

Review

Metaphor of Silungkang ornament *songket*

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Accepted 15 October, 2016

This article is taken from the results of research on society Minangkabau traditional of clothing made of *songket* with traditional ornament that has a meaning associated with traditional Minangkabau social system; both personally and communally, especially for the people of Minangkabau. This study aims to reveal the metaphor behind the ornament found on *songket* Silungkang. The research location is the village Silungkang Solok regency, West Sumatra, Indonesia. This study uses a method of ethnosience with semiotic analysis to describe research finding. The research data were obtained through in-depth interviews to members of the public who are competent in the field of *songket* like; *songket* craftsman, leaders community, as well as cultural. Based on the findings and discussion, the study concluded that the ornament in *songket* Silungkang contained a traditional symbol and is seen as an educational institution of culture, because behind Minangkabau, traditional ornament are symbols that contains the meaning associated with the norms and customary rules that can be used as guidelines in the life. Ornament on *songket* is a rule or law that must be obeyed by the scope of the indigenous people who were in Silungkang Minangkabau, and ornament fabrics such *songket* has a strong function as a means of communication.

Key words: Metaphor, ornament, *songket*, Minangkabau costume.

INTRODUCTION

Traditional social system (indigenous peoples) of Minangkabau should be followed by other systems such as legacy systems (communal land), law, clothing, weapons, art reproduction (mating), the language system and so forth. All sub-systems contained in the customs system refers to a philosophy and customary rules applicable, in this case the indigenous Minangkabau philosophy with *Alam Takambang Jadi Guru* (natural as a teacher). One sub-system in Minangkabau costume that is quite prominent is the system of traditional clothing that is unique, both in terms of materials, and ornament inherent in the traditional clothes. One ingredient in traditional clothing is *songket* woven Minangkabau fabric, which has an ornament inherent in the traditional Minangkabau *songket*. *Songket* are produced by craft centers of the region Kubang, Limapuluhkota districts, regions Pandai Sikek Tanahdatar district and local *songket* craft centers Silungkang Solok district.

Custom clothing are made of *songket* used by the public in such traditional ceremonies; *Batagak Pangulu*, *Baralek* (weddings), *Manaiki Rumah*, *Baturun Mandi* and

other traditional ceremonies. In Minangkabau customary rules, every member of the society has the position of each in accordance with the social system. Starting from *Pangulu*, *Bundo Kandung*, *niniak mamak*, *Ipa Bisan*, and the *Induak Bako*, as well as traditional costumes will be worn by each member of the society, governed by its position respectively. Therefore, it is believed that the traditional clothes with various ornaments attached to the *songket* is a symbol that has a specific meaning related to the Minangkabau social system.

Ornament attached on the *songket* can be seen as an expression of such or such a language which can also be viewed as symbols with a charge of meaning contained therein. Visual language often lacks the verbal language which is more familiar with Minangkabaus proverb, is a metaphor related to philosophy, and Minangkabau outlook on life society.

Metaphors such as intangible ornament contained in *songket Silungkang* needs to be studied and analyzed, as found in the symbolic meaning of various phrases such Minangkabau traditional ornament. This study is



Figure 1. Chart of Minangkabau traditional system (Ishmael, 2007).

intended to supplement documentation of indigenous culture as closely related to the Minangkabau *songket* Silungkang existence, in terms of ornament as a visual language that is used as a means of communication. This documentation is also intended as a form of preservation of cultural property. Rosa (2011) says "Preserve culture is an activity to maintain or conserve the natural objects or man is considered to have significant value for the history, science and culture. In Indonesia, objects of cultural heritage must be aged at least 50 years old (Law No. 5 of 1992). Objects of cultural heritage is a cultural richness that is important to the understanding and development of history, science and culture, so it needs to be protected and preserved for fertilization awareness of the nation's identity and national interests".

