

THE SYMBOLIC VALUES OF MYTHICAL IMAGES AT KERATON KASEPUHAN CIREBON

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Abstrak

Masyarakat Nusantara merupakan masyarakat dengan latar belakang kerajaan, sehingga seluruh pola pikir, dan pola hidup masyarakat Nusantara dipengaruhi oleh pakem dan aturan-aturan, norma-norma, serta nilai-nilai yang diajarkan oleh civitas kerajaan secara sporadis, komprehensif dan turun-temurun. Salah-satu bentuk penyebaran ajaran-ajaran suci tersebut yakni dengan melalui pendekatan mitologi, baik melalui seni sastra, seni tari, maupun seni rupa, salahsatunya adalah dengan menampilkan sosok figur imajinatif dalam bentuk patung, relief, ataupun ilustrasi pada ornament-ornamen hiasan. Imaji-imaji mitos di Keraton Kasepuhan Cirebon secara historik-diakronik merupakan simbol akulturasi dan multikulturalisme, yakni merupakan pengaruh kebudayaan Islam, Negeri Tiongkok, dan Kebudayaan Hindu. Imaji-imaji mitos tersebut, secara sinkronik juga merupakan sosok mitos yang memberikan nilai-nilai atau makna simbolik dan filosofis akan pentingnya wilayah kehidupan dalam “tiga dunia” atau ‘triloka’: Dunia Atas yakni wilayah spiritual dan transenden, Dunia Bawah yakni wilayah imajinatif dan bawah sadar, Dunia Tengah yakni wilayah dunia nyata, materialistik, atau imanen. Nilai-nilai simbolik dan filosofis yang ada pada sosok mitos-imajinatif di Keraton Kasepuhan Cirebon dielaborasi dengan metode penelitian kualitatif dengan melakukan wawancara langsung kepada civitas Keraton Kasepuhan, juga dengan studi literatur sehingga hasil penelitian menjadi khazanah ilmu pengetahuan dan upaya publikasi dalam rangka keberpihakkan akan kearifan lokal Nusantara.

Kata kunci: imaji mitos, multikulturalisme, makna simbolik, makna filosofis, akulturasi

Abstract

The people of Nusantara were a society with a royal background, so the entire mindset and lifestyle of the people were influenced by the standards of rules, norms, and values taught by the royal community in sporadically, comprehensively, and from generation to generation. One way of spreading these sacred teachings is through a mythological approach, either by literature, dance, or fine arts, one of which is by displaying imaginative figures in the form of sculptures, reliefs, or illustrations on traditional ornaments. The mythical images in Keraton Kasepuhan Cirebon are historical-diachronic symbols of acculturation and multiculturalism, which are the influence of Islamic culture, Chinese culture, and Hinduism culture. These mythical images are synchronously mythical figures that provide symbolic and philosophical values or meanings of the importance of the real-life in the “three worlds” or ‘triloka’: first, the Upper World, namely the spiritual and transcendent realm. Second, the Underworld which is an imaginative and subconscious world. Third is the Middle World, it is the materialistic, or immanent world. The symbolic and philosophical values that exist in the mythical-imaginative figure in the Kasepuhan Keraton Cirebon are elaborated with qualitative research methods by conducting direct interviews with the Kasepuhan Palace community, also by studying literature so that the research results become a treasure trove of science and publication efforts in the context of siding with local-wisdom archipelago.

Keywords : mythical images, multiculturalism, symbolic meanings, philosophical meanings, acculturation

INTRODUCTION

1. Myth in Civilizations

The life of human civilization cannot be separated from the culture which continues to run and develop in accordance with the needs and interests of each human being, both personally and communally. Culture characterizes the development of people's mindset and lifestyle from one place, so that they can differentiate from other places because of the results of this culture, in his book "Rethinking Multiculturalism", Bhikhu Parekh states: "Culture is a system of meanings and meanings created historically or, what leads to the same thing, a system of beliefs and practices in which a group of people understands, regulates, and structures their individual and collective life. Culture is a good way to understand as well as to organize human life."

