

Multiculturalism Practices Associated with the Production of Batik in Lasem - Indonesia

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Abstract

This article reports the research on the dynamic relations between Chinese and natives regarding cultural production in the field of *batik* art in Lasem – Rembang, Indonesia. The word “field” as used in this context is traced to Bourdieu (1993, 2005), who defined field as a "system of relationships" in which actors interact dynamically to produce nonmaterial cultural products (systems of ideas, value, symbolic system) and material products (art, architecture), in this case batik art. This research aims to unveil how multicultural practices take place in the process of *batik* art. Through the ethnographic method of *batik* production process at a *batik* industrial centre known as Rumah Batik Sekar Kencana in Karangturi Village, Lasem, the researchers traced the dynamics of the native – non-native relation that took place in this process and followed it to understand how *batik* as a cultural product was born in Lasem.

This research finds that *batik* can be seen as a relatively autonomous cultural production field that has its own logic, and the practice forms a delicate social fabric that leads to the achievement of certain goals. The achievement of goals involving Javanese *batik* makers, Chinese owners, and Javanese religious leaders shows how multicultural practices have taken place in Lasem not only at the level of ideas but also at the level of material culture.

Keywords: Multiculturalism; Cultural Production; Artistic Area; Batik Tulis.

Introduction

The problem regarding Javanese-Chinese relations was reignited recently, triggered by the elections held in DKI Jakarta in April 2017, which gave birth to two identities: native and non-native. For this reason, it is necessary to re-establish the cultural relations, so that the problem is resolved, especially before the 2019 election begins. In order to achieve this, the birth of socio-cultural transformation



models that can re-establish the native – non-native relations are required. Such models should not merely be a "melting pot model", which requires different cultures to "melt together" and become one, but a "salad bowl model", which allows each cultural unit to maintain its culture and live in harmony with others. In this model, each ethnic group is able to practice its collective culture in public and in private; they are able to express their cultural identity freely without any symbolic pressure and violence.

The Javanese-Chinese relations have been widely studied. Al-Qurtuby (2003: 231), for example, studied the flow of Chinese-Javanese-Muslims, which shows the process of acculturation that happened in the three socio-cultural entities. According to him, the Chinese Community was a big part of the process of Islamization in Java in the 15th and 16th centuries. The inhabitants of Java came from Canton, Chang-Chou, Yunan, Swatow and other areas of South China, which were originally Islamic bases. They came to Java and other areas of Southeast Asia as traders, tourists, professionals, and for political escapades.

Likewise, researcher Hoon (2012: 251) studied "Race, Class, and Stereotypes in Native Perceptions of Chineseness". His research is important because it is able to uncover non-native interpersonal interactions, which show the relevance of "race," "class," "religion," and "education" in asserting ethnic differences and causing ethnic division. The factors that are responsible for the division are still present, thereby limiting hybridity.

Both studies, according to the researchers, contain weaknesses. First, the study by Al-Qurtubi (2003) sees the process of acculturation of Chinese-Javanese-Muslims only from the point of view of religious social history and does not see how the formation of Chinese–Javanese-Muslims acculturation is manifested in the social aspect of everyday life of a society. Likewise, the study by Hoon (2012) only focused on the point of view of essentialism in the study of culture. His study is merely related to how the Javanese-Chinese relations in everyday life are influenced by the assertion of the dividing factors of race and stereotypes. Therefore, this study assumes that the identity of an ethnic group is something that should be "taken for granted", i.e. passed down from generation to generation without any chance for the emergence of a new culture as a result of the interaction between natives and non-natives in a heterogeneous community.

Based on Bourdieu's (1997) thinking about "practice" in a "field", the researchers intend to study how culture (knowledge of race and stereotypes), as part of the cognition map of the Javanese-Chinese community, is not only inherited from generation to generation but is also produced and reproduced in a diverse domain. The heterogeneity of the field, in which the ethnic relations take place, is assumed to produce cultural heterogeneity, which is produced through the processes of cultural production and reproduction in a domain.

By taking Lasem, Rembang, known as a "Little China", which is in the North-Coast of Java as the research site, this study examines the dynamic

interactions of the Javanese-Chinese relations in the field of batik production. By this study, the researchers intend to construct the models of cultural production in relation to ethnicity, as a form of concrete multiculturalism, which can be applied to the development of the relations between the natives and non-natives in other regions.

