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The Acculturation of Batik Lasem's Culture With Chinese Motif in the 18th to 20th Century

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Batik Lasem is one of the famous heritages in Indonesia. Lasem has a unique batik motif because it is a blend of Chinese and Javanese culture, which results in a combination of motifs with distinctive shapes and colors, as well as having motifs that are full of meaning. The city of Lasem was chosen because it plays an important role as a batik producer in Indonesia, which is bought by Chinese culture. The purpose of this research is to study and analyze the variety of Chinese decoration in Lasem and its development in the 18th century until the 20th century. The research method used is the study of literature, while the theory used is cultural acculturation theory and discussion of the theory from previous research.

Keywords: Lasem batik, motifs' meaning, Javanese-Chinese's culture, acculturation motifs

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Introduction

Lasem is a melting pot between Javanese and Chinese cultures. Therefore Batik Tulis Lasem is the result of the acculturation of both cultures. Batik Tulis Lasem brings traders and merchants from various places, which are traded and bought by local people in the port city of Lasem. These activities were creating multicultural cultural values and products. The map of Lasem can be seen in Figure 1 below.



Figure 1. Lasem's map

(source: *Sita Resmi, Carita Lasem, Arkeologi FIB UI*, 2012)

According to the number of literature, Lasem was the first place where Chinese traders landed in Indonesia (Putra & Sartini, 2016). Starting from Lasem, they spread to Kudus City, Demak, and other Java areas. Admiral Cheng Ho and his men at that time were attracted to the City of Lasem and finally decided to stay temporarily. Besides, the city of Lasem is known as the Little Tiongkok or La Petite Chine (French) since it was the first place of arrival of the Chinese who landed on the north coast of Java (Aziz, 2014: 47). Admiral Cheng Ho and his fleet landed at the port of Lasem in 1413 AD (Kamzah, 1858:1). Figure 2 shows the Cheng Ho sea voyage to Indonesia in the 1400 century.

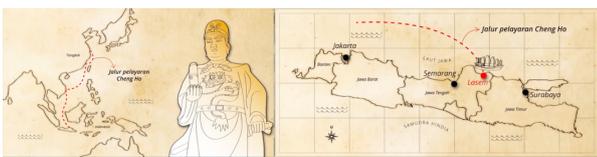


Figure 2. Cheng Ho sea voyage

(source: *Kompas*, <https://interaktif.kompas.id/baca/koridor-rembang-lasem/2018>)

Besides, the city of Lasem known with many old high-wall houses with distinctive Chinese styles, which can be seen in Figure 3 (left side) below. Besides the unique homes, the acculturation of Chinese culture is reflected by the three old temples known as the Cu An Kiong temple in Karangturi village, the Poo An Bio temple in Bagan village, and Gie Yong Bio temple in Babagan village, which has been built since 1700 century. The Cu An Kiong temple is the oldest in Java Island. This temple can be seen in figure 3 (right side) below. The front gate of the Cu An Kiong temple looks similar to a temple building in general, except

for two lion statues that show the influence of European culture (Handinoto, 2015: 145).



Figure 3. Chinese houses and Cu An Kiong temple in Lasem (source: survey, 2015)

According to the manuscript that rewritten by R. Panji Kamzah (1858) entitled *Carita Sejarah Lasem* manuscript, it described that Lasem had been the center of batik production in Central Java since 1401 Saka (1479 AD). During the Ming Dynasty, there were two of *Dhang Puhawang* named Cheng Ho, with his captain Bi Nang Un, decided to stay in Bonang after seeing the beauty of North Java. Lasem's Adipati, Wijaya Badra, gave land and place to stay to Bi Nang Un in the Kamandhung area. Bi Nang Un has a wife named Na Li Ni, who taught batik and Chinese letters to young local people girls in Taman Banjar Mlati Kemadhung (Putra & Sartini, 2016: 116).

