

# THE JATIDUWUR JOMBANG'S MASK PUPPET IN BATIK CRAFT

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## ABSTRACT

Jatiduwur mask puppet is the only masked art show held in Jatiduwur Village, Jombang Regency. This traditional art performance's format is a total theatrical (combination of dance, drama, literature, music, and fine art). It is used by local community as a ritual, *ruwatan*, or fulfilling a vow (*nadzar*). Jatiduwur mask puppet is one of the culture richness that is now live in pity, though it still leaves artifacts. Batik craft is expected can reintroduce the local art form, Jatiduwur mask puppet, while providing a positive view about this art to the people of Jombang. The approaches used in this craft are craft creation theory and aesthetics theories. While the method used in conducting this research is unstructured interview. The creation of this batik craft presents a new pattern with stylations of seven moves of Jatiduwur mask puppet show. Technique used is *batik tulis* (manual process of batik making) on ATBM silk with naphthol coloring.

**Keywords: Planning, Jatiduwur Mask Puppet, Jombang, Batik Craft**

## INTRODUCTION

Jatiduwur mask puppet is an art existed in Jatiduwur, Kesamben District, Jombang Regency. Its format is traditional theatrical performing art of *Panji* composed by dance, drama, literature, music, and fine art presented by the puppeteer. All of the dancers wear mask and related accessories based on characters each of them try to represent while the Javanese *Slendro Gamelan* music is played in a venue which commonly held in someone's home yard or on stage.

Dian Sukarno, a Jombang humanist, explains that mask puppet is originally used by local communities as a ritual, *ruwatan*, or fulfilling a vow (*nadzar*). In Jatiduwur Village itself, the mask puppet used to be a sacred ritual, so only certain people had the right to organize it (*nanggap*).

However, nowadays, Jatiduwur mask puppet is getting forgotten and closer to extinction. Even people at Jombang are unfamiliar to this kind of art. According to a data questionnaire spread to the various respondents, from students to adults (10 to 45 years old) in Jombang, 87,6% of them admit do not aware that Jatiduwur mask puppet is their local art. Citing *Kompasiana*, "This art is one of the culture richness Jombang has, that now is at the death's door, but not died, yet. Though, the *penguri* keep practicing with all the limitations they have. This traditional art located in Jatiduwur Village, Kesamben District, Jombang Regency, is recalled to live by the elders there whose age are over 50." If this traditional art keeps getting abandoned, Jatiduwur mask puppet will be dead and gone completely. The passive and insensitive government is also responsible for the stagnation of this art development also lack of recognition among people in Jombang (*Kompasiana*, September 21<sup>st</sup> 2013, retrieved in Februari 3<sup>rd</sup> 2015).

That background fact becomes the basic initiative to promote Jatiduwur mask puppet art in a batik craft pattern. It is actually a pride of local art wrapped in a concern to reintroduce Jatiduwur mask

puppet, a traditional art that has been disappeared for some times, into other form of art. The Jatiduwur mask puppet pattern concept is taken from the two most played stories: *Patah Kuda Narawangsa* and *Wiruncana Murca*. Those stories have seven dance moves that represent the plot, act, characters, and the uniqueness of Jatiduwur mask puppet. The seven dance moves of Jatiduwur mask puppet consist of: *Alen- alen*, *Gantungan Bodolan*, *Lumaksono Miring*, *Lumaksono Putri*, *Lumaksono Buto Terong*, *Lumaksono Mincik*, and *Perang*.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

“Jatiduwur Village, according to stories believed for hundred years, was a vital village in Majapahit era. It is said that Jatiduwur was a place where Majapahit’s bricks that had big forms were made” (quoted from Dian Sukarno, 2011:22). Tracing the story of Jatiduwur mask puppet is not easy, since until this writing is done, no valid record of Jatiduwur mask puppet ever found or made. But, if it is examined based on the play or story theme presented, which is *Panji*, allegedly Jatiduwur mask puppet is a heritage from Majapahit era.

“In Majapahit era, there already was a popular mask show and *Panji*’s cycle act, a beloved act at that times. Even in his reign, Hayam Wuruk was recognized as a king who loved mask dancing, or used to be called ‘*Raket*’” (quoted from Nanang PME, 2012: 482).

Oral data spread in Jatiduwur Village establish an information that mask puppet art there could not be separated from a figure named Purwo. Perhaps in 1800s, there was a man called Purwo in Jatiduwur Village who made 31 mask puppets, equipped with accessories and clothing that fit each character and a set of *Gamelan*. Purwo and his friends finally made a mask puppet in his village for *Bersih Desa* ritual. The characters and the characteristics of this show could not be separated from the artist, people, and its history in Jatiduwur Village.