Myth is a form of human culture that has been implemented long ago by humans in every pattern of life and mindset. Myths are used by grouped (communal) human beings around the world as a form of representation in conveying teachings, values, guidelines and limitations in regulating patterns of daily life which are conveyed regeneratively and continuously. Myth is such a world. Thinkers of many different disciplines have found that at all times myth represents an absolute truth, affords insight ... "[5] (Veronica ions, 2005).

Mythology plays an important role in the order of life (especially traditional society), so that with the myth all norms, rules and values are created. Myths are considered to play an important role and have a big influence on civilization in this world, as we know Greek civilization which is very much influenced by its mythology of the life of the gods through myths that are considered sacred and even human, as well as civilizations in Babylon, Egypt, Syria, the East. Middle, also the

American Indian community. As Joseph Campbell wrote in his book:

The Power of Myth, he wrote that: "Myth are stories of our search through the age for truth, for meaning, for significance. We all need to tell our story and to understand our story". Myths can be said to have a very strong role in shaping civilization in this world, including what happened to civilizations in the archipelago

2. Mythical Images

Mythical images are images, or objects, statues or reliefs that represent mythical figures or figures. Maybe it can also be called an illustration of a mythological figure, that is, because mythological figures are usually not real (unreal) or fictional, and do not live in the real world, so to present them of course through images or illustrations. Human culture in fact needs these images, so that with these images all aspects of life are arranged, both values, norms, customs, and philosophy of life with the help of oral stories when conveying them. Of course this happens to all cultures, especially those with a center of government, such as a kingdom. That is why in the Yogyakarta Palace, the Surakarta Palace, and the Palaces in Cirebon there are so many mythological images. Mythological images, of course, are imaginative, fictional, and fictional because their initial function is as a form of conveying messages about values, or standard rules agreed upon by certain communities, mythological images are images of everything in the form of narratives or stories, so that this image is illustrative.

Symbols and Symbolization

Symbolization, literally means the process of simplifying something into certain symbols or certain signs. For example: Courage is symbolized by

the color red, wisdom is symbolized by the color white, strength is symbolized by the bull or horse, peace is symbolized by the dove, and so on. This also occurs in traditional culture, for example in the Yogyakarta Palace, this symbolization is also widely applied through pictures or sculptures. For example: Kalamekara image which is a symbol of protection and strength, symbolized by a demit (monstrous figure) in the form of a giant reptile with canines sticking out and a long nose like an elephant's trunk, this figure symbolizes strength as well as protection. This is why the Kalamekara figure is found at the gates of temples, palaces, and even in the puppet *gunungan*. Another example, there are 63 pillars in the Yogyakarta Palace, which are taken from the number or age of the Prophet, this is a symbol of obedience to the life teachings (guidelines) of the Prophet as the Prophet in Islam. Or a dragon figure that symbolizes strength and power, even the dragon is believed to be the wife of Hamengku Bhuwono IX, namely Nyi Roro Kidul. Or the *gayam* tree planted in the entire palace, totaling six trunks, which symbolizes the pillars of faith in Islamic culture.

Mythology and Kejawen Mystics in Javanese Society

The Javanese people are very synonymous with their traditional life patterns, this is certainly influenced by the existence of a royal government system that is still active on the island today, namely the Cirebon Kingdom in West Java Province, the Paku Bhuwono Kingdom in Central Java Province, and the Hamengku Kingdom. Bhuwono Ngayogyakarta Hadiningrat in DI Province Yogyakarta. This makes people in Java, who are in the palace area, tend to have a traditional and feudalist and patriarchal mindset, compared to people in other areas because their traditions and