The method used in this study is ethnoscience, with the semiotic approach. Spradley (1997) argues that "ethnography is the method used to examine the society and the meaning of the object under study. Bogdan and Steven (1975) says "In other words, the research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of words written or spoken of people and behaviors can be observed".

Semiotic study is intended as a reference in identifying the existence of symbols and meanings associated with *songket* function in public life in Minangkabau. Zoest and Panuti (1978) explained that the human search for meaning in the objects that surround him and symptoms are accurately or not, and it's true or not. Man has always tried to give meaning to objects or symptoms. So, between the object and the symptoms are a sign that has a meaning. That meaning is agreed upon (the convention). Human relationships is established through the intermediary of the pins. Humans are to send and receive a mark in every act of komunikasinya. Kurniawan (2001), although in Peirce's semiotics is still a tendency to continue the tradition of scholastic lead to the inference (logical thinking) and Saussure emphasis on linguistics; in fact semiology also discusses the significance and communications contained in the non-linguistic sign

system. Interpreting (to signify) in this case cannot be mixed together or communicated. Interpreting the meaning of objects not only carry information, in which case the objects want to communicate, but also constitute the structured system of sign. According to Ishmael (2007), the form of clothing, as well as customs procedures are part of the habits of a village, which is called "customs", the customary division can be seen in Figure 1. From the chart in Figure 1, it can be understood that the features of custom clothing or custom building of a village in Minangkabau can vary from one village to another village. For example, clothing, customs, tradition in the area *Luhak* (district) Limapuluhkota, will be different from the traditional clothing traditions in the seacoast town of Padang, so too can differ from that in use in district Agam. Third *luhak* (district) origin Minangkabau culture (Agam, Limapuluhkota, dan Tanahdatar), The districts is now known as the Regency.

Although there are different shades of clothing a village, but not every districts in West Sumatra produce their own custom clothing materials that are mostly made from *songket*. Among the center's craft *songket* in West Sumatra is Silungkang village (district of Solok), Pandaisikek (district of Tanahdatar), Kubang (District of Limapuluhkota). Of the three producers that *Songket*, Silungkang craft *songket* production can be considered productive, therefore *songket* results in the region that spread to the entire region of West Sumatra. This is one reason to make Silungkang *songket* the research object (Figure 2). However, the most important reason is that according to the passage of time, it is not a lot more of people who understand the cultural meaning contained from custom dress made from *songket*.

Ibrahim (1986) explains that the traditional custom clothing has an important role in certain traditional ceremonies. Through custom clothing are illustrated messages, cultural values contained therein, as well as also related to other aspects of culture such as economic, social, educational, political and religious.

Cultural values conveyed through expression of



Figure 2.Sketsa: (Budiwirman, 2010).
 Overview Abstract Object:
 transformation forms the decorative
 motif Minangkabau tradition (visual
 language), ornament name is the
 language of verbal communication.

meaning can be seen through a wide variety of labeling systems by the way they dress and the variety of custom clothing patterns. Based on the findings of diverse woven *songket* Silungkang motifs field used semiotic approach relating to the function of Silungkang weaving *songket*.

In terms of morphology, then there is a change in form (shape transformation) of the decorative motifs carved custom home building to decorative *songket* ornaments (Minarsih, 1998). As a result, the existing system of meaning in carving custom home has similarities to that contained in decorative ornament of textiles, in particular *songket*. Transformation of form is due to realization of engineering changes of ornament with names and meanings which are the same but for different purposes.

According to Couto in Sedyawati (2003), there are two ways to convey specific intent through visual language, first through elements, both through a collection or array elements (syntactic) and or language form. In this case the decorative motifs are elements, how to wear and put the elements and element composition is syntactic. Both can read its meaning (semantics), either as single elements (decorative motif and parts of clothing) as well as a collection of elements (the dress code), because the way they dress is included in a collection of elements (syntactic). Both visually in this way are used to read the meaning of traditional custom of Silungkang clothing *songket*.

