Visual Elements of Kabasaran Character on Web Comic Nusantara Droid War

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ABSTRACT

Comics are popular, comics contain stories that are published through images and text and contain information. Comics contain knowledge and entertainment. Comic stories and depictions come from creativity resulting in a variety of stories and visual styles. The visual style and content of the story influenced the interest of the audience and raise many comic genres. Many comics in Indonesia take inspiration from Indonesian culture both from their stories and visualizations. Many research on comics has been carried, but research on the visualization of Indonesian culture in comics is limited, as in previous research is still research on characters and their traits, but many character studies are associated with elements of Indonesian culture. Based on this, research on the content of Indonesian culture in a web comic entitled Nusantara Droid War needs to be carried out. Nusantara Droid War is one of the web comics that contains visualizations of Indonesian culture. The visualization used in this comic uses elements that represent the culture of an Minahasa North Sulawesi. The study aims to find out the cultural elements of North Sulawesi contained in the visualization of the character Droid Kabasaran in the Nusantara Droid War comic. It uses the descriptive qualitative method to describe and visually discover the object of study. The results of the study obtained a visualization of the character of Droid Kabasaran containing visualizations from the Minahasa culture, namely the Kabasaran dance. The visualization of Kabasaran dance elements is obtained from the results of character descriptions, character visuals and character costume elements. The visualization of Kabasaran characters in this comic is shown through skills (abilities) taken from three acts of Kabasaran dance, namely: Cakalele, Kumoyak, and Lalayaan. This research is expected to increase knowledge, increase the amount of research related to character visualization, enrich the science of visual communication design

Keywords: Kabasaran; Nusantara Droid War; Visual Characters; WebComics

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INTRODUCTION

Comics are one of the most popular media around the world. The comics industry is dominated by comics from America, Europe (especially Belgium, France, and the Netherlands), as well as Japan with their respective characters and storytelling peculiarities (Eisner, 1985). Comics according to Danesi (2004), are narratives created through several inline images that are bound by horizontal lines, strips or squares (panels), and complemented by verbal text from left to right (sequence). The definition describes comics as having illustrations accompanied by text to tell a story. Illustrative images have a very important position (Utari, 2019). Illustration is a combination of analytical thinking and practical ability to create a visual form capable of having a message (Ricky, 2021).

Advances in information technology have made the way of communicating and conveying information much richer, the presence of the internet has also colored the process of developing comics. This can be seen from the emergence of a type of web comic that makes it easier for readers to read the comics. Web comics have many advantages over printed comics, giving the difference of a fairly large appearance, sharper colors, a huge selection of comics, easily accessible and cheap. With the support of the internet network readers can access comics through web pages and applications. Various applications providing online-based comic content are presented to support comic artists to make it easier to publish their comic works and more readers. Comic artists who create comics through the use of software on computers as a result of the comic work are referred to as digital comics.

Digital comics are created on a computer and stored data in the form of files, although comics are created manually and scanned into data, the comic can be called a digital comic (Rahadian, 2017). Digital computing is different from web comics, web comics are read through the internet network (Rahadian, 2017). One of the web comic applications is Line Webtoon. Webtoon successfully reached millions of downloads accommodating web comic content. Nusantara Droid War is one of the web comics found on Webtoon. Nusantara Droid War is one of the fantasy comics wrapped in action scenes. Nusantara Droid War written by Satria Suleman and Vega Mandalika initially won 3rd place in the Webtoon Challenge competition, a comic competition organized by LINE Webtoon in 2015. Nusantara Droid War then consistently continues to develop its story and has produced more than 100 episodes on Webtoon. Nusantara Droid War received a rating of 9.76, including a fairly high rating in Webtoon (Evandio, 2016). This comic tells the story of two main characters, namely Sagriya Legi with her droid Kabasaran. Sagriya Legi daughter of Droid maker who dissapeared when Sagriya Legi was a child. She have mission to find out about the truth of Nusantara Droid War
Droid is a term for heroes that will appear when summoned by their owners such as Yu Gi Oh and Pokemon. Every droid in Nusantara Droid War, has a background that is based on Indonesian culture, for example Kabasaran which is taken from the name of a war dance from the Minahasa area, North Sulawesi. Kabasaran is a droid character who has abilities (skills). Kabasaran's character is depicted in the form of a naughty, fierce but sweet little boy (Webtoon Indonesia Fandom Wiki, 2021).

