



# CERTIFICATE

No : 43456/UN38.9/DL.01.02/2020

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**Gender Stereotype on Solo Putri Bridal Makeup Java Indonesia**

on International Conference on Research and Academic Community Services  
"Strengthening Innovation to Enhance Revenue for the Better Future"  
hosted by Institute for Research and Community Services Universitas Negeri Surabaya

On October, 3<sup>rd</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> 2020

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# Gender Stereotype on *Solo Putri* Bridal Makeup Java Indonesia

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## ABSTRACT

Bride's performance is the center of attention in *panggih* (The meeting of the bride and groom of the marriage ceremony) procession. Each detail of the makeup is a cultural symbol and full of meaning. Every region in Indonesia has a different and unique bridal makeup. This study aims to describe the look and meaning of Javanese bridal makeup and describe the patriarchal culture manifested in the makeup. This qualitative study invited senior artists, cultural figures, and traditional leaders as the research participants. Data were collected by using interview, observation, and document study technique. Roland Barthes' semiotic theory was used to analyze the obtained data. Results showed that this makeup provided a portrait of a beautiful, loyal, and gentle wife who was careful in managing finances, kept her chaste, and got respect. This study concluded that bridal makeup was one of the artworks and a manifestation of spiritual expressions of the ancestors existing in society's cultures. This study provided a theoretical contribution to various gender biases in patriarchal culture.

**Keywords:** Gender, Bride, Makeup, Culture

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The uniqueness of Indonesian culture is a wealth that cannot be separated from the kingdoms that once existed in the archipelago. One of them is the Surakarta Solo Palace. The legacy of the Surakarta palace inspired the form of bridal make-up which is currently known as the Solo Putri bride and the Solo Basahan bride. Initially, the bridal make-up was a bridal make-up that was used in the Palace Surakarta. Currently, its use has spread to the people of Solo and other areas. Both types of bridal makeup are often used in weddings. However, society does not know its meaning and philosophy.

Solo is a city located in Central Java Province, Indonesia. It is very rich of Javanese culture and is one of the centers for Javanese tradition development. Surakarta or Solo Palace has been the center of Javanese culture for years. In the past, there were various kinds of developed Palace arts and cultures that became the benchmark for the community, especially in Central Java Province [2]. The glory of Solo since the 19th century has stimulated the development of Javanese literature, culinary, fashion, architecture, and other forms of cultures. Solo people communicate in *Mataraman* Javanese dialect (Central Java) in which the dialect is more refined in term of using words in everyday conversation. The typically cultural

forms of Solo City are *keris* (traditionally ceremonial knife) and batik. Batik was declared by UNESCO as a world heritage on October 2, 2009 [3]. Many types of batik are developed in Solo, starting from the design, manufacturing process, packaging, production process, to becoming clothes or other ready-used products. Apart from *keris* and batik, Solo is also known for its *Wayang* (Traditional puppets) and *Solo Putri* bridal makeup.

Bridal makeup as a product of art cannot be separated from the elements of aesthetics, meaning, and philosophy. *Solo Putri* bridal makeup is made up of using a foundation with yellow nuances in accordance with the characteristic of Javanese brides, equipped with a forehead ornament called black *Paes* [4]. Bridal makeup is not just to show the charm of the bride and groom as the center of attention in a wedding ceremony. It is an artefact that depicts the mystical atmosphere of Solo people, culture, and surrounding social life [5]. Its meaning encompasses hope and prayer in living a good household life. The symbols that are ordered in every detail of the makeup are originated from the society's interpretation of the figure of a wife in a marriage.

Damayanti, A., in her study on Solo wedding dress, found that along with the times, the wedding dress penetrated outside the Palace walls. *Solo Putri* wedding

dress currently has a variety of clothing styles, colors, materials, and decorations. There are five types of Solo bridal clothing, but the important and popular one is *Solo Putri* wedding dress, because *kebaya* (Javanese blouse) style can be made by desired its collar, sleeves, and the length [6].

Ihsani, A. N. studied the making of Solo bridal makeup pouches. *Paes* in Solo style bridal makeup consists of four parts namely *gajahan*, *penitis*, clamp, and *godeg*. The making of traditional *Paes* by using standard finger makeup is less symmetrical and the results are not optimal. Alternatively, making *Paes* can be done with proportional techniques. This technique makes it easier for the novice makeup to make *Paes* and it works great [7].

Lestari, M. W. & Lutfiati, D. examined the style of bridal makeup with the characteristic of *Paes* filled with black turns. They found a cosmetic substitute formula for dressing namely applying powdered and solid eyeshadow types as the finishing of bridal *Paes*. For best results, it can use powder eye shadow [8].

Khofifah & Faidah, M. (2013) examined the diversity of makeup forms for Solo brides consisting of yellowish powder, eyebrow makeup, brown and green eye makeup, and forehead makeup. The form of Solo bridal hairdressing is *tulak* up bun and curved bowl. Moreover, the diverse forms of Solo wedding dress include *Sawitan*, *Solo Langenharjan*, *Solo Putri*, *Solo Basahan*, *Solo Kesatrian* and *Solo Takwo* [9].