The reading of the meaning (semantics) through a set of elements is based on certain rules, for example (1) when a kind custom clothing is used, (2) who should wear it, and (3) how to use it. This follows the rules that have been agreed in accordance with the provisions of customs in a village. This was confirmed by Kartiwa (1994) who explains that, *songket* is part of its user. In embodiment of other people's culture, not all people are justified to wear this dress, their sacred values, the requirements of the wearer, and a symbolic value as oversized clothes. Minarsih (1998) explains that those allowed to wear *songket* in Minangkabau culture are

certain people (regarded in the community), that support traditional ceremonies such as (1) *Bundo Kanduang*, (2) *Datuk* in various ceremonies and (3) The Bride in a traditional wedding ceremony. No matter how rich a person is and is capable to have it, he still was not allowed to wear as they pleased.

If the reading of meaning can be through a system of collection of elements (syntactic), then the reading of visual meaning (semantics), which is the second is through the element or elements contained in traditional clothes (a collection of elements), the decorative motifs. Budiwirman (1986) explains that, any decorative motif found on traditional *songket* that can have a specific meaning has been agreed (convention). Good syntactic meaning of the metamorphosis, as well as elements of meaning can be read in two ways, first through the visual language, the second through verbal language (e.g, through the name of any decorative motif). As explained by Couto earlier that visual language is undergoing a transformation shape (air-metamorphosis), as well syntactic (the change in the arrangement of elements) which cause also change in its meaning (semantics). In this position, it will have an easier reading of meaning through verbal language because both (verbal and visual language) did have a relationship with one another, who read - via an icon (which resembles something), index (indicating something) and symbols (meaning agreements, or conventions). The following discussion is generally concerned with the latter which is the reading of meaning through symbols (emblem) since this subject matter sought to be tenable per generation.

Daryusti (2006) added that the emblem is an element that is essential to human life. Even the man is referred to as homosimbolicum, which means that as the creator and giver of meaning by symbol. Emblem is the "meaning something" by mutual consent (the Convention), as something that gives nature and of the same quality and can be represented, recalled, or imagined in reality or mind.



Figure 3. *Penghulu and Bundo Kandung* (Indigenous leaders), wearing oversized clothes during a ceremony at *Minangkabau* costum (Documentation: Budiwirman, 2010).

If this is the symbolism associated with that of the fabric and dressed in traditional *Minang* way, then all the steps, and all the action must be adapted to the meaning of which was approved in the traditional clothes. Wearing a symbol *Destar*, means a man who has reached a high level of thinking, educated, wise and prudent according to his place at the head. Various decorative contained in bonnets interpreted its meaning by the public about the good ways of thinking. One of the decorative motifs for example, Shoots Bamboo shoots, the shoots are the traditional philosophy of human symbol used, which is contained in the word "young usefull, old use up", epitomizes the model for his people.

Then *songket* that is made of garments such as clothes, termed protective of *miang* (fuzz on bamboo), is a cloth that is intended for a curtain attached to the wall. The meaning of the fabric *miang* protective *Silungkang* for villagers' life is to run and soulful with a natural starting point in *alam takambang jadi guru* (nature unfold made teachers). Shirt attached in the body was not only used as a bandage body only, but was followed by a large and loose hand. Great arm described as a propellar of the heat so so cool both for themselves and for children nephew, large chunks likens the wearer has a big heart, *beralam lapang* (broad mind), be patient. Embodiments of this shirt describes the nature and necessity that must be possessed by a leader to be adhered to in the village.

Based on the philosophical meaning, shirt shows the wearer must have hearts roomy as core to resolve all the

problems of his people to be found in the community sphere; these problems can be solved when there are enough condition through wise words in the negotiations. General knowledge on the use and manufacture of custom clothing along with the accessories, should be taught orally or by imitating and lasting for generations (Abraham et al., 1986). Knowledge is only recorded in the memory and repeatedly practiced by every needed by families who will follow the concerned ceremony. Therefore everything is not written and only exists in memory only. Then, as described above, more research and study in the "meaning of *Silungkang Songket* ornament in *Minangkabau* Rules of Indigenous Peoples should be encouraged".

