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Aesthetic Principles of Subahnale Songket: A Cultural Product of Sukarara Village

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Abstrack

This study explores the aesthetic principles of the Subahnale songket which is one of the ancestral heritages of the Sasak tribe. Employing the qualitative method, data collection was carried out through observation, interviews, and documentation. Data analysis techniques included data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The principles of aesthetics by DeWitt Henry Parker were used for data analysis. The results of this study show that Subahnale songket weaving has various aesthetic motifs. The craftsmen develop motifs and colors to keep up with the times. They introduce new designs while adhering to the standard, which is geometric hexagons. The aesthetic principles in the Subahnale songket is expected to impart knowledge to the younger generation and can serve as a reference for preserving the Subahnale songket weaving.

Keywords: Subahnale Songket Weaving, Aesthetic Form

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INTRODUCTION

Craft refers to a product that is made by hand or with the use of tools. The skill of the craftsman is essential in attaining the best results. A product can be aesthetic, artistic, decorative, traditional functional, religious, social symbolic, and utilitarian (Suntrayuth, 2017:1).

Our ancestors made their own tools, equipment, and necessities, one of which was woven fabric. Woven fabric is a handicraft made from wood fiber, cotton, and silk using non-machine weaving looms. The ancient weaving craft originated in India, East Asia, and West Asia, and later spread around the world. Weaving is estimated to have arrived in Indonesia several centuries ago, around 3000 years ago, as demonstrated by the finding of weaving loom in Gili Manuk, Melolo, East Sumba, and others. People weaved using cotton threads spun by themselves for clothes (Prayitno, 2010: 32).

Woven fabric is now frequently utilized as traditional apparel or as a symbol of regional identity. It is also a sign of social status and dignity. Woven cloth in the Sasak tribe is worn at big events, especially at the Nyongkolan Ceremony, which is a procession in a traditional Sasak wedding (Pratama, 2018: 48).

The culture of the people of Lombok, the Sasak tribe, which is rich in religious life, serves as the foundation for the concepts and ideas that are incorporated into the motif of Subahnale songket. The creativity and imagination of weaving craftsmen can be noticed in their work. The daily life of the craftsman becomes the inspiration for the design of songket weaving, which is expressed in the pattern that symbolizes that survival cannot be separated from the environment as its support.

Sukarara Village, which is located in Jonggat District, Central Lombok Regency, produces woven fabrics. Songket weaving has been passed down from generation to

generation of women in the area. Weaving has become a habit among unmarried women.

Subahnale Songket is a traditional woven fabric from the Sasak custom in Sukarara Village in the form of long cloth. Subahnale is derived from the word *Subhanallah* with the pronunciation of the Sasak people. The word *Subhanallah* is Muslim. The Arabic term is used to describe the Sasak people, where the majority of the population adheres to Islam. This is reflected in the island's nickname, "the island of a thousand mosques". This nickname is given to this island since there are many mosques built by the Sasak community (Nirwani, 2018: 145).

Beauty in the aesthetic sense refers to a person's aesthetic experience, which includes all that is felt, but beauty in a limited sense is more particular in that it only includes elements that are captured by sight (Hasan, 2019:335). The making of the Subahnale fabric is an aesthetic experience for the person who makes it. *Subhanallah* means Glory to Allah. The songket is dedicated as a form of glorifying the name of Allah. The Subahnale motif means sincerity, steadfastness, and a form of surrender to Allah the Almighty. It is dominated by hexagon geometric motifs, which symbolize the six pillars of faith in Islam.