There are some elements that can be categorized in Jatiduwur mask puppet performance:

1. Puppeteer, the key element of this show who brings the story and delivers the dialog.
2. Dance, performed in the middle of the show. The kind of dances used are Klono and Bapang.
3. Story (*lakon*), the story that still lasts until now is *Kudonorowongso*.
4. *Gending*, musical element that enhances the show. Kind of *Gending* used is *Gending Jawa Timuran* (Gending coming from East Java).
5. Fine art, as seen in the masks’ ornaments.

“People understood that in the making of his masks, Purwo did that through ritual process. Therefore, people came to an assumption that masks used as the media in the mask puppet performance in *Bersih Desa* ritual were sacred. It was also related with the *Bersih Desa* ritual itself that regarded as a communal and spiritual event. People also believed that the mask puppet art in Jatiduwur Village had magical power or sacred and had the ability to save Jatiduwur people from the disease epidemic” (Nanang PME, 2012: 480).

From time to time, mask puppet became popular among Jatiduwur people and its presence considered as a great impact for them. People then started deeming mask puppet as a medium for vow (*nadzar*) fulfillment and other rituals. Further development put Jatiduwur mask puppet as a popular entertainment art. For example, Jatiduwur people began presenting mask puppet performance as a social celebration, like marriage, circumcision ceremony, *nadzaran*, and “local thanksgiving”.

However, the existence of Jatiduwur mask puppet was in question in the last decade of 20 century. After the death of Purwo, his descendants became the ones who managed the mask puppet Jatiduwur organization. It was in line with the myth believed in Jatiduwur, that the ones who ought to run both the organization and the show must be from Purwo’s brood. And so, not only the puppeteers in the mask puppet performance came from Purwo’s blood until 1990s, the set of the show like masks and other supporting equipment must be saved in Purwo’s relatives’ houses.

But, this rules had a great cost. 2011, at the Pendopo Jombang Regency, was the last year Jatiduwur mask puppet shown in public. Currently, its existence is nowhere near popularity. The Jatiduwur mask puppet has already forgotten. Revitalization should be taken to make this local art

alive, so that the younger generation could recognize the Jatiduwur mask puppet as a culture richness Indonesia have, especially for Jombang, East Java.



Figure 1: Jatiduwur Mask Puppet Performed  
(Source: SOSBUD Kompasiana 21 September 2013, downloaded 20 Maret 2015)



Figure 2: This Jatiduwur Mask Puppet Owned by Mr. Priyo  
( Pictured by Prayogo, 25 Januari 2015)

## THEORETICAL APPROACH

### 1. Theory of craft creation by SP Gustami

Citing SP Gustami "... every artwork has a power to deliver life's messages generally lies behind its physical form" (SP Gustami, 2004:13). He adds that there are three steps of craft creation process: exploration, planning, and embodiment. The exploration covers a set of activities consist of analyzing the source of ideas through identification and problem formulation; investigation; examination; also data and reference collection. While the planning embrace the process of visualizing data analysis – or sketching and drawing based on data obtained to help the embodiment.

### 2. Aesthetics theory

Aesthetics cannot be separated from culture, since culture defines the complexions and lifestyle of a certain community that supports product of its own culture. As a multidimensional being, human also has a role to create and observe an art based on its taste. Culture essentially owns a definition as a whole knowledge, belief, and other values consist of system of meaning or system of symbols. Further, there are aspects like science, belief (including religion), and values (ethics and aesthetics) exist in culture.

Aesthetics theory is related to this batik embodiment presents a visual art in a piece of batik. Citing Jakob Sumardjo, batik itself is an identity, a visual symbol that contains a context

of beauty from the creator's idea and value. "Batik is a rectangle fold which has different values in every part of it. The beauty of batik owns a decorative value and spiritual symbol also has a visualized cycle of message as its dynamics." (Jakob Sumardjo, 2006:187)

Batik's pattern is not only orientating to its form simplicity and coloring. The literal meaning of each batik can be linked to the aesthetics theory, since every pattern in batik has various aspect of beauty. A pattern in batik surely has a meaning that implicitly demonstrate its own beauty. "In the past, batik as an art is not only a practice of painting and decorating. Batik as an art is in fact loaded with ethics and aesthetics education for women in old times" (cited from Asti Musman, 2011:6).