This study focused more on techniques for making Solo *Paes* and bridal clothing. Specific studies that reveal the meaning of makeup and gender bias in makeup have not been undertaken. This study is important to capture the extent to which gender issues are revealed in cultural artifacts. The objectives of this study were (1) to describe the form and meaning of Solo bridal makeup and (2) to describe the gender bias in the makeup.

## 2. METHOD

This study used descriptive qualitative research. Qualitative research involved observers to know and record the object of study. Qualitative research was based on what was revealed and observed from information sources. The object of this study was Solo bridal makeup in terms of form, meaning, and gender issues. The study was conducted for ten months at Surakarta Palace, the Culture and Tourism Office, the residence of Solo makeup artist. Data were collected by using interview and documentation in the form of pictures, archives, artifacts, and others.

Presentation of data using the Miles and Huberman model consisted of reduction, display, and conclusion [10]. The obtained data were analyzed using Roland Barthes' Semiotics theory. Barthes stated that there were

two kinds of systems of meaning namely denotation and connotation. Denotation was a descriptive and literal level of meaning understood by almost all members of a culture. In connection with connotation, the meaning was created by connecting markers with broader cultural aspects covering beliefs, attitudes, frameworks, and ideologies of a particular social formation [11]. The participants of the study included the Head of Tourism and Culture in Solo palace, cultural observers, and Solo traditionalists.

## 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1. The Form And Meaning Of Solo Bridal Makeup

Bridal makeup was an activity to makeup bride and groom to highlight the existing strengths and cover up the shortcomings in the bride's face. The bridal makeup at Surakarta Palace was chosen based on *pangolahing budi uwoh* (the depths of the soul). This style of makeup forms, colors, and how it is used were based on the inner light [12]. Javanese bridal makeup had a symbolization that was closely related to the Javanese philosophy of life which had a high value [13]. Javanese people believed that the meaning contained in the symbol of bridal makeup should not be arbitrary because it could affect the life of the bride and groom in the future.

The tradition of wedding ceremonies in Javanese customs referred to the arrangements that took place in the Palace, both Yogyakarta and Surakarta Palaces. For Javanese people, these palaces became a source of order and guidance for ceremonies relating to the stages of the life journey, e.g. marriage. Moreover, in Solo, there were five types of bridal clothing, e.g. *Solo Basahan*, *Solo Puteri*, *Solo Langenharjan*, *Solo Taqwa*, and *Solo Mangkunegaran* [14]. The most-often used makeup was *Solo Putri* bridal makeup, which was worn by the daughter of the President of the Republic of Indonesia, Joko Widodo, during her marriage contract.

*Solo Putri's* bridal makeup followed the style of the Kings' daughters in the past. Smooth, clean, and yellowish skin was the result of diligence in caring for beauty, from body scrubs, hair, spice bath, and drinking herbs. *Solo Putri's* bridal makeup had a characteristic yellowish powder. Eyebrows were made with a black eyebrow pencil formed by beautiful arch. On the upper eyelid, it was given a faint green color and the lower eyelid was given a brown color with a light blend. The eye line was made with a black pencil using mascara to thicken, blacken, and curl the lashes. A pretty face looks bright with pink blush and bright lipstick. The beauty of the bride and groom was a symbol of the wife's offering to her husband. In the Palace tradition, where the King had an empress and many concubines, the concubines fought for the love of the King by appearing beautifully and full of charm. Fortunate girls who became King's

concubine were the dream of every parent because they would raise the status of the family [15].

The forehead makeup (*paes*) on the face of the Solo bride was the hallmark of this makeup. The *paes* was not just beautifying the bride. Moreover, there was a philosophical meaning in it. *Solo Putri* makeup required the bride to wear pitch *black Paes*. *Paes* consisted of four forms of *cengkorongan* (indentation) namely *Gajahan*, *Pengapit*, *Penitis*, and *Godeg* [16].

*Gajahan* was the largest indentation in the middle of the forehead. Its shape like a mountain symbolized that a woman would be respected and exalted in social rank. The clamp was a tapered indentation that was on the side of the colony. It was likened to controlling the colony so that they could walk straight ahead so that there were no heavy obstacles in living life and were able to distinguish good and bad. The dropper was on the side of the clamp with a smaller indentation. It symbolized that everything must be purposeful and effective, such as in making household budgets and being able to choose the right one. *Godeg* was a curve that resembled a side burn. This shape symbolized the hope that the bride and groom could act wisely and had offspring to continue life. In the form of *Paes Solo*, all the lower edges point towards the tip of the nose (*wandha luruh*), which meant that the bride had a gentle and humble nature.

*Solo Putri* bridal bun was called *Bangun Tulak* (resisting disaster). *Bangun Tulak* bun was used by the empress or the princess. It was a symbol of rejecting the logs, so that the household was expected to be away from danger and bad luck. There were several important decorations to decorate the bun namely *cunduk mentul*, *Bros*, *Sintingan*, and *Tibo Dada*. There were 7 pieces of *Cunduk mentul* (decoration on the head) and were mounted like a fan facing forward. This symbolized the hope that married life would always be illuminated by the sun. The number that was paired up was always an odd number as a sign of God's greatness. Seven fruits were a symbol of help, because seven in Javanese was called "*pitu*", which was believed to be a symbol of "*pitulungan*" (help), getting help from God [17].