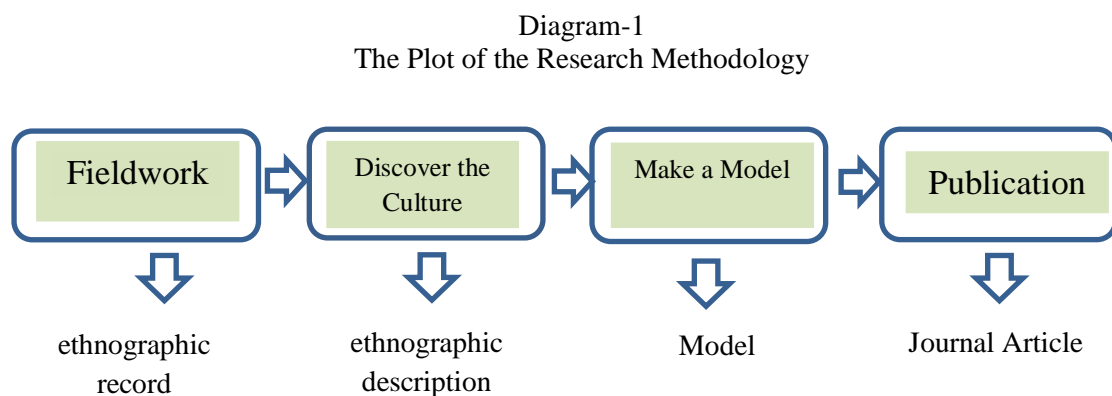
Methodology

Starting from the desire to closely study Javanese-Chinese relations in Lasem regarding batik production, this research is done according to the following stages:

First, the researchers did fieldworks by following the activities of Chinese and Javanese in the field of batik production through "observation involved" and conducting in-depth interviews. The outcome of this stage is the ethnographic record that describes the batik production process in Lasem.

Second, the researchers discovered, analysed and concluded on the culture resulting from the dynamic interactions between the parties involved in the batik production process. The outcome of this stage is the ethnographic description of how batik is produced from a dynamic interaction process between actors from different ethnic backgrounds.

Third, the researchers found a model of indigenous – non-indigenous relations in cultural production in Lasem. The outcome of this stage is the indigenous – non-indigenous relation model, which can be a reference for the development of multiculturalism in other regions. More information about the stages of this research is shown in the following flow chart:



Road Map of the Research

This research took place in Lasem, Rembang, which is in the North-Coast of Java, an area that became the object of development of Main Scientific Pattern

(MSP) and Master Plan Development (MPD) education, research, and community service of Undip. Thus, this research is expected to strengthen the achievements of MSP and MPD of Undip in studying socio-cultural issues in the North-Coast Java Community.

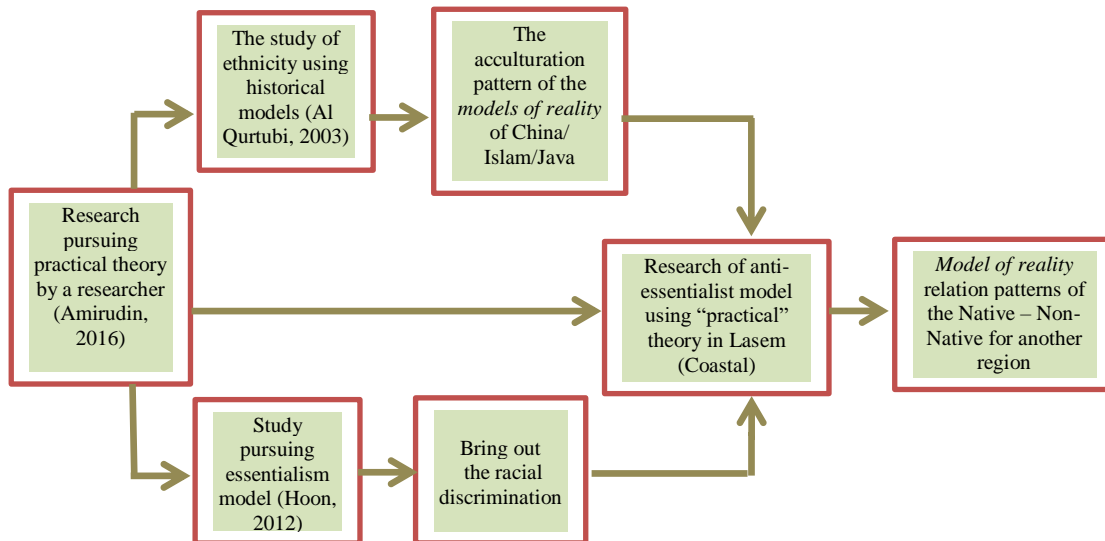
The researchers had the courage to research on this topic because of the following reason: The researchers have experience in researching social culture with an anti-essentialist approach, which uses the concept of culture as “practice”. In this concept, culture is not positioned as a “*sui generis*” that directs human’s action, but as an “objective structure” that is produced and reproduced through practice in different fields. Culture is not a static phenomenon, but it is a dynamic phenomenon. This approach was adopted by researchers in studying the process of producing religious impressions through dynamic interactions (constellation and negotiation) between actors involved in the field of show production in Indosiar TV studios. This study provides a new perspective in the study of culture and can be developed to study other phenomena. In this case, the culture is produced through the Javanese-Chinese interaction process in the field of batik production in Lasem.

