

WRITE BATIK FORM OF *KRECAK* MOTIF IN THE BATIK TULIS LASEM SEKAR KENCANA COMPANY IN BABAGAN VILLAGE, LASEM DISTRICT, REMBANG DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

The art of Lasem's batik craft is one of the identities of the city of Lasem, Rembang. Lasem dubbed "Small China" because it was the initial city of the Chinese landing in Java. Lasem as one of the centers of the batik industry in Indonesia has unique and unique batik results that cannot found in other regions. Lasem's batik art is difficult to develop due to the Chinese batik artisans who are considered the most mastering the knowledge and traditions of Lasem's written batik but are reluctant to pass on their knowledge to the younger generation who are not their lineage. This research attempts to explain the form of Lasem Sekar Kencana written batik craft motifs in the batik company Lasem Sekar Kencana in the Village of Babagan, Lasem District, Rembang Regency. Methods of data collection are interviews, observation, and documentation. Data validity uses the Miles model triangulation technique. Findings: The form of batik craft Lasem motif in the batik company Lasem Sekar Kencana in Babagan Village Lasem District Rembang Regency is unique to the motives made by the skipper and is an acculturation between Chinese culture and Javanese (palace) and or with local culture (Lasem), as well as maintaining Lasem's classic colors in batik.

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Introduction

The art of Lasem's batik craft is one of the identities of the city of Rembang. The process of creating Lasem batik is inseparable from the role of the early ethnic Chinese who came to land along Bonang - Lasem beach, named Bi Nang Un. He was one of the ship's masters of the entourage of Admiral Cheng Ho from Campa during the Ming Dynasty. Unjiya (2014) argues that Bi Nang Un is interested in the island of Java (Lasem) which is "gemah ripah Loh jinawe", then begs permission to Prince Wijaya Badra (Duke of Lasem) who came to power in Lasem in 1413, to be allowed to settle and bring his relatives and live in Lasem. The request granted by providing a residence for Bi Nang Un and his family outside the back of the fence of the Kriyan Palace, in the Kemandhung village (south of the cloudy bridge canal) which was then called "Taman Banjar mlathi."

Bi Nang Un together with his wife, Na Li Ni, chose to live in Lasem apart from seeing the beauty of Javanese nature, also to spread Islam to the local indigenous population. Also, Na Li Ni is a woman who has artistic talent, one of which is batik art. He taught his art skills, especially batik art to Lasem native girls and

his children, especially his daughter, Bi Nang Ti. Found in fragments of the contents of the text Carita Sejarah Lasem (Babad Lasem) written by Badra Santhi (1401 Saka / 1479 AD) and compiled by Raden Panji Kamzah in 1787 saka / 1858 M. The text fragment in question is "Neng Taman Banjar Mlathi kono Putri Na Li Ni mulang nggawe slepi lar merak, mbathik, lan mulang njoged maring bocah-bocah wedok Kemandhung, lan uga mulang marang putra putine dhewe", After growing up, Bi Nang Ti developed the batik art and spread his expertise to his friends until it finally developed and emerged Lasem batik, Chinese entrepreneurs, by involving Lasem natives and the surrounding areas as batik laborers. The opinion of Musman and Arini (2011) that "During the heyday of Lasem batik every Chinese residence tried to make batik by recruiting batik workers from the villages around Lasem" (p.63). The natives flocked to become batik laborers by joining Chinese descendants with makeshift wages. The opportunity not wasted by him because, in addition to improving the family economy, it was also to absorb batik knowledge that he had not previously known.

Indigenous skills in batik are increasingly widespread. The batik laborers were finally able to create Lasem batik motifs with native



motifs, where the motifs inspired by objects in the neighborhood around Lasem, such as the motifs of mountain ringgit, latohan, pasiran / tanah, krekak / watu rupture, and others. In connection with this statement, Unjiya (2014) argues that "Lasem Batik makes craftsmen more creative. New motives, such as latohan, mountain ringgit, kricakan or watu rupture appear" (p. 9). In addition to the native batik, there is also Lasem batik with Chinese characters which are strongly influenced by Chinese culture. Unjiya (2014) argues that Na Li Ni began batik motifs of hong, liong, seruni flowers, banji, currency, and other typical Chinese motifs until finally, these motifs became the hallmark and uniqueness of Lasem's batik to be introduced to local indigenous batik artisans. Then, Musman and Arini (2011) also argued that the influence of Javanese culture also influenced the style, motifs, and decorations of Lasem's batik, which was proven by the existence of motifs such as kawung and machete.

