

7 ICLEHI 2017-007 Nanang Rizali

## **The Islamic Influences in Nusantara Batik**

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### **Abstract**

Batik today has grown in the archipelago and created a variety of batik. Each region has its own characteristics as a result of contact with the local culture. Batik originally was the clothes of the Muslim sultans in Mataram. Inside batik already contained elements of Islam, which does not describe the animals animate with styled style. But after coming out of the palace, batik also met with other Islamic influences in various places in the archipelago. This study aims to reveal the influence of Islam in batik motifs outside the palace of Mataram-Java. The method used is descriptive interpretive method. Various motives influenced by Islam are interpreted in relation to Islamic values. The location of this research took from various sites such as Solo, Pekalongan, Jambi, and Bengkulu.

Research shows that there is influence of local culture and Islamic culture in batik. Batik from Jambi and besurek batik from Bengkulu are very large influence of Islam in them. The value of Islam has become a reference in batik. The various Islamic references are: (1) does not describe living things with real, (2) uses Qur'an verses as a source of inspiration, (3) contains hope and prayers on those motives. Society that develops Islamic values in batik motif is Muslim society. In this society Islam is expressed in batik motifs adapted to Islamic values. Batik is also used as a means of da'wah (Islamic sending) and the expression of beauty. Islamic culture in batik motif has also mixed with local culture. Local flora and fauna such as fish, scales, shrimp, plants, and grasses has become the cornerstone of the batik. Batik then has a new value with new meaning. For example, the machete motif in the palace becomes a sacred motif, within the Muslim community the motif is modified so that it is not sacred and given a new meaning. If in the palace the motive is only for the king, then among Islamic society the motive becomes free to use as cover of *aura*.

*Keywords:* Batik, Islam, motive, and influence

### **Introduction**

The Indonesian nation is known for its rich diversity of cultures with the background of the creation and manufacture of traditional textiles among them is batik. In essence batik as a cultural artwork tradition admiration by the nations in the world, long before the cultural heritage set by UNESCO. Since the early 8th century AD, batik as an ancestral heritage which became known as Local genius. As according to Koentjaraningrat that batik is one of the traditional Indonesian Textile identities. The art of crafts especially the art of weaving, the art of batik, the art of ikat (other kind in coloring textile) and the art of Indonesian textiles is a branch of art that has been rooted in Indonesian culture since long, the high quality of its beauty can accentuate Indonesian characteristic (Koentjaraningrat, 1985.16).

The visual manifestation of batik is not only beautiful, but merges with the beauty of morals and customs. In classical batik for example there are symbols or signs that can

not be understood icon, because in which contained symbols of belief, philosophy and conception of harmony alive. In Java batik activities grow and flourish and produce a variety of batik-rich motifs and colors. That's why the early development of batik comes from the Keraton Yogyakarta and Surakarta environment full of meaning, subtle and very careful in. In development there is a difference between the type of batik Yogyakarta and Surakarta with batik from the north coast of Java. It shows that batik Nusantara has a variety of patterns, such as we found in Pekalongan, Lasem, Madura, and Cirebon with each characteristic.

Based on its position, Nusantara is strategically located in crossroads of trade traffic and cultural paths abroad. The presence of Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam that experienced the process of acculturation with local cultural traditions has given birth to a variety of cultural styles. The relationship between religions and local culture seems to have given various possibilities such as a culture based on religious values. This will lead to new ideas and understandings that impact social change, such as in Bali. Because a religious norm can serve as a new guideline for believers, in the form of beliefs, rules and judgments in addition to being able to direct in work and work even able to become a binder of his community.

Some theories explain that the development of Islam in the archipelago is very diverse, as according to the historian of the entry of Islam through trade routes to the region of Aceh from the Arab century I H. Another source states that Islam came to the archipelago brought by Indian traders in the 7th century, and other opinions Brought by Muslim da'i (sender) from Quang Zho and Campa. Another opinion states that the spread and development of Islam occurred since the 13th century in North Aceh conducted by traders from India. Thus it can be assumed that the first formation of Islamic culture in the archipelago occurred in the trading center that is in coastal areas. The local cultural traditions that developed from prehistoric times earned a 'touch' of Islamic values. Thus, giving birth to the art of culture that breathes Islam without loss of identity and personality of local culture included in batik art.