Visually, Nusantara Droid War also features visualizations of hero characters (droids) that are different from comics in general. The droid character in the Nusantara Droid War comic looks modern by combining the culture of North Sulawesi. The difference in image style is also seen in droid characters who use manga image styles combined with attributes sourced from Indonesian culture. In a comic story, the character plays a very important role as stated by Lukman (2017). As a reading source that relies on images or visuals, the image of the character's face is the main tool to describe events even without using words. For better or worse, characters can greatly affect the quality of a comic. The visualization of unique and interesting characters in comics can leave a strong impression on readers, thus affecting the level of popularity of the comic.

The combination of attributes and characteristics set in Indonesian culture in the characters in the Nusantara Droid War comic attracts attention to be researched. Each piece shown on the character has visualizations that can affect the reader's experience of the character and the comic story. In addition to the attributes on the character, the character's emotions displayed through facial expressions also have an important role. The character brings the story to life through facial expressions, facial expressions show the emotions of the characters, in this case Lestari & Dewi (2020) stated, Ongoing emotions in a person can be seen by the presence of certain visually indicated signs and many ways to visualize emotions, examples of how to visualize emotions can be seen in illustrated stories, one of which is comics. Comics use signs in such a way to describe the emotions of the characters (Lestari & Dewi, 2020).

Research on characters in comics has been conducted by many researchers. Similar research on characters in comics is found in the following research; Oktavia & Martadi (2016), analyzing 3 characters in the comic Al Fatih 1453; Handri Satria's Battle of Varna uses elemental methods and forms principles to discover the traits of the character. In this study, there is no compatibility between the results of the analysis of elements and the principle of appearance in the table and conclusions, the table is only a description of the elements and principles but the conclusions produce the meaning or properties of the figure. Musnur & Faiz (2019) this study identified the...
visual presentation of characters and storylines in the Vulcaman-Z comic by Galang Tirtakusuma published by PT. Mizan. The focus of the research is to find a visual presentation of comics and an Indonesian-style plot. This research includes examining characters but not specific to one character. Laily & Rosmiati (2020) about the Character Wana Rama In The Pikolo Comic 1st edition by Ikatan Komikus Solo, this study examines the main character through character traits including soul, body shape, way of dressing, facial expressions, and expressive traits. The results of the study found the nature of the 3 main characters. Zakaria (2021), analyzing the visuals of the main characters from the comic "oting & Kemod The victims of the times, the object of research of the characters Oting and Kemod is analyzed through their gestures and illustrations in the storyline and the characters are analyzed through elements and principles of form, but the results of the analysis in the form of character explanations taken from one comic scene selected in the panel are not equipped with visualizations of the comics. Tyagi & Murfianti (2021), researched the character Sri Asih in the web comic Sri Asih Celestial Goddess by Bumi Langit, the focus of the research was on the visualization of the character from the depiction style, attributes and personality using the manga matrix method, the research did not find significant things, the results of the analysis tended to be general such as semi-realist image style, manga style and description according to the visible visualization.

