

# BATIK *PAHAKH*: THE TRANSFORMATION OF TRADISIONAL TOOL IN THE *NGEJALANG* CEREMONY INTO BATIK PATTERN

Hadi Kurniawan<sup>1</sup>

Make Up and Fashion Department, Faculty of Visual art and Design, Indonesia Art and Culture  
Institute Bandung

Jalan Buah Batu No. 212 Bandung 40265

[Hadi.kurniawan@isbi.ac.id](mailto:Hadi.kurniawan@isbi.ac.id)

(022) 7314982

## ABSTRACT

This research is the writer's expression of the preservation of *pahakh*, a tool in the Ngejalang ceremony performed by the society on the West Coast of Lampung. It aims to produce *batik* patterns inspired by *pahakh* used in the Ngejalang ceremony. The research used the method of data sources and three-stage artwork creation, namely exploration, design, and embodiment. The form of *pahakh* had gone through stylization techniques to produce alternative designs to *batik* patterns. This research had reported the production of three hand-drawn batik designs: *pahakh kunyikh*, *pahakh bikhu*, and *pahakh ujaou*. Hopefully, this study can give insights to people about *pahakh* with its meaning and philosophy. Thus, it raises their awareness about the preservation of this legacy. This creation also enriches the repertoire of Indonesian batik culture diversity.

*Keywords: Hand-drawn batik, Pahakh, Lampung, Artwork creation.*

## INTRODUCTION

Lampung is the southernmost region of the Sumatra Island. This province is the origin of the Lampung tribe. The tribe is divided into two cultures that are Saibatin and Pepadun. The people of Saibatin culture usually live in the Lampung coast areas. The people of Pepadun culture live on Lampung mainland. There is a unique tradition from the people of Saibatin that is called the Ngejalang ceremony. In Bahasa, the word *ngejalang* has a negative connotation for common people but it means visiting

activity in the local language. The word *ngejalang* comes from *jelang* that gets the affix *-nge*. The Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia states that the word *jelang* means to visit or to face. Then, the word *ngejalang* is pronounced using a local accent to be *ngejalang*. This ceremony is a gathering of people to keep in touch with each other while eating together to then pray together. It is a representation of how people show gratitude and ask for good things from God the Almighty. This tradition is usually held on Islamic celebration days, such as the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad, Eid al-Fitr, Eid al-Adha, etc. The word *ngejalang* is similar to *ziarah* if we look at its meaning. However, the difference between *ngejalang* and *ziarah* lies in its implementation. *Ziarah* is an Islamic-related activity in that people can visit each other to just meet or do something else and it also means to visit someone's grave and pray for the peace of the grave's owner. Whereas the Ngejalang ceremony is just not a praying activity but people can gather and have meals together using *pahakh* (a tray made from metal). *Pahakh* is a local language for a traditional home tool from Lampung that has a round shape. It is similar to a plate and has a diameter of about 30 centimeters. Based on its form, *pahakh* has two versions, one that is equipped with legs and another one that is not. Legged *pahakh* uses a round base stand with a smaller diameter than its top part. The stand has a height of about 15 – 20 centimeters while the legless *pahakh* does not use a base stand but only has a round shape. Based on the material, *pahakh* is made of copper or bronze metal and has a scarf wrap on the top part which is called *Puala*. It is a kind of Lampung traditional cloth called *tapis*. Women carry out the *pahakh* over their heads from their houses to the field where Ngejalang ceremony is held. It is one of the sequences in the ceremony process that local people refer to as Nyuncun Pahakh. It is a representation of how human interacts with nature and the universe. In addition, it is also the local wisdom of the Lampung people, especially in Saibatin culture.

Terminologically, *Nyuncun Pahakh* consists of two words that are *nyuncun* and *pahakh*. The word *nyuncun* means to carry things over somebody's head and *pahakh* means a plate or tray made from bronze or copper. So, *Nyuncun Pahakh* can be defined as a sequence part of Ngejalang ceremony in which local people carry *pahakh* over their heads. The *pahakh* is usually loads with



**Figure 1. Nyuncun Pahakh**

(Sources : Ruth Intan, 2022)

foods such as rice, traditional meals, cookies, and drinks. which will be served in the ceremony. The *pahakh* itself represents the people's respect toward humanity and nature. as evident from Nyuncun Pahakh procedure with high concern to food hygiene. *Pahakh* round stand creates the distance between the ground and the food. *Puala* as the top part of *pahakh* wrap the food on it. So, the food in the *pahakh* will be free of dust and dirt when it is put on the ground where the event is held. Its traditional culture manifests a connection with a life philosophy adopted by the Lampung people, called Nengah Nyappur. This means that somebody has to be active in socially, and be tolerant for the sake of peace and prosperity in life.