Chinese characters are known to be stable in preserving the customs of their ancestors, and this has an impact on the socio-cultural life of the Lasem community. The motifs that appeared in batik are Phoenix/*Hong, Kilin*, Dragon, *Chrysanthemums, Banji*, coins, and chicken-blood, a kind of red color that represented Chinese character (Asa, 2014:139). These motifs then became Lasem batik trademark. Afterward, batik Lasem developed new motifs while keeping these old motifs as well. The batik motifs that are still produced up to present by the artisans are *Bledak Krecak Naga (Dragon)*, *Hong bird*, *Bledak Naga Swastika (Banji)* *Bledak Naga*, *Bledak Naga Banji Merah* and many more.

This paper discusses the historical background of the emergence of Chinese culture in Lasem batik. This paper aims to explore the mixture cultural of the design forms and the meaning of motifs, that produced the uniqueness of Lasem motifs with its characteristics periodically. Based on this objective, in this paper, the author tried to discuss the Chinese cultural values that could be underlying the emergence of batik culture and the variation of Lasem batik motifs. Besides, this paper also describes the historical background and identity of Lasem batik, as well as the cultural values that underlie the motifs in Lasem batik.

The methodology used in this paper was using literature review and documentation. Data collection was gathered by conducting interviews with Lasem's '*tetua*' or elders, batik observers, batik craftsmen, and the owners of traditional *pembatikan*. The author collects preliminary data by reading the literature review. The analysis was done by the method of interpretation and description.

Literature Study

The spread of Chinese culture in Indonesia has occurred since the Ming dynasty in 15th century AD, with all interactions between immigrants and local people, not only seen as a process of assimilation, acculturation and integration, but also as a process of struggle and conflict, as an identity construction and reconstruction, that has been going on for centuries. Denys Lombard in a book called *Nusa Jawa: Silang Budaya 2* (2015), said that the relationship between the Indonesian people and China had been established for a long time, due to trade relations and the spread of Buddhism in the 14th century AD.

The migration of Chinese people to Indonesia is the male people without bringing their wives and relatives. They live to trade and marry local people. Intermingling between Chinese and local people is based on a sense of religion and mutual tolerance. Many Chinese people settled on the north coast of the island of Java. Both migration and trade are all located along the northern coast of Java. This condition encouraged the Chinese people to interact a lot finally and centered on the north coast of Java. The overseas Chinese then settled and had offspring there. Many Chinese people live in the streets that are strategic for trading and living in groups in Chinatown (Lombard, 2005: 243-244).

Peter Carey, in his book entitled *Orang Jawa dan Masyarakat Cina* (1986), discusses the growth of the Chinese population in Indonesia, which is very closely related to its role in the economic field. The Chinese want to be free from the Chinese royal bureaucracy that has made Chinese people confined. The Chinese uphold the values that emphasize crafts, frugality, effort, and skill. These skills are also added to the principles of social organization that are easily adapted and used in community life.

Acculturation appears, if there are groups of people with several cultures confronted with a different culture, so culture is quickly accepted and processed into a free relationship according to the needs themselves. (Koentjaraningrat, 1986).

Rens Heringa in *Five Centuries of Indonesian Textiles* mentioned that Batik was considered an "ancient" Indian-derived resist technique combined with Hindu iconography that had been initiated within the courts of Central Java, from whence it subsequently spread to other social levels and regions on the island. Moreover, the development of the brightly colored batik style of the North Coast was attributed mistakenly to the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century as a response to the demise of the trade cloths from Gujarat and the Coromandel Coast. Recent studies have amply demonstrated that Central Javanese court culture only developed in the early seventeenth century and benefited considerably from the downfall of the

abundant trade ports of the North Coast. One vital element was the hybrid Javanese-Chinese Islamic traditions influenced by Muslim migrants from South China who settled on the North Coast between the late thirteenth and the early fifteenth centuries. Typical for this style is the iconography of traditional pesisir batik (Barnes, Kahlenberg, & White, 2010:121). Helen Ishwara, L.R. Supriyanto Yahya and Xenia Moeis in the book *Batik Pesisir Pusaka Indonesia* (2011), say that Chinese traders carry embroidered silk and Dragon-drawn pictures, *Hong* birds, *Kilin*, *Banji* (swastika), flowers in China such as peony flowers, plum blossoms, and animals like cranes, deer, turtle, bat, rooster, peacock, etc. The images were adapted to batik and combined with coastal batik motifs and became part of Indonesian culture (Ishwara, Yahya, Moeis, & Rambe, 2011: 26).