Subahnale songket is one of the arts and crafts with aesthetic value. It represents the culture and traditions of the Sasak tribe, especially the Sukarara people, as reflected in its shapes, patterns, and colors. It depicts the life of the Sukarara people. The motif and pattern representing the identity of the Sukarara people are investigated in this study in terms of its aesthetic principles. This study is reinforced by Kertiwa (2007: 9) that woven fabric, as one of Indonesia's richest cultural legacies, has diversity, and traditional fabrics inspired by the lifestyle of ethnic group, are impacted by geographical differences. Climate variability can have an impact on the flora and fauna, resulting in variations in the type of decorations and fabrics produced. Environmental factors have resulted in a wide

range of equipment, materials, and manufacturing techniques that influence the final product of woven fabrics. As a result, each weaving has its own qualities depending on where it comes from.

Art cannot be discussed without mentioning the allure of beauty. Art is an object that is influenced by aesthetic values. Aesthetics comes from the Greek word "aesthesis" which means absorption, or expression. From a philosophical point of view, aesthetics is a branch of philosophy that discusses beauty, beauty is a unique and distinctive experience, in an aesthetic experience (Maran, 2007: 142). The term aesthetics first appeared in the mid-18th century through the German philosopher Alexander Baumgarten. Baumgarten contended that aesthetics, as a branch of sensory knowledge distinct from logical knowledge, refers to the perception of a sense of beauty, particularly the beauty of works of art (Ichsan, 2019:123).

In this study, the researcher used principles of aesthetics by DeWitt Henry Parker, in which Parker stated that there are six principles for seeing the aesthetic form of a work of art, namely, the principle of organic unity, the principle of theme, the principle of thematic variation, the principle of balance, the principle of evolution, and the principle of hierarchy (Kasidi, 2017:168).

This study was conducted based on the uniqueness of the Subahnale songket in Sukarara village. This study is expected to inspire art creation and also become knowledge for the younger generation. The purpose of this research is to examine the Subahnale songket for a better understanding of its aesthetic value.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative method with the main characteristic that the data presented is in the form of analysis based on theory. The results of data collection are presented in the form of descriptive reports.

This research was conducted in Sukarara Village, Jonggat District, Central Lombok Regency. The objective of this research is to examine the aesthetic form of Subahnale motif in Sukarara Village.

Data collection was carried out by using observation, interviews, and documentation. Direct observation of the research environment was done while at the same time the researcher carrying out interviews. The research subjects involved the Subahnale songket weaver, songket craftsman, tribal chief, and the Sukarara community. Archives and photographs gathered from local government, family, and community archives serve as documentation.

Research data was validated using triangulation techniques. This technique seeks to check the validity of data by using something other than the data to solve or compare the data's validity (Hidayat et al., 2021:183).

Data analysis is the process of searching for and compiling information in a structured manner gathered through observations, interviews, and documentation. The steps of data analysis include organizing information into theory, describing it into units, synthesizing it, identifying the patterns, sorting out important information, and making conclusions to make it easier to understand (Sugiyono, 2009: 335). The data was proceed following stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusions drawing.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Crafts have distinct qualities, and as such, they can be utilized to represent one of the regional cultural identities. Different qualities can distinguish one craft from another (Suntrayuth in Mardi et al., 2021:108). Subahnale songket weaving is closely related to the manufacturing process. The process of making it with the weft thread is by weaving the warp threads and the lower weft threads. The songket weaving requires patience and perseverance to produce a special songket. The

craftsmen of Subahnale songket have different motifs from craftsmen in other locations due to cultural variations as well as the natural environment around them.

Weaving is a fabric craft made from yarn that uses a thread-crossing technique to combine threads. The weaving craft has several techniques, including the warp tie technique, which produces motifs with the tie technique and dyeing only the vertical threads, the weft tie technique, which produces motifs with the tie technique and dyeing only the horizontal threads, and lastly, multiple ikat weaving, which produces motif patterns on vertical and horizontal threads. Both are connected to produce complex and symmetrical patterns (Kartiwa, 2007:15). Subahnale weaving is a weft tie made by weaving the warp, weft, and weft below it to produce songket motifs.