## RESEARCH METHODS

### 1. Research Sites

Jatiduwur Village, Kesamben Subdistrict, Jombang Regency, East Java

### 2. Key Informant

Supriyo, he is an activist on repopularizing Jatiduwur wayang mask as well as the owner of Jatiduwur puppet masks duplication. He has an important role in the existence of Jatiduwur puppet performances. Dian Soekarno, former journalist, Jombang cultural artist, performing artist and art entrepreneur. He lives in Sumber Mulyo village, Jombang regency. He is familiar with the details of Jatiduwur puppet mask information, and has once been a Jatiduwur puppet mask performer.

### 3. Data Collection Technique

Unstructured interview technique are selected to capture data, to seek and dig deeper to discover the information. These interviews are usually used to find non-standard information or single information. The results of such interviews emphasize the exceptions of irregularities, unusual interpretations, reinterpretations, new approaches, expert views or single perspective. Quoted from Qualitative Research Methodology

"This type of interview is very different from structured interviews, in terms of time of asking and how to respond, i.e. this type is having more freedom in terms of the pace. Respondents usually consist of those who are selected only because of their distinctive properties. Usually they have the necessary knowledge and in-depth experience of the situation, and they are more aware of the necessary information. Questions are usually not arranged or planned at first, but rather adjusting to the unique circumstances and characteristics of the respondents. The execution of the interview questioning flows just like normal daily conversation." (Lexy J, Moeloeng, MA, 1988: 190-191).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This batik craft is based on the concept of Jatiduwur puppet mask performance's form of movement. Jatiduwur puppet dance movements tell the story of the *Patah Kuda Narawangsa* and *Wiruncara Murca* which conveyed through some of the puppet mask movement, namely:

1. **Alen- alen**, the dance movement of putting on the ring. The dance tells Klono puts on a ring and dresses up to find a wife, or when Klono is about to go to war.



Figure 3: Alen- alen

(Source: www. Antarafoto.com, December 5, 2011 downloaded on March 20, 2015)

2. **Gantungan Bodolan**, soldier dance (red-colored puppet mask) who will go to war, royal court meeting (*pisuanan*).
3. **Lumaksono Miring**, the dance after gantungan bodolan (can be translated as the movement of getting out and entering the stage). This movement has the “gejing” characteristic on every puppet mask that performing.
4. **Lumaksono Putri**, a dance for the princesses which are Kumudaningrat’s daughter. This dance depicts the refined attitude of the princesses.
5. **Lumaksono Buto Terong**, this dance is conveyed violently (*beringas*) because the dance is dedicated to portayed a mannerless demon.
6. **Lumaksono Mincik**
7. **Perang**. This dance depicts war between several puppet masks.



Figure 4: War

(Source: beritajombang.net dated November 8, 2013 downloaded on March 20, 2015)

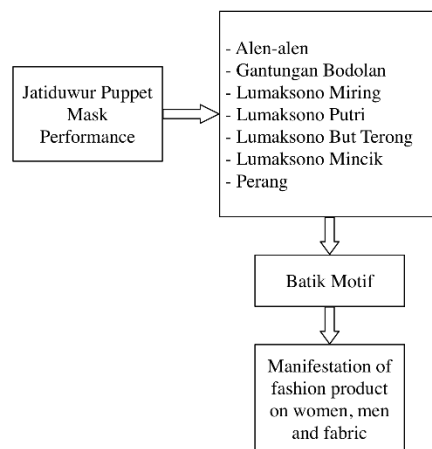
The puppet masks performance has seven core movements, all of which having a typical Jatiduwur wayang mask distinctive movement. The performance concept are taken and stylized into batik motifs. The batik crafts is made using batik tulis technique using naphtol colorants on

the strands of ATBM (Non-Machine Weaving Machine) silk fabric. Each piece of fabric will be decorated with gold (*prodo*) on each lining. Embroidery technique is also applied to the cloth that has been going through the batik process to make the batik motifs that already exist looks bolder, as well as the novelty value of the batik itself.

a. Product Design

The design of the product is attributed to the selected material, the color, and the dyeing material used. The craft material is ATBM (Non-Machine Weaving Tool) silk using *batik tulis* motive-making techniques. The batik making process is using a technique named *nemblok*, which is done by blocking the desired colors before being dyed again. This process must be done repeatedly if you want more than one color in one cloth. The fabric is being dyed using naphthol colorant ranging with a choice of black, yellow gold, red, or sogan color, while the fabric's basic color is white. The process starts from drawing and making batik motif of Jatiduwur Jombang puppet dance motif on the cloth. This process requires precision and accuracy because it uses a *tutup celup* technique that will need a long time. After the batik making finishes, the next process is coloring. The last process is the process of making adult women and adult men clothing from the batik cloth that has been completed.