The contribution of Lasem batik to Coastal batik is enormous. The batik business starts from a small business, then develops into a big one. The original Chinese batik businessman only traded for a limited circle, for the needs of his own family, but over time this business developed so that it could dominate the batik market at that time. Coastal batik production multiplied around the 1870s, supported by the advancement of transportation of trains and steamships. Batik traders and producers are trying to meet diverse consumer tastes, which are always demanding innovations. As a result, batik made along the coast of its style is very dynamic (Ishwara, Yahya, Moeis, 2011: 23-26).

Nanang Rizali and Bani Sudardi in *Aktualisasi Nilai Cina Dalam Batik Lasem* (2019), said that Chinese culture influenced Lasem's batik in terms of colors and motifs. Chinese people wrote literature with Chinese characters poured their culture into the art of making batik on cloth. Long before it was poured into Lasem's batik art, elements of Chinese culture such as Chinese letters, Dragons, and *Hong* birds had been painted on traditional Chinese fabrics such as handkerchiefs, clothing, and long cloth (Rizali & Sudardi, 2019).

The process of making Lasem batik is not much different from other areas, which is through the stages of *pengetelan*, *mola*, *nglengkrenge*, *nerusi*, *nembok*, *ngelir*, *nglorot* to *melipat*. A piece of batik cloth takes from three to six months. This is because the tools used are still traditional, and all stages of manufacturing are done manually. The repetitive coloring process is done by hand (interview with the owner of Batik Tulis Sekar Kentjana, Sigit Witjaksana, Lasem, August 2018).

Discussion

Chinese Ornamental and The Motifs Meaning

The flora and fauna motifs that we find in the coastal batik cloth are rooted in the teachings of *Tao*, *Confucius*, and *Buddha*. The meaning contained in these symbols is often interpreted as being missed in later centuries, so it loses its

religious and philosophical meaning and is only considered to be a repellent. Centuries before Christ, the Chinese believed that four powerful creatures guarded the world. The four creatures are called the *Penjaga Empat Penjuru Dunia*, which means Guard of the Four Corners of the World. Dragons stand guard in the East, *Kilin* in the West, *Hong* Birds in the South, and Turtles in the North (Ishwara et al., 2011: 48-57).



Figure 4. Dragon

(source: *Batik Pesisir Pusaka Indonesia*, 2011:48)

Dragons are called *Long* in Mandarin and *Liong* in the Hokkien dialect. Dragons are known since about 3,000 years ago and have various types. The best known is the bluish-green Dragon. The head of a Dragon is like the head of a horse or camel but has a shield. His teeth were pointed like tiger teeth, his horns were like giant stags, while his eyes were like rabbit's eyes. The ears are like those of a bull. Its body is long like a snake, covered in 117 scales shaped like golden fish scales. All four legs had eagle-like claws. The paws can be five, four, or three. The Dragon motif is the symbol of the Emperor of China, and only imperial Dragons can have five claws like in the picture below. Official costumes under the emperor could only be decorated with four-clawed Dragons. Three-clawed Dragons belong to people of lower social status.



Figure 5. Five-Claw Dragon motif, Emperor T'ung-Chih clothes in 1862

(source: *Threads of Gold*, 2006:46)

Dragons are often depicted as surrounded by water or clouds. This creature is glorified because it is believed to have extraordinary powers. It can fly, it can also live on the seabed, and some live in the ground. Dragon is considered as a protector, repellent, fortune giver, and fertility because it gives rain; even if it is angry, it can bring along dry season and flood on land and storm in the sea. Each type of

Dragon has a different task. The Dragon known for coastal batik is *Donghai Longwang*, the Dragon King of the East Sea. The figure is in the *Hokkien* dialect, commonly called *Hai Liong Ong*.



Figure 6. Hong Bird

(source: *Batik Pesisir Pusaka Indonesia*, 2011:48)

The *Hong* bird (*Fenghuang*) is often referred to as a phoenix. On the batik cloth of coastal *Hong*, birds are depicted differently. Sometimes it looks like a *kuao* with a long and beautiful tail. Sometimes it is distilled, so it forms simple lines. *Hong* birds can be red, can also be colorful. Black symbolizes loyalty, honesty, white, red politeness, green justice, and yellow generosity.