life patterns are still influenced by the system implemented by the still ruling kingdom. . It can be concluded that, the people of East West Java, the people of Central Java and Yogyakarta, have more traditional nuances than other provinces in Java, this is also supported by the history of a very strong royal society that occurred and was formed on the island of Java, coupled with the still The establishment of important historical heritage sites, and of course still very relevant and functional until today, Borobudur Temple, Prambanan Temple, Suku Temple, Cetho Temple, and other temples, it seems very appropriate to explain this. The role of the kingdom in shaping the characteristics of the Javanese is very strong, this is inseparable from the pattern of delivery and dissemination of teachings, values and customs through myths which are passed down from generation to generation, are regenerative, and continuous in nature, even today

Mysticism-Kejawen also greatly influences the mindset of Javanese society, as expressed by Suwardi Endaswara, in his book: "Mystic Kejawen - syncretism, symbolism, and Sufism in Javanese spiritual culture -", he wrote:

"Almost every area of Kejawen always has myths that are believed. These myths are used as a direction for life, obeyed, adored, and given a special place in his life. Kejawen areas usually still carry out mysticism, although the levels vary. Each region has its own uniqueness in carrying out mystique "

The myth that was able to shape the mindset and pattern of life of the Javanese people at first, of course, before the *samawiyah* religion (the religion of the sky, a religion formed based on divine revelation through the intermediary of the Prophet or Apostle namely: Judaism, Catholicism and Islam) came and influenced the character of

the kingdoms. the. Mythology is indirectly able to shape the character of society slowly, in detail, and acculturatively, that is, mythology is able to change the perspective, paradigm and way of thinking of society not suddenly (revolutionary), but slowly and gradually in the long term. a long time (evolutive). So that to get rid of mythic nuances in the characteristics of Javanese society, of course it is not easy because of its radical and strong nature, no wonder most Javanese people still use myths as a reference for living their lives, from looking for finances, looking for types of business, to finding a mate. even finding a good time to do something. Then there are patterns and cultural characteristics that are mixed (mixed) between the old teachings and the new one they embraced. Myths have greatly influenced the lifestyle of the Javanese people in general, from then until now. Furthermore, Suwardi also revealed that:

“Such Javanese mythology will lead to inner actions of the Kejawen community. Through these spiritual actions they will master the ngelmu kasi-dan teak. This means that knowledge becomes a perfect life and death guide. The kejawen life tradition is usually the foundation of his life is theological. Theosophy is a teaching that recognizes things related to God based on inner deepening. Life wisdom is always based on inner strength that wants to be one with God “

The form of mythology in Javanese society is divided into two forms, namely: spoken (oral) and invisible (non-representative) mythology, and sensory (empirical) mythology, so that it can be seen, heard, and touched (representative). Non-representative mythology, is a mythology in the form of narrative and is conveyed through speech, or in words, through fairy tales, fables, epic stories, folk tales, legends, myths (stories about gods), traditional song lyrics, rhymes, and others. Mean-

while, representative mythology is mythology that is conveyed through things that can be felt by our senses, for example in the form of dance, music, shows, ornate ornaments, masks, sculptures, paintings, pictures, reliefs, or man-made sites (artifact). . Mythology certainly discusses fundamental matters, from social order, daily manners, customs, to forms of worship of transcendental gods and goddesses. Mythology is conveyed mainly to create boundaries so that all behavior that occurs in society is felt to be in accordance with the rules, values, norms, manners, and ethics, or morality (ethic).

