

Historical Record of Batik for Community in Tuban, East Java, Indonesia

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Abstract

Tuban is located in East Java, as part of Indonesian archipelago based on historical data; it has a long historical story. It started from the beginning of Kediri/Kahuripan Kingdom, Tuban had succeeded of becoming an important port. It grew even more by becoming an international port. As an international port, there were many foreign cultures brought in to Tuban by the arrival of the traders such as from Tionghoa and Gujarat. Therefore, Tuban grew in strong acculturation. It triggered the invention of tradition product that still survives until now, batik. Through batik, there are good lessons to learn, especially its community's structure up to behavior and value pattern of Tuban in the past. Through this knowledge, this research, as the opening gate of other research, is expected other research to furtherly study the determining factors of which form Turban community nowadays, as well as the cause why it could survive or degraded.

Keywords: batik, history, tradition, Tuban

1. Introduction

In Tuban, East Java, Indonesia tradition of making batik has being existed since long time ago. The activity of making batik as suggested by (wardani, dkk, 2013) is a part-time activity performed by women at the time they do not go to the field. Usually they work from morning to afternoon; therefore making batik is performed in the evening or at their free time while they wait for growing season caused by drought season or just finished harvesting.

Looking at to Tuban community's life, there are behaviors which always get in touch with aesthetic-related things. Batik cloth is not created merely as an object of aesthetic, but also contents philosophy values. It may be concluded that visualization of motif, color on traditional cloth of Tuban's community has a strong relationship with their knowledge of cosmology and aesthetic. White in their knowledge symbolizes maternity where human are in clean and innocence condition. As well as *irengan*, it is dominated with dark color. And in between, there are red and blue colors which are believed as colors of fertility and life.






2. Method

This research is performed with literature study method, where reference data is grouped into two: text and interview. Text data comprises researcher's personal notes, literature in form of reference books, scholar journals, flyers, poster, newspaper, magazine, exhibition catalogue, power point file, email and questionnaire. While interview data is gained through in-depth interview towards expertise on the studied field.

3. Result

According to several literature studies, chapter in Turban – East Java history generally comprises important periods occurred in Turban sub district. Historical record of Tuban in most illustration was started in the beginning of Kediri/Kahuripan Kingdom period. This period lasted approximately prior to civil war between Janggala and Panjalu during the year of 1044 – 1055. At the given time, name of Tuban was still *Kambang Putih* located at the north coast of Java Island, its polity was governed by King Airlangga. In a record of "Pemerintahan Kabupaten Tuban dalam Untaian Sejarah", (Soeparmo, 2005:50) explains that in the period of King Airlangga, the community's wealth was really taken care of. One of his efforts to strengthen Kahuripan Kingdom's economic situation, he improved Brantas river flow to expand its trade relations by make it as an important trading line. Trading vessels were free to anchor at Hujung Galuh as a trading line between islands. Meanwhile, for between-countries-port, it is directed to Kambang Putih in Tuban (now it is called Boom-Tuban).

Table 1. Meaning and Aesthetics on Visual of Traditional Cloth of Tuban Community

No	Textile	Picture	Visual and Aesthetic Meanings
1	<i>Putihan</i>		White background with blue or black motif; symbolizes innocence and purity (Karsam, 2014).
2	<i>Bangrod</i>		According to the tradition, it is usually worn by single women and relates it with menstrual blood. Symbolizes fertility and productivity (Karsam, 2014). The word <i>bangrod</i> comes from <i>diabang</i> (red colored) and <i>dilorod</i> (boiled to get rid of wax). <i>Bangrod</i> is related with regeneration and worn by young women who are ready to get married (Heringa, 2010: 37).
3	<i>Pipitan</i>		Has <i>remekan</i> base and usually worn by married women as a symbol of living a life with husband, children and give birth (Karsam, 2014). This cloth is usually worn by women who have younger children. The word <i>pipitan</i> means togetherness, closeness. In Java, it means the togetherness and closeness of husband-wife and children (Heringa, 2010: 38).
4	<i>Biron</i>		This cloth is used as <i>sasrahan</i> from the groom to the bride. It is symbolized as an initial step before the woman finally united as a part of the man's family (Heringa, 2010: 38).
5	<i>Irengan</i>		Has a dark motif in black color, a symbol of an end and usually worn as the body cover of a person who has passed away as a protection from bad things for the spirits (Karsam, 2014: 39).

