

An Axiological Study of *Tumpal* Batik Motif and Its Relevance to the Character Education

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Abstract—Triangle is one of the geometry forms that has developed in various fields such as in the field of architecture, even in the field of fashion such as fabric motifs. Batik is one of the Indonesian cultures originating from Javanese culture. Batik has motifs based on the triangle geometry. One of them is called the *tumpal* motif. According to the Indonesian Mode Dictionary, the term *tumpal* means "cloth head" consisting of a row of triangles, both single and facing each other. The *tumpal* motif can be found not only in batik, but also in the weaving design. *Tumpal* stores meanings and symbols as a question as to why a triangular geometry is formed, that is, the motif of a bald batik cloth. The birth of the *tumpal* motif was originated in the kingdom. The meaning in the *tumpal* triangle motif is interpreted as divinity, knowledge, and power.

Keywords—batik, motifs, pedals, education, character, character education

I. INTRODUCTION

The objectives of an axiology are explore the nature and take benefits in terms of knowledge. An axiology is a term derived from the Greek word *axios* that means value and *logos* that means theory or science. Thus, an axiology is a theory of values in various forms.

In the *Kamus Bahasa Indonesia* (Dictionary of Indonesian Language), an axiology is the use of science for human life and its special ethical values. At certain stages sometimes science must be adapted to the cultural and moral values of a society, so that the value of the usefulness of science can be felt by the community in their efforts to improve shared prosperity. In Kattsoff's view [1], axiology is science that investigates the nature of values generally viewed from a philosophical perspective.

Symbols are interpreted on the basis of the physical form of a sign of meaning. Symbols are sometimes difficult or often unreachable, so that the discussion of symbols becomes arbitrary as in [2]. His understanding becomes increasingly anachronistic when it deals with the existence of relations between "the nature of the Javanese people", "the philosophy of the Javanese people", "the elements of life" and the elements of "batik". As if the elements of "ornament" and "symbol" and "meaning" seem to justify the existence of a relation of the hindusistic concept called "*triloka*". Ahimsa-putra emphasize that a scheme of symbols does not conduct structural studies, namely limited aspects or surface aspects [3].

In Durkheim's thinking [4], the position of "batik" is an object that is functional in the Javanese cultural environment. Pujianto reveals that "batik" is an example of description that has functions, as follows:

The reasonable motifs do not appear (there are all types of batik clothes), but only appear on the cloth both in terms of the *Dodot bangun-tulak* (fashion patterns) and a combination of golden *prada*. This type of batik is often used by the King for grand ceremonies, and Bedhaya dance (page 133).

Based on the gamabali.com, the tapered triangle shape can be a signpost, interpreted as achieving the goal. In spirituality, this form has been used to represent self-knowledge, and enlightenment. The triangle *Yantra* can be stable if it is in the basic shape (a sitting position). Wikipedia notes that the mystical *Yantra* is the basic forms abound in the universe. Citing the page gamabali.com, *Yantra* is a pattern used for worship. The word *Yantra* means a tool or facility; specifically used by *Yogis* or Brahmins to meditate.

The shapes and patterns commonly used in *Yantra* consist of boxes, triangles, circles and flower patterns. *Shatkona* (satkona) (a sanskrit name for hexagram) consisting of a balance between an upward triangle that, according to Tantra, shows energies, or more specific actions and services (*sewa*). In addition, it can show spiritual aspirations, elements of fire, or Shiva. This represents the *substratumstatis cosmos*; a triangle that shows spiritual knowledge, and it can show creative knowledge of the universe, fecundity, elements of water, or *shakti*.

A triangle represents dynamic pressure, action and aggression [5]. It has dynamic, stable and unstable energy and strength that can show both conflict and optimal strengths. Triangles are balanced and become symbols for law, science and religion [6]. Triangles show movements based on where they are headed. Triangles can be used to provide common themes such as pyramids, arrows and symbols. Spiritually, they represent the religious trinity, self-discovery and revelation.

In the rachnasandika.com, *tumpal* is defined as a type of ornament of geometric fields, which are triangular fields. In the history of its development, this *tumpal* decorative motif spreads evenly both architectural, textured and woven. The *tumpal* motif can be found in the decorative body, typical of coastal batik that distinguishes it from batik from the palace.

The *tumpal* motif is one of the cultures absorbed from the Indian culture.

According to kkbi.wev.id, *tumpal* is a noun that has the meaning of a batik motif with a painting of three stripes that are lined up (in a sarong and so on). In terms of exoticism, the *tumpal* of East Javanese batik is a unique form of the general public or batik folklore according to the book.

