

The Taxonomy of The *Tupping* Art as Life Representation of South Lampung People

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Knowing that Performing mask art is getting rare in Indonesia, It is interesting to find out how the art survives and becomes the cultural icon of the regency, in this case, the Performing *Tupping* in Kesugihan Village, Kalianda, South Lampung. Performing *Tupping* (Mask) art in Kesugihan Village, Kalianda, South Lampung Regency is a very essential folk art that has been rearranged with character forms from several types. It is interesting to find the history and its taxonomy, from just a village performance until it becomes South Lampung's cultural icon. This article attempted to describe the taxonomy of *Tupping* in Kesugihan village, Kalianda, as a cultural icon of South Lampung. The qualitative research was conducted to answer these research questions: 1. How was *Tupping*'s taxonomy at the beginning and what characteristic did it represent. 2. How is the taxonomy of the modern *Tupping* and what is behind them. The data were collected through observation, interview, and literary study. *Tupping* at the beginning was simpler, with only a few characters. They mostly depict ugly figures. *Tupping* can survive because It has been used since Radin Intan's reign, especially by her knights for disguising to fight the Dutch. Later in their daily life, *Tupping* was used for worshipping the spirit and the ancestors and performed as entertainment for the villagers. Taxonomically, There are some types of *Tupping* with each respective character and what each philosophically means. it also evolves from time to time to catch up with modernization and globalization.

Keywords: taxonomy, cultural-icon, kesugihan and tupping

Taksonomi Seni Tupping Sebagai Representasi Kehidupan Masyarakat Lampung Selatan

Mengetahui seni pertunjukan topeng semakin langka di Indonesia, menarik untuk mengetahui bagaimana kesenian tersebut bertahan dan menjadi ikon budaya kabupaten tersebut, dalam hal ini Pertunjukan Tupping di Desa Kesugihan, Kalianda, Lampung Selatan. Seni pertunjukan Tupping (Topeng) di Desa Kesugihan, Kalianda, Kabupaten Lampung Selatan merupakan kesenian rakyat yang sangat esensial yang telah ditata ulang dengan bentuk karakter dari beberapa jenis. Menarik untuk disimak sejarah dan taksonominya, dari sekedar pertunjukan desa hingga menjadi ikon budaya Lampung Selatan. Artikel ini mencoba mendeskripsikan taksonomi Tupping di Desa Kesugihan, Kalianda, sebagai ikon budaya Lampung Selatan. Penelitian kualitatif dilakukan untuk menjawab pertanyaan penelitian ini: 1. Bagaimana taksonomi Tupping pada awalnya dan karakteristik apa yang diwakilinya. 2. Bagaimana taksonomi *Tupping* modern dan apa yang melatarbelakanginya. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui observasi, wawancara, dan studi kepustakaan. Tupping di awal lebih sederhana, hanya dengan beberapa karakter. Mereka kebanyakan menggambarkan sosok jelek. Tupping bisa bertahan karena sudah digunakan sejak Radin Intan berkuasa, terutama oleh para ksatrianya untuk menyamar melawan Belanda. Kemudian dalam kehidupan sehari-hari mereka, Tupping digunakan untuk memuja roh dan leluhur dan dilakukan sebagai hiburan bagi penduduk desa. Secara taksonomi, ada beberapa jenis Tupping dengan karakter masingmasing dan makna filosofisnya masing-masing. ia juga berkembang dari waktu ke waktu untuk mengejar modernisasi dan globalisasi.

Kata kunci: taksonomi, ikon budaya, kesugihan dan tupping

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INTRODUCTION

Lampung is one of the provinces in Indonesia which is multiethnic and multilingual. Central Lampung Regency consists of various ethnic groups, including Lampung, Javanese, Sundanese, Balinese, and others (Mustika & Setyarini, 2022). Lampung province is rich in cultures and customs such as traditional ceremonies, performing arts, handicrafts, and other types of performing arts that have grown from migrant communities. However, the existence of performing arts in Lampung is still hardly noticeable because art performances in Lampung are overshadowed by the greatness of Lampung traditional ceremonies. Lampung people are familiar with traditional ceremonies such as gawi (traditional work) which involve many people including traditional leaders and the local community. Lampung customs and traditions are inseparable from the performing arts, considering Lampung's reasonably old cultural history. Some of the oldest performing arts in Lampung are dances, traditional music called talo, literary arts, sound art, and folklore such as rhymes, myths, and legends. Traditional dance and music are the fastest-growing art at the moment. Nowadays there are quite a lot of Lampung dance performance arts according to their functions such as (1) dances for traditional ceremonies including, Nyambai, Kipas, Serujung, Plate, Sahwi or Ceti dance, and Lampung Mask dance, (2) dances for aesthetic presentations including the Sembah, Manjau, Serai Serumpun dances (Ikhwan, 1994) and the newly emerging Bedayo Tulang Bawang dance (Wayan, 2010).