The uniqueness and distinctiveness make Lasem batik as a beautiful craft art and of high economic value. However, the batik industry in Lasem is difficult to develop because of the Chinese-style batik bosses who are reluctant to pass on their knowledge to the younger generation who are not of their lineage. They

hold fast to the tradition that secrets in the world of batik must not transmit to others. Therefore, the main problem that is trying to be studied is "The Art Form of Batik Crafted by Lasem in a Batik Company, Lasem Sekar Kencana in the Village of Babagan, Lasem District, Rembang Regency." Based on the main problem, a research question was asked, namely: How did Lasem's handicraft art form in the batik company Lasem Sekar Kencana in the village of Babagan, Lasem District, Rembang Regency?.

Method

This study uses a qualitative approach, with methods for collecting data is the method of interview, observation, and documentation. The validity of the study uses triangulation techniques and the analytical model used in the study is a flow model of analysis by Miles (1992: 20). This research was conducted at the batik company Lasem Sekar Kencana in Babagan Village, Lasem District, Rembang Regency.

Results and Discussion

A. Location Description Research

1. Babagan Village as a Batik Tourism Village, Lasem

Lasem is the name of one of the sub-district cities in Rembang Regency. Aziz (2014: 68) in his book entitled "Lasem City of Small China" notes that in the colonial era, the status of the city of Lasem was a regency city, but since 1750 the Regency city was moved to Rembang, followed by the VOC fortification of the city that year. So, recorded from 1751 until now (2019), Lasem has the status of a sub-district city.

Lasem Subdistrict is a strategic and profitable location because it located on the North Coast line (Pantura) between Semarang and Surabaya which caused the city of Lasem as a trading center that never deserted. According to Aziz (2014: 68) that as a city on the north coast of Java, Lasem was known as an important city in the colonial period because trade traffic occurred by connecting several cities in Java, especially inland cities which caused Lasem to become a coastal city trade center, besides Jepara, Tuban, and Gresik.



Figure 1 Atmosphere in One Corner of the Road in the City of Lasem
(Documentation: Qisthi Maghfiroh)

The industries that develop in Lasem include batik, salt, crackers, fish processing, wood processing, stone grinding, syrup and lemonade, bricks, and others. However, among those industries which experienced the most rapid development was the batik industry. Lasem as an industrial area of batik is also known as "Small China." Aziz (2014: 39) in his book argues that Lasem is also known as "le petit chinoise" (little China) or Small China due to the architectural model, the atmosphere of life, and the close interaction of the Chinese Peranakan population. In line with the nickname of Small China, Unjiya (2014: 6) also explained his opinions as follows:

Lasem is referred to by French researchers as Petit Chinois (Small China) or called The Little Beijing Old Town by European historians in the colonial period.

According to him, the number of relics in the form of culture that has its unification value as a unique cultural heritage and reflects a strong multi-cultural, especially between Javanese and Chinese cultures. Besides being in the city of Lasem itself, Lasem batik can also find around the city of Lasem, such as in the District of Pancur and Pamotan. Each of these regions has a uniqueness of batik that is not the same due to the flexibility of the hands, the creativity of batik artisans, and environmental factors that have their characteristics.

In the city of Lasem, the village that is the center of the largest written batik industry is Babagan Village. Babagan Village has become Lasem Batik Tourism Village since July 17, 2014, which was inaugurated directly by the Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy of the Republic of Indonesia who served at the time, Mari Elka Pangestu. The inauguration ceremony also attended by the Rembang District Regent who served at the time along with his staff, related agencies, the Head of the Babagan Village and his staff, batik entrepreneurs and batik makers in Babagan Village, and others.