### **The Development of Islam Culture and Value**

With the entry of Islam to the archipelago has contributed in the development of various aspects of community life. This is based on Islamic teachings not only governing the relationship between man and God, but directing and shaping the view of life, the tradition of cultural values. One of the main teachings of Islam is morality that can affect attitudes, behaviors, activities and work ethics either individually or in groups. Islam teaches that a person's deed is judged by the root of his intention, while work is determined by the level of one's knowledge, skills and attitude. For a Muslim the task of his life is worship in the widest sense of the word, as for the purpose of his life only to reach the mercy of God. Therefore his life function is as Khalifah (representative of God) on earth, on the basis of the benefit and welfare of mankind (Rizali, 2014: 5).

Since the spread of Islamic teachings in the archipelago, the binding on behalf of religious equality embraced by local custom has given birth to a new identity, namely as a 'brother of one religion'. In its development the Muslim community in Nusantara continues the wealth of old tradition high value. One of them in the creation of traditional textiles (batik). As a symbol of the form of traditional batik works produced and then given a meaning that is Islamic. In this connection the symbol can be interpreted as a particular form that contains the intent of the meaning it represents. Although in its embodiment there is no resemblance or to find the rule between the shape of the sign and the sense it contains is solely as arbitration.

One symbolic form in the field of traditional batik brings Islamic values. The important era in the relationship of cultural traditions and art with elements of Islam in the archipelago is a transition from the Hindu era, especially in the time of Majapahit. Decorative ornamental art and applied motifs have evolved according to the then-anthropomorphic and iconographic references that are rich in symbolic values. In the next development is the period of Islam (Mataram) of the 16th century there is adjustment of the concept of 'visual language', which is a symbolic form of the breath and in harmony with the teachings of Islam. In batik for example, although there is a value of symbols derived from the old tradition (Hindu) is also found decoration that is the nature of Islam. Like the motifs of calligraphy and arabesque (arabesque) in Cirebon batik or geometric shape resembles Arabic letters (Karting, 1989: 7).

The link between art and Islam is related to the interrelatedness of various worldly human activities (Muamalah). The result of their interaction has resulted in an art that is imbued and colored by the teachings of Islam. In Islam there are no binding rules in art, as mentioned in Al-Hadith that 'your worldly affairs are your own responsibility.'. Man is given freedom in all his worldly affairs including the art world. As long as it does not deviate and hurt the rules and norms that applies in Islam. Yet the identity of Islamic art can be described as follows: 'Islamic art is the result of the embodiment of oneness in the field of diversity that reflects Divine Oneness, reliance on the One, the world's intercessions and the positive qualities of the existence of the cosmos or beings as revealed by Allah in Al -Qur'an (An Nasr, 1993: 18).

As is the case in some other Islamic countries in the archipelago there is cultural interaction between local cultural traditions and Islamic values. Some of the ornamental art in the Hindu period (Majapahit) which is then processed into the principles of understanding the breath of Islam. If the existence of Islamic visual art is considered a physical dimension, it will be related to the idea and social system that develops in pre-Islam societies that favor ceremonies. Therefore, the guardian or cleric engineered the birth ceremony, the turn of time (maulud, Shawwal) or drum that is processed and packed into Islamic understanding. Since pre Islamic generally traditional textiles Nusantara considered to have magical powers, besides the tradition of belief in the spirit of the supernatural and the ancestors who are considered to contain spiritual meaning and religious values magic. Since pre-history era, ancestors in the archipelago region has artistic skills and skills down- Hereditary. This is closely related to the archipelago tradition mentioned in the manuscript Sang Hang Sikakanda ing Karesian, namely various skills such as painters or batik experts. Thus, the Indonesian bag has produced unique characteristics in each of his artworks. As a result of the creation of the nation, batik has its own meaning related to tradition, prevailing norms, behavior and belief in the society.

As reflected in the decorative batik that developed in the Keraton Yogyakarta and Surakarta as well as among nobles (nobles). But somewhat different from the batik that developed in the northern coastal areas of Java are more diverse in the motives and colors. Some types of batik Keraton tends to be bound by the rules agreed by the royal family. Among the rules that are maintained include the layout of decoration and color arrangement, the name of the pattern, process and function life. In the palace batik almost all worn by kraton relatives, especially on traditional ceremonies. Thus historically traditional batik Nusantara has a symbolic meaning in the embodiment. In contrast to the type of batik that develops in the northern coastal region of Java grows dynamically and quickly changes with a variety of patterns. In general the other batik kind is merchandise that rests on changes in consumer demand.