South Lampung, especially in Kesugihan Village, Kalianda, keeps some of the art performances that are preserved and inherited by the community. The performing art is in the form of a dance which is known as the art of tupping. Tupping is one of the oldest forms of the art performance in Kesugihan Village, Kalianda. Tupping can be found when there are festivals in South Lampung Regency e.g marriage events and welcoming national holidays. In this tupping art performance, there are many changes in appearance, both in terms of motion, costumes, and also the place of the show (Soedarsono, 2001:39). Moreover, many observers question the form of the face in tupping art performance, also known as the tupping taxonomy, which is still a mystery today. The uniqueness that becomes the main attraction of tupping art is the form of the face and the history of tupping art in the Kesugihan Village, Kalianda. In today's modern society, masks are placed as one form of high art. Not only because of the aesthetic beauty it has, but the mysterious side that is hidden in the facial

expression of the mask is still capable of emitting a magical power that is difficult to explain (Wirawan, 2021). The function of the mask is worship, a symbol, a complement to the ceremony, and a complement to dance clothing (Martono et al., 2017). They can be found in the regions of Java, Bali, Kalimantan (Tusan & Yudoseputro, 1991), and Lampung. The form of art performance which uses wood or tree bark to cover the face can be named the art of mask performance. Of all the mask arts in Indonesia, tupping, in South Lampung, still has a mysterious and philosophical existence. For this reason, it is considered imperative to explore and uncover the taxonomy, history, and revitalization of tupping art as part of the identity of the South Lampung Regency.

The regional autonomy adopted several years ago has caused every head of the district in their respective regions in Indonesia, to compete to find their regional identity through arts and cultures. Until now, arts and cultures are the easiest way to find or to get the characteristics of a specific area, since art and culture are regional assets that have universal values that are rooted in the souls of people who inhabit the specific area. The universality of art and culture can reduce conflicts and can unite a tribe or ethnicity in every country. Moreover, art can also establish friendships between countries in the world regardless the ethnicity, religion, language, politics, society, and economy. This can be seen from the cultural exchanges that are often carried out by countries, such as between Indonesia and France. The identity of one country is very important because identity can give colors or characteristics of a nation in the world. Identity is very important, especially with the rise of pop culture which spread rapidly in Indonesia. Consequently, every region in Indonesia competes to find its true identity. In Betawi, located in the heart of the capital of the State of Indonesia, where the people are very diverse, the Betawi people have developed their identity through Betawi's art called the Topeng Betawi or Betawi mask and ondel-ondel. Similar to what happens in Betawi, other regions in Indonesia are also having the same thing, they begin to revive traditional arts with slightly modern packaging and touch suited to the current developments.

The objectives of this paper are:

- 1. Describing the taxonomy of old *tupping* and the characteristic represented.
- 2. Describing the taxonomy of modern *tupping* and the characteristic behind them.

The methods used in this study were field research and literature study. Field research was intended to take qualitative data concerning the development of performances, tourisms, and the position of the tupping as an identity through observation, and interviews with informant/s. Meanwhile, the documentation used some instruments such as a stationary, a camera, an audio recorder (Mustika, 2015), and a cellphone. A literature study was conducted to get written sources regarding related materials. Literature data were in the form of writing from books, magazines, newspapers, etc. This was done knowing that the results obtained from fieldwork must be processed beforehand to produce an objective analysis. The data analysis to answer the research problems was done by combining the results from the observation, the literature study, and the interview on tupping taxonomy, identity, and revitalization. It analyzes the shapes or facial characteristics of tupping through physiognomy by carefully observing characteristics in the form of facial lines such as eyes, eyebrows, mouth, cheeks, and nose, which are associated with its characters (Corson, 1975).

METHOD

This research is descriptive qualitative in nature in which the data were collected through observations, audio-recorded interviews, documents, and artifacts. To check the validity and accuracy of the information, the collected data were verified by reporting back to the key informants and by triangulating them with the data collection methods and informants. Triangulation can be said as an almost must-do method for confirming findings (Miles et al., 2013).