Source: Heringa, "Ninik Towok's Spinning Wheel", 2010

Approximately in 1275, Singasari Kingdom was conquered by Kertanegara Kingdom. Shih-tsu Khubilai Khan, a Caesar from Yuan new Dynasty liked to invade other countries and asked them to admit the China power. Kertanegara objected to do so and showed it by cut *Tiongkok's* (China) messenger, which turn the Caesar's anger. To anticipate thread of Khubilai Khan to Singasari, Kertanegara expanded his *cakrawala mandala* by making the archipelago united in one shelter, Singasari, through malay expedition. From Kertanegara, the power was taken over by Jayakatwang, *Adipati* of Kediri, after he killed Kertanegara. Because of the power reshuffle, Raden Wijaya, Kertanegara's son in law ran to Sumenep and opened Hutan Tarik (Tarik Forest) which then became the origin of Majapahit Kingdom.

Mongol and *Tiongkok* troops give revenge attack to Singasari, even there were no longer Kertanegara

but Jayakatwang. It is written that the troops were assisted by Raden Wijaya. After Jayakatwang killed, Raden Wijaya strike back the troops and defeated them. It then set him as Majapahit King.

In 1215 Saka or 12 November 1293, Raden Wijaya appointed himself as Majapahit King with title of Sri Kertarajasa Jayawardhana. Its biggest power was when it governed by Hayam Wuruk and *patih* Gajah Mada, during 1350–1389. In “Pemerintahan Kabupaten Tuban dalam Untaian Sejarah”, (Anang Wahyudi, 2005:56) suggested that in the next era, Majapahit grew by becoming the strongest kingdom in the archipelago. When Majapahit established, Tuban port administratively moved to Majapahit from Singasari previously. Majapahit then used the port for political and trading purposes. Majapahit’s political expansion improved the port’s role.

Majapahit as the strongest kingdom had been able to unite regions across Southeast Asia comprises: Kalimantan, Sumatera, *Semenanjung* Malaya, Singapore, Philipines, Sulawesi, Nusa Tenggara, Maluku, to Papua. After Gajah Mada left, Majapahit was weakend and gradually suffered a setback, especially when many regions started to take themselves out from Majapahit, *Kesultanan* Malaka was one of them, which was supported by Moslem trader from Gujarat. In the fifteenth century, Islamic Kingdom-Demak took over the power of Majapahit and asked them to give it to *Adipati* Unus. According to some stories; priest, the king’s family, artists, and Hindu community moved to Bali and some of them stayed in Tengger, East Java. Total of Majapahit period was approximately between the years in 1293 - 1527.

In around the thirteenth century, Islam spread by Sunan Bonang (*Raden Makdum Ibrahim*), son of Sunan Ampel. Islam in Tuban also developed with support from Islamic Kingdom-Demak. Sunan Bonang spread Islam teachings along the north coast of Java Island, especially in Tuban, by performing acculturation in particular things between Hindu and Islam, until there emerged new culture in the community.

During its growth, Tuban had suffered a setback. It was in general caused by Tuban port disfunction for traffic between countries. Quoted from “Pemerintahan Kabupaten Tuban dalam Untaian Sejarah” (2005:79) it is explained that: “Tome Pires who visited Java in 1599 disclosed this issue.. instead of going to Tuban trading vessels was going to Gresik in the sixteenth century, there was no information whether it was because of the reducing facility, or sediment shallowing the port land, or high import duty that made traders did not get the expected profit.”