Figure 2: Entrance Gate of Babagan Village
(Documentation: Qisthi Maghfiroh)

Babagan Village in Lasem Subdistrict, Rembang Regency, there are as many as 15 batik companies that are actively producing and have registered the company's trademark, and have received official permission from the Rembang City Government, namely: (1) Sekar Kencana Batik; (2) Padie Boeloe Batik; (3) Batik from Katrin's Bee; (4) Kidang Mas Written Batik; (5) Sriti Bird Batik; (6) Two Daughter's Batik; (7) Maju Jaya Batik; (8) Asri Written Batik Ana Budaya; (9) Laksam Batik; (10) Batik Writing Talents; (11) Sekar Mulyo Batik; (12) Batik Agsa; (13) Batik written by Bima Art's; (14) Batik Tulis Sumber Rejeki; (15) and Dewi Sinta Batik.

2. Batik Company Write Lasem Sekar Kencana

The Batik Company, written Lasem Sekar Kencana, is addressed at Jalan Babagan Gang IV, Number 4, Babagan Village, Lasem District, Rembang Regency, which is about 250 meters away from the entrance gate to Lasem Batik Tulis Tourism Village. The owner of the batik company Sekar Kencana is a Hoakiao (as the overseas Chinese descendant) has long been the heir of the longest-running Lasem batik handicraft business, Sigit Witjaksono.



Figure 3 Sigit Witjaksono with the Writer

(Source: Author's Documentation)

The batik company Lasem Sekar Kencana does not have a shop/showroom in Babagan Village. The production of written batik cloth is stored and displayed in the production house which is

also the private residence of the skipper. The batik production house is very easy to find due to the style of a typical Chinese house with towering walls, fences, which inherited from her ancestors for generations. In connection with the workshop of the batik company Lasem Sekar Kencana which is a legacy of hereditary ancestors, Pratiwo in Aziz (2014) argues that, "Chinese settlements in Lasem were initially in Dasun, then developed into Babagan, extending to Karangturi, in the middle of the city of Lasem in the seventeenth century "(p. 52).



Figure 4. Production House of Batik Company Write Lasem Sekar Kencana

(Documentation: Qisthi Maghfiroh)



B. Description of Research Results and Discussion

The form of Lasem's batik craft produced in the batik company Lasem Sekar Kencana has its uniqueness and characteristics compared to other batik cloth products written by Lasem. Sigit Witjaksono as the business owner still tries to maintain the history that Lasem's batik motif is a cross-cultural product between Java and China. Unjiya (2014: 8) argues that: That said, the development of Lasem batik influenced by elements of the arts and culture across the country, namely people from China and Campa who came to Lasem and mingled with residents who gradually gave birth to positive and rich acculturation of culture, including art "Batik Laseman " itself.

Batik motifs that are influenced by Chinese culture from the use of ornaments such as horn, banjo, dragons, count the flowers, lotus flowers, turtles, peacocks, and others. The businessman of Lasem written batik, especially of Chinese descent, has used the motifs of Chinese culture a long time ago, where Chinese descendants who came to Lasem introduced the motifs. In this regard, Kusrianto (2013) argues that "Lasem Batik is estimated to have been produced since 1415 which was introduced by Princess Na Li Ni of Campa" (p.

224). Also, Unjiya (2014) also argues that "(...) Na Li Ni began batik motifs of hong, liong, ceruni flowers, banji, currency, and the red blood color of typical Chinese chickens. This motif later became the hallmark and uniqueness of Lasem batik "(p. 8).

Meanwhile, motifs that are influenced by Javanese culture can see from the typical geometric motifs of the palace, such as parang, kawung, and others. Also, batik artisans in Lasem and its surroundings also created their local motifs inspired by the history and natural environment around Lasem, such as Gunung Ringgit, Krecak / Watu broke, Latohan, Sekar Jagag Laseman, Pasiran / Tanah, and others. Unjiya (2014) argues that "Lasem Batik makes craftsmen to more creative, new motives, such as latohan, mountain ringgit, kricakan or watu rupture appear "(p. 9). Among Lasem's typical motifs, the Latohan motif and the broken Krecak / Watu motif are considered by the people of Lasem and its surroundings to have their uniqueness and distinctiveness. Kusrianto (2013: 224) presents his opinion as follows: Lasem Batik has at least two distinctive features, namely Latohan and Krecak / Watu Pecah. The Latohan motif lifted from a kind of seaweed (algae) plant which is a typical food of the Lasem community. While the motive of Krecak or Watu Pecah is a painful memory of



the events of the forced labor of the Lasem community during the construction of the Daedelus road which took many casualties.

