

## THE CREATION OF CONTEMPORARY BATIK MOTIF RETAK SERIBU AS AN INNOVATION OF THE REMEKAN TECHNIQUE FOR TRADITIONAL BATIK MOTIFS

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### ABSTRACT

Batik is one of the identities of Indonesian cultural products that is well known by the world community. Research on batik never runs out to be studied. The point of view of the study can be done from various disciplines. Although in terms of motifs, it has been researched many times, and it is possible to identify that the number of batik motifs in Indonesia can reach thousands of existing motifs, from traditional motifs to modern motifs. Reveals that what forms a physical motif are the spot elements (in the form of strokes, colors, textures) line (lines) and mass (mass / in the form of Figures) in a single unit. Then the motif is duplicated or given variations with repetition to form a pattern or field. States that classical batik motifs have meaning for the Javanese. Classical batik ornaments must also be able to give birth to a harmonious sense of beauty between the composition of the color scheme and the arrangement of the ornaments. That innovation is the introduction of new inventions or spreading the meaning of these new inventions into general use in society. This study aims to develop the technique and manufacture of *retak seribu* motifs originating from the *remekan* batik technique, the consideration being to simplify the manufacturing process and enrich the development of contemporary batik motifs in Indonesia. Thus, this research will use research-based development with the following steps: 1) information collecting, 2) develop a preliminary form of product, 3) preliminary product testing, 4) main product revision, 5) main field testing, and 6) dissemination.

**Keywords:** Creation, Batik Motifs, *Retak Seribu*.

### A. INTRODUCTION

The totality of the process of creating traditional art is indeed extraordinary so that all works of traditional art always have a creative spirit. Diligence, tenacity, seriousness, patience, and thoroughness in the creative work of traditional arts should be used as examples of the totality in creating art so that many traditional works of art that still have existence are still favored by the public. One of the traditional works of art that still exists today is batik. Batik is one of the identities of Indonesian cultural products that are well known by the world community. Research on batik never runs out to be studied. The point of view of the study can be done from various disciplines. Although in terms of motifs, it has been researched many times, and it is possible to identify that the number of batik motifs in Indonesia can reach thousands of existing motifs, from traditional motifs to modern motifs. Kenneth F. Bates (in Riyanto, et al 1997:15) reveals that what physically forms a motif is the spot element (in the form of strokes, color, texture), line (line), and mass (mass/Figure) in a single unit. Then the motif is duplicated or given variations

with repetition to form a pattern or field. In contrast, Adi Kusrianto (2013: 3) states that classical batik motifs have meaning for the Javanese. Classical batik ornaments must also be able to give birth to a harmonious sense of beauty between the composition of the color scheme and the arrangement of the ornaments.

One technique that is sometimes considered a traditional batik motif is the *remekan* motif or technique. Many ordinary people are rarely familiar with this *remekan* technique or motif, so it is not popular. Making the *remekan* technique requires a long and tiring process so its existence is rarely optimized. The results of Suyikno's research, Suharso (2016) entitled "The Development of Traditional Batik Crafts in *Bakaran* Village, Juwana District, Pati Regency in 1977-2002" in the Journal of Indonesian History 5 (1) (2016), said that what distinguishes *Bakaran* batik from coastal batik is other areas are as follows: (1), In Other coastal styles, the dominant basic colors are red and blue, while the coastal style of *Bakaran* batik is brown and black. (2) there is a crack in the pattern of *Bakaran* batik, if in batik making in other areas, such as in Yogya, Solo, and Pekalongan, the cracked night is considered a failed process (usually occurs in the dyeing process). Batik *Bakaran* motifs or subtle *remekan* patterns that result from this process can actually be the main attraction.

Meanwhile, Astuti Yeni as a teaching staff at the University of Jember in her research entitled "Batik *Bakaran* Between Tradition and Contemporary" said that *Bakaran* batik has elements that play a role in appearance related to the form of batik cloth as a whole from talent, skill, and facilities/media. Including the highlighting of batik *remekan* (*bledak*) which is deliberately done to give its own characteristics to *Bakaran* batik. In the global era, it is not enough for a work of art to meet international standards, it also needs to have a local color. This will be useful for preserving traditional works of art as well as developing tradition-based works so that they are ready to compete in the global market. Therefore, artists/art academics have the task of preserving and developing local culture (Primadi Tabrani; 1999:1-4). For this reason, it is necessary to develop or innovate that focuses more on local values that have many meanings, as well as documenting and preserving traditional culture. Good innovation results will foster the appreciation and interest of the younger generation towards the richness of traditional arts.