Therefore this paper presents an axiological study of *tumpal* batik motif and its relevance to the character education.

The rest of this paper is organized as follow: Section II describes about history of *tumpal* motive. Section III describes wearers in the past. Finally Section IV concludes this work.

II. THE HISTORY OF *TUMPAL* MOTIVE

From prehistory to classical times, *tumpal* decorative motifs have magical functions or symbolic meanings, according to the concept of the unity of the cosmos, microcosm (human), macrocosm (universe), and metacosmos ('other' natures), or can be depictions of immanent or mundane activities towards the transcendence or divinity.

Even Sunan Paku Buwana III in 1769 issued a ban on certain batik, as stated by Soedjoko and quoted by Amri Yahya [7], as follows:

Ana dene kang arupa jejarit kang kalebu ing laranganingsung: Batik Sawat lan batik parang rusak, batik cumangkiri kang calacep, modang, bangun-tulak, lenga-teleng, daragam lan tumpal. Anadene cumangkirang ingkan acalacap lung-lunganutawa kekembangan, ingkang ingsun kawenangaken pepatih ingsun lan sentaningsun, kawulaningsun Wedana.

The items in the form of long cloth (*jarit*) are banned by the king: Sawat batik, and broken machete batik, cumangkiri batik commonly called *calacep*, *modang*, *bangun-tulak*, *lenga-teleng*, *daragam*, and *tumpal*. The cumangkirang batik, which is also called *acalacep* takes the form of lung (*sulur*) or *kekembangan* (flowers), which the *patih*, and the court, Wedana allow to wear.

Tumpal was born due to the results of the Indian textual cultural inspiration. Harmen C. Veldhuisen in his book *Dutch Batik* mentions that around the 16th century Dutch merchant ships carried Indian fabrics from the Coromandel coast (see in Figure 1). The fabrics are known as *Serasah*, *Kumitir*, *Orembagi* in the Javanese regions. The distinctive features of these fabrics are that they have decorative motifs such as limiting triangles on the front and back of the fabrics. The cloth motif on the litter fabric is like the motif as known today.

For people who believe it, the *tumpal* batik motif has a repellent meaning because of the pointed triangle motif that symbolizes as the crocodile's teeth. While today, in general, *tumpal* decorative motifs have shifted functions, which were originally magical-symbolic, and now they are more likely to fulfill the sense of beauty according to the functions of many ornaments. The *tumpal* decorative motifs can commonly be found in ethnic cultures everywhere. The basic form of *tumpal* is a triangle as its development undergoes a stylization

or good changes combined with the forms of flora and fauna or a combination of both.



Fig. 1. Serasa cloth from India traded in the Archipelago. Seen in Fig. 1. The motifs surround the main motif shaped like a *tumpal*. (Source: Kompasiana.com)

III. *TUMPAL* WEARERS IN THE PAST

In ancient times, the use of a *tumpal* motif was distinguished from the gender status of its wearers. For example, a long cloth (*jarit*), or a *tumpal* motif is placed on the back for male wearers. While the location of *tumpal* is in the front part for female wearers (see Figure 2).



Fig. 2. A portrait of two men in Java at the colonial time, the man on the right wore a patterned *tumpal* batik (Source: Phesolo.wordpress.com and KITLV.ni)



Fig. 3. The *tumpal* batik motif in the middle position of coastal batik. (Source: batikplatform.com)

Based on Figure 3 above, the *tumpal* laying on a piece of batik takes different versions, namely those on the left and right sides of the fabric, some drawn in the middle of the fabric, and some on the upper and lower sides of the fabric.

The batik motif in the modern era and its relevance to the character education.

Based on the etymology and terminology, batik is a series of words. For example, *mbat* in Javanese is interpreted as *ngembat* or throw many times, whereas *tik* is derived from the word *dot*. Thus, batik means throwing dots repeatedly on the fabric. Finally, the shapes of the dots coincide with a line shape. According to arts, lines are a collection of points. Another argument is that batik originates from a combination of two *amba* Javanese words, which mean *writing* and *a dot*.

In the past, ornamental artwork was a written work of arts because some batiks were made similar to writing or *menyunging* techniques. Therefore, the term batik is more or less parallel to writing, painting or ornamental art. At the beginning of its existence, batik motifs were formed from meaningful symbols, which were traditionally Javanese, Islamic, Hinduism, Buddhism. In its development, batik was enriched by other cultural nuances such as China and modern Europe.