In line with this opinion, Sigit Witjaksono also stated that there are three typical Lasem batik motifs, namely latohan, Sekar jagad, and watu rupture / krecak (Results of interviews with Sigit Witjaksono, May 19, 2017). Based on these opinions, Lasem batik krecak motifs were chosen to be used as research samples in the batik company Lasem Sekar Kencana, Babagan Village, Lasem District, Rembang Regency because the motive was one of the motives that resulted from the creativity of Lasem's indigenous batik batik-makers. In terms of the form and source of ideas behind the creation of these motifs.

In making the design of the Krecak batik image/motif, Sigit Witjaksono did it himself, to be patterned by his employees. Also, he also made innovations or breakthroughs, namely by combining matching typical Lasem motifs, for example, broken patterns / broken patterns, latohan, sekar laseman, and others, with Chinese writings containing hope or prayer. He got the idea of creating a new motif (Chinese characters) during his contemplation on Chinese New Year's Eve. Additional ornaments from other Chinese are always

displayed, such as hong, turtles, peacocks, butterflies, and others. Cultivation of local culture (Lasem) and China as outlined in Lasem's written batik art, can be accepted by the wider community and can be developed again by other batik entrepreneurs written by Lasem.

According to Sigit Witjaksono's statement, namely "So that cultural acculturation between Lasem and China can be accepted by the general public and can be developed again" (Results of an interview with Sigit Witjaksono, May 19, 2017). Also, he also added, "I want to prove that Lasem's batik is indeed acculturation from Javanese and Chinese culture like its history" (Results of interview with Sigit Witjaksono, May 19, 2017). The effort made by him also paid off. At this time began to emerge some batik entrepreneurs from Lasem of Chinese descent who also added Chinese characters into the batik motif he wrote. However, the style and meaning implied in Chinese writing cannot be the same as what was created by Sigit Witjaksono. In anticipation that consumers do not choose the wrong product in buying batik cloth products from Lasem Sekar Kencana, the company produced by batik, Sigit Witjaksono took the initiative to add his name in the lower left corner of the fabric as the identity of his batik

product.



Figure 5 Identity of Sigit Witjaksono's Name on Lasem Batik Fabric Products Krecak Motif in Batik Company Write Lasem Sekar Kencana

(Documentation: Qisthi Maghfiroh)

Imitation-imitating motifs and colors have indeed become a natural thing in Lasem's batik industry. If one batik company can create a Lasem's best-selling batik motif on the market, then other batik artisans are competing to emulate the motif as closely as possible, which is done in their respective companies. Regarding the imitation, Sumarsono et al. (2013: 70) argue that: Duplicate designs, techniques, colors, etc. occur everywhere. No wonder that many batik places surrounded by high walls such as Lasem and Laweyan in Solo. Just one attempt to protect their secrets from competitors.

As a Lasem batik entrepreneur, Sigit Witjaksono is an idealist. Because he is reluctant to include modern elements in the coloring of batik he wrote, as did other batik entrepreneurs from Lasem who use pink, turquoise, magenta, and others. Sigit Witjaksono argues as follows, "The written batik that I produce is indeed not mixed with the style of Pekalongan or other modern styles, because I am more pleased with the classic" (Result of an interview with Sigit Witjaksono, May 19, 2017). Therefore, his written batik products retain Lasem's classic colors, such as soja, red, blue, purple and green. Next, are the uniqueness and distinctiveness of Lasem's batik produced in the batik company Lasem Sekar Kencana.