This perspective is important in extending the research done by Al-Qurtubi (2003), which only reveals the patterns of Chinese-Javanese-Muslims acculturation in historical studies. His findings merely uncovered the “models of reality” of an acculturation, which he calls “Sino-Javanese Sub-Culture”, or a Chinese-Javanese assimilation that succeeded in becoming a sub-culture. Likewise, Hoon's (2012) research is quite ethnocentric, revealing only social action in everyday life that is driven by an affirmation of racial division and stereotypes; the study belongs to the category of cultural research of the essentialists. The output of the research is actually a “model of reality” whose tendency is to reinforce the dividing factors of race and stereotypes in everyday life.

On the basis of the weaknesses of these two studies, the researchers in the present study decided to study the pattern of Javanese-Chinese relations that are now facing problems because of the political process of elections, which will continue to take place with an anti-essentialism approach: a worldview that sees culture (culture as a cognition of race and stereotype embodied in a symbolic system that directs social action) as new cultural forms that are produced through a process of practice involving the dynamic interaction of Javanese-Chinese in the Lasem Community, in the field of batik production. The outcome of this research is the cultural product produced through a practice process constructed as a “model for reality” for other areas that characterize the diversity of the native and non-native races.

More concisely, the road map described above is depicted in the following diagram:

Diagram 2
Road Map of the Research on Native – Non-Native Relation Model in Lasem



Criticism of the Study of Multiculturalism

Research on the production of batik in Lasem as a cultural production field was approached with the concept of field as used by Bourdieu (1993, 2005). According to him, the field is a "system of relationships" involving actors who interact dynamically to produce non-material cultural products (ideas, concepts, values, symbolic system) and materials, such as art, architecture, and so on. The dynamic relations between actors in every field will be traced. It will be followed by the birth of a common culture, which is then explored to get a Javanese-Chinese relation model that is applicable in other fields with similar characteristics regarding ethnic heterogeneity.

This study was conducted to fill the void in existing studies on Javanese racial relations; a number of studies place race as a differentiating factor. Such studies affirm the definition of identity: there is a dominant and non-dominant race category in everyday relations.

This research also uses the concept of race as an object. The term "race" has been widely used to categorize human beings on the basis of biological traits that are considered hereditary. Race is a different outer physical appearance (Worchel

in Hoon, 2012), and historically, race was used to determine the intelligence, behavior and morality of different racial groups. However, lately, social scientists no longer use this term as a way to categorize human groups, because its scientific validity is weak. Nevertheless, race still has an allure as a social category (Hoon, 2012). In Indonesia, it is recognized that the natives and Chinese have different characteristics. For example, compared with the natives, the colour of their (Chinese) skin is brighter; they are slant-eyed and straight-haired, and their cheekbones are protruding (Gondomono in Hoon, 2012). This physical appearance is often the basis of stereotypes.

Luke and Carrington's article, "Race-Matters", describes race as a marker of political identity, which is "the basic principle of social organization and identity formation that moves people to act in certain ways (Hoon, 2012). Race markers really affect the way people view and interact with those who are "racially oriented". Anthias and Yuval-Davis (Hoon, 2012) argue that "race can be one way to show how a barrier is built between those who can and cannot be part of the special construction of a collective entity of the population." This boundary is often defined, and from this basis, social groups are classified. People tend to excessively estimate the intra-category homogeneity as well as the inter-category differences. This excessive judgment results in the reification of groups.

Stuart Hall considers stereotyping as a very important factor reinforcing "racial" differences (1987: 257). He states that the stereotype manifests itself by the classification of people based on certain characteristics, thereby reducing them to those simplified and exaggerated characteristics and insisting that they are not able to change and that their characteristics are natural.