Traditional art is not only seen as an artifact of cultural products because traditional art can be used as a source of creation in this millennial era. Traditional art has aesthetic and artistic values that can inspire creativity through various artistic activities and can be used as a source of ideas. creative in the creation of new works of art in accordance with the times. Based on some of the things mentioned above, research on the development of traditional batik *remekan* techniques has become a source of inspiration for the creation of a *Retak Seribu* contemporary batik motifs, by creating ten *Retak Seribu* contemporary batik motifs through the development of ideas, themes, and forms based on aesthetics and artistic values. traditional batik *remekan* technique.

## B. METHOD

In general, this research will be conducted in Surakarta and Yogyakarta. Meanwhile, in particular, research and creation of works of art will be carried out at the studio "Puri Art: Wooden Batik and Craft", Perum Bulu No. 4/5 Jaten Karanganyar and studio "Komunitas Seru 79: Batik and Painting Specialist", Banaran RT4/RW IV Grogol Sukoharjo.

The two partners who produce fashion fabrics use traditional *remekan* motifs so that they have relevance to the characteristics of the theme proposed in this study. This study uses a qualitative approach that emphasizes the aspects of developing and creating *retak seribu* batik motifs based on the aesthetic and artistic values of traditional batik *remekan* techniques. The technique for completing the data is the result of observations and in-depth interviews. The interview process is carried out freely, by placing a place and process situation that is open, informal, and unstructured, but leads to the focus of the research problem (Bernard, 1994: 213). Even so, researchers still strive for data quality, rather than a lot of information data but the level of trust is low. Therefore, natural methods of interviewing ensure that information are obtained as it is (Lincoln and Guba, 1985: 37). Obtaining in-depth data on the portfolio of informants who are sources of information, is done by collecting individual life history data. especially biodata of activities that support professionalism in the creation of modern batik motifs as well as exhibition activities that have been carried out. Techniques like this will make it easier for researchers to gain an in-depth understanding; of things that cannot be done by observation or observing from the outside (Pelto & Pelto, 1987: 108-109; Koentjaraningrat, 1983: 59-72). This is done to complete the lack of data and to check the data carried out with involved observations.

Another thing that is analyzed is the infrastructure in each studio whose function is as a complement to explain the existence of the research area as a whole. In addition, some of the other documentation data as well as some library references related to the research topic are also explanatory information. To get an explanation and observations that can describe the actual reality, an effort is made to validate the data in order to get a degree of confidence in the information. Efforts have been made in three ways, including: (1) source triangulation, (2) peer debriefing, and (3) rechecking. Source triangulation is done by comparing information data to various data sources related to the same problem. Peer debriefing is done by discussing the results of research with comparable personnel (equivalent to knowledge), to obtain criticism and sharp questions that challenge the level of belief in the truth of the research. While the recheck is done by re-examining the information data from the informants in order to obtain improvements or correctness of the data against various incorrect and incomplete information from the results of previous information. Thus, researchers always make corrections continuously regarding the research results that have been collected (Nasution, 1988: 116). Through the data validity test technique, the information data and findings in the field are true facts that reveal the truth and are empirical facts.

The analysis is carried out continuously and gradually using interactive techniques or an interactive model of analysis which includes analysis components, namely: data reduction, data presentation, and verification or drawing conclusions (Miles and Huberman, 1984: 18). The three components of the analysis are carried out in the form of reciprocal interactions with the data collection process as a cycle. The interactive analysis process can be seen schematically in the chart below. This research was conducted to explore in-depth and thoroughly the aesthetic and artistic values of traditional *remekan* batik motifs, especially those related to techniques, visual forms, and the medium used. The results of the study of the aesthetic and artistic values of the traditional batik motifs are then used as a source of technical development and innovation in the creation of a *Retak Seribu* contemporary batik motifs. The design of this research is research-based development with the following steps: 1) information collecting, 2) developing a

preliminary form of product, 3) preliminary product testing, 4) main product revision, 5) main field testing, 6) dissemination (Borg and Gall, 2003:775).