Although both types of batik is finally experiencing mutual influence influence, because there is inter-state trade contacts region. Since Islamic presence in the archipelago

'coloring' elements of traditional batik ornaments, namely batik art that has been achieved in the Hindu era, both technical and aesthetically. At the time of Islam developed and updated with new elements. In general, the variety of ornaments that developed during the pre Islamic period is still maintained as long as it does not conflict with Islamic values, so there is no noticeable difference. One distinguishing feature is the presence of decorative Arabic calligraphy, especially on Jambi and Cirebon batik. In connection with this, a source states that the center of the spread of Islam which still makes Arabic calligraphic batik cloth is the area of Cirebon (Djoemana, 1990: 18). The similarities and differences in the aesthetic form of traditional batik in the northern coastal areas of Jambi, Cirebon, Pekalongan, Tuban and Tanjungbumi not necessarily meaning that there is continuity their symbolic meanings.

### **Islamic Influences in Nusantara Batik**

Islamic batik is a physical manifestation of a creative process and inner sensitivity (spiritual discipline). As an expressive symbol of decoration and color contains the idea of symbolic and philosophical because it has Islamic values. Based on the rationale (concept) which underlies his creation, his batik form is a work of art as an expression of gratitude and dhikr and Rakhmatan lil'alamin. Visually the wide variety is the elements of the form that are in harmony and in accordance with Islamic values. Some decorations such as flora, fauna, geometric and natural objects have been known since the pre Islamic era in accordance with the laws of nature (Sunatullah).

Decorative variety is used as an element of batik motif, although with different forms and meanings in each region. Among city decorative batik are distinctively Islamic form of Arabic calligraphy and Islamic mythology is a symbolic meaning. There are three kinds of batik meaning as follows; first, the new symbolic meaning of Arabic calligraphy with the writing of Syahadat meaning testimony on Jambi batik, and the form of sentence Toyibah, which means victory in Cirebon batik. Secondly, the symbolic food remains as it was in pre-Islamic times, such as most ornamental flora, fauna, geometric nature of things and others. Because it's meaning is not contrary to Islamic values and is considered not to lead to the destruction of Qaida or shirk. Third, symbolic meanings that change as geometric ornament with the tumpal shape which originally meant shoot bamboo shoots into the sharpness of Jambi batik. In addition, decorative geometric shape that originally meaningful tumpal trident into regularity in Cirebon batik and decorative meaningful tumpal repellent reinforcements into jagat raya (universe) on Pekalongan. Some batik ornamentation changed symbolic meaning is intended to conform to the Islamic value system that is meaningful on the conception of monotheism.

The structure and values of Islam are based on intent which means intent, will or desire to do something over or for God. In determining the value of the quality of intention used criteria, the highest sincerity and riya '(arrogant) to the lowest. To determine the legal value used five criteria, namely mandatory, circumcision, mubah, makruh and haram. Then increased in value qonaat, the attitude of heart for all the rich given his good luck, then tawadhu is a humble attitude on the grace given him and submissive attitude completely to Him in all matters after the maximum effort (trust).

These three values will form the value of morality, namely attitude, behavior, and good deeds and true Qaida value which means belief, belief or faith in the heart, expressed orally and practiced in deeds (behavior). The highlight of the value of goodwill, qonaat, tawadhu, trust, morality and Qaida is tawhid (oneness of Allah), namely inner and outer activities, estuaries throughout the steps and heart rate a Muslim. These values embodied in the concept of Tawheed, Aqeedah and morality has been a refinement and guide to the positive values of the local archipelago's cultural system and tradition. Philosophically

these values are the dimensions of the shahada sentence that accompanies every step of life of Muslim batik craftsmen.

Traditional batik works that breathe Islam is a crystallization of the spiritual (breath) of Islam that conveys spiritual, and essential Islamic teachings through language. Such as the variety of Arabic calligraphy on batik Jambi and Cirebon means a visual form of God's nature as the Creator of the Holy Scriptures. At Tanjung Bumi (Madura) batik, the floral decoration has the meaning of growth and the life of a celestial plant. Similarly, batik Pekalongan and Tuban there is a geometric ornament that means a regular pattern, fixed and sure as a portrayal of universe nature the different colors in batik is meaningful as a source of light or light and life of the power of God is Islam breath. Batik archipelago has become a legacy that continued the tradition of pre-Islamic batik to revive the power of beauty, the inner dimension of Islam and spirituality. It proves that the value of local cultural traditions and Islamic values has been become a reference in the process of creating traditional batik in several areas batik Nusantara.