Figure 6 Krecak as a Road Making Material What Makes Inspiration the Creation of a Cracked Motif

(Documentation: Qisthi Maghfiroh)



Picture 7 Batik Writing Lasem Motif Krecak at the Batik Company Write Lasem Sekar Kencana

(Documentation: Qisthi Maghfiroh)

The Idea Source of Creation Motives

The broken krecak / watu motif is an expression of the annoyance of the Lasem people towards the Daendles project, namely the construction of the Postal Highway which claimed many lives at that time. An inspiration for batik designers or batik artisans (batik) in creating a distinctive Lasem batik motif design. In this broken pattern, Sigit Witjaksono maintains that Lasem's batik is a blend between local culture (Lasem) and Chinese. Egard, Musman, and Arini (2011) argue that "Another peculiarity of Lasem batik lies in its style which is a combination of the influence of Chinese culture, The local culture of the northern coastal communities of Central Java and the culture of the Solo Palace and

Yogyakarta" (pp. 62-63). Also, the colors were chosen to use Lasem's classic colors, such as red, blue, and soja. The design of the image was made by him so that the patterns found on the broken / non-broken motifs would not find anywhere else.

The influence of Javanese culture, especially the local culture of the people in Lasem, is seen in the use of ornaments inspired by the natural environment around Lasem, such as the main ornament krecak / watu rupture and additional ornaments such as starfish, sea corals, and octopus. While the influence of Chinese culture poured in additional ornaments, such as Chinese characters, butterflies, ceremonial flowers, and spiders. The Chinese script is an innovation or breakthrough created by Sigit Witjaksono so that people remember history and can accept that Lasem batik is acculturation between Chinese and Javanese culture. In the sample of broken/broken paper motifs, Sigit Witjaksono added Chinese characters which meant "Longevity and Youthfulness, All Happy and Prosperous Houses."

2. Analysis of Design Structure Based on the Elements of Motif Ornaments and Ornament Builders.

The batik motif according to its elements based on the opinion of Susanto (1980) divided into two, namely batik motifs and batik motifs. Batik ornaments divided into main ornaments and additional ornaments. Motif krecak / watu broke with a background full of ornaments krecak or small pieces of stone which is the expression of the craftsman (batik) Lasem if



claimed many lives. The whole broken krecak / watu pattern consists of irregularly shaped small pieces of stone (krecak) which are arranged to spread on the background of the batik, which combined with matching motifs such as Chinese characters, ceruni flowers, butterflies, spiders, starfish, octopus, coral reefs, and flowers. While "isen-isen" used in this motif is "cecek-cecek" and sawut which are used to fill and beautify additional ornaments.

Based on the ornamental compilation theory, Budiyono (2008) argues that the arrangement of ornaments on the batik motifs of broken krecak / watu uses a combination of random techniques, transitions, and repetitions. To form the main ornament, one of the main ornament patterns is arranged repeatedly with transition direction and size techniques because it experiences repetition accompanied by close changes in the direction and size of the ornament continuously filling the background of batik cloth. Then, in additional ornaments such as leaves, flowers, spiders, starfish, and octopuses, using random techniques because they are arranged randomly without any specific pattern bonds so that some patterns are spread freely across the surface of the batik cloth. On the other hand, for additional ornaments of butterflies, cucumber flowers, Chinese characters, and sea corals, each experience repetition with extreme similarities in shape, expression, size, direction, color, texture, and distance.

3. Analysis of Design Structures Based on Elements of Fine Arts

a) Shape

Sanyoto (2010) argues that any object in the universe, including works of art/design, certainly has a form (form), and this form into spots, lines, shapes, and volumes. The Objects can be simple spot categories in the broken batik motif are in the form of shreds to fill or beautify additional ornaments. Also, the objects can be a category as lines in this batik motif are in the form of both straight lines and curved lines. Straight lines are used to form the isen sawut in additional ornaments. While the curved line used as the outline forming the main and additional ornaments. Then, objects that can be simply as a shape on this broken watu motif are the main ornament krecak / watu rupture and additional ornaments. While objects that have dimensions of length, width, and height that simplified into a stocky category (volume), cannot be found on written batik cloth which only has long and wide dimensions.

b) Expression

The expression is a characteristic that is possessed by every object that distinguishes each form from a spot, a line, a shape, and a volume. Sanyoto (2010) argues that "Any form in this world certainly has an expression that is a characteristic of that form" (p. 83). From the statement, it concluded that the shape of a spot, line, shape, and volume, each certainly has an expression. In this small pattern, the point depends on the thing used, which is the large, small hole "carat / cucuk" of the "canthing" used, and at the speed of the hand of the craftsman in scraping the canting containing



hot nights on the surface of batik cloth. In this motif, the point produced by batik artisans is simple round.