These studies have not yet found anything new and specific related to the content of Indonesian culture, all of which still describe the character of what is visually visible and associated with its traits. There has been no discussion of characters attributed to elements of Indonesian culture which are taken as character ideas in comic characters such as in the attributes and traits of the characters. This fundamental thing is the basis for the need for research on the visualization of Droid Kabasaran characters in the Nusantara Droid War comic, to find out the content of Indonesian cultural elements contained in the attributes and character traits through Kabasaran character. This research focuses on the visualization of the character Droid Kabasaran as the main character of the droid in the Nusantara Droid War comic with a descriptive Qualitative approach. Comics containing illustrations and texts can be separated. This study aims to analyze the illustration elements in the character of Droid Kabasaran in the Nusantara Droid War comic. Illustration is used to clarify or explain something, illustration is an action or process that describes something (Barnhart, 1982). According to Rohidhi (1984) illustration is related to fine art, through visual elements it can explain, explain or also embellish a text, so that the reader can feel directly through the properties of motion, and the impression of the story presented. The benefits of this research are that as additional knowledge in the field of Visual Communication Design in general and in particular the field of Comic Illustration,
increasing the amount of research related to character visualization, enriching the science of Visual Communication Design.

METHOD

The research method used in this study is the descriptive Qualitative method. Bogdan and Taylor in Abdussamad (2021), mentioned that qualitative research is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observable behaviors; the approach is directed at the setting and the individual holistically. The descriptive analysis method is to analyze, draw and summarize various conditions (Khasanah, 2021). Through descriptive analysis, the Kabasaran character research object is analyzed based on the acquisition of data each object is classified and described. Based on its purpose, a descriptive method was carried out to identify the visual elements of the Droid Kabasaran character in the Nusantara Droid War web comic as it is. The object of study is limited to illustrations of the characters only, not to the layout, text and other elements of the comic. Based on its function, illustrations are explanatory or companions to writing. An illustration is an image that communicates a concept or message. Illustration can create a style, a form of metamorphosis, or translate an object from an emotional and physical side (Maharsi, 2016).

The research stage is carried out by collecting data through literature and observation. The type of observation used is non-interactive observation or roleless observation, according to Sutopo (2006), this type of observation is a researcher's observation that does not affect the observed object. The analysis process is carried out through three stages, namely determining the object of analysis, compiling finding data and interpretation.

In the first stage, it is determining the object of analysis, namely the character Kabasaran in the Nusantara Droid War web comic taken from episodes 6, 9, 37, and 58. In choosing a sample image of Kabasaran characters, there are several things to consider, based on the focus of the research, namely the visualization of Kabasaran characters that represent Indonesian culture, the objects studied are panels that represent Dance. Kabasaran as one of the Indonesian cultures which is also a characteristic of character depictions in the Nusantara Droid War comics, after analysis is then concluded to get research results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Nusantara Droid War Comics
Comics are images and other emblems *that are juxtaposed* (side by side) in a certain order, aiming to provide information and or achieve an aesthetic response from the reader (McCloud, 2008:8). Eisner (1985) defines comics as a medium of speech or rather as a medium of storytelling. Based on this understanding, comics are one of the works of art that use image media in conveying stories, story ideas and information are displayed through images that are sometimes accompanied by text. Nusantara Droid War comic is a web comic published by the Line Webtoon application that provides entertainment in the form of comics with the characteristic depiction of its Manhwa comics. Webtoon itself refers to the term in South Korean for comics released online. In South Korea webtoons became a popular online comic. The term webtoon is synonymous with the mobile application issued by the company NAVER (Kreativv, 2022). According to Webtoon Indonesia Fandom wiki (2021), the story characters in the Nusantara Droid War comic consist of 9 characters as NDW (Nusantara Droid War) players in the comic story, namely Sagriya Legi (main character), Adnan Dwipangga, Eriza Ayunindya, Adinata Maheswara, Velinka Martawangsa, Velinda Martawangsa, Anggi, Admiral, and Rendra Dwipangga. Each of these characters has a droid as a fighter in the NDW game. Droid Kabasaran is a Droid belonging to the main character Sagriya Legi. Kabasaran is a droid whose visualization concept is taken from the traditional war dance of Minahasa, North Sulawesi, namely the Kabasaran Dance. Kabasaran dance is danced by dancers dressed in red, carrying swords, spears and shields (Webtoon Indonesia Fandom wiki, 2021).

