

The Illumination on Literary Manuscript of the Palace Product:

THE POWER SYMBOLS OF THE PALACE

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The literary texts produced in the centers of Java kingdom in the 18th and 19th centuries, especially from Yogyakarta palace, was illuminated with a lot of very beautiful and diverse. The beauty and diversity of the illumination can not be separated from the role of the palace as a protector in the production of manuscripts. Illumination is important to be studied as one of the efforts to uncover the traditional art forms in Indonesia.

This paper would analyze the form, style, function, and meaning of literary text illumination produced in the palace during the height of the development of the arts, politically at the same time the kingdom is not powerless against the dominance of the colonial government. Illumination is also a synthesis between the elements of pre-Islamic Javanese culture with Islamic values.

Literary texts from the palace typically were illuminated with beautiful and diverse making them more beautiful and valuable. Each manuscript was illuminated with the different form. Illumination graced on many pages. The beauty and diversity of the illumination was a form of kingdom's role as protector or supporter in the production of the manuscripts. Illumination of manuscripts serves to: (1) beautify the manuscripts, enhance the value, dignity, and sanctity; (2) symbolize royal power domination through the use of styles that symbolize the power and greatness of the king.

Keywords: Illumination, manuscript, palace, symbol

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INTRODUCTION

One of cultural heritage of the archipelago is literary manuscript. Literary manuscript written as cultural heritage experienced the peak of the development at XVIII-XIX centuries, which are called *Renaissance* period of Classical Java Manuscripts, whose centers in Kartasura, Surakarta and Yogyakarta palaces. Literary works of this period were generally written by the poet of the palace using new Javanese language. (Adiwimarta in Edi Sedyawati, 2001: 5).

Literary texts produced at renaissance period were adapted from ancient Javanese literature, such as *Serat Rama* (from *Ramayana*), *Serat Bratayuda* (from *Bharatayuddha*), *Serat Mintaraga* (from *Arjunawiwaha*), and *Serat Arjuna Sasrabau* or *Lokapala* (from *Arjunawijaya*). The stories of Persian and Arabic widely influenced on Java script, like Menak Amir Hamza, the story of Joseph, Ahmad Hanapi, and other manuscripts (Kumar & McGlynn, 1996: 173).

Classical Javanese literary texts, especially from Yogyakarta palace, were illuminated with a lot of beauty. Illumination generally adorned double pages on the manuscripts with intricate patterns or styles and variety of colours (polikromatis), which were very interesting visual elements and common features of Java scripts. The beauty and diversity of the illumination on literary text produced by the palace could not be separated from the role of the palace as a protector or supporter in the production of the manuscripts.

Illumination on Classical Javanese manuscripts revealed the diversity, both in the form, style, and color as well as ornaments. Each script had a different style, ranging from the simple to the complex. This difference could be due to differences in time and place of writing, cultural background, available resources and technology owned, as well as the structure and socio-cultural life of the community.

Illumination is an art on books or manuscripts through the use of letters, ornaments, or other forms, especially on the edges of the page. As an art, the illumination is not a direct development of the writing art, so that simple writing without ornament on the page can not be considered as illumination. John W. Bradley asserts that the perfect illumination should be colorful and given or plated by gold (prada). There are times when the text or manuscripts illuminated with

realistic paintings, which by Grohmann considered the illumination in the early period of Islam, which is similar to miniature painting (Diringer, 1967: 21-23).

Illumination is generally placed on the home page, the second, and last, or the page that contains the title, author name, and offerings. Sometimes the whole pages are illuminated and filled with geometric and flora styles. Book cover is usually made of leather that is embossed or stamped with gold. The leather is adorned by geometric and arabes patterns. (Sijelmassi, 1987, 36-38).