However, humans generally cannot avoid creating stereotypes, because humans cannot move without stereotypes. Stereotypes serve as part of the maintenance of the social and symbolic order. Stereotypes perpetuate a different feeling between "self" and "other" and create imaginary barriers between "normal" and "abnormal", "acceptable" and "unacceptable", and "us" and "them." Gilman (1985: 18) notes that the imaginary line itself as well as the relationship between "self" and "other" can change. Thus, "us" which is considered "normal" can be imagined as a one group with a united voice. On the other hand, "them" are reduced to be "abnormal". Therefore, stereotypes are used to maintain the distinction that separates "them" from "us". The reduction of the Chinese to "outsider" by the native "Self" has hardened the racial barrier between the two "different" races.

In the world of research, many studies have intensified the racial barrier between the two races. A number of such studies are as follows:

First, the study by Al-Qurtubi (2003) focused on the Chinese-Javanese-Muslims flow with a historical approach. The conclusion of the research is that the Chinese community undeniably had a major role in the process of Islamization of Java in the 15th and 16th centuries. The inhabitants of Java originally came from Canton, Chang-Chou (around Amoy), Yunan, Swatow and other areas of South

China that were originally known as Islamic bases. They came to Java and other areas of Southeast Asia as traders, tourists, *zending*, professionals and for political escapades. The “overseas Chinese” community then mingled with local communities and foreigners who come to Java for the same purpose. They also married local women to form the so-called Sino-Javanese subculture.

Chinese citizens, whose population was originally sparse, later became a well-structured society and were able to emerge as a prestigious and middle-class group, thanks to their success in international trade. Material prosperity made them appear as an independent, autonomous social class, free from dependence on the local rural-based Java governance. At the same time, this advancement in commerce was able to attract Javanese people to take part in the commercial process. So, at that time, there was a large-scale urbanization, which caused the coast of Java to become the centre of demographic growth.

The progress and prosperity of these coastal cities almost undermined the traditional myths that the royal palace had always proclaimed; the blue blood myth, the myth of marriage between nobles, the myth of the sacred palace officials and others almost faded, drowned by the frenzied cosmopolitanism and the commercial crowds on the Java coast. In other words, internationalization had an impact on the independence as well as the attitudes of the people of Javanese society. The material prosperity that they achieved also had an inevitable impact, i.e. the depletion of the level of community loyalty to the local government of Majapahit. Furthermore, the profits from international trade were used to build political networks to throw off the agrarian power of Majapahit, an area that practised Hinduism. History even noted that the power of Majapahit was toppled by a new power called Islam.

Although it was called a newcomer, Islam had its own charm for the people in Java. Not only does it have an egalitarian nature in its doctrine, it also does not recognize the caste system. Its simple and uncomplicated nature and the fact that it does not have many conditions and ritual processes became the charms that attracted the outsiders, and they wanted to become acquainted with Islam. Another attractive feature was the method of “urban Sufism”, developed by the *zending*. Muslims are compatible with the nature of local Javanese spiritualism, and this, surely, increased the passion of local people to embrace Islam. Their universal, populist, egalitarian, practical and all-inclusive characteristics coupled with the economic prosperity of Muslim immigrants encouraged the local people to become Muslims. The conversion of adherents of Hinduism/Buddhism and other local religions to Islam in the 15th/16th century was quite massive and simultaneous along the coast of Java, so it is not an exaggeration to say that there was a religious revolution, such that another religion replaced the established religious systems (Hinduism, Buddhism, Javanism) in this country. Before this religion went back to being trapped into the mythical and the occult world of Mataram, Islam once showed itself as a mesmerizing urban power. The agent that acted as a driving force

for this conversion and the initiation of urbanism and Islamic cosmopolitanism was the Muslim Chinese Community.

Critics of this study likened it to someone who wanted to portray an object; although he successfully revealed many aspects, he was unable to reveal all the aspects. Moreover, this research also has the impression of favouring the dominance of the Chinese race in the process of Islamization in Java.

Second, Hoon's research (2012) on "Race, Class, and Stereotype: Native's Perceptions of Chineseness" examined the relevance and necessity of a perception analysis of race in the study of natives and *Tionghoa* relations in the current Indonesian society. Although race is unpopular in academic discourse on ethnicity and multicultural studies, in public discourse in Jakarta, it is really something fundamental. This study has shown that certain racial markers influence the way people perceive, construct and interact with the "other" that has been realized. In the process of how the natives build stereotypes about the Chinese, indigenous collectivism is envisioned as a homogeneous race category, which is compared to the "other" *Tionghoa*. The barrier of the natives and Chinese differences is envisioned and preserved through stereotypical and mythological observations about the characteristics of a racial group. None of these stereotypes are free from their historical context.