RESEARCH METHODS

This research is a qualitative study by conducting studies on mythical images in the Keraton Kasepuhan Cirebon. The datas were obtained through direct interviews with the members of the Keraton Kasepuhan, in this case the Sultan Kasepuhan Cirebon protocoler, the datas that had been obtained through direct interviews were then elaborated and analyzed by being compared and combined with data from other sources such as Cirebon cultural observers, or the community. Cirebon, also with data obtained from other Keraton members in Cirebon, in this case the Keraton Kanoman. Apart from the data obtained directly empirically, other data were obtained from literature studies, both from books and ancient manuscripts that have been translated and through the study process by previous researchers. Furthermore, the datas are elaborated and studied for their philosophical meanings, symbolic meanings, and aesthetic meanings, supported by related literature as a reference in order to reach conclusions and the results of research or studies.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Mythology in Cirebon Culture

Like the pattern of life in other royal systems in the Nusantara, the life of the Kasepuhan Palace in Cirebon is also dominated by patriarchal, feudal and mythic life patterns. Myths are very thick and play a strong role in every pattern of life of the Keraton community, starting from manners, manners, customs, ritual ceremonies, and worship. Myths are very influential in the life of the Keraton, so this certainly spreads to all levels of society in the residency of the Keraton Kasepuhan Cirebon, this continues, is hereditary, and is sacred, no wonder until now, mystical life is still common. in the traditional community in Cirebon despite the influences of various cultures from outside Cirebon.

2. Singa Barong As A Mythical Images In Keraton Kasepuhan Cirebon

Singa Barong is a golden-carriage used in certain ceremonies at Keraton Kasepuhan Cirebon.

2.1 Multiculturalism Values of Singa Barong

As befits a culture, Cirebon has a culture that is influenced by cultures that are interrelated both historically, symbolically, and philosophically. The Cirebon culture is certainly the result of a combination of cultures that influence Cirebon so that Cirebon is the result of comprehensive accul-

turations in the context of multiculturalism. The context of multiculturalism is presented in the form of a Singa Barong hybrid creature, which means that the hybridity in Singa Barong's visualization is a form of representation of the concept of multiculturalism in the cultural area.

2.2 The Historical-Diacronic Meaning of Singa Barong (The Meaning Behind Singa Barong)

Based on the results of direct interviews with the members of Keraton Kasepuhan Cirebon, historically, Singa Barong is a hybrid creature which is a hybridity or symbol of acculturation from three cultures that influenced the government of the Kasepuhan Kingdom Cirebon, namely: Islamic Culture from Egypt, Hindu Culture from India, and Culture Konghuchu from China, this is implied from the anatomy of the Singa Barong, which each represents these cultures. The body parts of Singa Barong, are representative parts of the cultures that influenced Cirebon, for example the wings, legs, spurs and tail, were

The part adopted from the figure of the imaginative buraq (burok), this buraq is an imaginative creature that is believed by the Middle East as a vehicle, or a ride by the Prophet when he carried out God's orders to take a spiritual journey, namely making the night journey from Mecca to The city of Medina (birth journey), and the spiritual journey from earth to sidratul-munthaha which is a place in the spiritual realm where he is shown life in the afterlife, and which in the end he gets orders to carry out his duties as Rasulullah with the command to pray five times a day (the Isra and Mi'raj Muhammad), in the next chapter it is explained that the influence of Islamic culture on Singa Barong has the essence of the attainment of Islamic spiritual life, which is known as *makrifatullah*.



Fig. 1. Kereta Kencana Singa Barong.
(Private Documentation)

While the trunk, ivory, ears, and body are parts that are adopted from the figure. elephant beast, which is An important icon of Hindu culture in India, the elephant is not only a typical animal that lives in India, but also has a close connection with Indian society and culture, or Hinduism because it is associated with the figure of Lord Ganesha, the god of knowledge who is the son of Lord Shiva, so the Elephant and Ganesha is an important figure or entity in the mindset and way of life of Hindu society both in India and in the world. This mindset and life-pattern should be harmonious, a harmonious combination for the sake of carrying out the continuity of life in this world, so in the next section it is explained that the Singa Barong influenced by Hindu culture contains an important message to instill values for life in the material world, or the real world.