DISCUSSION

Meaning of *Silungkang songket* ornaments in the governance of indigenous *Minangkabau*, revealed where each motif has a meaning as an expression found in the visual language-vehicle communication *dikonvensi*. In addition to a visual language through a variety of motifs is also found in verbal language in the form of proverbs (Figure 3).

Visual Language

Visual language is the beginning of a verbal language.

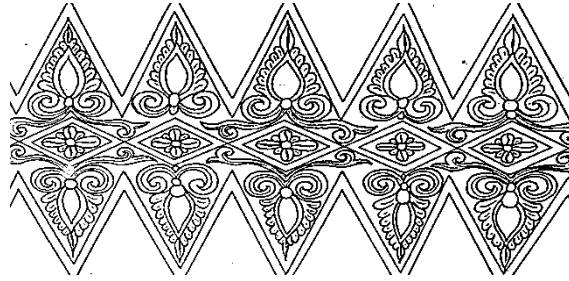


Figure 4. *Pucuak Rabuang* ornament (Sketch: Budiwirman, 2010).

Rosa (2011) says that: visual language is a symbol system that is used as a vehicle for communication and conveyed through visual forms, paintings, reliefs, drawings, sculptures, graphics, motifs, and so on. As for the visual language interpreting, Wucius Wong (1989) said that to interpret visual language, there are many ways. Language Arts does not have rules like spoken language is more established or written grammatically. Therefore, any expert can stimulate the visual language and have the opinions. Good solution can be obtained through intuition, even though most people rely on the foresight of his brain to explore all possibilities in such within the scope of the demands of the problems encountered. Tabarani (1993) said that every tribe has words different to designate the same object, which draws on study language where words are when tribes create what word to refer to the same object. In the visual language of this problem, it is less attractive, as descriptive images for each ethnic group is a simple representation. As a result, the object as it is, is so easily recognizable and similar to each other.

Based on the fact that there are at Silungkang *songket* motifs, such as the meaning of the communication media is very influential in the lives of indigenous Minangkabau. There are varieties of Silungkang *songket* motifs into something that is very important and has implications on the behavior of social and cultural life of indigenous peoples.

The Meaning of Silungkang *Songket* Weaving

Each Silungkang weaving *songket* motifs have meaning Silungkang closely related to the social order, indigenous culture, which is tied with patrons' mechanical solidarity. Here are outlined symbolic values ornamental motifs found in traditional clothes greatness (*songket*) Silungkang, from interviews like this.

Pucuak Rabuang Ornament

Decorative motifs bamboo shoots are a value to the

interpretation that is widely used in the livelihood of indigenous Minangkabau. Crafters make the ornament into woven fabrics. The ornaments *pucuak rabuang* have meaning of versatile value, as a form of role models for indigenous peoples. Dt. Garang (1983) says, this motive is not only the motif carved into a traditional house, but also a basic form *gonjong* of custom homes, which can be seen in the traditional philosophy; *ketek paguno*, *gadang Tapakai* (small can be used, old usable by the public). Child bamboo shoots are coming out of the tuber. Shaped like tumpal (cone) and a scaly, small is good to eat, if it has been great shoots of bamboo called. The symbolisms of bamboo are: Young useful, old use up which are beneficial for all members of the society (Figure 4).

Another phenomenon that can be learned from bamboo as stated by Wimar in Bart (2006) is that when it becomes a high stem, bud always ducked down. This is the epitome of strength without arrogance, one of the qualities that should be possessed by a leader. According to the interpretation of Datuak Rangkayo Sati and Datuak Pingai (interviews) that, symbolic education values is implied by *Pucuak Rabuang* motif that is a strong leader and had the knowledge and authority, respected by the community. Meanwhile shoots have symbolic significance as part of the regeneration process of leadership.