Illumination is often applied to the two facing pages (*frontispieces*), in Java it is called *wadana* or *rerenggan* or *sunggingan* interpreted as illumination or enlightenment (*brightening*). Illumination includes: punctuation, frame (enframing) and textual gate (textual gateway), rubric (rubrication), cursive calligraphy, and pictorial calligraphy (Kumar & McGlynn, 1996: 188-191). In general *wadana* is colorful, full of prada, and it is ornated by symbolic ornament (Mulya, 2001: 80).

Manuscript illumination can be seen as a gateway that sacredness the writings and give access to the hidden meaning therein. This text gateway is often manifested in the form or terms of illumination on Java script imitating repetitive ornament on the Qur'an which is complicated and interlocked, or taking the form of lines of Java temple filled with symbols (Behrend, 1990: 42-43). Similarly, the decoration or ornament on manuscript illumination is also not free from certain symbolic meanings associated with functions of illumination or view or life philosophy of script maker. Because the decoration or ornament often contains symbolic values associated with a view or life philosophy of the creator community, so that it becomes more meaningful, with certain expectations as well (Gustami, 2008: 4).

Manuscript illumination as a form of art is closely related to the disclosure requirement sense of beauty. Therefore, the form and its pattern tends to vary from culture. Differences in the expression of art, Rohidi (1995), not solely related to the fulfillment of beauty, but also related to the fulfillment of other needs, both primary and secondary.

Beside beautify the manuscript, illumination in the form of decoration or ornament also reveals certain cultural meanings. Illumination as an art is the

subject of culture, which is crucial to the existence of the palace and it also marks its culture, then there are historical and sociological relationships toward illumination on literary manuscripts to the palace. Otherwise the existence of manuscript illumination is also related to the existence of the palace as supporters.

As a product of culture, illumination is not just an ornament which embellishes the script, but it may have more role than just an ornament, especially those related to the role of the palace as the protector and creator of the manuscript. However, in manuscript illumination, the form, style, function, and meaning are influenced by the elements or the thoughts that existed in the royal court.

Therefore, this paper aims to analyze: (1) the form and the function of illumination; (2) the implementation function of manuscript illumination; (3) the illumination meaning, particularly in relation to the role of the palace. Hopefully this article can give information about the illumination on classical Javanese manuscripts, particularly in exposing one of the traditional arts in Indonesia which is associated with the form, style, function, and meaning.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Based on the purpose of the study, the scientific discipline used is aesthetics. However, historical and semiotics theory are used as a multi-disciplinary approach to examine the problem as a whole and comprehensive. Multi-disciplinary Approach, as stated by R.M. Soedarsono (2001: 194), is very possible and even advisable.

Manuscript illumination is one of art works, therefore to get and analyze the whole illumination, it must be viewed from the aspects of: form, styles, function and meaning of classical Javanese manuscripts. That is way, the problems of form, styles, and its meaning will be analyzed using esthetics theory of E.B Feldman.

Illumination is a product which is produced through a sequence of activities or the process of organizing the elements. Illumination as an art work can be seen as a design. According to Mayer (1988: 109), design is the selection and

preparation of formal elements, or the expression of a artist concept in the size, form, and line, as well as through some consideration of the composition.

The values produced by the combination or organization of visual elements in the illumination are called formal values. Therefore, to understand the aesthetic value and the meaning of illumination, Feldman (1967: 220-221) stressed the importance of studying the structure of art because it is closely related to beauty, and is inseparable from the comprehensive meaning of art works. Through art structure, it will obtain an understanding of : (1) element trait or art element; (2) how elements are organized, which is called design principles; and (3) the way people see and respond to art works.

Further it is explained that basically art has the same function from prehistoric to modern times. The three functions are; (1) *Personal function*, that puts the art as an expression of psychological expression of love, sex, marriage and relationships, death, and circumstances of concern, as well as aesthetic phrasing; (2) *Social function*, which related to political ideology and interests, as well as social interest; and (3) *Physical function*, charged to residential buildings, handicraft and industry.