In this study, it is clear that the Chinese were depicted as powerful and wealthy bosses and the natives as helpless and poor victims. This depiction showed the Chinese as the perpetrators of the persecution and the natives as helpless victims. Such simplistic reductionism ignores the complex dynamics of power relations between the state, the natives and the Chinese. As a consequence, diversity within the category of "self" on the class, gender, ethnicity, culture and religion bases was ignored, and the categories of "self" and "other" were exaggerated in a dualism that cannot be reconstructed in such a way that diversity "imaginary line", which is essentialism, can be maintained.

The study also revealed some counter-narratives against the prevalent stereotypes of Chinese people. Although these counter-narratives have a positive meaning on how stereotypes based on myths and generalizations can be reversed, the counter-narratives cannot break or crush the racial barrier. This means reversing stereotypes may not be the most effective way to match stereotypes.

The criticism against this study is that it focuses too much on the assertion of the distinction that begins in the perception of identity as a trivial entity in the essential sense. The ethnic Chinese in the native's perspectives will continue to be seen as "immigrants" and "passengers" as long as racial discrimination on the basis of essentialism remains the dominant discourse of the Indonesian society.

Third, Hoon's research (2012) on "Maintaining Ethnicity: Negotiating the Barrier Maintenance and Border Crossing" examined the process of defining and maintaining ethnic barrier between the natives and Chinese from the point of view of the Chinese themselves. The study found that the interaction between Chinese

and the natives in everyday life shows the relevance of race, class, religion, and education in affirming ethnic differences and promoting ethnic barriers. However, it is shown that the main elements of ethnic differences are viewed differently by the Chinese from different generations. Although the older generation plays an important role in instilling racial stereotypes to the young generation of Chinese, differences in discrimination, ethnic relationships, physical mobility, work environment and education cause different perceptions between one generation and another. As a result, the imaginary line that determines the ethnic barrier also shifts. Although ethnic barriers are maintained, crossing the barriers and hybridity are also not strange. Unfortunately, the factors responsible for certain barriers are still present, so hybridity is limited.

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Fourth, Ahmad Atabik conducted a research (2016: 7-17) on “Mixing Javanese and Chinese Cultures: Harmony and Religious Tolerance of Lasem Society”. This study reveals the values of harmony and tolerance in the process of ethnic assimilation of *Tionghoa* and Javanese in Lasem. His study found a history of social interaction that occurred between the people of Lasem and ethnic Chinese from the 14th century to the 16th century. Although the interaction of these two ethnic groups had ups and downs, harmony and tolerance were always present.

The arrival of ethnic Chinese in Lasem gave birth to cultural pluralism in the society. Pluralism leads to harmony in religion and socialization. A harmonious relationship existed between the two ethnic groups, especially when they collaborated against the Dutch colonists at Lasem. The harmony and tolerance of the Lasem Muslim community can be seen in the cordial interaction between the native population and immigrants, both Muslim and non-Muslim, mostly from Chinese.

In daily life, harmony is maintained due to several factors, namely cross-breeding, the brotherhood feelings within the society, and the opening of social spaces. Inter-ethnic marriages consisting of Chinese, native Javanese and *santri* (student at traditional Muslim school) started since the arrival of the Chinese in Lasem.

The criticism against this study is that it has shown a pluralism perspective in revealing facts, but it does not go into a detailed disclosure of how culture is produced by a collectivity involving the ethnic Chinese and the natives. This study also creates the impression that the tolerance and harmony that existed were achieved on a silver platter without detailing how they were achieved.

Based on the weaknesses of existing studies, the present research aims to understand Javanese-Chinese collectivity practices in everyday life regarding the production of cultural products.

This research does not place the concept of culture as essential but as anti-essentialist instead, how humans create culture as an objective structure that is continually constructed in everyday life.

Overview of the Lasem Society

Lasem is a small town that is a part of the Rembang regency, about 110 km to the east from Semarang along the Pantura line and located 12 km before the east area of Rembang City. The area is in the middle of the main Pantura route between Semarang and Surabaya. Same as the other Pantura cities of Java that had experienced their glory in the past, Lasem also has supporting infrastructure in the city, such as a port that is easily accessed by small and medium size ships, the Bagan River, and the highway that connects the city with other big cities in Java.