**Chart 1: Batik Craft Work Pattern Design Scheme**



**1. Preparation**

This process involves the material creation. And then, there comes the earliest process called *ngemplong*, started with washing the cloth to clean up starch. It is followed by drawing the pattern to the cloth that directly done above it.



Figure 5. The process of drawing on ATBM silk cloth (Prayogo, 2015)

## 2. Making the batik

The next process is coating the wax to the cloth, started with *nglowong* (drawing the lines outside the pattern) and *isen-isen* (filling the pattern with various shapes). In the process of *isen-isen*, there is another process called *nyecek*, or making stuffing in the pattern created by putting dots on it (*nitik*). Then, followed by *nembok*, or covering the parts that should not be exposed by the base color with wax. The silk cloth that has passed through this process called *batikan*.

## 3. Coloring

*Medel* is a process of dipping the cloth that has passed through batik making process (*batikan*) to the color liquid repeatedly until the creator gets the color desired. The wax on the cloth should be scrapped carefully with a metal plates, before rinsed in the clean water and dried or aerated. This coloring process used salt dye naphtol, because naphtol has a good durability on both natural and synthetic fiber. Naphtol also has broad range of color that can ease the creator in this process.

## 4. Detaching the wax (*Pelorodan/Nglorod*)

*Lorodan* is a process of peeling all the wax on the batik cloth through putting the batik that has been colored to the boiling water. The wax will melt and detached.

## 5. *Mrodo*

*Mrodo* is giving the border of each pattern on the batik cloth with gold color. The material used are prodo powder that has been mixed with chemicals substance.

## 6. Tailoring

This process consists of decorating the clothing and the sewing itself. Some cloths are usually put to be combined with the batik cloth. These additional cloths could be satin dutchess, lace, shantung, and cotton. The clothing decorations are equipped with embroidery technique, hand-embroidered ribbon, and satin ribbon woven. This process involves some steps like pattern making, material cutting, tailoring, and finishing

## 7. Product



Figure 6. Product on ATBM silk cloth (Prayogo, 2015)

## CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION

### A. Conclusion

Creating a batik craft is an interesting things. The challenge itself emerges in making batik motif of Jatiduwur puppet mask in the midst of many similar batik motifs. Each batik on the market has their own weakness, strengths and distinct characteristics. The challenge that arises is to design batik motifs according to the concepts taken to be used as a new batik motif. The making of Jatiduwur puppet batik motif has several purposes, such as: (1) reintroducing Jatiduwur puppet mask art which is now no longer performing live, through the new media of batik craft to the people of Jombang Regency. (2) creating a work of batik craft with Jatiduwur wayang mask concept that can attract the attention of the people of Jombang. The process of making Jatiduwur mask puppet motifs is based on the masked puppet movements on the show. The seven movements contained in the story of the *Narawangsa Horse Race* and *Wiruncana Murca* which are more often played.

The process of creating the embodiment of Jatiduwur puppet mask motif has many difficulties, especially because of the lack of available literature and data in the field. Jatiduwur puppet performances itself now experiencing a stagnant phase, but it is actually expressing the challenge to create a new batik motif of Jatiduwur wayang mask to revive the show performance again as a true local community show in Jombang regency

Throughout the batik process many new things and difficulties are found in the embodiment process. One of the difficulty found is the process of batik making and dyeing that takes a long time and complicated techniques. This work requires a lot of hand skills to create the details, so accuracy and carefulness is essential in the process. Some of the new findings that exist in the creation process of these batik works are very diverse, such as the design of new motifs of Jatiduwur wayang mask puppet show, the selection process of the hand-made material, and the making process of which is almost 80% also done manually by hand.

#### B. Recommendation

The process of batik crafting requires an understanding and assessment of the explored object. Therefore, data collection methods are essential to underlies the creation of a work. This batik motif represents a local art performance whose fate is now miserable. There are many factor behind the declining state of Jatiduwur mask puppet. The work of this craft needs to be published because the media can greatly affect the success of the information delivered to the public. This work is also expected to be a stepping stone to keep on re-introducing Jatiduwur puppet mask to the general public, especially Jombang community This batik work is also expected to be mass-produced as a form of creative economy effort.

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