At the same time, Tuban had no longer chosen as an important port. They chose Jepara instead. Thereby, Tuban existence as an important port area was started to shift and until now suffers a setback. Then in the sixteenth century, the Dutch came in to get rid of Portuguese and Spain that had stayed in Malaka since 1511. The presence of the Dutch triggered chaos in Indonesia and dominated more of Indonesia, including East Java and Tuban. In the sixteenth century, precisely in 1596, there are approximately four vessels anchor at Teluk Banten. The arrival of the Dutch’s trading vessels is to eliminate trading domination of their enemy, Portuguese and Spain. Portuguese had ruled Malaka since 1511. Since then, the Dutch took over the trading domination in Indonesia. The Dutch at that time put enforcement planting (*tanam paksa*) into effect. People of Indonesia who had fertile farmland was forced to give their land to the colonial polity to be planted types of plants which brought much devisa. Farmers were obliged to work on the Dutch’s land. In addition, those farmers were obliged to give crops to the polity and pay high tax as well. This period lasted during 1830–1870. In this period, there were many rebellions occurred. It echoes to “mataraman” sub districts where one of them is Tuban. The Dutch then started to change many of their policy system, from political ethics, and decentralize polity.

In 1942 Japan troops landed in the north coast of Java: Banten, Indramayu, Juana (Pati sub district), Kragan (Rembang sub district) and Tuban. To build military facilities, Japan Military Government took *romusha* (forced laborers) into effect in Indonesia. Japan’s oppression towards Indonesian triggered various rebellions in order to take back the Republic of Indonesia’s independence. Entering 1950, precisely on 25 February 1950, all provinces in East Java had recovered. Even nowadays, Turban plans “city branded, Tuban Bumi Wali, The Spirit of Harmony” to build local identity that has uniqueness to attract national or international tourism and regional investment. Through city branded, hopefully it will improve domestic and international tourists visit to Bumi Wali Tuban.

Another explanations regarding Tuban community in the pre-historic period attempted to be explained by an Anthropology Lecturer in Social and Politic Faculty – Airlangga University, (Ernawan, 2001) refers to statement of (Butzer 1984:131), that human life around Tuban-Lamongan has been lasting since per-historic period. Back then, human lived in caves in living order of epipaleolithic technology (blades, stones, arrows). Turban-Lamongan’s physical environment comprises karst stone is ideal to form caves as a place to live in pre historic period.

(Ibid, 2001) added based on survey result performed by *Pusat Penelitian Arkeologi Nasional* (National Archeological Research Center) in 1989 in Tuban, several pre-historic caves were found, it is assumed as the residence of pre-historic community. They are:

- a. In Semanding there are *gua* (cave) Akbar, *gua* Gedhe, *gua* Pawon, *gua* Butul, Gragas, *gua* Sumur, *gua* Panggung, *gua* Gembul, *gua* Peteng, *gua* Cilik, and *gua* Bagong,
- b. In Montong there are *gua* Terus, *gua* Lawa, *gua* Clangap, and *gua* Suruh,

- c. In Palang there is *gua* Suci,
- d. In there is *gua* Song Prahu, and
- e. In Rengel there is *gua* Gedhe.

Based on bone fragment dating in the caves, especially in *gua* Pandean in Tuban, it is visible that the human activities were from early metal technology (score 795) and the XII-XV (twelfth – fifteenth) century (score 630-755). Pre-historic human's life with the technology of epipaleolithic is believed started to live together with other community in Indonesian Classical History period (end of Majapahit period).

Based on historical record, it is found that Tuban has been becoming a relatively busy port since the beginning of XI (the eleventh) century. Under King Airlangga government, there were two big ports: Hujung Galuh as the trading line across islands, and Kambang Putih as international trading line. Refers to (Groneveldt, 1960:45-6) Erawan explained that Tuban was busy by anchored foreign vessels. Those foreign traders were frequently bothered by local people who did not wear clothes and lived in caves.