In comparison, if Dragons are *yang*, then *Hong* birds are *yin*. If the Dragon is the symbol of the emperor, then the *Hong* bird symbolizes the empress. If a Dragon symbolizes might, then a *Hong* bird symbolizes gentleness and elegance. In coastal batik, *Hong* birds are considered to be repellent. A Dragon with a *Hong* bird symbolizes the happiness of marriage.



Figure 7. Killin

(source: *Batik Pesisir Pusaka Indonesia*, 2011:49)

Qilin or *Kilin* are creatures that are like deer but scaly like golden fish. His head is like a Dragon, complete with horns. The toenails are like cow hooves, although some say they are like horse hooves, the tail is like a lion's tail or a cow's tail. Sometimes his body is fiery. Despite its creepy appearance, *Kilin* is considered a gentle creature. He stepped carefully so as not to step on creatures and even living plants. *Kilin* is said to be a vegetarian. Yet he only eats dry grass, not live grass. He can walk on water. *Kilin* symbolizes purity, truth, justice, prosperity, and peace. He is also considered a giver of fertility to infertile people.



Figure 8. Turtle

(source: *Batik Pesisir Pusaka Indonesia*, 2011:50)

Turtles are the only real animals in life, out of the four guardians of the world. The top shell of the turtle is considered a celestial dome of heaven. Because the life of a tortoise is relatively long, it is used as a symbol of longevity and even eternity. The tortoise became a strong hero in many Chinese legends, so it was called the “Black Warrior,” which symbolized perseverance and strength. That’s why the emperor’s army carries a Dragon flag that symbolizes irresistible power and a tortoise flag that symbolizes an impenetrable defense. Turtles are also considered to invite good fortune and luck. Up to now, there are still offerings and snacks made from glutinous rice flour in the shape of a turtle. Sticky *ku* rice cakes filled with peanut dough taste sweet and are made to invite prosperity, harmony, and security.



Figure 9-16. Butterfly, Stork, Deer, *Makara*, Dragonfly, Peacock, Lotus and *Chrysanthemum*

(source: *Batik Pesisir Pusaka Indonesia*, 2011:51-57)

The butterfly is almost always used as a motif in coastal batik, because of its beautiful shape, and symbolizes true love that is inseparable. A butterfly is called *hudie*, which means “90 years old”, a symbol of a long life. Butterfly motifs are used to fill empty spaces, as is the case with small birds.

Stork has glorious meanings such as success, wisdom, learning, peace, majesty, determination, wealth, and power. Storks depicted in pairs means loyalty or a long-married life because the stork is pronounced as *he*, which sounds the same as “harmony.” Storks are also considered to be animals ridden by human spirits to heaven.

Deer are *lu*, which means wealth. The deer symbolizes success in a long career, fame, public recognition, in addition to symbolizing endurance and elegance. The deer are considered inviting longevity because in addition to the ride of the God of Longevity. Fish called *yu*, whose sound has the meaning “abundance.” Goldfish scales or chef fish glitter like gold, so they also symbolize abundant gold or wealth. Fish also symbolizes calm, patience, harmony, wisdom, and longevity.

Tigers and leopards are called *hu*. It sounds the same as *hu*, which means “protect.” Tigers are considered to be an exorcist and protector of children in addition to symbolizing bravery, strength, and dignity. It helps children to be strong and brave. A tiger is found in a child’s sling. The white tiger or *baihu* then replaced *Kilin* as one of the four guards in the world. Five poisonous animals, snakes, three-legged frogs, scorpions, millipedes, and spiders are considered as an exorcist. It is not surprising that in a sling or baby-clothes drawn by those poisonous animals. Other animals that are supposed to drive away demons are tigers, dogs, lions, pigs, and Dragons.

Makara is an elephant-headed fish found in Hindu temples in Java. *Makara* is considered a creature ridden by the sea god *Baruna* and the Goddess *Gangga*. But in coastal batik, *Makara* is a Dragon-headed fish, as found in Chinese and Japanese culture. Dragon-headed *Makara* is considered to be able to go through all the dangers and difficulties to be able to reach the Dragon Gate, which is a high waterfall. *Makara* is a symbol of perseverance, courage, strength in overcoming challenges to achieve high ideals or glory.