Nyuncun Pahakh tradition was registered at the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia in 2017 and was registered in 2018 as one of Indonesia's Intangible Cultural Heritage. The certificate for the determination of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Indonesia from the Minister of Education and Culture was received by the Governor of Lampung, Muhammad Ridho Ficardo that was represented by the Lampung Tourism and Culture Office and the regents from each district, there are Pesisir Barat Regency, Tanggamus Regency and West Lampung Regency. *Pahakh* existence is still maintained in the life of the Lampung people. Today, *Pahakh* which is owned by some people is a legacy from their ancestors. In fact, there are no craftsmen who make these tools in Lampung until now. This means that the tool is currently limited because no one has yet been able to produce this tool. The reality is many younger generations, especially in Lampung, no longer know about *pahakh* which contains high-value meaning and philosophy for good living. If this condition is ignored and no action is taken to preserve the *pahakh*, this noble cultural artifact will extinct. In other words, *pahakh* is a local wisdom from Lampung culture, full of noble meanings and philosophies, that need to be preserved so it can be passed down as a cultural legacy to the next generation.

Batik is one of the original Indonesian craft-arts resulting from the noble heritage of Indonesian culture. It is a traditional cloth that is produced by resisting the dye coloring process using hot wax. Line contrast and shape among parts covered

and uncovered by the hot wax will produce beautiful decorative patterns (Salma, 2012, page?). Etymologically, batik consists of two words that are *mbat* and *tik*. *Mbat* in Javanese is defined as *ngembat* or throwing repeatedly, while *tik* means dot. So, batik means to throw dots on the cloth repeatedly. So finally, the dot shapes coincide with a line shape. According to fine arts, a line is a collection of dots. There are also those who argue that batik comes from a combination of two Javanese words, namely *amba* which means writing, and *titik* which means point. (Musman, 2011, p. 1). Batik crafts develop along with the dynamics of human life. Besides being used as a clothing fabric, batik is also developing into a textile craft pattern. There are a lot of new batik pattern created as means of expression in visual form. Batik's main function is as a clothing material in the form of a long cloth pattern (Prasetyo, 2010, p?). Batik cloth can also be applied onto accessories, interiors, and other possible functional stuff, such as umbrellas, shoes, bags, wallets, hats, paintings, and so on. Batik in Lampung is developing rapidly. There are also many patterns patterninspired by nature and traditional ornaments. Batik Lampung is one of the superior products as souvenirs for tourists who visit Lampung. This is related to the Lampung region, as one of the tourism destinations, that has great potential in the economic sector. Variations of creativity, design innovation, and patterns are important selling points in the economic sector, especially in *batik* Lampung. This phenomenon shows that there is a demand for innovation and creativity in the development of Lampung's original batik patterns. Until now, no creator has made a batik pattern that inspired by a *pahakh*. This is an innovation and creativity in the development of Lampung batik characteristics. In this study, the batik work is a medium to express the soul's experience of *pahakh* cultural preservation of a traditional home tool on the West Coast of Lampung. The form of *pahakh* is stylized to become batik patterns. Based on this, the study aims to create batik patterns inspired by *pahakh* in *Ngejalang* ceremony of Lampung culture. The creation is manifested into three batik artworks using hand-drawn batik techniques. It is expected that the research result can give more knowledge and insight into the *pahakh* with its meaning and philosophy so that it will raise people's awareness about the preservation of its local wisdom legacy. This artwork will also enrich the repertoire of

Indonesian batik culture diversity.

## METHOD

This research method uses a qualitative approach to produce descriptive data and art creation. Data collection uses observation techniques, interviews, and documentation. The art creation method consists of three stages, which are exploration, design, and embodiment. The craft creation process can also be done intuitively and carried out through a carefully planned method, systematic, analytical, and scientific (SP. Gustami 2003, p. 28).