The development of batik was influenced by Hinduism, for example, through the *kawung* motif. In this sense, Amri Yahya views that at a glance there is a connection between the *kawung* motifs used by Hindu statues on Sinjangan.

Nyai Kushardjanti reveals that batik art is an example of conceptual truth of Tro Kon, namely the theory of cultural development as expressed by Ki Hadjar Dewantara in that a sustainable cultural development must be open to other cultures for the sake of cultural continuity and integrated world culture, but better still, it must be concentric in its traditional culture, so that it has a personality amid the world culture.

Batik is currently developing not only as a long cloth (*jarit*) that only covers the waist to the ankles. As an original piece of cloth, batik worn as a waist cover to ankles begins developing into daily clothing, offices and even other official events. In fact, it is not uncommon that batik is a wall display,

popularly known as batik painting. Wooden souvenirs, footwear or sandals are designed batik artistically.

The notions in the book *Batik: Warisan Adiluhung Nusantara* [8] howa spectrum of diverse visual expressions because the fabric has long been one of the most important cultural expressions of Javanese society, especially in the context of *adati*, for example, clothing and supporting ceremonies. Batik is also a commodity in the form of basic materials for a variety of need-it-right-now fashions, and complementary elements of the interior. In terms of education, batik is presented in the curriculum as one of the choices in the textile and handicraft space. Batik is recognized as an expression of traditional culture. Students can appreciate, be creative, become batik designers or engage in traditional batik arts. Batik is a product that follows the dynamics of modern tastes.

According to Hajar in [9]., through arts, mental functions will be developed, such as freedom of thoughts, sharpness of taste, and strong analytical abilities. Art education trains moral and mental awareness through aesthetic senses. Through this learning process, students are expected to see an object or artwork both naturally and artificially.

Nowadays, batik is in line with other modern fabrics that have succeeded in international tastes. Art education acts as a process of students' formation that has an aesthetic soul toward the objects that students see. Indonesia has a variety of characters to shape the identity of each individual. One of these characters is religiosity. In the Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, the government commitment to build the character education is addressed in article 3 that states, "National education functions to develop capabilities and shape dignified national character and civilization in order to educate the life of the nation."

The development of cultural education and national character includes 18 core values, as follows:

- Religious
- Honest
- Tolerance
- Discipline
- Hard work
- Creative
- Independence
- Democratic
- Curiosity
- National spirit
- Love the country
- Appreciate achievements
- Friendly and communicative
- Love peace
- Love reading
- Care for the environment
- Care for society
- Responsibility

The *tumpal* batik motif has a triangular shape that can be interpreted as a balanced symbol for law, science and religion. The shapes and patterns commonly used in Yantra include boxes, triangles, circles and flower patterns. Shatkona

(satkona) (sanskrit name for hexagram) consists of a balance between upward triangles that, according to Tantra, shows energy or more specific actions and services (sewa). It shows spiritual aspirations, elements of fire, or Shiva. This also represents the *substratumstatis cosmos*, a triangle that shows spiritual knowledge. It also shows creative knowledge of the universe, fecundity, elements of water, or *shakti*.

The use of *tumpal* may vary, most of which is still placed in the middle to make it look symmetrical. The existence of batik is not only limited in Indonesia, but also appreciated by foreign countries. Indonesian culture is not static, but it is always in the dynamics in accordance with the development of the environment and era as a form of modernity.

IV. CONCLUSION

In its development, the *tumpal* batik motif was born because of the existence of social interactions between traders and trade that occurred in Indonesia, provoked and gave rise to ideas, and ideals and imaginations as visualized in cloth media which are initially limited to the royal circles. Like the concept of philosophy, it is also applied for the art of self-asking, namely human efforts to gain understandings and knowledge about life as a whole by utilizing the ability of feeling and carcass.

The *tumpal* batik motif is based on geometric shapes, namely triangles. It can represent the religious trinity. The triangle can show self-discovery and revelation. In its distribution, the motif of *tumpal* is spread in the circle of the royal family in Java. In Indonesia alone, triangular motifs such as *tumpal* can be found in woven fabrics. As time goes by, *tumpal* motifs can be found widely and not limited to certain people presented not only in the form of cloth, but also accessories or ornaments for display. Whether this is a change, a shift, or a development of culture or not, it is expected that batik motifs, and other related things can be good tools for progress and science, humans and character education as found in curriculum ideals.

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