Illumination can be seen as the way of life of the citizens associated with beauty. As elements or subsystems of culture, the function of illumination can be seen clearly in human life. In this case, illumination is a model of cognition or symbolic system, used selectively by his supporters as the community guidelines in disclosure or, regardless of how simple the demands of the beauty is.

Art is the main culture that plays an important role in the existence of a society simultaneously marking the culture, the historical and sociological relationship between art and the existence of a society cannot be clearly separated. Otherwise the existence of art should be understood integrally towards the existence of community supporters.

Related to that, the understanding of the illumination will never be enough to merely consider a form, but should also traced the roots of his. Thus, the shape, role and value of long illumination will be evident significance in the subsequent development workflow. As a system of symbols, illumination is the aesthetic

meaning providing system together and regulating aesthetics expression pertaining to feelings or emotions of human being.

The Illumination function as an element of culture is the ability to meet some basic or secondary needs of the society. Some aspects of culture are the basic needs, then comes the second type needs (*derived needs*), and secondary needs that must also be met by culture. Finally, all the elements of culture can be seen as the basic needs of the citizens.

Associated with the illumination function or manuscript decorative, there are three abstraction social functions and institutions, those are: (1) related to customs, mannerisms, and other social institution; (2) related to the concerned community concepts; (3) associated with absolute necessity during the integrated life. These three abstractions are depicted in detail, making the meaning and function of illumination or decorative on manuscript clear. This is based on the opinion that the phenomena related to illumination must have meaning and function for slightest for the supporter community.

In relation to the function analysis of illumination or decorative on manuscripts as culture elements, with reference to Malinowski (1944), The study of functional illumination can be directed to: (1) the spiritual function of the illumination, as a means of religious society, institution, or organization that creates them; and (2) the function is to satisfy a series of several needs associated with the rest of his life for example, as a fulfillment of instinct of beauty or the fulfillment of a combination of *human needs*.

DISCUSSION

Classical Javanese Manuscript Illumination

In general, Illumination on classical Javanese manuscripts is integral part of the development of Javanese manuscripts. Illumination, its meaning is to enlight or expose manuscript pages through ornament or decoration, is a specific tradition. Illumination is used to embellish the pages of manuscripts.

Among Classical Javanese manuscripts stored in the Sonobudoyo museum which was illuminated, manuscript of Yogyakarta palace is presently the most numerous and beautiful, and the most varied forms of illumination. Illumination

reveals the diversity, both in form and structure, ornamentation and color. Each illumination has different forms, ranging from the simple to the complex. One of the texts that has very beautiful illumination is *Serat Ambiya* script which is the scriptorium results of Hamengku Buwono V, which by Behrend (1989) considered the most beautiful manuscripts, valuable and priceless beauty. Illumination is rich with style and color, and coated with gold or prada, using the European newsprint paper.

The beauty of the illumination can not be separated from the role of the palace as the cultural center. Rulers or nobles deal of support in the writing of the manuscripts. Drafting in the palace, as stated by Ann Kumar and McGlynn (1996: 199), that manuscript produced in palace involving people who have expertise in the arts, so that the manuscripts are very beautiful. The beauty of manuscript illumination of the palace can not be separated from the height of the development of the illumination art which occurs in the palace of Yogyakarta. As stated by Gallop and Arps (1991: 93), that *sunggingan* arts reached its peak in the palace of Yogyakarta.

Illumination in Classical Javanese Manuscripts generally consists of a double-page illumination on the opposite side of the *verso* and *recto*. The structures of the illumination, particularly in the manuscripts of Yogyakarta palace, are adapted on many manuscripts pages.

Illumination basically covers all areas of decoration or contained in the manuscript, including the decoration on the cover or cover. Referring to Ann Kumar and McGlynn (1996: 188), illumination on Classical Javanese manuscripts includes: (1) the decoration of the frame (*frame*) called *wadana* are on the turn of *pupuh*, that consists of recurring shapes up (*wadana renggan*) and gate shapes (*wadana gapuran*); (2) the decoration of texts (*rubrication*) to mark the paragraph or stanza, and the other important parts of the text; and (3) Punctuation decoration consisting of ornaments *pepadan*, *wulu*, *suku*, and *pangkon*.