Dragonflies are called *qingting*. *Qing* can also mean pure and clear. The horse symbolizes fast advancing in a career or business, endurance, and strong energy, loyalty, and purity. The eagle is a symbol of strength. An eagle on a rock by the sea symbolizes heroism.

A peacock with beautiful feathers and an elegant attitude symbolizes dignity and beauty. Quail symbolizes courage. Buffalo and cattle signify the arrival of the rainy season, which brings a lot of hope and peace of life like in the countryside.

The lotus flower symbolizes purity. Even though it comes out and lives surrounded by mud, it can still maintain its beauty or purity. Lotus symbolizes indifference to worldliness and is considered sacred because Buddha is often de-

picted sitting on it. The lotus flower is called *lian*, which is the same as saying “continuously.” Sometimes it is called *he*, which sounds like “harmony,” so it is considered to symbolize continuous harmony. Lotus seeds are called *li-anzi*, which can be interpreted as “continuing childbearing.” The lotus flower blooms with a leaf mean complete happiness. The lotus flower with a boy and a goldfish mean abundant fortune. Lotus flowers with storks symbolize hope for a career or business.

Chrysanthemum symbolizes the courage to face the situation. Chrysanthemum also implies longevity, happiness, and well-being in old age in addition to inviting good luck. Peonies, called *fugui hua*, are flowers of wealth and honor and are considered to encourage happiness, loyalty, eternal beauty, and longevity. Because there are many flower canopy collections, so it is also considered to symbolize prosperity and wealth.



Figure 17. Clouds and Sea on Emperor costume in the 19th century
(source: *Threads of Gold*, Haig & Shelton, 2006:29)

Distilled clouds symbolize luck and are associated with a peaceful state. Clouds in China are used to fill the space in the emperor’s clothes.



Figure 18. Motifs of Clouds, Bats, Dragons, Waves, on Emperor T’ung-Chih costume in 1862
(source: *Threads of Gold*, Haig & Shelton, 2006:25)

Result

Lasem Batik has the form and meaning of the symbol acculturated with Chinese culture. The results of the acculturation of Lasem batik motifs with Chinese culture are

the *Kilin*, *Hong Bird*, Dragon, *Lokcan*, The Red-Blood *Getih Pithik*, and Chinese letter motifs. The kingdom of Mataram experienced a split in 1755, becoming the Kasultanan of Yogyakarta Hadiningrat and Kasultanan Surakarta Hadiningrat, Yogyakarta inherited the cultural batik of Mataram. Some Lasem batik motifs have elements of the Keraton culture; they are *Sekar Jagad*, *Kawung*, *Udan Liris*, and *Parang*. Lasem community develops batik motifs under Lasem’s natural environment and conditions, historical stories and flora and fauna in Lasem, to produce its characteristics known as Lasem batik, seen in the *Lato-han*, *Watu Pecah*, *Ringgit*, and *Batik Tiga Negeri*. Design shapes and meanings of motifs are reviewed and discussed one by one in the drawing of symbols and motifs on batik cloth, from the 14th century AD to 18 AD.

Kilin and Hong Bird (Phoenix)

Kilin is a Dragon-headed creature, bodied like a golden fish, while its tail is like a lion’s tail, but scaly like a deer. On the *Kilin*’s forehead, there is the *kanji wang* script, which means king. Although its appearance is terrible, *Kilin* is considered a gentle creature and symbolizes purity, good news, truth, justice, prosperity, and peace. *Kilin* is also considered a giver of fertility to infertile people (Asa, 2014:44).

Hong birds are the same Chinese mythological animals as Dragons. This bird is believed to bring good luck and prosperity to the lives of its people and symbolizes the value of beauty, loyalty, justice, humanity, and sincerity. *Hong birds* in Chinese mythology are also known as *Fenghuang*. The *Hong bird* is a legendary creature worshiped by the Chinese people and used to describe a woman. This bird reflects tenderness, elegance, and kindness. The symbols and meanings of the *Hong bird* represent the feminine nature of a woman that is beauty, affection, and a symbol of luck. Therefore, the Lasem people believe and assume that wearing clothes and clothing that are patterned on *Hong birds* is expected to have an aura of elegance and beauty for the wearer (interview with the owner of Batik Tulis Sekar Kentjana, Sigit Witjaksana, Lasem, August 2018).