### C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

#### **Remekan Technique in Traditional Batik as a Source of Creation of *Retak Seribu* Motifs**

The *remekan* technique of traditional batik, which is often used as the background for the main motif, can be used in the creation of several motifs for the development of contemporary batik. The visual form of the crushing technique is the emergence of artistic value in the effect of crushed candle shards so as to create irregular lines and give the impression of crumbling or cracking. The wax (wax) which is broken up because it is crushed produces scratches like fine fibers which serve as the background for the motifs on the cloth. At first, the traditional *remekan* batik technique was implemented on the bed sheet covering the bed, because the sheet has a wide area, to fill the batik motifs on the sheet it is not filled completely, so accentuation is needed to fill the empty fields. Further developments *remekan* technique is implemented on the fabric for clothing.

The crushing technique process is actually very simple, but it requires a lot of wax and takes a lot of energy because it requires energy. The method of making the *remekan* technique is after the main technique has been completed and has been colored, then the surface of the cloth is covered with wax as a whole. The way to apply it is by using a brush all over the surface (although there are also those that apply to the empty parts outside the main motif). Furthermore, the surface of the batik cloth that has been smeared with the wax is no longer hot, then beaten until the wax sticks look cracked, even a little peeled off. The effect of these cracks is used to enter the color. The hammer used is a hammer with a used car or motorcycle tire on the head or inner tube, so as not to damage the fabric. The appearance of these cracks allows the dye to enter and stick to the pores of the fabric and usually uses one color so that the fabric with cracked wax will appear the desired color. While the parts that are not cracked and protected by the wax are not affected by the coloring process. After the coloring is complete, then it is smeared or the entire wax is released on the fabric. Alternative development of motifs in contemporary batik can be done by simplifying the technique of making the crack effect and using more varied colors.

#### **The Creation Process of Developing *Remekan* Techniques into Contemporary Batik Motifs.**

Intense observation of the *remekan* technique in traditional batik gave rise to ideas to develop it into *retak seribu* motifs. Visually observing the effect of the knitting technique that produces irregular but artistic lines, and after seeing the very tiring making of the knitting technique, there was an intention to try but in an easier and less tiring way. This basically creates the effect of cracks on the fabric by using wax which is then colored on the cracks so that the results cannot be controlled but are still artistic.

##### **1. Idea Creation**

The idea of creating *retak seribu* motifs began at a batik *bainting* workshop at one of the universities in Malaysia. The implementation of the workshop was accompanied by experiments on materials and dyeing techniques for batik painting. By experimenting with the development of certain techniques, certain forms of effects can be created and irregular lines can be organized, creating new motif elements with the use of more varied colors. From this experiment came the idea to make a *retak seribu* motifs

## 2. Concept of Creation

Exploration is an activity that is able to give birth to various forms of creativity. Exploration of techniques for making batik motifs that are focused on the *retak seribu* motif is a step toward the creative industry. Considering that traditional batik in its visualization requires certain established standards/patterns or conventions. Sourced from traditional batik *remekan* techniques will add to the treasury of batik motifs in Indonesia. The concept of creation is that creativity continues and will not be stopped, based on traditional batik techniques as a source of creation, it will give birth to new artistic, interesting, and interesting techniques and motifs for the community. The concept of the form of the *retak seribu* motif refers to natural phenomena so that the shape can be representative, but it does not rule out the possibility of irregular shapes appearing but still giving an impression that resembles representative forms.

## 3. Creation Process

The process is carried out to get the effect of cracks and small round shapes using only white or paraffin wax, in the *remekan* technique uses a mixture of brown wax (*klowong* wax, *nembok* wax, or used *lorotan* wax) and white or paraffin wax. In the initial process of making the motif of the thousand cracks, first the cloth that will be given the motif of the thousand cracks is spread out using wood, then the starch layer is cleaned using water or TRO (Turkish Red Oil). It is important to clean the fabric to be made from a layer of starch glue and components that may be present in the fabric fibers, including oil, grease, and other impurities as an obstacle to the entry of dyes into the fabric fibers. Basically, if the fabric to be made is clean, the color that will be poured will be sharper and resistant to fading because the dye will bind strongly to the pores of the fabric. After the cloth is clean and dry, then sketch the desired shapes globally. Furthermore, the cloth is moistened using a spray gun, then wait until the cloth is in a damp condition, when the cloth is in a damp condition, the cloth base is given or poured with white wax/paraffin which has been heated (in liquid and hot conditions) according to the desired sketch.