At the beginning of the 14th century, the small town of Lasem was one of Majapahit Kingdom's powers. This kingdom existed in Indonesia from the 13th century until the 15th century but began to collapse when Islam came into Indonesia. Tome Pirees, a Portuguese traveler, noted that the area from the Rembang region to the east until Tuban was known for wood craftsmanship (Handinoto in Attabik, 2016: 8). One of the news sources about the district stated that Lasem became a subordinate land of Majapahit in 1273 Saka or 1351 AD. This region was led by a woman named Dewi Indu, who was the nephew of King Hayam Wuruk, the ruler of Majapahit (Kamzaz in Attabik, 2016: 8).

Another source mentioned that Lasem became a duchy under the Islamic Kingdom of Demak through the leadership of Raden Patah, who managed to shift the authority of Majapahit. In 1751, Lasem was designated as a subdistrict, a year before the status of the district was transferred to Rembang by the Dutch colonial government. Of all the diversities presented, the Chinese aroma was the strongest, as it was in the northern coastal area of Java since the 15th century. To this day, it is easy to find Chinese ornaments in ancient buildings in the subdistrict. The touch of this blend is certainly the result of the Lasem community's appreciation of their diversity (Hartono & Handinoto in Attabik, 2016: 8).

In Lasem, there is the Bie Yong Gio Temple, a temple that has a long history of the ethnic Chinese in Lasem. It is often touted as a symbol of multiculturalism. This temple according to the story is devoted to the three main ethnic Chinese figures who contributed to Lasem, especially in the fight against the Dutch VOC in a terrible war, the "Yellow War". The three of them are Oey Ing Kyat, tan Kie Eie, and Raden Panji Margono (Unjia in Attabik, 2016: 8).

The Dynamics of Indigenous - Non-indigenous Relation in the Incision of *Canthing Pranakan*

The batik industrial centre that was studied by the researchers is *Rumah Batik Sekar Kencana* in Karangturi village, Lasem, owned by Sigit Witjaksono (88 years old). This centre has 20-30 workers, who are mostly indigenous/native people. This Batik centre is one of the 12 batik crafters that survived among the over 120 craftsmen that were available in the 2000s.

Sigit Witjaksono and a number of religious leaders in Lasem are good friends; one of them is KH Zaim Ahmad Maskoen, the principal of Pondok Pesantren Kauman. He said, they visit each other when Muslims celebrate Eidul *Fitri* as well as when he (Sigit) celebrates the Chinese New Year. He does not hesitate to congratulate KH Zain during the celebration, and he also dismissed all his employees to celebrate the Islamic Eid. For years, this habit continued to be maintained and implemented. Likewise, KH Zaim always visits Sigit Witjaksono's house when he (Sigit) celebrates the Chinese New Year. KH Zaim stated that he often explains the meaning of the Lunar New Year to his students using the Muslims celebration of the new year of *hijriyah*, so that the students would recognize the nature of Imlek (Chinese New Year) as well.

As the owner of the famous batik, Sigit Witjaksono stated that batik is not just an expression of the taste of beauty in the art of batik writing as a cultural heritage that he has, but that it is also an expression of other things. For him, his batik skills were obtained from his parent and ancestors. From when he was small, he was introduced to the tradition of batik writing in a cloth that is 2.5 meters long. The Chinese motif that he loves to make is the motif of plants. This batik is known as Sekar Jagad. Sekar is a plant or a flower, and Jagad is the universe or the world. So Sekar Jagat means a collection of plants in the world.

He does not make only plants-patterned batik, but he also makes batik motifs such as *homng*/phoenix, lion/dragon, *killin*, goldfish, bats, partridge, sea fish, clam, and shrimp; he also makes geometric motifs, such as *banji* and *swastika*, as well as the motifs of natural objects, such as clouds, mountains, and moon. Other Chinese motifs that he makes are currency patterns and rolls of letters. Meanwhile, in addition to Chinese motifs, he also makes batik motifs in the form of geometric motifs, such as machetes, slopes, and *kawung*.

Regarding colour choices, he stated that many colours can be used to give batik style, and he was conversant with them all. For him, the dominant colours of Lasem batik are red, blue, soja, green, purple, black, kem (faint yellow), and white. He is of the opinion that historically, colour protrusion does show the influence of a culture. For example, the colour of blood red affirms the influence of the Chinese culture, which in Javanese is the colour of *getihpitik*. The blue colour is influenced by Dutch culture, which is similar to delft/delft blue ceramic blue colour. Soja

colour reflects the influence of Javanese culture, taken from the colour of *soga batik* Surakarta. The green colour is associated with the Muslim community.