![Figure 1. Sagriya Legi (main character)](https://www.webtoons.com/id/fantasy/nusantara-droid-war/ep-232-final-attack-2/viewer?title_no=596&episode_no=237)

**B. Character Analysis of Droid Kabasaran**

The analysis is elaborated through three parts, namely character descriptions, character visuals and character costume elements. The main focus of the analysis in this study is on
the discussion of the character Kabasaran as the main Droid in the Nusantara Droid War web comic story which contains a representation of Indonesian culture, namely the Kabasaran traditional dance originating from the Minahasa area, North Sulawesi.

1. Character Description

Kabasaran is a war dance from the Minahasa area, North Sulawesi, according to Sumanati in Rahman (2022), the Kabasaran traditional dance is a Minahasa soldier dance, from the word "wasal" which means a cut rooster the cockcomb is so that the chicken becomes more fierce in fighting. Kabasaran dance is accompanied by the sound of tambur or small gongs. Musical instruments such as gongs, tambur or kolintang are called "pa" "wasalen" and the dancers are called kawasaran, dancing by imitating the movements of two fighting roosters. The word kawasalan later evolved into "kabasaran" which is a combination of the two words "kawasalan ni sarian" "kawasal" meaning to accompany and follow the dance movements. Meanwhile, "sarian" is the leader of the war who leads the traditional Minahasa soldiering dance.

Kabasaran war dance is used as a droid character in the Nusantara Droid War comic by Vega Mandalika. The character Kabasaran in this comic is made as a form of a naughty, fierce and sweet little boy. Kabasaran character as a droid character who has the skill or ability to fight according to the act on the real Kabasaran dance. According to Lasut (in Rahman, 2022) Kabasaran dance has three acts, the first act of Cakalele, the dancers chase and jump, the second half of Kumoyak, the dancers swing sharp weapons, swords or spears up and down, back and forth to calm themselves from a sense of anger when fighting, acts the third Lalayaan, the dancers dance freely cheerfully free to break away from the feeling of beaver. The three acts in the dance were also adapted in the Nusantara Droid War comic as the ability to fight the character Droid Kabasaran. In the comic book, Droid Kabasaran's fighting ability will increase according to the skill card activated by the droid owner. Here are the specifications of the skills or abilities of the Kabasaran character shown in Table 1.

2. Visuals of Droid Kabasaran

Visualization in comics is a way of describing something and is charged with information as stated by McCloud (2008). Comics are images and other symbols that are conceptualized (side by side) in a certain order, aiming to provide information and or
Visual Elements of Kabasaran Minahasa Dance on Web comic Illustration Nusantara Droid War

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achieve an aesthetic response from the reader. The visualization of Kabasaran Droid Characters taken from Kabasaran dance is an idea taken from Indonesian culture and as a form of preserving Indonesia's diverse art and culture. Cerita comics can be conveyed well to the reader through the characters in the story. Character is a combination of facial appearance, body shape, costumes, accessories, customs, habitual culture and traits or personality (Gumelar, 2011). The depth and characteristics of the character can also give rise to meanings that can stand alone and the formation of character characteristics can be done by building a certain impression through elements and visual elements on the character.

Table 1. Kabasaran Skill or Ability

|   | Kabasaran Skill or Ability                                      |
|---|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | **Cakalele (Character Images from episodes 6 and 9)**          |
|   | Cakalele comes from the word "saka" which means to compete, and|
|   | "catfish" which means to chase jumping up and down (Jurnal6.co.id, 2022). |
|   | In accordance with the word, this skill card strengthens Kabasaran's attack to double. |

![Cakalele Image]

| 2 | **Kumoyak (Character Images from episodes 6 and 37)**          |
|   | Kumoyak itself comes from the word "koyak" which means to swing a weapon. The word torn can also mean persuading the spirit of an opponent or enemy killed in war (Jurnal6.co.id, 2022). In this skill, as the name implies, Kabasaran will use weapons in the form of swords and shields. |