The application of paraffin is repeated two or three times using a brush and waiting for the paraffin to cool. After the paraffin has cooled, the paraffin is pressed with the fingertips or the palm of the hand to break/crack. In the cracks, if they are colored, they will enter the cracks. the coloring can use several colors and can be made gradations or transitions. Remasol and indigosol dyes are used in staining. For the remasol coloring process, it begins by dipping the cracked cloth into the color vessel, then the cloth is spread out in a shady place and waits for it to dry, after it is dry, the color is locked using water glass. dry by itself, only then washed thoroughly. In the coloring process, to produce sharp colors, it is done up to two- or three-times coloring. After all the coloring is complete, then the result of making the thousand crack motif is removed/removed the wax, then washed until clean.

## 4. Visualization of the *Retak Seribu* Motive

The development of the traditional batik *remekan* technique into contemporary batik motifs with a thousand cracks resulted in thousand crack motifs made in large sizes, it is hoped that the motifs dominated by large motifs will have different dynamics and artistic values from other batik motifs. in general. The alternative of developing a thousand cracks motif is based on the visualization of the effect of cracks that give rise to irregular lines and some parts of the lines also form small circles and other organic shapes. The appearance of circular shapes and organic shapes accentuates the rhythm that is present in the overall motif and gives a dynamic impression. However, there are times when it also includes elements of form from traditional

batik motifs such as *cecek*, *scales*, *ukel*, *cacah gori*, and others. The thousand crack motifs can also be combined with decorative patterns on other fabrics such as *sibori* fabric, or *jumputan* fabric.



**Figure 1**

Title: *Retak Seribu Ombake Pesisir* Motif  
Size: 115 Cm x 200 Cm



**Figure 2**

Details of the *Retak Seribu Ombake Pesisir* Motif  
Size: 115 Cm x 200 Cm



**Figure 3**

Title: *Retak Seribu Banyu Sinebar* Motif  
Size: 115 Cm x 200 Cm



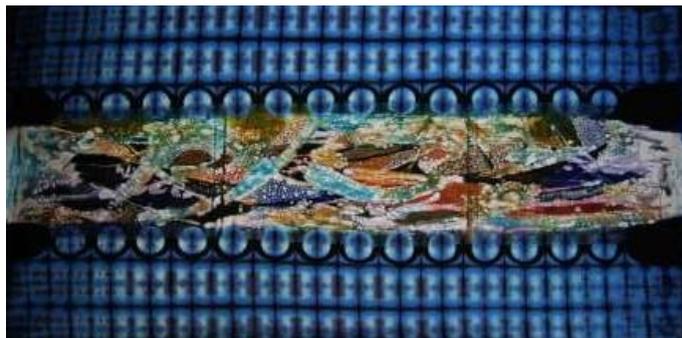
**Figure 4**  
Details of the *Retak Seribu Banyu Sinebar* Motif  
Size: 115 Cm x 200 Cm



**Figure 5**  
Title: *Retak Seribu Turangga Seto* Motif  
Size: 115 Cm x 200 Cm



**Figure 6**  
Details of the *Retak Seribu Turangga Seto* Motif  
Size: 115 Cm x 200 Cm



**Figure 7**

Title: *Retak Seribu Pranata Praja Motif*

The Combination of the Folded Motif (Sibori) with the *Retak Seribu* Motif

Size: 115 Cm x 200 Cm



**Figure 8**

Details of the Combination of the Folded Motif (Sibori) with the *Retak Seribu* Motif Size: 115 Cm x 200 Cm

#### **D. CONCLUSION**

The aesthetic, artistic, and philosophical values of traditional art will never be exhausted as a source of inspiration for the rich creation of modern and contemporary art. The creative process can be realized in real terms if it has proportional competence. The ability to verbalize and visualize the competencies possessed will be seen in the quality of the work produced, coupled with the experiences they have. The thousand crack batik motif produced is an initial experiment that focuses on its technique in realizing the artistic values of the motif. And visually it is very relevant to the current millennial era, for that we still need more experiments in order to strengthen the results of the experiments being carried out at this time.

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