Figure 19. Bedsheet in 1880 Hong Bird, Kilin, Deer with *Chrysanthemum*
(source: *Batik Pesisir Pusaka Indonesia*, 2011:46-47)

Dragon motif

Dragon is a Chinese mythological animal that is considered as one of the most sacred and deified animals, because it can bring along all aspects of its life (Interview with Sigit Witjaksana, Lasem, August 2018). The Dragon symbol is valued by the Chinese people as a symbol of good luck. The Dragon motif (*Xenodermus javanicus*) in Lasem batik is shown to have a red, four-legged, and snake-like appearance. The Dragon in Lasem batik motif follows with other motifs such as lotus flower (*Nelumbium nelumbo*), chrysanthemum flower (*Chrysanthemum Indicum*), and a type of seaweed that is more found in Lasem such as *Latohan* (*Spinifex littoreus*). The Dragon symbol, which is full of philosophical elements in Coastal culture, is applied and adapted into Lasem batik so that the Lasem community is interpreted as a source of advice, a description of the ancestral history to be conveyed to the next generation (Rizali & Sudardi, 2019: 247).



Figure 20. Dragon Motif in Batik Lasem
(source: *Batik Tulis Pusaka Beruang*, August 2016)

Lokcan

Lokcan comes from Chinese, *lok*, which means blue and *can*, which means silk. *Lokcan* can be interpreted as blue silk that is made into a scarf. In the *Lokcan* motif, there are motifs of small birds, flowers, and leaves on silk cloth in blue. This can be seen in the motifs depicted on fabric with various flowers, leaf tendrils, *Hong* birds, and *Kilin* (Asa, 2014: 147). Another part that distinguishes between *Lokcan* motifs with other Lasem batik is the blue color, which is more dominant than the red color (Interview with *Pusaka Beruang* Batik Tulis, Santoso Hartono, Lasem, August 2018).



Figure 21. Lokcan with Hong Bird, Batik Lasem, in 1900
(source: *Batik Pesisir Pusaka Indonesia*, 2011:136)

Getih Pithik, Batik Tiga Negeri and Chinese Letter Lasem Batik is very famous for its characteristics as a beautiful coastal batik with distinctive coloring. One of the colors that characterize Lasem is the blood-red color (*getih pithik*), which is produced from the roots of the *mengkudu* root plant, which reflects the color-tradition in China (“Denyut Batik Tiga Negeri - Tirto.ID,” 2019).



Figure 22. The Red Color-Getih Pithik with Banji motif, Batik Lasem
(source: *Mosaic of Indonesian Batik*, 2014:150)

The distinctive red color of Lasem is displayed in *Batik Tiga Negeri*, namely the blood-red chicken color made in Lasem, the indigo blue color made in Pekalongan, and the soga brown color made in Solo (Dwi Rahayu & Alri-aningrum, 2014). The specificity of Lasem batik coloring is the red color. The red color of Chinese culture is very dominant in Lasem batik. The nature of the red color of Lasem batik is very different from other batik-producing areas. William Kwan said that no one was able to match the red color of Lasem. The uniqueness of the red color because it requires groundwater. In ancient times the color was taken from natural dyes from the *mengkudu* tree, but after synthetic or chemical dyes were introduced in 1890, and from economic and efficient agreements, natural coloring began to be needed (IKM, Ditjen, 2014). Even so, many batik from outside Lasem was brought there to get its distinctive colors, such as Gondologiri batik from Solo and Tiga Negeri Batik (Liong, 2006: 3). Variants of Batik Tiga Negeri motifs are buketan, puspa, and Lasem’s flora fauna (“Denyut Batik Tiga Negeri - Tirto.ID,” 2019).