The head of Singa Barong has distinctive organs, including: sharp horns and branches like deer horns, sharp and pointed teeth, two pairs of fangs, then scales on part of its body and strong and strong claws on each finger. These organs are parts that are adopted from the imaginary figure of the Dragon in Chinese culture, because the characteristics of the dragon figure are identical to such distinctive organs, but of course it is very different between the Dragon in Chinese culture and the Dragon in Javanese culture, because physically Javanese dragons, usually wearing crowns, wearing ear ornaments and usually only in the form of a giant snake without limbs, so it is alleged that the dragon with legs is an influence from China.

The three cultures that influence Cirebon culture are reflected thoroughly in every part of the Singa Brong anatomy as a representation of the hybridity of creatures, which is essentially a manifestation of multiculturalism that occurs in Cirebon culture, this is of course deliberately done by

the founder of the Kingdom of Cirebon with the intention of conveying sacred values to the Cirebon people so that gradually it would influence the mindset and lifestyle of the Cirebon people under the Keraton government, so that Singa Barong has historically had a very strong influence on life-patterns and patterns. -thinked the court civitas until recently.

2.3 The Synchronic Meaning of Singa Barong (The Philosophical Meanings of Singa Barong)

The symbolic meaning of Singa Barong, related to the culture that influences it, Singa Barong is a symbol of the strength of these three parts of life. In this life, for the sake of running life, the Keraton people believe that the world is divided into three: the Upper World, the Middle World, and the Underworld.

The Upper World, is a spiritual world, a celestial world or a transcendent world, namely a world that is inhabited by things that are holy and sanctify, this world above or the sky is symbolized by birds, namely birds whose place of life is "above" or in the sky, this is is a symbol of spiritual life, transcendent life that is identical with divine and godly conditions in the realm of makrifat, that is also why birds are taken from Islamic culture, because the conditions of Isra and Mi'raj Muhammad SAW, are conditions of makrifatullah which are the culmination of his apostleship so that they reach sidratul munthaha (seventh heaven), the symbol of paksi (wings, tail, spurs and claws) found in Singa Barong, is a symbol of the transcendent Upper World, the world of attainment of closeness to the Creator.

While the elephant figure is a symbol of the Middle-world, the material world, the physical world, or the real world everyday where worldly

things are taking place, that is also why the Middle World is identified with the culture of Hinduism, where all of its teachings are teachings - Grounded lessons, about our behavior in this world, contain teachings on the importance of compassion, *tepo saliro*, compassion, and mutual respect like all the teachings of other earth religions. Liman is also a real creature (real), which is still alive today, in contrast to Bouraq, and the Dragon who is in an imaginative realm. Liman is also the incarnation of Lord Ganesha, which means that in living this life, Lord Ganesha's contribution must be implemented in everyday life, especially in the area of knowledge and wisdom.

The dragon is a symbol of the under-world, where all things that are identical to the "dark side" of humans, or the dark side of life, originate. Dragons are in the spiritual realm as well as birds, but in the area of darkness, which is where all negative traits, including greed, originate, that is why the dragon figure always looks creepy, with bulging eyes, outstretched fangs, and sticking out tongue and horns. sharp, it is a symbol of the dark side of man, such as sin, envy, evil, hypocrisy, and others living, it is present as a balance and as a means of 'self-insecurity' for the owner of the body, in order to avoid all these actions, despite their existence. Of course it is very humane, there is a side of the paradox that is inserted into the dragon symbol, but the point is that humans in carrying out their lives must be accompanied by an awareness of negative passions that must be avoided in order to harmonize the life they live in harmony. In Chinese culture, the Dragon is the only imaginative creature found in the Chinese astrological or zodiac culture, according to Chinese culture, the Dragon is a special figure because it is paradoxical, symbolically present on the one hand as a symbol of strength and greatness, on the other

hand it exists as destruction and horror.