The data, which were collected in the forms of words, visual, and moving images, were descriptively analyzed and interpreted. This study was conducted through intense and prolonged contact with informants in a natural setting in villages in Kesugihan District, Kalianda, and South Lampung Regency because *tupping* performance art cannot be found anywhere else. The key informants were purposively selected to take part in this study, which includes traditional Lampung elders, *tupping* artists, and cultural experts from Kesugihan Village, Kalianda, South Lampung.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Performing *Tupping* art or Performing mask art which gets scarce due to modernization and globalization can be found in Kesugihan Village, Kalianda, South Lampung. Some aspects can make

the performing *tupping* art survive, grow, and eventually becomes the cultural identity of South Lampung.

Tupping art in Kesugihan Village, Kalianda

Kesugihan Village is the village that is considered the oldest village by the people of Kalianda. Some of the reasons are because the village stores relics in the form of archeology, customs, and tupping. The preservation of tupping art in Kesugihan Village has been passed down from generation to generation and every traditional ceremony most often uses tupping art also as a gathering event. As for the life of the people, most of them are farmers, entrepreneurs, and also employees. It is interesting to explore the life of the people of Kesugihan in Kalianda since the village has a fairly old cultural civilization. In addition, many of the freedom fighters or figures were also from Kesugihan village. What is interesting about this Kesugihan village is how it preserves Lampung's art and culture in a sustainable way. The people highly respect these customs as a part of social and civilized life. Therefore, it is not surprising that Kesugihan village is known as the village of art and cultural preservation in Lampung.

Kesugihan village, Kalianda is an attraction for the people of South Lampung, because of the arts and cultures of coastal Lampung which are mostly found. Similarly, the people are very consistent in preserving their cultural customs. In addition to cultural arts, some customs and traditions are still maintained by local traditions. For example marriage customs and also their way of life which is guided by the village laws.

Kesugihan Village is located in Kalianda city, a city that is considered an advanced city in terms of its social life. Although Kesugihan Village is located near the center of the city where life is very dynamic and normally easily influenced by modernization, its local traditions are still well preserved.

Taxonomy of Older: *Tupping* Ikhung Tebak, Ikhung Cungak, and Luakh Takhing and what they represent.

The word taxonomy is derived from the Greek words tassein which means to group and nomos which means rules. Taxonomy can be interpreted as a grouping of things based on a certain hierarchy (level). Where the higher taxonomy is more general and the lower taxonomy is more specific (Soedarsono, 1998:56). In understanding the taxonomy of *tupping*, it is most commonly seen from various sides on the face part. However, *tupping* art has already reclaimed its name based on the types of the *tupping*. According to one of the

tupping art leading figures in Kalianda, Darmawan SC, tupping art has always had the name of its tupping character. Until now no one can provide definitive information about who gave the name to the art of tupping. Kesugihan village people are limited only in inheriting and preserving as a form of devotion to ancestral heritage. Similar to the history of tupping art, the shape of the character or taxonomy of every curve or angle within the tupping mask is still limited to stories told from generation to generation or hereditary (Djaenuderadjat, 1993).

From the face shapes, we can identify different roles and characteristics like the magic knight, the female knight, the fierce knight, and also the comedian knight. *Tupping* has been an integral part of the people of Kalianda, especially of Kesugihan villagers because *tupping* can describe the feelings and spirit of heroism for the people in Kalianda.

The shapes of *tupping* masks vary greatly according to the characters that already have names. The following are three forms of *tupping* masks that are often played by a group of *tupping* artists in Kesugihan Village. But there are still *tupping* masks shapes made of cardboard that are usually played with by children to celebrate big holidays, such as August seventeenth.

Tupping Ikhung Tebak

Tupping ikhung tebak has a large, long, and irregular face. The shape of the eyes is wide to the side. It has a big nose, mustache, beard, and many teeth. According to the local people, this kind of Kesugihan tupping is guarding Rajabasa Kalianda Mountain. Tupping is believed by the local people to protect the life of Kesugihan villagers. This is similar to what people in West Kuranko, Sierra Leone believe that the masks give them mystical protection from their enemies. A big, tall, and strong performer is usually chosen to be the one who wears this mask when it is performed. That is the way to get the character or performer for the art of tupping ikhung tebak. Ikhung tebak is a brave, decisive, and strong character. This character provides a philosophy for the people of Kesugihan village in their life (Djaenuderadjat, 1993). The local people believe that by reflecting on this character, especially the youth, they can have big hearts, courage, determination, responsibility, and become hard workers. This philosophy is the basis for this tupping performer or actor. Most of the tupping performers considered the tupping ikhung tebak figure as an educational medium in society.