Ornament of *Bada Mudiak*

In *Bada Mudiak* decorative motifs, Bart (2006) says that a type of fish live in the sea many Courant beach. Life of anchovy is very much attracted in the attention of people, so people Silungkang take parable on the behavior that must be considered human. Anchovy is interpreted as gregarious and harmonious. As in the customary words; like anchovy marched upstream, like a flock of birds pigeon fly. This parable is interpreted as living in harmony and peace agreement (Figure 5).

Why must not the little fish strive to reach the upper river? Therefore, the clear water in the upstream. This is the symbolic values of philosophy of education implicit *Bada Mudiak*, which is to get a clear source we have to



Figure 5. *Bada Mudiak* Ornament (Sketch: Budiwirman, 2010).

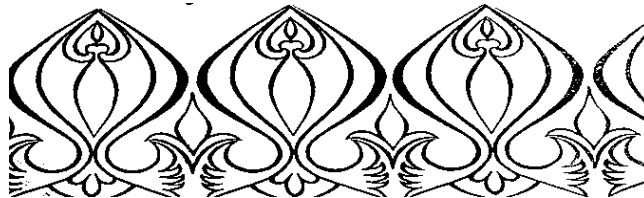


Figure 6. *Buah Palo Bapatah* ornament (Sketch: Budiwirman, 2010).

go back to early times. To resolve the issue we should be go back to early times. There is a divine hidden meaning of this meaning, that to achieve the truth should be back at the actual source, the greatness and truth of God.

Saluak Laka Ornament

Saluak Laka ornament are interwoven mutual aid; lacquer is a pedestal stoneware, made from coconut sticks. Interwoven sticks are formed into useful containers to be pedestal pot. *Laka Saluak* meaningful kinship system exists in society. They interact with the proverbial *saluak lacquer*:

<i>Nan basaluak bak laka</i>	hooked like laka
<i>Nan bakaik bak gagang</i>	barbed like handles
<i>Supayo tali nak jan putuih</i>	So that the rope does not break
<i>Kaik bakaik nak jan ungkai</i>	No barbed hooks disintegrating

Matting *laka* very neat, do not look at the base and the end, as all are recessed into the bottom. Symbolic value behind it is a unified society, strength produce, but always humble. That power is built on the basis of cooperation and sincerity. Individuals are united and melting as a joint force as nothing like copy will stand, or feel more meritorious than others.

Buah Palo Bapatah Ornament

Pala is a kind of herb that many benefits from, both for food seasonings as well as the basic material for medicines. If nutmeg broken (split) into two, will reveal the contents of which resembles the motif on *songket* Silungkang, then it is nice and beautiful (Figure 6).

Ornamentation derived from nutmeg has a symbolic meaning-laden educational messages that share the

beauty and pleasure. Beauty and pleasure are not restricted to belong to a small group of people and not left stored in a closed circle because in a closed loop it is not a beauty, and cannot enjoy the beauty perfectly.

Saik Ajik dan Saik Kalamai

Ajik and *kalamai* is a traditional food made of glutinous rice flour and brown sugar, dark brown, and very sweet. These foods made *songket* motifs Silungkang. *Saik Kalamai* produce parallelogram shape, interpreted as a symbol containing a symbolic meaning in the life-saving and well-planned.

CONCLUSION

Silungkang *Songket* weaving ornament meaning embodies the visual language as a vehicle of communication, which is used as part of the institutional system of indigenous Minangkabau by convention. *Songket* ornament in Silungkang village, shows that the custom clothing is a symbol in the livelihood of indigenous Minangkabau used in traditional ceremonies. Each ornament *songket* has the meaning of a rule or law that must be obeyed by indigenous peoples Silungkang as guidance in living a social life.

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