2.4 Hybridity of Singa Barong

Hybridity is the process of interbreeding between entities with different types and contexts, hybridity in a cultural area means that there is a combination of one culture with another with or unintentional, so that gradually a new culture is formed as a result of this hybridization, for example acculturation in Cirebon culture which is a cross-breeding of Javanese, Islamic, Hindu, and Confucian cultures. In living things, hybridity is carried out with the aim of producing perfect and superior offspring, that is why in the field of agriculture, cross-breeding is sought so as to obtain superior seeds from hybridization, for example hybrid coconut, hybrid rice, or others. Likewise with animals, cross-breeding is carried out to enrich the varieties of certain species, so that one species can produce new and superior varieties, for example in dogs, cats, horses, cows, birds and others. Hybridity in the cultural context of Cirebon is represented by the traditional image of Singa Barong, which is a cross between birds, dragons and elephants and has historically been an acculturation of Islamic (bird / *buraq*), Chinese (dragon), and Hindu (elephant) cultures. a symbol of the harmonization of the Cirebon people even though historically they are a society that is influenced by multi-cultures or various cultures. Hybridity in Singa Barong is a form of representation of multiculturalism that occurs in Cirebon.

2.5 Anatomy of Singa Barong

To be able to understand the hybridity of a figure, we must first see the figure in plain view, this means that it is related to the anatomy of the figure which needs to be considered one by one so that we can identify, what are the figures contained in the

hybrid figure. which is an influence from another figure before. Singa Barong, as a figurative image, is a hybrid figure of three creatures that have distinctive characteristics and have a strong symbolization of each of these creatures. Anatomically, Singa Barong has proportions like other types of creatures, namely having the main anatomy, such as the head, body, and arms or legs. Anatomically, Singa Barong has a head that resembles a dragon in general, but is more similar to a dragon from mythology in the Asian Continent than dragons from other cultures. The typical characteristics of this dragon from Asia are, having horns, in the form of a giant reptile (usually a type of snake), sharp eyes (its eyes), teeth that are also sharp and equipped with two pairs of sharp and large fangs, the difference is Singa Barong. , has a trunk and tusks similar to a trunk and tusks on an elephant (liman), that is what distinguishes Singa Barong from other common dragon images. However, according to Sofiyawati, apart from the assumption that the dragon is a symbol of Chinese culture, the dragon which is represented in the Singa Barong appearance tends to be influenced by the Hindu art style. This is indicated by the use of a crown on his head and sumping on the side of his ear.

In addition to this visual characteristic, Singa Barong also has a peculiarity in its trunk gripping a three-pointed weapon (trident) at the tip and base. In addition, Singa Barong also has wings on both of its front legs, so it is believed that Singa Barong can or has the ability to fly like a bird / buraq. On its legs, Singa Barong has anatomy of legs like those of predators from the big cat family that live on land, such as tigers, lions or tigers.

On its body, Singa Barong has a sturdy and strong anatomical shape, like creatures that live on land, such as horses, buffaloes, elephants, or bison and on its back there is a saddle or base for a

mount, which is a rider's seat. This shows that Singa Barong is a creature or figure that can be ridden or is someone's mount. In the tail, Singa Barong's tail is very similar to that of a horse, because it has the characteristics of a dense tail that is overgrown with hair like a horse's tail, in contrast to the tail of an elephant or buffalo which only has hair on the tip of its tail. In overall anatomy, Singa Barong has the following characteristics:

1. Head: in the form of the head of a dragon, complete with horns that branch like deer horns, sharp teeth and a protruding tongue, decorated with a crown
2. Trunk and ivory: on the face (face), are tusks and trunks that resemble an elephant (liman), by gripping (more precisely wrapped around) a weapon (chakra) which has three pointed ends (sula), at the tip and base
3. Body: in the form of an animal that is usually ridden with a strong and sturdy character, such as in an elephant, horse or buffalo, this is indicated by the presence of a saddle on its back.
4. Limbs: the front legs are equipped with a pair of wings, while the hind limbs are not, each leg has sharp nails like those of carnivores
5. Wings: the wings of Singa Barong, in the form of wings that are owned by birds in general, which indicates that this creature is capable of flight. According to Nina Sofiyawati in her journal writing, the shape of the wings and body in Singa Barong seems to have a tendency to put more emphasis on the depiction of the winged buraq, the animal form of Persian (Islamic) mythology. This buraq, which displays a form like a winged horse, is considered



Fig. 2. **Cirebon Batik Ornaments of Singa Barong**
(private documentation)

a symbol of strength, purity, immortality, and protection.