Figure 23. Batik Tiga Negeri, Batik Lasem
(source: *Batik Tulis Lasem Pusaka Beruang*, August 2016)



Figure 24. The Chinese Letter, Batik Lasem
(source: *Batik Lasem Sekar Kentjana*, August 2018)

The Lasem motif after the 18th century developed and combined Chinese motifs with the environment, culture, and history of the Lasem people, creating a unique Lasem batik motif. Some motifs have philosophical meaning and become typical Lasem motifs, namely *Watu Pecah*, *Latohan*, and *Gunung Ringgit*.

Watu Pecah or Kricak

Watu means stone, and *Pecah* means broken so that *Watu Pecah* can be interpreted as broken stone. This motif is remembering the sad conditions of people to become stone-breaking workers. *Watu Pecah* motif had a historical background in Lasem during the Daendels era. In 1808 Governor Daendels made the highway from Anyer to Panarukan (1808-1810). The colonial government ordered the regent to prepare 200 strong workers to work for free. The workers must break the mountain rocks to harden the road. The emergence of various epidemic diseases such as malaria and typhus during the road construction project caused many mass casualties. This event is a memory for Lasem’s people who are then enshrined in batik cloth motifs (interview with Sigit Witjaksana, August 2018).



Figure 25. *Watu Pecah*

(source: *BatikTulis Lasem Pusaka Beruang*, August 2018)

Latohan

Latohan or seaweed is one of the sea plants commonly used by the Lasem community for food as urap. *Latohan* is inspired by the history of the Lasem community, the majority of which work as fishermen. The life of the Lasem community in the coastal area requires fishermen to utilize and process food products originating from the beach, namely seaweed plants (Dwi Rahayu & Alrianingrum, 2014).



Figure 26. *Latoh*

(source: survey, August 2018)

The Lasem people’s passion for eating seaweed plants as a side dish ultimately makes this *latoh* plant a favorite food and has deep meaning for the Lasem community. This *latoh* is what directs the making of the motif into the art of batik. The motifs on the Lasem batik cloth are depicted in the form of small dots with a pedigree stalk followed by other motifs such as Chinese characters, birds, and flowers. The description of the *latohan* motif is almost similar to grapes because it has several spheres that virtually meet in each style (interview with Purnomo, August 2018).



Figure 27. *Latoh Motif*

(source: *Batik Tulis Pusaka Beruang*, August 2018)

Gunung Ringgit

Gunung Ringgit is a classic ancient motif in Lasem because it was discovered at the beginning of the development of Lasem batik. The motif contains symbolic meaning, which is made like a pile of coins. This motif is commonly found on Lasem batik cloth from the past to the present (Dwi Rahayu & Alrianingrum, 2014).



Figure 28. *Gunung Ringgit*

(source: *Batik Tulis Pusaka Beruang*, August 2018)

Conclusion

Lasem is currently known as one of the centers of Batik Tulis in Central Java, located on the coast of North Java. Lasem Batik Tulis is the result of acculturation between foreign and domestic traders who stop by and interact with local communities in the Lasem port. The arrival of the Chinese, who then settled and married local people, brought to cultural acculturation on the coast of Lasem and

its surroundings, thus creating to Lasem batik motifs that are tight with Chinese culture.

Lasem batik motifs are divided into three types, Chinese motifs, Javanese motifs, and Lasem motifs. The combination of these three types of motifs is combined to form a unique Lasem batik motif. The result of the Lasem batik motif with acculturation of Chinese culture is the *Hong Bird*, *Dragon*, *Lokcan*, *Kilin*, and Chinese character motifs.

The Lasem community develops batik motifs by Lasem's natural situation and conditions, historical stories and flora and fauna conditions in Lasem, to produce its characteristics known as Lasem batik, seen in *Latohan*, *Watu Pecah*, *Gunung Ringgit*, *Getih Pithik*, and *Batik Tiga Negeri*. Lasem Batik itself has several concepts of cultural values that are still used and maintained in daily life activities, that is the understanding of not distinguishing between local people and Chinese, and assuming that all the same and need each other.

The beauty of tolerance between Lasem people, which then makes life interfaith and ethnicity develop well. The cultural cross between Javanese and Chinese is seen in daily life and activities and has the meaning of producing unique cultural products and fostering harmonious values, for the people of Lasem. Social dynamics between Javanese and Chinese to provide a picture of peace where culture and socio-economic life between Javanese and Chinese become a harmonious construction process in Lasem.

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