The Visualization of Subahnale Motifs on the Songket Weaving

The pattern found in the Subahnale motif is a hexagonal line with some shapes as shown in Figure 1. A complementary motif in the form of a stylized flower in colorful and geometric shapes appears in the center of the hexagonal line. Decorative motifs are affected by natural shapes, which are subsequently styled into ornamental motifs through imagination, and geometric motifs are motifs based on the shape of geometric elements such as circles, squares, triangles, rectangles, and others. Geometric themes make more use of geometric components like curved and straight lines, circles, triangles, and so on (Toekio in Sanjaya, 2020:257)

Geometric motif ornaments are the oldest type of all decorative elements, which gradually evolve and the original ones become more artistic as science and culture grow in society (Sudana et al., 2018:3). Similarly, the Subahnale woven motif ornaments evolve with the times.



Figure 1. Visualization of Hexagons in Subahnale Weaving

Source: Qatrunnada

Referring to Na'am (2021:39), the pattern is a certain arrangement of a motif or series of motifs. The pattern applied to Subahnale songket weaving is in the form of a scatter pattern and a repetitive pattern. The motifs in the scatter pattern are spaced at regular intervals. The motifs can be arranged in a single direction, two directions, or all directions. A scattering pattern that is also a series pattern connects one motif to another vertically, horizontally, and diagonally.

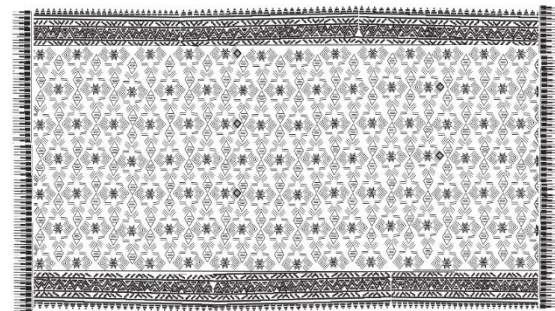


Figure 2. Scatter Pattern

Source: Qatrunnada

The fringe pattern is also used as a boundary in Subahnale songket weaving; it is positioned on the margins of the woven in a row and is connected. This pattern is called Lambe and Poto.

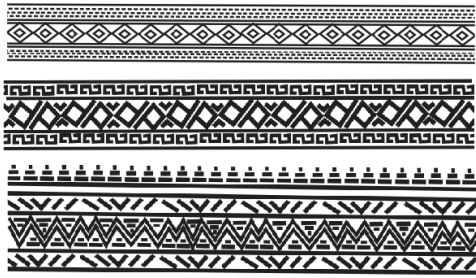


Figure 3. Fringe Pattern

Source: Qatrunnada

Repetitive patterns and alternating patterns are also applied to this songket weaving. The repetitive pattern is repeated until the surface is filled with a uniform pattern. On the other hand, alternating patterns can produce more varied and interesting shapes. The repeated shapes are motifs, sizes, and colors that differ from one another.

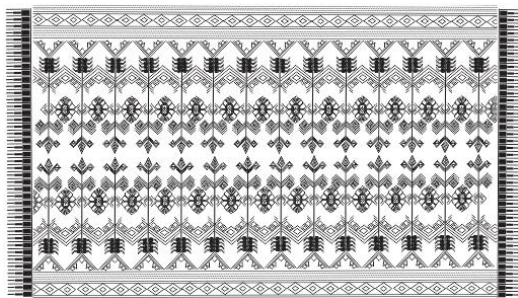


Figure 4. The Repetitive Pattern.

Source Qatrunnada

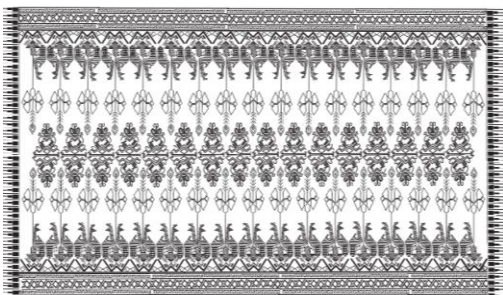


Figure 5. Alternating Pattern.