6. Tail: Singa Barong's tail, has thick hair on almost the entire tail, similar to the tail of a horse, this is also allegedly an adoption of a buraq tail influenced by Middle Eastern culture.

2.6 Singa Barong in Traditional Art

Singa Barong on Cirebon Batik Ornaments

So strong is the image of Singa Barong from the Keraton Kasepuhan, so that it influences the mindset and daily lifestyle of the Cirebon people, this can be seen from Cirebon's traditional crafts or arts featuring the figure of Singa Barong, for example, is applied to Cirebonan batik ornaments.

Singa Barong on Keris

The Singa Barong is also found in keris or-



Fig. 3. **Keris with Singa Brong on the ornaments.**
(from: www.losanajisakti.com)



Fig. 4. **Singa Barong on glass painting Cirebon traditional art**
(private documentation)

nement, especially on the head of the keris, this shows that the people of Cirebon have made Singa Barong a guide in their thinking and lifestyle including in defense equipment or traditional weapons, such as the keris for example.

Singa Barong in Cirebon Glass Painting

Singa Barong is also found in many traditional Cirebon paintings, namely glass painting, glass painting with the subject matter of Singa Barong, which is usually painted complete with a carriage date, but there are several traditional artists who present it separately, so only the figure of Singa barong is shown. without the train date, and usually complemented by a "mega-mendung" motif as a decoration or backdrop, or fore-ground (fore-ground). In glass painting, the Singa Barong object is sometimes difficult to distinguish from the Paksi Naga Liman object found in the Keraton Kanomann, however for the Cirebon people it is very easy to distinguish the distinctive features of the two images, one of which is by distinguishing the types of trains which are very obvious, that the Kereta Kencana Singa Barong has a roof, while Kereta Kencana Paksi Naga Liman does not, Singabarong also does not wear a crown on its head, while Paksi Naga Liman wears a crown.

3. Macan Ali

Another interesting imaginative figure is the



Fig. 5. Couple of Macan Ali on the center of the Keraton Kasepuhan. (private documentation)

Macan Ali couple, we can see this figure in the middle of the park right in front of the Keraton building. Tiger Ali is in the form of a tiger animal, with more teeth than a real tiger and white. Ali tiger is a symbol of strength and might from Islamic culture, Ali's name is taken from the name Sayidinna Ali bin Abi Talib, the son-in-law of the Prophet who was famous for his strength and courage to oppose Islam and protect his Prophet's in-laws, apart from the Prophet's son-in-law, Ali was one of the Prophet's friends after his death. he became one of the khilafaurasyidin (a Khalifa or great leader at the level of the president), Macan Ali is a mythical hybrid figure with white color which is a symbol of strength and purity, courage, bravery, loyalty and protection, why they are placed at the entrance to the palace. Like oth-



Fig. 6. Image of Macan Ali on glass painting traditional art (from: <https://lukisanku.id/lukisan-macan-ali-karya-kusdono>)



Fig. 7. Image Macan Ali in Arabic Calligraphy. (From: islami.co)

er mythical images, Macan Ali's images are also applied to various Cirebon traditional arts, especially in fine arts, such as reliefs, glass paintings, and batik motifs.