The illumination on Classical Javanese Manuscripts are decorated by variety styles, styles used are as follows: (1) Geometric Style, consists of: gyre style, slope (*machete*), *tumpal* (*tlacapan*), bamboo shoots (Java: *untu walang*), lozenges (*saton or wajikan*), *kawung*, and style *Jlamprang* or paper paste; (2)

Flora Style, consists of leaves style (*patran*, *lung*, and *sulur*) and flower style (jasmine, chrysolite, chrysanthemums and lotus); (3) Fauna Style, consists of aquatic animal style (fish), land animal style (snake and elephant), wing beast style (eagle wings (*lar*), and imaginative animal style (dragon); (4) Human Style, is displayed in the form of a giant face stylization tangible or *kala*; and (5) Landscape technological object Style such as guns, cannons, buildings gates, houses, or parts of other buildings.

Style developed through repetition of form or structure of the fabric style in a symmetrical pattern. The repetition of styles forms composition symmetrically, orderly, groove, forming interlocking fabric such as woven, giving the impression of a complicated and as if there are no boundaries between styles. Through the symmetrical organization, it is not only produced arrangement of illumination symmetrically as well, but also orderly and harmonious. Gustami stated (2009: 7-8), the patterns are symmetrical repetition not only to obtain precision of repetition, but also to create harmony.

Each style in the illumination has function or role of each. Referring to the style role suggested by Gustami (2008: 8-9), styles in this illumination have roles as: (1) main style, which is the center of attention, such as style tendrils, eagle wings (*lar*), peacock, snake (dragon), fish, humans or giants, and style of buildings; (2) extras style that serves as the principal supporter style, which consists of style ropes, flowers, pillars, windows of houses, and so on; (3) stuffing style that serves as a complement to an arrangement of decorative patterns, which form of style tumpal, gyre, lozenges, lung, ropes, flowers, style *semen*, and so on. Sometimes geometric and floral styles are arranged to form the fabric style resembling arabes.

Function and Meaning of Illumination

As a form of artistic expression, of course, illumination is applied to the aesthetic manuscript purpose, which is to embellish the script. Ornament implementation on manuscript illumination gives beauty. However, beauty is not to interfere with the legibility of the text or make text difficult to read, because the provision of customized illumination with text fields.

Shape and arrangement of the illumination are aligned with composition and the field of the text as a medium of communication, which convey the contents of the manuscript.

Illumination is not just a decoration given to merely embellish the manuscript, but also has functions related to the content and position of the text. Giving a beautiful illumination makes the value of the text higher and nobler in position, and has sacred values. This is consistent with the functions of Islamic decorative art, as proposed by Faruqi and Faruqi (1992: 401), that the decoration is applied to increase the function of sacred illuminated manuscripts.

Illumination which can be viewed as a text frame visualizes the spiritual power that flows from the reading of sacred texts, which as a gateway or entrance to text. Illumination like the light surrounds the sacred text. Symbols that indicate the presence of light is emitted from the illumination surrounding the text. Not only that, the infinite decoration, which resembles arabes, emits a symbol of God's infinite power.

Styles of the illumination on Classical Javanese manuscript are styles containing symbolic meaning. Such as *lung-lungan* style and rope style which meanings are giving each other, *tumpal* style or *tlacapan* describes light or grandeur, and Patran style implies perfection. Bird wings or eagle style generally symbolizes nobleness and all the universe of power source, the one almighty God (Prawirohardjo, 2011: 4). Beside eagle style, elephant style also symbolizes the greatness, power, and legal justice.

Other styles which implies symbolic meanings are peacock which symbolizes the world and sanctity, and style snakes, dragons, and fish which symbolize the underworld. Snake or dragon style is an icon of Yogyakarta Sultanate which has symbolic meaning of unity between the king and his people (Sunaryo, 2009: 104). Kala shaped human style is a symbol of the sun or a symbol of the upper world, which has the magical power to give life and reject evil (Sunaryo, 2009: 50).

