

THE UNIQUENESS OF THE STORYTELLING ON THE BATIK KOMPENI FROM THE CIREBON REGION

Nuning Yanti Damayanti

Faculty of Visual Art and Design, Institut Teknologi Bandung
nydamayanti10@gmail.com

Abtrak

Batik merupakan produk budaya asli Indonesia dan telah diakui sebagai kekayaan intelektual yang mewakili warisan dunia. Merupakan produk tekstil yang dihiasi dengan berbagai motif khas Indonesia. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah dengan mengamati berbagai foto sampel batik dan menganalisisnya melalui pendekatan kritik seni dan perspektif bahasa halus, serta wawancara dan studi inovasi formal dengan menafsirkan kembali narasi cerita rakyat Jawa untuk mengembangkan cerita batik di Cirebon. Tujuannya adalah untuk memperkaya motif batik sekaligus mengenalkan kembali cerita rakyat Jawa melalui karya seni batik itu sendiri. Kesimpulannya adalah, batik karakter dongeng dari Cirebon dapat menjadi karya seni alternatif dan memiliki nilai ekonomi yang kompetitif.

Kata kunci: Batik Kompeni, Cirebon, cerita rakyat, batik bercerita.

Abstract

Batik is an original cultural product of Indonesian and has been recognized as an intellectual property that represents the world heritage/legacy. It is a textile product decorated with various unique Indonesian motifs. The research method comprise of observing a various photograph of the batik sample and analyse it through from the approach of art criticism and fine language perspectives, also interviews and formal innovation studies by reinterpreting the Javanese folklore narratives to develop the storytelling batik in Cirebon. The goals is to enrich batik motifs while also reintroducing Javanese folklores through the batik artwork itself. The conclusion is, character of storytelling batik from Cirebon can be an alternative artwork and has competitive economic value.

Keywords: Batik Kompeni, Cirebon, folklore, storytelling batik.

INTRODUCTION

Batik as an original traditional technique is the heritage of Indonesian nation and has become a world heritage as a product of intangible culture, an award given by UNESCO on October 2, 2009. The development of batik in Indonesia varies in design greatly, media, and function. The various batik designs can be in the form of traditional batik, modern batik, or contemporary batik. The creativity of the creation of modern batik designs is increasingly diverse in form and function. In the

past, batik products had motifs that were still sacred, were also functional, and belonged to the collective. Modernization has caused a degradation of functions and values in making batik, which has shifted into products that have consumptive, economic and individualistic values. In the world of batik, batik plays a very important role, namely a number of batik artists in Cirebon creating new batik uniforms that depart from modern and contemporary thinking. with a new interpretation into a modern batik design. This new creativity in

field of batik has received special attention from both the consumer community and in the market. In general, batik designs and new motifs are snippets of repetition of old motivations or even leaving the original traditional motifs of the region and shifting to contemporary motifs, to meet the tastes of today's society which are completely practical and instantaneous. The variety of shapes and motifs of batik design orders from consumers overwhelm our craftsmen, now in each province each province has its own distinctive features, its batik motifs are adapted to the environment and richness of local art. This paper discusses initial research on the storytelling batik motif which is an alternative to batik motif that can be developed, especially the storytelling batik motif that tells the folklore that developed on the North coast of Java. The method used in this research is a visual experiment approach with learning material about the visual elements in batik motifs. Another supporting analysis is to study innovation in reinterpreting Javanese coastal folklore narratives which are still known by coastal communities. The aim is to enrich coastal motifs while reintroducing coastal narratives through batik work. It is hoped that the storytelling Batik motif will become an alternative to the new coastal motifs from the Javanese coast.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Folklore, Reflections of the Society it Self



Fig. 1. Eliza van Zuylen's Indo-Dutch family developed Batik Pansolen on the northern coast of the island of Java in the 1840s. Pansolen style motifs are still being produced and are quite in demand.
(Photo: Tropen Museum and Javanese Collection)

Folklore is passed down from generation to generation and folklore is still an important thing for traditional society, even as if it is a part of their pattern of life. Folk stories can also be heroic stories, fairy tales about figures who are not real, imaginary and imaginative, but are believed to exist by the local community. For people who believe in it, folklore is considered real and influences the mindset and pattern of social life in that community. This is reflected in behavior, speech, ritual ceremonies, artistic activities and even in state government structures, all of which are in accordance with the rules or local wisdom of the community's ancestors from generation to generation (regeneration) and are still believed to be today [3] (Campbell, 1988). Mythology about folklore in Indonesia is thought to have existed since prehistoric times, folklore stories were passed down from generation to generation



Fig. 2. Dutch Batik Motif Pictures, Folklore on Batik Kompeni; Red Hat with different variants. namely produced in the 1840 -1900s
(Image data: Luluk Khoironi)



Fig. 3. The Batik Pattern image tells the story, the development of batik Kompeni motifs, tells the story of the daily life interactions between the Dutch Company and local residents (Batik Cirebon).