Besides being in the Kasepuhan Palace, the figure of Macan Ali is also in the Kanoman Palace in Cirebon, but visually they have minor differences. Macan Ali in the Kanoman Palace in Cirebon is different from Macan Ali in the Kasepuhan Palace in Cirebon, Macan Ali in Kanoman, has a pair and the male has horns and thick hair, complete with large and sharp fangs and bulging eyes, while the The female does not appear to have horns and a less dense mane, but her teeth and fangs appear complete and sharp. Tiger Ali. Macan Ali, which is located in the Kanoman Palace, also has the Cirebon trilogy concept, the figure of the Tiger is

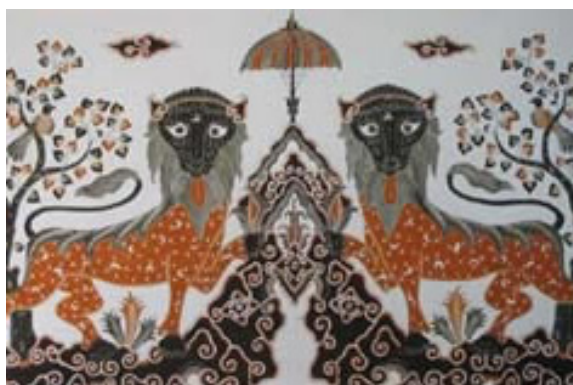


Fig. 8. Macan Ali in batik ornament. (private documentation)

a symbol of strength in the region of the middle world, while the horns, eyes and fangs are symbols of the dragon which represent the underworld, and finally Ali's charisma and white, which the power of spirituality, as a symbol of the sanctity of the upper world.

CONCLUSION

Nusantara is an area that has a number of treasures as well as a high aesthetic wealth, artifacts from the ancestors of the archipelago and the traditional culture of the archipelago. The people of the archipelago are a society with a royal background, so that the entire mindset and lifestyle of the people of the archipelago are influenced by the standards and rules, norms and values taught by the royal civitas sporadically, comprehensively and from generation to generation. One of the forms of disseminating these sacred teachings is through a mythological approach, so that stories, poems, rhymes, songs, dances and traditional art are laden with myths as a form of conveying messages of the noble values of humanity, so that with In other words, myth plays a very important role in shaping the character of the Indonesian people in general.

One form of myth that is applied to traditional art artifacts of the archipelago is the mythical images found in the Kasepuhan Palace in Cirebon, West Java. These mythical images are a wealth of traditional art in the archipelago, their existence can present noble values of the lifestyle and mindset of the people of the archipelago in general and especially the civitas Keraton Kasepuhan Cirebon. These mythical images are historically diachronic as symbols of acculturation in the Kingdom of Cirebon, so that the influence of external culture is symbolized by this figure, for example Singa Barongi, which is the result of the accumulation

of three cultures: Buraq, which is the influence of Islamic culture brought by the people. Egypt to Cirebon. Naga, which is the influence of China which is entering the Cirebon region, and the Elephant, is the influence of Hindu culture brought by the Indians to Cirebon, this is evidenced by the many artifacts of these cultural heritage that are stored in the Keraton Heritage Building. Kasepuhan Cirebon.

The mythical images found in the Kasepuhan Palace in Cirebon are synchronically mythical figures that provide symbolic and philosophical values or meanings of the importance of the realm of life in the "three worlds": the Upper World which is the spiritual and transcendent area, the Underworld which is an imaginative area. and subconsciously, Middle World, namely the realm, material or immanent world. This is reinforced by the paradigm that is firmly held by the civitas Keraton Kasepuhan Cirebon

Thus, the mythical images in Keraton Kasepuhan Cirebon are an example of the traditional art area of the archipelago which is able to influence the aesthetic aspects of traditional artists, in other words, myths in the area of philosophy greatly influence mindsets, patterns of life and even. aesthetic expression in society since ancient times until now, this can be proven by the number of contemporary artists who bring the aesthetic taste of traditional art into their works of art as a medium of expression and a form of partiality for local wisdom, to gain a position in the world of national and international art.

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