Figure 1. *Tupping Ikhung Tebak* (Source: Lampung State Museum, 2018)

Tupping Ikhung Cungak

Tupping ikhung cungak has a form of a rather round face, with a long nose, slightly small eyes, and a thin mouth. Another special characteristic of tupping ikhung cungak is facial hair or beards instead of a mustache. Additionally, there is hair on the forehead of the mask. This tupping is commonly used by a patih/ a knight who is patient, kind yet firm in making decisions. This character reflects a patih figure that is wise in carrying out every task. A performer who takes on the role or the figure of Ikhung cungak is very delightful. Since indirectly, the performer will be able to feel and practice the soul of the character, especially within the figure of the Patih Ikhung Cungak. A character like Ikhung Cungak gives a picture that we can have balance by practicing wisdom in our life. Not only the balance in our family but also in society. Reflecting form a character like this can be a lesson in life for everybody. This is the uniqueness of the character of Patih Ikhung Cungak that it can inspire the life of the people of Kesugihan Village, South Lampung.



Figure 2. *Tupping Ikhung Cungak* (Source: Lampung State Museum, 2018)

Tupping Luakh Takhing

Tupping Luakh Takhing has the characteristics of a long shaped face, a somewhat prominent forehead, black long thick eyebrows, a long straight nose, mustache, beard, and two fangs. Tupping Luakh Takhing has a somewhat proportional face like humans in general. This character is well known for its fierce and decisive, characteristics. Despite having a ferocious face, he is sincere. With a fierce face, its sincerity is sometimes not visible. Characters like *Tupping* Luakh Takhing are also very popular among young people who commonly played them. This figure is greatly admired by the people in Kahuripan Village, South Lampung. Tupping Luakh Takhing is used by servants of the royal who served in the west Anjak kekhatuan Mit Matakhani. The taxonomy of the Tupping Luakh Takhing face is very apparent in its gallantry. Tupping Luakh Takhing is very appropriate and assigned as a guardian of an area, especially with a thick mustache and sharp fangs. This impression is interpreted by every performer or actor who plays this tupping figure, to get a fierce, authoritative, decisive, and frightening character yet actually there is sincerity deep inside this tupping luakh soul. This is the uniqueness of the characters from Tupping Luakh Takhing that can not be found in other the area of Kesugihan, Kalianda.

The two fangs of *Tupping* Luakh add the fear effect and carry their own distinct identities. On the other hand, the ears appear to be thin and small and the predominant part of this *tupping* as a whole is in the shape of the face by having a smiling face. This *tupping* shows a sense of joy and happiness stored in the character of a Luakh Takhing. Another aspect that can be seen as a unique sign is the line under the eyes, indicating that it is a humble and simple character. Overall, the shape of the Luakh Takhing face is only seen by the presence of facial lines on the face that can be analyzed in a simple taxonomic way. But this specific Luakh Takhing character cannot yet be revealed properly according to its maker.



Figure 3. *Tupping Luakh Takhing* (Source: Lampung State Museum, 2018)

Taxonomy of Modern and what they represent.

To catch up with modernization and globalization, art has to make some changes or adjustments. If the art sticks to the old types, *tupping* can lose its popularity, because nowadays people have so many choices in art and entertainment. The awareness of this has caused some changes and adjustments in the art of *tupping*.

Farmer.



Figure 4. Farmer (Source: I Wayan Mustika, 2018)

Farmer varies very much. Like the name, they depict farmers celebrating their harvest. They consist of males and females. For the female, they are more brightly colored, so they give a better sense of feminism. For young females, they are brighter and smoother and for the old females, they are a little darker and they have wrinkles. The performers usually wear light color upper costumes and a little darker, bright lower clothes. Males, have darker colors and are rougher. They are so to have a stronger sense of being masculine. For the costumes, male tupping performers wear dark, mostly black with a little very bright color on the edges. Some male performers wear very bright costumes too. We can see some of them are wearing pink. The color nuances depict the joy of the harvest.

for Circumcision and thanksgiving.