(Repro: Nuning Damayanti)

orally. The notion of mythology in Indonesia is divided into three understandings, the first is true folklore, where humans try with their imagination to explain natural phenomena / forces of nature / occult / mystical. Therefore, folklore in Indonesia is often associated with spirituality, the occult and the mystical. When Hinduism affects the beliefs of the local community and is associated with Indian Hindu beliefs, it then affects the way of thinking of Indonesians. The imagination of natural phenomena has turned into folklore-folk tales by marrying the Mahabharata story into wayang story characters adapted to local life to become role models for Javanese people who are aligned with local beliefs, into folk tales through the form of West Java Wayang Golek, Wayang Cepak Cirebon, Wayang Kulit Solo and Yogyakarta, Wayang Kamasan Bali. [1] (Adisasmito, Nuning, 2007).

The Origin of Storytelling Batik

The Cirebon region is a coastal city that frequently visited by foreigners, resulting in a process of mixing external cultures with Cirebon's indigenous culture. Cirebon batik motifs greatly influenced the decorative patterns of batik which experienced its heyday, especially at the time of the entry of Islam in the 15-16 centuries. The variety of non-figurative flora becomes an alternative in coastal batik motifs because it may be because of the prohibition among Islamic scholars in drawing figurative forms. The peak of the development of coastal batik was during the era of Indo-Dutch entrepreneurs who played a role in the batik business. Not only entrepreneurs from the Netherlands, Chinese entrepreneurs also took part in the development of coastal batik. North of the island of Java. Coastal batik has the following characteristics: Batik decoration is decorative for



Fig. 4. The Batik Pattern image tells the story of developing company motifs, seeding, planting rice until harvesting, and selling the award crop to Dewi Sri, Dewi Padi. (Batik Cirebon).

(Repro: Nuning Damayanti)

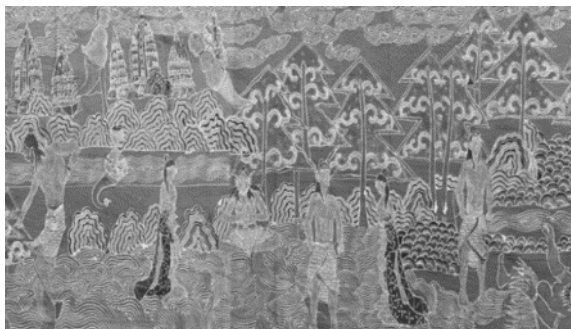


Fig. 5. Batik style tells the myth of Timun Mas
(Awee Art Studio Batik)



Fig. 7. Batik style tells the story of the Wewe Gombel myth. (Batik Semarang)
Repro: Nuning Damayanti

flora and fauna, showing the motif of influencing the aesthetic concepts of India, China, the Middle East and later the influence of the West during the Dutch colonial period. In the Kompeni batik motif, the influence was quite dominant, because of that later Batik became known by the Dutch people and they saw economic opportunities. Furthermore, the Dutch businessmen collaborated with Cirebon batik makers to produce Batik with a distinctive Dutch Batik motif which could be identified from its European patterns and patterns. This batik is known as “Batik Kompeni”. Dutch batik is the other side of the Dutch colonialism journey in the archipelago. The motif has a dynamic pattern and is rich in shape into a storytelling batik pioneered by Von Franquemont, namely a long cloth with European-style floral patterns [10] (Valdhuisen, 2007: 12).

The development of Batik coastal motifs includes the influence of European and Chinese fairy tales. This causes Batik artists to bring up lo-



Fig. 6. Batik tells the myth of Jaka Tarub
(Yanmi Art Studio Batik)

cal myths and legends. The characteristic of coastal batik can be seen from the motifs that symbolize the acculturation of coastal Indonesian culture with foreign cultures. Cirebon coastal batik has progressed during the 1800-1900s period.

Coastal Batik artists are usually easier to adapt to culture from outside, including in developing the Batik Kompeni style. Contemporary company batik no longer depicts European folklore, they develop storytelling batik motifs that take their ideas from local folklore with objects and folk tales that more bring out the daily life of local people. In addition, there are also batik motifs that take the mythology of Indonesian society.

Actually, from the results of the documentation of batik, there are quite a lot of batik with storytelling motifs or Kompeni batik. It seems that it has not been widely known by the wider community. Efforts should be made to introduce this unique storytelling batik. . In addition, the development of a story-telling batik style can be an effort to reintroduce coastal myths in the coastal areas of the island of Java. It is hoped that Batik with its creation of coastal myths and its rich folklore can become an alternative to the new Javanese coastal style.