The embodiment of pre-Islamic traditional batik that has similarity and symbolic meaning, symbolic with the Islamic values tend to develop in Muslim society. In some batik cities, decorations such as flora, fauna, geometric and natural objects are traditional batik motifs that have existed since pre Islamic times. With the absorption of Islamic values in a culture tradition of Jambi, Cirebon, Pekalongan, Tuban and Tanjungbumi embodied in batik has given rise to a distinctive understanding of the new meaning in the same breath with such Islamic systems. It is value in assessing the link between local cultural traditions with value - Islamic values, i.e. elements in the form of batik with the core teachings of Islam (tauhid) is a thorough discussion. Therefore, the discussion is not enough and limited to the symbol apparently, but must also understand the eating soul that includes ideas, thoughts, and expression of hearts, attitudes and behavior of Muslim batik craftsmen.

In his approach not only through the analysis of semiotics theory that emphasizes the sign system, but requires the theory of hermeneutic in the form of interpretation behind the sign or symbol apparently. It shows that visual language is not just a visible visual aspect, but there is something beyond the reach of the eye (Intangible). Islamic breath in the archipelago batik is evidence one transition case evidence continuity of the Hindu to Islamic era.

### Conclusion

In presence of Islam in the archipelago that introduces a religious view monotheism has been a spiritual liberation force against superstition and idolatry form. Therefore, in every process of creation of textile artwork, especially batik is always based on the conception of monotheism as the estuary of values such as intention, qonaat, tawadhu, tawakal, akhlaq and Qaida. The works are expressed on the basis of benefits for the welfare (sal) of all mankind. Elements of the pre-Islamic decoration apparently in its development did not appear to contradict Islamic values and breathe.

Even in it reflected their creed dimension, there are two step of life in the making batik, namely hablum-minallah and hablum-minannaas. In Batik Nusantara, Islam breath contained an expression of symbolic significance remembrance and gratitude the results of the combination of forms Symbolic constructive, evaluative, cognitive and expressive.

In addition to the philosophical meaning Laaillaha illa Muhammadara Rasulullhah testimony to the charge of truth, goodness and beauty, the current conception, beliefs and morality, has become a complement and influence for the positive values of the cultural traditions of the archipelago system. Muslim batik artisans archipelago became heir to carry on the tradition of pre-Islamic batik process to revive the strength, beauty and

spirituality of Islam, but do not lose the hallmark of their respective local cultural traditions. Some findings in five cities such as Jambi, Cirebon, Pekalongan, Tuban and Tanjungbumi Evident in the background of his batik creation accommodating the values of local cultural traditions and Islamic values.

As in the purpose of creation, in addition to continuing his local cultural tradition also equips it with the intention to achieve God's blessings. In the concept of aesthetic ideas in addition to understanding the universe also do qira'ah Qur'an, so that the growing elements of the ayatollah in the process of creation is not just a creative process and inner sensitivity, but also a process of worship, spiritual discipline and Tazkiyah process. Batik Nusantara as a cultural work is not only functional, complicated and smooth, but also as rahmatan lil'alamiin. Its ornamental variety tends to develop appropriate elements of Islamic pre-Islamic language, in the same breath and in harmony with Islamic values.

The Islamic Nusantara Breathe conveys the spiritual and essential message of Islam through the language with its symbolic assignment. The elements of Islam blend with the batik archipelago, thus giving a distinctive symbolic meaning, as Arabic calligraphy has meaning about the form of God's character and the position of the Creator as the Holy Scripture. Geometry is a fixed, orderly, and definite pattern as a depiction of the universe. Flora means a change and growth from the life of a heavenly garden. The nature of things is a meaning that indicates the oneness of God who is present everywhere and everything is above His power. In terms of diversity batik Nusantara means a development of the power of God as a source of life in the form of light or light. Batik Nusantara Islamic breath has been fulfilled and in accordance with sunatullah (the fate from God/Allah) with characteristics of the effects of beauty, namely balance, harmony and harmony of the universe.

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