression. Subandi reinterprets this tradition through a modern visual language, articulating renewed ecological and spiritual consciousness in the 21st century. Thus, ancient themes—fertility, sacrifice, and cosmic balance—are reimagined through contemporary imagery relevant to today's environmental crises, disrupted harmony, and search for ecological ethics. These works are not merely reconstructions of tradition but symbolic reinterpretations reviving Javanese cosmology as a moral compass for human–nature relations in the modern era.

3.3. Iconological Interpretation

The iconological interpretation stage seeks to uncover the deepest meanings of Subandi Giyanto's twelve "Pranata Mangsa" paintings—meanings rooted in Javanese society's worldview and cultural consciousness. At this level, the paintings are not merely representations of mythological figures or natural phenomena, but reflections of the Javanese *weltanschauung*—a worldview that perceives life as a harmonious unity between humanity, nature, and divine power. Through figures such as Gumarang, Arjuna, Ganesha, and Yamadipati, Subandi presents more than mythological tales; he articulates a system of values and ecological wisdom transmitted through generations within the *Pranata mangsa* cosmology.

3.3.1 "Cosmic Awareness" and the Javanese Worldview

For the Javanese, *Pranata mangsa* is not merely an agricultural calendar but a cosmological map structuring the relationship between the microcosm (human) and the macrocosm (the universe). Each figure embodies a cosmic force: deities and mythological beings symbolise natural powers, while the landscape and colour palette are metaphors for life's cyclical rhythm. Subandi revives the Javanese tradition of reading natural signs—winds, rain, blossoms, and animals—as a spiritual language through this approach. The cycle of twelve mangsa represents the human journey: birth, growth, maturity, death, and renewal. Time is understood not linearly but as an eternal circle of harmony.

3.3.2 "Agrarian Spirituality" and Ecological Ethics

The iconological dimension also manifests in how Subandi animates agrarian spirituality. In every mangsa, farmers are depicted not only as labourers but as worshippers expressing gratitude in unity with nature. The first rain, the chirping of cicadas (*tonggeret*), and the rice harvest are not mere physical events, but spiritual signs of cosmic balance. Farming, in this worldview, becomes a spiritual act—an ethical relationship between human beings and the earth. Subandi's paintings deliver a powerful ecological message: prosperity arises only when humans live in rhythm with nature. Nature is not an object of exploitation but a partner in life requiring reverence and moral equilibrium.

Recurring values such as patience, honesty, perseverance, and gratitude reflect the Javanese ecological ethic rooted in agrarian spirituality. From *mangsa Kasa* to *Sadha*, each season teaches a moral lesson: facing drought resiliently, working diligently during abundance, and expressing gratitude at harvest time. This perspective underscores that ecological balance depends on human inner harmony.

3.3.3. Historical Corrective Principle and Modern Context

From a historical-typological standpoint, Subandi Giyanto's work exemplifies Panofsky's corrective principle of historical types. He revives classical symbols not for nostalgic romanticism, but as a critique of modernity. Amid environmental crises and human alienation from nature, Subandi reinterprets Javanese myths to reaffirm the relevance of indigenous wisdom in addressing contemporary challenges. The Hindu deities and mythological beings—once guardians of the seasons—now serve as emblems of renewed ecological consciousness, reminding urban humanity to read nature's signs and restore their spiritual relationship with the environment. In this sense, Subandi Giyanto's "Pranata Mangsa" becomes a visual narrative uniting tradition and modern ecological awareness. Through a contemporary style, Subandi positions himself as a mediator between two worlds: the agrarian-spiritual past and the modern, disoriented present. His paintings function as symbolic actualisations—demonstrating that

Javanese cultural heritage remains alive and relevant in the discourse of global ecology.

3.3.4 Worldview and Symbolic Values

The intrinsic (iconological) meaning of these twelve paintings rests upon the Javanese principle of harmony between humans, nature, and the divine—akin to “*Tri Hita Karana*” in its local form (Hindu – Bali). Each mythological figure embodies specific moral and spiritual virtues: Wisnu and Narasingha represent divine strength and courage; Ganesha and Chandra symbolise wisdom and knowledge; Yamadipati and Kumbakarna remind humanity of life’s limits and moral responsibility; while feminine and aquatic figures express love, patience, and the regenerative power of nature. Collectively, they construct a “cosmos of symbolic values” where nature and humanity mirror each other’s perfection. Through “*Pranata Mangsa*”, Subandi rearticulates the principle of “*hamemayu hayuning bawana*”—preserving the world’s beauty as a moral duty. Every seasonal transition carries a spiritual message: ecological balance can be maintained only when humans recognise themselves as integral to the cosmic cycle.

Iconologically, “*Pranata Mangsa*” paintings manifest a cosmological reflection on the interconnection between humanity, nature, and divine energy. The seasons’ cycles mirror the soul’s inner journey—from endurance amid drought to gratitude in abundance, and finally to awareness of mortality. The work embodies the Javanese *weltanschauung*—a worldview that situates balance and harmony at the heart of ecological wisdom. Subandi Giyanto transforms traditional agrarian values into a contemporary ecological ethic, employing Javanese symbolic language to urge modern society toward reconnection with nature and ancestral spirituality. Thus, *Pranata Mangsa* functions not only as a cultural archive but as a moral-ecological manifesto—an appeal to restore cosmic consciousness and live in harmony with the universe.

4. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that Subandi Giyanto’s “*Pranata Mangsa: Mangsa 1–12*” (2024) constitutes a visual text embodying Javanese ecological and spiritual awareness. First, at the pre-iconographical level, factual elements—human figures, mythological beings, deities, animals, plants, colours, composition, and agrarian activities—corresponded to *candraning mangsa*. These depict the ecological continuity between humans and nature while employing *wayang purwa-beber* aesthetics to structure the visual rhythm of agrarian life. Second, the iconographical analysis revealed conventional meanings through symbols and allegories linked to Javanese cosmology. The antagonistic and protagonistic figures embody cosmic duality—between destructive and restorative forces—harmonised through patience, honesty, self-restraint, and gratitude. Collectively, the

paintings affirm that *Pranata mangsa* is not merely a seasonal guide but a moral-spiritual reflection on maintaining ecological balance through ethical conduct and self-awareness.

Third, at the iconological level, the work radiates the Javanese worldview of “*hamemayu hayuning bawana*”—preserving the world’s harmony and beauty. Subandi reinterprets classical mythology as an ecological critique of modern crises, emphasising the loss of cosmic rhythm in urban life. Through his synthesis of traditional idioms and contemporary visual language, the paintings convey a universal message: true well-being emerges only when humans live in harmony with nature and divine forces. Nevertheless, this research remains limited to visual interpretation and does not address public reception or cross-artist comparisons. Future studies should expand toward intertextual and ecosemiotic dimensions to deepen the iconological understanding of *Pranata Mangsa*-based visual arts within contemporary cultural ecology discourse.

AUTHORS’ CONTRIBUTIONS

Didit Prasetyo Nugroho, as the first author, designed the overall framework of the study and determined the research object, analytical approach, and methods employed. He conducted the pre-iconographical description and provided the primary literary sources. I Nyoman Sedana, as the second author, served as the supervisor, validating the descriptive and analytical results and reviewing the conclusions. As the third author, Aditya Nirwana managed the literature review, conducted the iconographic analysis, and performed the iconological interpretation with the first author. All authors read and approved of the final manuscript.

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