Then, for the lines on the krecak motif, which are straight and curved, follow the direction of the line. For this motive, it can be categorized as a combination of geometry and non geometry fields. From the additional ornaments of Chinese characters, butterflies, ceremonial flowers, and coral reefs which are arranged repeatedly in several corners of batik cloth. Later, other additional ornaments such as flowers, leaves, spiders, and octopuses have the look of an organic field, namely fields which are bound by free curved lines. On the other hand, the main ornament of the broken tab is arranged transitionally with close changes in the size and direction of the ornaments, which spread throughout the background of the batik cloth. But in Lasem's written batik motif, it cannot be found in a stock expression.

c) Size

Size is in the form of large, small, high, low, long, short, thick, and thin. However, the intended size is not in centimeters or meters, but the relative size is relative or adapted to the shape. From the statement, Wahida and Handayani (2002) added, "If the size is not balanced, the design produced will look less good" (p. 24). So that size is a calculated element in art and design, taking into account the size according to the perspective of art, the results of certain beauties will obtain. For this written batik motif, objects that have sizes are lines and fields. The length, height, and size of the line influenced by the space where the line located. The length of the line of the outline in

the main ornament and additional ornaments, each adjusting from the visualization of the shape. While the length of the line for isen sawut in additional ornaments depends on the area. And for the height of the line, each one adjusts from the field of ornament. Then, the thickness of the line influenced by the size of the carat can thing used and the speed of the hand by each artisan. For the whole line, both curvilinear lines and straight lines have the same line thickness, exacerbated by the curved lines forming additional Chinese characters which have thicker than others. The fields small motifs on the main ornament are narrow in size.

d) Directions

For written batik cloth, the forms that have direction are in the form of lines and fields. In this broken/broken pattern, for straight line forms have diagonal, horizontal, and vertical directions. Whereas for curved lines have the direction of the dome, arc, float, and arch S. Then, for the overall main ornament and additional ornament have vertical, horizontal and diagonal plane directions.

e) Texture

Sanyoto (2010) argues that the one that includes pseudo-texture is a patterned, patterned or pictorial texture. So it can be concluded that written batik cloth has a rough pseudo texture. Pseudo coarse texture can be grouped again into three types, namely manual texture, mechanical texture, and expression texture. So, batik cloth is included in the mechanical texture, because the making of the



motif through the printing of the obstacle, namely the night of batik as a barrier, then dipped into the dye to produce a motif. In this specially written batik motif, the coarse pseudo texture is present in the main ornament which is small in size and meets the background of the batik cloth. As for the additional ornaments, the coarse pseudo texture appears because of the presence of isen-isen sawut and shreds.

f) Color

Color is a very important element of design. Because with the color, making an object can be seen more sharply and interestingly. In this broken batik motif, the color components used are:

- i. White, which comes from the basic color of Mori cloth.
- ii. Red, which comes from a mixture of naphthol AS-BS with Red 3GL salt.
- iii. Blue, which comes from a mixture of naphthol AS- with Blue BB salt.
- iv. Yellowish brown (sogan), which comes from a mixture of naphthol AS-G and Blue B.
- v. Black, which comes from a mixture of US naphthol with Blue BB salt stacked with a mixture of naphthol AS-G and Blue B salt

g) Space

This kreckak batik motif occupies two-

dimensional space or dwimatra. This is because batik cloth only has dimensions of length and width.

Conclusion

Based on the results and discussion, it was found that the form of Lasem's batik craft at the Sekar Kencana company in Babagan Village, Lasem Subdistrict, Rembang Regency is unique in its motives and is an acculturation between Chinese and Javanese culture (Lasem), which preserves Lasem's classic color in batik is write.

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