Source: Qatrunnada

The Aesthetic Principles of Subahnale Weaving According to DeWitt Henry Parker

According to Parker, works of art are a means of aesthetic life. Every work of art is transformed into an experimental platform for

expressing life. Although works of art can improve aesthetic talents and experiences, an art concept must incorporate expression or communication. The satisfaction produced by intermediates of expressions composed through color, line, shape, and other relationships is the source of the value of aesthetic form, and the concept of art can only be completed if it help someone express artistic value (Irawan, 2016:4). Parker shares six principles of aesthetic form as follows:

The principle of organic unity

This principle states that every element of a work of art is necessary for the work's value; the artwork has no extraneous elements but comprises everything that is required. The value of a work as a whole is determined by the reciprocity of its elements, which means that each factor requires another. This is the main principle that drives the other principles.

Subahnale songket is a two-dimensional work of art with a rectangular shape, which has complex elements in it. It offers various motifs, colors, and neatly arranged patterns or shapes.



Figure 6. Motif Grouping,

Source: Qatrunnada

The motif grouping in Subahnale songket weaving is divided into three parts (1) Songket bodies (main and complementary motifs) (2) Songket fringe (3) Songket ends.

The main motif in Subahnale songket weaving is a hexagon named Subahnale, which is a visualization of the six pillars of faith in Islam, namely (1) Belief in Allah, (2) Belief in the Angels, (3) Belief in Revealed Scriptures, (4) Belief in the Messengers, (5) Belief in the Last Day, and (6) Belief in Qada

and Qadar. Subahnale songket has complementary motifs that take the forms of flora and fauna, some of which are Remawe flowers, peacocks, orchids, Wayang, and others.

Color is an impression created by light in the eyes. It can be improved by selecting the proper color. Color is frequently related to a person's subjective taste. The emotionality of the owner or craftsman is one factor that influences color selection (Chaniago et al., 2020:44)

There are several colors in Subahnale songket. Dark colors, such as black, were initially widely employed as the base color and were the most dominant in fabrics. Bright colors such as gold, red, yellow, and blue are often used as complementary motifs. However, new colors have emerged over time, and dark colors are now employed as complementary motif colors.

The shape of the motif pattern is one of the most crucial factors because it contains visual aspects (Yunianti in Prasetyo et al., 2018:350). Subahnale songket is dominated by geometric and striped motifs.

The composition of the motifs for Subahnale songket considers the appropriate line shape, layout, repetition, and color. On the top is a golden thread with a pattern of graduated lines and zig-zags, which is also applied to the bottom part called Lambe, and on the left and right is a pattern that is almost the same but named Poto as a counterweight to the beginning and end of the fabric so that each side looks balanced. In the middle, there is a hexagonal thread with various designs. This is the main motif with important roles in showing the aesthetic values of Subahnale songket. The hexagon designs are embellished with a variety of decorations, including flora and fauna.

The Principle of Theme

A work of art contains one or more main ideas in any form, such as color, shape, meaning, or rhythmic pattern, that serve as the

focal point of the entire piece. This point is critical to understanding a work of art.

Subahnale songket, a work of art from the Sasak community that is mostly Muslim, is dominated by Subahnale (*Subhanallah*) motifs. The motifs are made interconnected on the cloth by filling all parts of the fabric. This motif is the main idea of creating songket which is highlighted by a combination of contrasting colors and repetition.

The principle of thematic variation

To keep people from being bored, the theme of work art must always be developed. Thus, numerous variants, such as processing shapes, color patterns, and so on, are required

As previously said, the motif of Subahnale songket weaving is both the essential idea in constructing Subahnale songket weaving works and the theme of creation. However, it is not simply Subahnale motifs that contribute to its beauty; there are other complementing motifs as well.