*Sintingan* (jasmine buds with ivory flower) was pinned to the left side of the bun right behind the ear and extended only to the bride's shoulders. It symbolized loyalty to your husband.

*Tibo dada* (jasmine flower buds that hang from the head, through the chest, to the waist of the bride). It symbolized honesty and responsibility for women. *Keket* was used over the bun as the boundary between real hair and the bun (extra hair) [18]. This pattern makes the flower appeared circular and made along the width of the bun to be worn. Comb or *keket* was a symbol of an obedient wife to her husband. The cover of *Sanggul* (additional hair) was a jasmine with a series of *kawung* to cover part or all of the bun. Meanwhile, in *Solo Putri*, the

cover only covered part of the bun. For an elegant look, the bride and groom were equipped with accessories, such as earlobes (ornaments on the right and left ears), necklaces, bracelets, and rings.

The dress was a classic long *kebaya* (Javanese blouse) made of velvet with a peacock motif combined with *jarik* (bottom shirt). The motif of *Jarik* was *Sido Mukti* and *Sido Asih*. *Sido asih* was a symbol that the bride and groom must love and respect each other [19]. Behind the clothes and the fingers were stuck with *stagen* (belly binder). *Stagen* was a symbol of chastity and a wife who maintained her husband's honor.

### 3.2. Gender Stereotypes In Solo Putri Bridal Makeup

The differences in roles, functions, and attitudes between men and women in the context of works of art were tied to the views and cultural values of the community. Makeup as a cultural product, in its various manifestations, was always present in the form of symbols that aesthetically expressed the cultural values of society [20]. In a society with strong patriarchal values, art works would be displayed by positioning women and femininity as the objects. Artwork was a cultural expression that aesthetically-symbolically voiced or conveyed the reality of the natural, social, and cultural conditions of a society in which art appeared.

The depiction of women reflected the cultural values of male domination over women. Symbols formed in depictions with a meaning to emphasize the subordinate position of women over men. Stereotypes in the context of gender were labeling given to men and women with reference to existing biological characteristics and natural differences [21]. Men with their biological characteristics and traits were always identified with an instrumental orientation namely being active, self-assertion, protector, and leader. Meanwhile, women with biological characteristics were identified with emotional traits such as being passive, making sacrifices for the needs of others, dependence, love givers, and caregivers.

The gender stereotypes in *Solo Putri* bridal makeup were described in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Gender Stereotypes Of Solo Bridal Makeup

Forms	Meaning	Gender Stereotypes
Makeup lips, eyelids, eyebrows.	Beautiful like an angel. Women are required to look beautiful and perfect.	The value of women in terms of beauty was to please their husbands
<i>Paes</i> (all the lower edges point to the tip of the nose)	A wife should have a gentle and humble characteris.	Imaging of women with tenderness
<i>Penitis</i> (Dropper)	Everything had to be purposeful	Labeling women as family treasurers who are

	and effective, such as making a household budget and being able to choose the right one.	required to manage finances effectively and economically
<i>Godeg</i>	Wife who could give offspring	Women's reproductive responsibility
<i>Keket (Comb)</i>	Loyalty of Husband	The demands of loyalty are placed on the wife, not on the married couple
<i>Stagen (The Gridle)</i>	Maintaining purity and honor	The depiction of a female figure who maintains honor

A stereotype could be described as a picture in a person's head and consisted of a number of traits and expectations applied to a group. This picture was actually inaccurate, because stereotypes were generalizations about traits that were considered to be possessed by a certain gender without the need to be supported by objective facts. In a patriarchal society, women were labeled emotionally while men were rational. In other words, the views were gentle woman and strong man. Ultimately, stereotypes gave direction to a person's behavior because they often determined how a person views a group or how a person interacted with others.

Symbolization of women in cultural forms appeared in various forms such as food that was labeled as a specific gender characteristic [22]. The color of the clothes, where the groom wore black and the woman was dressed in white. Black symbolized assertiveness and toughness and white symbolized purity and tenderness [23].

Gender bias stereotypes could be detrimental and led to injustice. Because they were negative, gender stereotypes could become burdensome for both men and women. In the context of this study, the labeling of women as symbolized in the details of their makeup was a form of submission to their husbands. This concept was a characteristic of Palace culture. Patriarchal culture in the Palace environment was reflected in the appearance of bridal makeup by depicting a gentle woman with full of love.

**4. CONCLUSION**

In general, this makeup provides a portrait of a wife who is beautiful, gentle, careful in managing finances, loyal, keeping her chaste, respectful, and being able to give offspring. This study concluded that bridal makeup was one of the artworks and spiritual expressions of the ancestors that expressed society's culture. The findings of this study provide a theoretical contribution to gender bias in various forms in patriarchal culture.

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