Figure 5. for Celebrations of circumcision and thanksgiving (syukuran) (Source: I Wayan Mustika, 2018)

They have various colors and shapes. They are usually made for male performers. Some of them look funny, some are strange, the others are ugly, or they can be funny, strange, and ugly at the same time. Look at the big tennis ball size. The other has different colors between the left and right halves, and the forehead with many different colors. They have various colors, shapes, and characters to be more entertaining. They are worn by a group of traditional music instrument players.

of the Krakatau Festivals



Figure 6. Tupping from Krakatau Fesstival (Source: I Wayan Mustika, 2018)

The *tupping* is completely different from others. It is not made from wood. It is made from a certain kind of thick paper. It is plain white with some motifs of eyebrows which is Lampung's uniqueness. The eyes are made of different sizes and there is a big letter. This *tupping* shows more freedom and creativity. Thus, the local government is also expected to always disseminate this tupping art to elementary and secondary education that it can continue to exist (Mustika, 2020).

CONCLUSIONS

From the above discussion and explanations, some conclusions can be drawn as follows:

First, South Lampung Regency has a very long history in Lampung culture. The Lampung cultural history map indicates that South Lampung is the origin of Indonesian freedom fighters (Radin Intan), he is considered a true warrior and a role model for the people of South Lampung. The Kalianda people believe that Radin Intan is a descendant of his ancestors who embraced animism and also accepted Hinduism and Buddhism in prehistoric times in South Lampung. South Lampung was led by Radin Intan during the colonialism, moreover, during the fight against the invaders *tupping* was used as a way or means for Radin Intan's soldiers to hide or disguise themselves against the invaders.

Second, The art of *tupping* is sometimes used as a means of worshipping the guardian spirit and the spirits of the ancestors who tend to have ugly faces and dress in leaves. *Tupping* used to be performed by Radin Intan along with his soldiers and by people at a place considered sacred, such as a worshiping site. The purpose of this *tupping* show is to bring spirits of the ancestors and the rulers of the universe to get protection or assistance, as well as avoid the difficulties that happened in that area. Thus, *tupping* is believed can be beneficial for the Kesugihan Village people to protect not only the people but also the village.

Third, the form of *tupping art* performance is by the people of the *tupping* performers, someone or a *tupping* group is not bound by the time, story, or place of the performance. *Tupping* art performance has developed very rapidly in the last few decades. During those years, the *tupping* performance was influenced by the culture of the city and also television shows. This performance is not only broadcast in the Lampung Region but it also reaches Java as in TMII and Yogyakarta. In addition, there were political contents attached to the appearance of *tupping* at that time. *Tupping* was also used as a

means to mobilize the masses for the local elections. In addition, the art of tupping has various performances such as carnival contests or cultural carnivals, greetings special guests, village parades, and dance creations. The diversity of tupping appearance styles indicates a significant increase in terms of development. Over the years, Sakura has been both in terms of clothing, motions, and venues. In addition, the attention of the South Lampung Regional Government to the development of tupping art so that it can be widely recognized by the people of Lampung also played a massive impact. The development of tupping art is due to changes in the supporting societies so that different shapes or colors emerge from the appearance of tupping art each year.

Fourth, the primary function of *tupping* performance art was initially as a means of worshiping for the harvest celebration and the safety of the village. But now the art of tupping already has several functions including art as socialization, art as social solidarity, art as entertainment, and art as aesthetic presentations. Tupping art as a means of socialization means that tupping is being used as a medium for interaction between the government and the people as well as between citizens. For example, to deliver politically charged messages, politicians are usually present to give gifts to the people in the hope of seeking their support. Tupping as social solidarity aims to build a sense of togetherness in community life, such as supporting and carrying out cultural carnivals together. With this solidarity, an indirect social system is built, such as activities that interact, relate, and get along with each other from time to time. Tupping as entertainment aims to entertain the audience, such as refreshing the mind, relieving stress, and enjoying the beauty of the art of tupping itself whenever it is performed in the form of cultural marches, welcoming guests, or in other forms of appearance. As an aesthetic presentation, tupping is an expression of its creator's soul of who wants to present the aesthetic or beauty elements of art to the audience.

Fifth, tupping varies in type and the shape of the face by its character. In addition, tupping has become the identity of the South Lampung Regency which is well known to many people. Tupping has been attached to the South Lampung people and has a uniqueness that can not be found in other regions in Lampung or even outside Lampung. Based on prior facts, this study found an effort to maintain self-esteem, custom, and the art of tupping as local wisdom in Kalianda, South Lampung Regency, especially in Kesugihan Village.

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