![Kumoyak Image]
2.1 Body Shape and Proportions of Kabasaran Characters

Feldman (in Gulendra, t.t) states, form is a physical manifestation of a living object, form has a spatial boundary effect, form has breadth and volume that can be perceived, measured, and interpreted its existence. Shapes can be seen through colors, silhouettes, or skeletons, in which case comic artists or illustrators create shapes to build characters, settings and other objects necessary for the story on each comic panel through sketches. Sketches are useful for separating images starting with one stroke then to the next, in Droid character analysis Kabasaran sketches are created to separate characters it is from other shapes such as the background and other shapes, making the shape clearer because it is separated from the color. The analysis of the character shape of the Kabasaran Droid is made through sketches as shown in Table 2.
Table 2. Kabasaran Character Shape through Sketch

The sketches show that the character of Droid Kabasaran has different forms of depiction according to the storyline and characterization. In Table 2, 4 kinds of depictions of the form of Droid Kabasaran are obtained, before the ability (skill) activated, the skill forms Cakalele, Kumoyak and Lalayaan. The change in shape consists of the shape of the limbs such as hair and the shape of the feet, the shape of the attributes are crowns, headbands, shawls, clothes, robes, bracelets, anklets, necklaces, swords, shields and spears. The forms build character between Kabasaran dance fashion and fantasy.

The character of Droid Kabasaran is made with a distinctive body size according to its characterization. The difference in the body size of each character is made according to the concept of the characters tied to the story, the size of the characters to one another is referred to as proportions. Proportion is the relationship between the part of one design and the relationship between the part and the whole. Color, texture, and line play an important role in determining proportions (Kartika in Suyadnya, t.t). Kabasaran Droid characters for all abilities (skills) are made with greater proportions, by increasing the head-length on the character's height to give a heroic and tougher impression. In figure 2, the proportion of the
Kabasaran Droid character on Kumoyak's ability (skill) based on the head length consists of 6 and a half heads.

Figure 2. Kabasaran Proportions by Head Length (Character Images from episode 37)
Source: Author document

2.2 Facial Expressions and Colors of Kabasaran Droid Characters

Face is an important element that can describe the emotional expression of characters in comics. In addition, the shape of the face can also build character traits that can be easily recognized by comic readers. The character of Droid Kabasaran in the web comic Nusantara Droid War is adapted from the face of a dancer at a kabasaran regional dance combined with the imagination of a comic artist or illustrator. In Figure 3, the facial expressions of the Droid Kabasaran characters show angry expressions.

In addition to Expression, color is also an important visual element, color forms the characteristic of Droid Kabasaran characters in the Nusantara Droid War web comic as Rustan (2019) stated, Colors are used to represent a more complex identity. The colors used for Droid Kabasaran are warm color groups and are taken from analogous colors of red, orange and black. Warm color means energy, "According to color psychology, different color temperatures evoke different feelings. For example, warm colors are said to bring to mind coziness and energy" (Canva, 2022). Gradations are used to create the illusion of depth, give a three-dimensional impression and build a strong, tough and intimidating character in the
character. The following are the results of the color analysis of the Kabasaran character seen in figure 4.

Figure 3. Kabasaran facial expressions (Character Images from episode 6)
Source: Author document

Figure 4. Kabasaran color scheme (Character Images from episode 6)
Source: Author document
2.3 Costume Elements of Kabasaran Droid Characters

According to Sulystio (2021), Costumes can strengthen the character of the character according to the dimension of physiology that describes the physical form, the dimension of sociology that describes the social background of each character, then the psychological dimension that can describe the background of the atmosphere and the scene. The colors in the costumes are also a supporter of the psychological dimension of the characters in the story. Droid Kabasaran characters use costumes adapted from Kabasaran dancers. Kabasaran dancers use Minahasa woven cloth called bentenan cloth, which is the clothing of traditional leaders (Tonaas) and religious leaders (Walian) in various traditional ceremonies such as the ceremony of building a house, determining the planting period, to war (Sondakh, 2019). Bentenan fabric has seven motifs, namely Tonilama (Weaving from white thread, colorless, white cloth), Sinoi (Weaving with colorful threads, in the form of stripes), Pinatikan (Weaving with mesh motif lines, hexagon shape), Tinompak Kuda (Weaving with various repetitive motifs), Tononton Mata (Weaving with human images), Kalwu Patola (Weaving with Indian pantola weaving motif), Kokera (Weaving with colorful floral motifs embroidered with beads) (Intangible Cultural Heritage of Indonesia, 2010).