3.1 Historical record of development of Batik Tuban-East Java

It is rather difficult to find manifestation of batik typically from Tuban. Skill of making batik and weaving among Tuban community is related with batik development in Java. Based on explanation from (Larasati, 2014), *Materi Pemandu Pameran Indonesia World Craft Council (WCC)* di Dongyang Expo Center, China; the origin of Indonesian batik is batik Jawa (Java batik) which has a long journey and history. Larasati refers to Brandes's statement, that prior to Hindu kingdom came in to Java, Java native had developed with 10 (ten) fields of important cultural life; some of them are planting rice and making batik. In her explanation, Larasati refers several important occurrences related with batik development in Java as follows:

- Approximately in Medang civilization, around the eighth century, there was typical motif of Batik Laler Maneng, Celeng Kewengen, Gajah Birowo, and so on which illustrated relationship of deep meaning of flora and fauna.
- In manuscript of Siska Kandha found in Bogor (West Java), recorded approximately in 1256 along Citarum river flow, under Tarumanegara polity since the fifth century. The word Tarum in Tarumanegara literally means Tom (nila) that becomes natural color used by the community for coloring their woven product.
- Batik has been known since 932 AD within Majapahit Kingdom (East Java) period. This explanation stated in *Kidung Harsya Wijaya*, told the story of Raden Wijaya the King of Majapahit I gave Sinjang Batik - Lancingan Gringsing to the warlords to encourage them.
- In Pagaluhan (now Kedu in Central Java) there was found a record about *parang* motif in Kidung Macapatan, where King of Watu Gunung determine 30 pieces of cloth in *parang* motif as family costume and chose for himself Parang Barong motif.

Then, various motif of batik that lasts until now among Tuban's community are also predicted caused by cultural mixture came in to Tuban. It is explained by (Erawan, 2001) it is possible for a port in Tuban has a function as feeder point as well as collecting center. Refer to (Sedyawati 1992:39), Erawan explains based on source from China, it is mentioned that Tuban port was visited by vessels from countries such as: Persia, Arab, Gujarat, Bengal, Malaya, Cina and so on. Those ships brought exclusive goods to fulfill the needs of the elite community in inland area. Other China news mentioned that in the XV (fifteenth) century, Javanese aristocrat loved to use home appliances made of porcelain in blue color, and worn silk with gold embroider and beads.

(Raffles, 2014:86) in his book "The History of Java" attempted to write his direct observation towards Javanese tradition and environment around the year of 1811-1815, found that commonly worn batik at that time was sarong, pictured by Marsden in a quotation in Raffles' book: "it appears to be different with Scotland's short skirt cloth, the cloth has motif on it, has 6-8 feet length and 3-4 feet wide, sewn on both sides and it looks like a sack without base"

Making batik among Javanese at that time had been firmed, Raffles suggested. They knew the technique as we know now, used hot wax as color resist, then use *canting* to draw, and drown it in natural color, then washed it used hot water to get rid of the wax. Batik naming is also varies upon regions.

4. Conclusion

The explanation regarding historical record of batik Tuban has approved that it has gone through centuries. (Larasati, 2014) quoted UNESCO Brief of *Inskripsi Batik Indonesia* (Indonesian Batik Incriptions), that batik is not merely a sheet of *wastra* fabric, but it has been passed down generation to generation and become part of high-valued-Indonesian cultural heritage: "...everyone pass batik down from generation to generation as family heirlooms posses deep symbolism related to social status. Local community, nature, and also historical development and this form a part of the cultural heritage..."

However, the difficulty of gaining specific data that can explain the origin of batik Tuban, therefore, based on literature data there is found that batik Tuban they knew, came from Javanese batik and was popular among the community far before that. As Java located along Java Sea coast, it has many accesses as it was an

active trading line, so that acculturation and enculturation could be simply occurred, whether in terms of domestic exchange or international exchange. Therefore, it is expected this research of historical explanation can open opportunity for further research on community's structure, behavior pattern as well as value in Tuban from the past to the present.

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