Besides styles, colour elements have the important roles in illumination and have symbolic or spiritual meaning. Gold is often used, especially for the

coating on the panels or style. Gold is the initial elements which gives the impression of luxury and have transcendental nature.

Illumination also serves to mark the turn of the story, stanzas, metrum, and so on. Ornament style of Leaves, flowers, or elephant are used to decorate or to mark the separator between stanzas, and the punctuation is different in each pupuh. Punctuation ornament or *pepadan*, provides ease of reading text or specify parts of the text.

Manuscript illumination can also indicate condition of the time when the manuscript copied or written, particularly those that have been achieved in Yogyakarta palace. Manuscripts and illuminations may be a reflection of the knowledge of the people who write and decorate a script, or show creativity and insight into the rules of aesthetics. Illumination indicates all thinking devoted to embellish the manuscript.

A hypothesis had been raised about the development of art in Java palaces (Yogyakarta and Surakarta 19th century), which says it had developed a lot of fruitful artistic works, which politically more powerless against the domination of the Netherlands. The hypothesis still needs to be questioned and proven whether literary works produced in this period were superior to what were produced in the past. In this case, the center of literary activities should not only be seen in the centers of political power, but can also be seen in other centers (Sedyawati, 2001: 25).

Classical Javanese manuscripts that are beautifully illuminated could become one proof of the hypothesis, that the manuscript was made also for political purposes. Classical Javanese manuscripts are manuscripts which are produced in the palace of Yogyakarta in XVIII and XIX centuries, times of increasing of text production, both in quality and quantity. Classical Javanese manuscripts of that period were generally decorated with exquisite illuminations, which were different from the texts produced in the past.

A large number of manuscripts produced in the palace and beautiful illumination that reached its peak in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries proof that the literary work to show royal dominance. This is reinforced by the use of a lot of styles symbolizes power and greatness, like eagle style which symbolizes

strength or power, elephant style symbolizes the greatness, and snake and dragon styles are the icons of Yogyakarta sultanate containing the symbolic meaning of unity between the king and his people.

Thus it becomes clear, that the illumination on Classical Javanese manuscripts not only aims to embellish the manuscript as aesthetic function of illumination, but also has the function as punctuation or *pepadan*, and political functions to show the dominance of royal power.

CONCLUSION

From the discussion, it can be concluded: First, illumination on Classical Javanese manuscripts has the forms as follows: (1) frame ornaments (*frame*) or called *wadana* shaped up repeatedly (*wadana renggan*) and gate shape (*wadana gapuran*) which resembles the shape of the temple. Frame ornaments contained the turn of the pages, which is a marker of early stanzas, paragraphs or sections of the texts considered important, (2) ornament on the part of the text (*rubrication*) in the form of a structured recesses three lined and decorated with ornaments; (3) punctuation ornament consists of ornament *pepadan*, *wulu*, *tribal*, and *pangkon*.

Illumination on Classical Javanese manuscripts is decorated with a variety of styles, such as: Geometric style, flora style, fauna style, human style (giants or *kala*), and landscape and technological objects style.

That style is widely used in a variety of artifacts from pre-Islamic times. In general, Style in illumination is manifested through stylization or abstraction, and structured repeatedly formed repetition style in a symmetrical pattern to produce a harmonious arrangement of illumination. Each type of style is given color with *sungging* or gradation techniques.

Second, as a form of artistic expression, illumination applied to the text has an aesthetic function, which serves to: (1) embellish the script, that makes the value of them higher and noble position, (2) make texts more sacred, because the illumination light that surrounds like a sacred text, (3) mark the turn of the story, stanzas, metrum, and so on; (4) shows the dominance of royal power, or for

political purposes, as indicated by the use of a lot of styles symbolizing power and greatness of Yogyakarta sultanate.

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