The principle of balance

Balance is the harmony of the elements, even if they may not have the same form. Even if there are elements in a work of art that are contradictory and not the same, they complement each other. Elements that are opposite to each other do not need similarities in terms of form but require similar values, if there are similarities in values, there is an aesthetic balance

Subahnale songket is symmetrically constructed with a hexagon motif aligned on the fabric. As a result, the songket weaving appears to be balanced between parts. Various elements are combined to form a unified whole. Various motifs combine to form a single unit, resulting in works of art that appear balanced.

The principle of Evolution

It is the unity of the initial part of the process that determines the following part and develops a whole meaning. As an illustration, there should be a causal connection in a story.

Subahnale songket contains a motif grouping composed of three parts. Subahnale motif serves as the main motif, with supporting patterns of various forms as motif development. The evolution of motifs is accomplished by describing the current reality. These motifs are located in the center or within the hexagonal motif, which is the main motif. To keep up with the trends, improvements are being made to suit aesthetic needs by enriching patterns and colors.

The idea of motif evolution is based on environmental resources and surrounding natural resources. The Subahnale motif is used as the main motif in the middle of the songket weaving. Continuous development is carried out to build appealing forms by filling in the empty parts, which is referred to as the supporting motif. The next process is to refine the shape of the fringe motif, which is positioned on the outside of the left, right, top, and bottom of the fabric and serves as a frame for this woven fabric. These parts are known as Lambe and Poto. The upper part has a gold thread with a pattern of straight lines and zig-zags which is also applied to the bottom part which is called Lambe. The left and right sides have a pattern that is nearly identical but is named Poto as the initial balancer and the end of the cloth so that each side appears balanced.

The Principle of Hierarchy

This principle is the organization of elements levels in works of art, and occasionally one factor plays the most important role. These elements explicitly reinforce the theme and are significantly more important than the others.

Using this method, it is clear that the Subahnale motif is the most dominating theme in Subahnale songket weaving. The general form of the motif is dominated by lines that form a geometric arrangement and become the character of all the motifs contained in the weaving. Color, composition, center point, and symmetrical repetition are examples of parts that become important points from the

main motif, followed by the Lambe and Photo motifs to the supporting motifs.

CONCLUSION

According to the findings of this study, Subahnale songket is a work of art and a local cultural product of the Sukarara community. This weaving has an aesthetic value as a manifestation of the culture of the Sasak tribe's people. This weaving evolved from a fusion of ideas, and concepts that reflect human relationships with the natural environment, events, and perspectives on daily activities.

The study of Subahnale songket by using the principles of aesthetics by DeWitt Henry Parker generates the following results:

Subahnale songket includes complex elements, varied motifs, and flora and fauna that are created decorative and geometric. It uses dark colors as a foundation to emphasize the motifs. The motif's composition is carried out by taking into account lines, shapes, layout, repetition, and appropriate colors.

(2) In Subahnale songket, the hexagon motif dominates while also being the main or central focus. In weaving, the motifs are created interconnected by filling all areas of the fabric. This motif is the main inspiration for the creation of songket weaving, which is enhanced by the use of contrasting colors and repetition.

The Subahnale motif is the basic idea in creating Subahnale songket. It also serves as the main theme. However, it is not only Subahnale motifs that play a part in exhibiting and complimenting its beauty; there are other complementary motifs as well.

Subahnale songket is made symmetrically with a hexagon motif lined up on the fabric. As a result, the songket weaving appears to be balanced between parts. However, the balance, in this case, is not limited to that; the balance of different elements is combined to form the whole motif. Various motifs become one unit and produce an attractive songket fabric.

To keep up with the trends, advancements are being made to suit aesthetic needs by enriching patterns and colors. The idea of motive development is based on environmental resources and surrounding natural resources.

The Subahna motif is dominant in this weaving. The motif is dominated by lines that form a geometric arrangement and become the character of all the motifs in the weaving. Color, composition, center point, and symmetrical repetition become essential points in other principles that become balanced of the main motif to the Lambe and Photo motifs or fringe motif to the supporting motifs.

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