Figure 5. Bentenan Tombulu Woven Fabric, Minahasa, North Sulawesi, Collection of the National Museum of Indonesia. Source: https://www.museumnasional.or.id/mahakarya-dari-minahasa-1862

Droid Kabasaran uses clothes inspired by red bentenan woven fabric and is developed. At the top using sleeveless clothes, according to Sondakh (2019), bentenan woven
fabric is worn by the Tonaas and Walian as tops by folding it in half and given a hole in the middle, so that they can insert their head called "sumolong". In the picture, cloth tassels and knee-length shorts were torn to shreds as in the original dancer. On the upper arm and wrist, a red cloth is wrapped around. The character Kabasaran in the Nusantara Droid War web comic is shown with four different costumes according to the three abilities (skills) that Droid Kabasaran has (see Table 3).

Table 3. Analysis of Kabasaran Droid Character Costumes based on abilities (skills).

| 1. Kabasaran Costume Before the Skill Card is activated (image from episode 6) | 2. Kabasaran's costume on Cakalele's skill (pictured from episode 9) |
| --- | --- |
| Fabric is worn as tops by folding it in half and given a hole in the middle, so that they can insert their head called "sumolong". In the picture, cloth tassels and knee-length shorts were torn to shreds as in the original dancer. On the upper arm and wrist, a red cloth is wrapped around. | |
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CONCLUSION

The analysis was carried out based on three parts, namely the character description, character visuals (consisting of the character's body shape and proportions, facial expressions and colors of the Kabasaran Droid character) and character costume elements. Based on these sections the results of the analysis found the following points:

1. Character description; The character of Droid Kabasaran is named after the North Sulawesi dance, has the strength (skill) taken from the Kabasaran dance round consisting of Cakalele, Kumoyak and Lalayaan. The depiction of the Droid Character Kabasaran is taken from 3 acts of Kabasaran dance. A visual overview of the 3 powers (Skills) is presented in Table 1.

2. Character visuals; The analysis consists of the Body Shape and Proportions of the Kabasaran Character and the Facial Expressions and Colors of the Kabasaran Droid character. The result of the Body Shape and Proportion of the Kabasaran Character, namely in Table 2, the form of depiction of the Kabasaran Droid character is adapted from the Kabasaran dance dress, made differently according to the ability (skill) which consists of before the ability (skill) is activated, the form of Cakalele, Kumyoak and Lalayaan. The changes of each ability (skill) are the shape of hair, legs, crowns, headbands, shawls, clothes, robes, wristbands, anklets, necklaces, swords, shields and spears. In figure 2, a proportional depiction is obtained with a head length of 6 and a half heads made larger to give a heroic and tougher impression. The result of the Facial Expressions and Colors of the Kabasaran Droid character is that the face shape of the Kabasaran character is adapted from the dancer's face in the kabasaran regional dance combined with the illustrator's imagination. In figure 3, the facial expressions of the Kabasaran Droid characters show an angry expression. The colors used for Droid Kabasaran are warm color groups and are taken from analogous colors of red, orange and black. Warm color has the meaning of energy, strong and tough.

3. Character Fashion Elements; Droid Kabasaran characters wear clothes adapted from Kabasaran dancers, namely red bentenan woven fabric, sleeveless clothes and shorts. Kabasaran characters are depicted with four different outfits according to the three abilities (skills) possessed by Droid Kabasaran in Table 3. From the results of the analysis, a visualization of the character of Droid Kabasaran was obtained from Kabasaran dance, Minahasa culture as part of Indonesian culture.
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