Myths of Nyai Roro Kidul on Batik Story

Decorative styles and illustrative narratives in



Fig. 8,9,10. A version of the story of the myth of Nyai Roro Kidul, Left by Kathrina Pallon, Middle by Roeyardian and Right Nuning Damayanti

artefacts and forms of fine art are distinctive characters in the Asian region, especially in Southeast Asia, as well as in Indonesia, especially in the Java region. Visual style on temple walls that undergoes a process of shape transformation when there is a change in media and of course technical adjustments, when applied to wood, leather, palm leaves, cloth, and the latest media are paper, the common thread that remains present is the visualization of the narrative style illustrative [1] (Adisasmito, Nuning 2007). These narrative and naturalist illustrative styles have always existed in every mainstream period in Indonesia up to the era of modernism and even the contemporary era.

The legend of Kanjeng Ratu Kidul is known on the South coast of Central Java, and Nyai Roro Kidul from the South Coast of West Java. in the story contains the Philosophical Concept of the Maritime country and astrology / astronomy which is expressed in the Bedhaya Ketawang Dance movement. There is a belief that in the kingdoms of Surakarta and Yogyakarta, the King of Java must marry the Queen of the South in order for his power to last. This mythical figure is often depicted as a beautiful woman, a ruler of the South Sea is depicted wearing green. Ratu-Lelembut of Javanese land is a popular feature in folklore and

mythology, as well as being associated with the beauty of Sundanese and Javanese princesses so that there is a Sundanese version, better known as Nyai Roro Kidul. Examples of storytelling Batik works inspired by the mythology of Roro Kidul.

The story is approached through interpretation and directed primarily as an artistic articulation of narrative batik painting. As is well known, interpretation is a very important cognitive aspect of perception. This process depends on the way of deepening (learning), one's motivation and personality. So the knowledge that we acquire through perception is not knowledge of the real object, but knowledge of the appearance of that object. Thus, the interpretation carried out by this batik artist undoubtedly presupposes the role of perception starting from his openness in perceiving the intentions of myths or legends that interest him. For this reason, it is better to remember and reexamine the power of narration in myths and legends.

CONCLUSION

Batik artists collaborate with batik craftsmen to develop batik motifs telling stories about folklore in coastal batik, as well as reintroducing coastal folk tales that may have been forgotten to

the community. Mythology is spoken continuously in oral, written, and artefacts that are scattered in almost all regions of the island of Java, is spoken continuously until now and continues to inspire artists, through new meanings, into new creations that are applied to batik motifs.

REFERENCES

- [1] Adisasmito, Nuning D, *Wayang Kulit Cirebon, Aesthetics and Visual*, FSRD ITB, 2018
- [2] Tertens, K. *History of Greek Philosophy*, Kanisius 1999
- [3] Campbell, Joseph, *The Power of Myth*, Anchor Books, 1988
- [4] Cotten, Arthur & Storm, Rachel, *The Ultimate Encyclopedia of Mythology*, Hermes House, London, 2007
- [5] Damayanti, Nuning, 2019, *Illustrations in Javanese Old Manuscripts are applied to the Storytelling Batik Fabrics*, Proceedings of the Sandyakala Seminar, 9 April 2019, ISI Denpasar, Bali (205-211)
- [6] Djawas, Rofiqoh, *The Philosophical Meaning of the Head Wayang Cepak Indramayu Figure Panji Songsong*, Limited Publication Thesis, Master Study Program Library, FSRD ITB, 2015.
- [7] Luluk Khoironi Maknun, *Batik Design with Inspirational Sources of Folklore and Flora Fauna Indonesia*. *Ornaments of the Surakarta Artworks Journal*, vol 15. No.2 2018, 109-117
- [8] J. W. Creswell, *Qualitative Research and Research Design*. Yogyakarta: Student Library, 2014.
- [9] Olthof, W.L. *Babad Tanah Jawi: Starting from Adam to the Fall of Mataram*. Yogyakarta: Narrative Publisher, 2017
- [10] Veldhuisen, C. Harmen. 1993. *Batik Belanda 1840 – 1940: Dutch Influence in Batik from Java, History and Stories*. First edn. Jakarta: Gaya Favorit Press.

Sumber data internet:

- [11] <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main/free/Myth>, 24/09/2020 archivee.ivaonline, 24/09/2020
- [12] <https://metrum.co.id/wayang-beber-wayang-tertua-di-indonesia>, 2/10/2020

Sumber data pendukung:

- Yanmi Art Studio Batik
Awee Art Studio Batik