Batik colouring is considered very important, so the naming is associated with the type or colour composition. Batik in red is called *abangan*; blue batik is called *bircon*; black batik is called *irengan*; red-blue batik is called *bang-biron*; red-blue-brown batik is called batik *tiganegeri*; and red-blue-brown-purple batik is called batik *empatnegeri*. Colouring materials is done using natural dyes, such as *mengkudu*, mahogany, and indigo.

There was a moment of extraordinary multicultural practice, when Sigit Witjaksono made Islamic patterned batik by writing Allah SWT and Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) as a gift for KH Zaim on his birthday. He painted that batik with his own hand in order to pay homage, because what he wrote were the name of Allah and Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). He wrote with a canting incision himself when in fact painting other motifs are generally done by using the foot. But specifically, for religious patterned batik, he did not dare to use his foot. Likewise, in the choice of colours, he got rid of the red hues, which are generally dominant in Chinese batik motifs, and fill it with the dominant shades of greenish colour.

For him, batik does not only meet the demands of the economy as well as the demands of art (aesthetic criteria), but it also shows a sincere appreciation of the religion (religion criteria) of his fellow human beings.

Bending Conventions in Batik Production Process

Batik production process involves many actors: crafters, other employees, and social networks. Sigit Witjaksono has all of them. In the process of creating, determining the motifs and the shades of colour, each actor has an almost equal position. The owner, as an actor who is formally at the highest level of the pyramid in the batik production process, is not always dominant in bringing out and deciding the motifs and shades of colour. He may even be compelled to let the batik crafters determine the motifs and patterns based on the experience that they have.

Why did it happen? Looking at the daily interactions in batik production process, it seems that there is no definitive benchmark to determine the actor that decides the emersion of a motif or batik colour patterns. However, by going deep into the ethnographic perspective, elements that decide the formation of batik motifs and patterns can be found. The researchers noted at least two things: first, there is an implicitly agreed assumption that every motif should be able to relate to the intended market prediction. But it is difficult to target the market, since the tastes of consumers had to be estimated by their sociological and psychological diversity. Second, there is also an agreed assumption that the pattern of motifs should reflect the trend in the society. This criterion is equally as tricky as the first criterion, so every batik crafter can observe, analyse and affirm what motif patterns

are the most appropriate to the present time. The so-called trends can be anything, modern trends, ancient trends, or eclectic trends (hybrids between the modern and the ancient); thus, the trend is used as a hook by the batik crafters for batik motif painting.

Because of its general and flexible nature, the two assumptions above have consequences on the interaction between the owner and the batik crafters in determining the batik product. In other words, the above two "conventions" cannot be controlled entirely by the authority of art knowledge, embodied in batik crafters, nor can they be fully driven by the market authority, represented by the company management. The authority of art knowledge, market authority and religious authority must be subject to so-called "real experiences" and "consumer trends". Experiences and trends can emerge from anywhere; thus, giving cracks and spaces for people involved in the batik production process to participate dynamically in the formation of batik motifs and patterns.

Interpenetration of Art Criteria, Market and Religion

Ronald Lukens-Bull (2008: 220) provides an observation of the symptoms of religious presence in the postmodern era. According to him, the production, consumption and contestation of painting is not just a product of globalization, but also a response to globalization itself. At that point, the process of commodification and ideology through painting images met and formed each other. Final capitalism, according to Lukens-Bull, "can involve both the ideology of commodities and the commoditization of ideologies." Religion, as one form of ideology, appears as a force that forms commodities, not merely passive objects that is formed by the commodification process of all the lines of life that characterize market globalization. In other words, what happens is not just "commodification of religion", but also "commodity religiosity".

A close observation of the batik motifs made by Sigit Witjaksono shows how the processes of creativity, commodification and religiosity meet. Art criteria, commodity criteria and religious criteria form each other, making it difficult to conclude that religion is dominating the arts and the market, or otherwise that religion has been conquered by the market - the reduction-reduction that appears in many popular analyses. The reality in the field of production is not that simple. The art criteria, religious criteria, and commodification criteria played by actors - in this context Sigit Witjaksono and KH Zaim - proceed interactively, affect each other, and in many occasions can veto each other.

It is true that as a product thrown into the market, batik does not escape the laws of art and commodities, which have certain standards that coincide. The visualization of the motifs and shades of colour shows it very clearly. The choice of motifs and colours also follow the development of preferred consumer demand. This means that Sigit Witjaksono cannot be separated from the criteria of art, which

must be subject to market criteria. However, on the other hand, the choice of motifs and colour hues are also seen as a tool for him to communicate religious tolerance to the society. The market standard applied in the appearance of batik motifs and colours is not seen as a form of religion conquest, because there are also the religious criteria. Religious criteria can be considered to win the battle at the point when it is able to make the commercial arena adopt religious criteria. This may be called a symmetrical interpenetration form: religion penetrates art and market by allowing art and markets to penetrate religion.

The Merchandise in the Art of Batik

A question that may arise is this, if the practices and interactions done in the production of batik are so complex and multi-faceted, what exactly is the anchor that blends everything? Why do these parties volunteer to come into contact with each other in a field limited by certain explicit or implicit criteria? If the arts, markets, and religions—despite the great role—do not dominate the cultural production, it cannot be called a binding anchor. Are there any other anchors?

To answer these questions, this study utilizes the concept of the field and the procession approach to determine the dynamics of the actors in the field. In a field of games, FG Bailey (1969) in his classic work *Stratagems and Spoils* identifies the five main elements. First, there are gifts or trophies that are pursued by all actors. Second, there is the presence of personnel or actors who play. Third, there is the existence of leadership, in the sense of having the main actor accompanied by a number of followers. Fourth, there is the existence of competition, in the sense of contestation for the prize or trophies. Fifth, there is a judge or referee who determines the rules of the game and decides the winner. For Bailey, every political (formal and informal) field can be explored using such "game theory" frameworks.

Although at some point we can see actors in the field of batik production as players competing for a prize, many questions arise, especially with regard to the assumption that actors act rationally with cost-benefit calculations. This assumption will certainly narrow the analysis based on the economic calculation case, which will subtract the role of batik makers, or partners like KH Zaim who is not taking a risk for economic benefits. However, when the "prize" is understood as not just a material-economic advantage, we will be able to see that these actors—from batik owners and craftsmen, to KH Zaim—are pursuing a goal that makes them move to play in the field of batik production.

In addition, Victor Turner completes Bailey's "game theory." For Turner (1986), the game does not merely involve competitions for championship, but is also a "cultural show". The actors who play do not only want to pursue victory, but sometimes the goal is the game itself. The reason is because it is possible for the social space to "play with" the principles and cultural restraints. That is, if the game

"championship" aims to win trophies, then the game "show" aims to gain pleasure in running the game itself.

Practices in batik production show how two forms of the game can come together. For batik makers, the prizes that are pursued are of course their salaries and bonuses. The various actions and processes that they carry out can be interpreted as an effort to achieve the quality of batik products with high selling value. However, when pursued further on which qualities are considered to be the high selling points, they can only guess. They only mention the possible mix of motifs, patterns of colour, or trends in society as the right mixture, to be considered as a high selling value. However, the accurate mixture can never be fully formulated. An attempt to formulate it always fails and raises other possibilities, so that when the formula is applied or re-run, it does not appear as expected. In the end, what happens is to "play" with the mixtures, creatively connecting the trends, motifs, and colour patterns. This creativity tends to be a more important goal compared to the hard-to-catch value.

Back to the original question in this section, the anchors that bind various interactions in the batik production process are not singular. Turner states that the game's field contains actors competing for the same prize (Turner, 1974). However, on the other hand, Turner also acknowledges that in the game, not all actors chase the prize, but, rather, some pursue the preoccupation of the play itself (Turner, 1986). Through this study, we can say that there is indeed a reward pursued by actors who play, but the prize is not only in one form. Each actor has his own prize, which is not necessarily important for other actors. The various gifts are all neatly intertwined in a field that becomes a place of action and interaction of actors. That is what keeps the actors together.

Conclusion

Based on the theory of the field by Bourdieu (1993) and Turner (1974) as well as the analysis of ethnographic data, the researchers make the following proposition: The practice of batik production can be seen as a relatively autonomous cultural production field that has its own logic. By focusing on the theory of cultural production, this study shows how cultural products are produced in a relatively autonomous field that involves dynamic ethnic relations between actors. Practices in the field of batik culture production have their own logic, and these practices form a delicate social relation that leads to the achievement of certain goals.

The achievement of the various goals involving Javanese batik-makers; ethnic Chinese owners; and KH Zaim, a Javanese who is a religious figure, signifies how the process of natural dynamic interaction has its own logic, that is, in the field of cultural production, there is a flexible convention in determining batik patterns and motifs. There is a solid interpenetration between art, market and religious criteria, and there are situations where various prizes that are pursued in the birth

of cultural products are merged. All these illustrate how the multiculturalism that occurred in Lasem does not only appear at the level of ideas but also at the level of material culture. An example of a relevant multiculturalism practice model is developed.***

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