The first stage, exploration, consists of two steps. The soul journey, the first step in this stage, includes field observations and verification of data sources to find problems or themes that require resolution immediately. Basic theory analysis is the second step in the exploration stage. In this stage, the reference sources and visual references are used as material to get the solution concept. These results can be used as creative ideas for visualization basis into designs. (SP. Gustami 2003, 30). Second, the design stage consists of 2 steps. The first step is to put the ideas of the verbal description obtained from the data analysis into a two-dimensional visual with various aspects consideration. The next step is to put the results of visualizing ideas into sketch designs or alternative designs which will be used as the basis for making prototypes. (SP. Gustami 2003, 30). Third, the embodiment stage consists of 2 steps. The first step in this stage is the production process which is based on the design plan as the reference. The second step in this stage is to give an assessment or evaluation of the results which have been carried out, the aim is to determine the suitability between design and artwork results. (SP. Gustami 2003, 31). The master designs will be transformed into batik crafts using hand-drawn batik techniques.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

*Pahakh* is a traditional tool to serve the food which is used by the Malay and Lampung people, especially the Saibatin. *Pahakh's*

form is like a round plate with legs and is usually made from brass, bronze, or something similar. *Pahakh* is golden or silver. *Pahakh* ornaments are diverse ranging floral, geometric, and curved lines, etc. Today, Nyuncun Pahakh tradition still exists and is usually held on Islamic celebration day. *Pahakh* also has sacred values that it is carried over someone's head during the ceremony processions and is placed in the front row.

Now, the batik industry is not only developing in Java but has spread to various regions in Indonesia. In this case, many regions develop their batik styles according to their original uniqueness. As in Lampung, based on a research survey in 2015 who conducted the survey? Cantumkan sumbernya, there were at least 5 batik craftsmen whose locations were spread across several districts. With simple technology, the craftsmen who managed this home-based business created various batik works. Government policy has encouraged the growth and development of this industry in Lampung. The large market share that can be exploited includes the obligation for civil servants, teachers, and students to wear batik clothes every Wednesday. It does not include other events that require participants to wear batik. This is a fixed market and will continue to grow. However, even though the batik market is available in Bandar Lampung and other areas in Lampung Province, it does not mean that the batik industry enjoys the growth of this market. Based on a survey which was conducted on some batik businesses, the data shows that they still face various obstacles in running this business.

*Pahakh's* form is processed on visual imagination with stylization techniques to produce three alternative batik patterns. Based on aesthetics and production process as consideration factors, the third alternative batik pattern has been chosen as the main motive in this creation. The main pattern that has been selected then was processed through the *design* stage so that it produced a pattern pattern. The embodiment of a pattern pattern is a combination of the main pattern and complementary patterns with a geometric shape inspired by the Lampung ship-cloth ornament. These traditional clothes are a kind of Lampung traditional woven fabric from Saibatin people whose pattern is dominated by ship ornaments. In the local language, it's called *nampan* clothes. *Nampan* ornament has a geometric characteristic



Figure 2. Pahakh

(Source: Renzi Dharmawan, 2017)





Picture 3: Pahakh





(Source: National Gallery of Australia)

form in accordance with the weaving technique in the production process. *Nampan* illustrates how strong maritime culture is in the Lampung Saibatin people.

A long time ago, *nampan* was often used as traditional ritual apparatus by Lampung people. However, many *nampan* clothes are of decreased quality and obsoleted. Its existence has begun to disappear from the social life of Lampung Saibatin people. Only certain people still keep the *nampan*, such as the elders, because the cloth cannot be used by ordinary people. Traditionally, *nampan* is also a symbol of social status. Another factor that causes *nampan* to disappear is that there is no longer a craftsman who can make it. Previously, *nampan* clothes makers were found in coastal areas such as Teluk Semaka, Teluk Lampung, and Krui. The difficult process and much time-consuming is one of the reasons why this legacy has been abandoned by the next generation. Hary Hunt Kahlenberg, he had seen crafter wove *nampan* cloth in 1971 in the South Lampung area (Kartiwa, 1992 p. 74). The eruption of Mount Krakatoa (in 1883) is another reason for *nampan* extinction because it destroyed a lot of clothes and caused many craftsmen injured or died. Currently, Lampung younger generations do not know about the existence of *nampan* clothes. If the condition continues to happen, the *nampan* clothes will become extinct. An effort is needed to preserve it. Therefore, the *nampan's* geometric ornament becomes an inspiration for the *pahakh* batik pattern to bring out the characteristics of Lampung culture. The decoration of *nampan* clothes seems more 'exotic' because it looks ethnically impressive and optimizes the potential of regional uniqueness.

The pattern arrangement has a rhythm that uses curved border lines that meet each other so that it gives a flexible and dynamic impression. The arrangement was inspired by the Polynesian tattoo culture, which still has a common origin with Indonesian, namely proto-Malay (sumber?). The elaboration of visual elements and principles of design produces innovation of pattern pattern arrangements. Based on this, the creation resulted in three designs which were transformed into hand-drawn batik cloth, namely *pahakh kunyikh* batik, *pahakh ujau* batik, and *pahakh bikhu* batik. The works were created by using hand-drawn batik techniques, such as *nyorek*, *nyanting*, *nyolet*, *lorod*, and finishing. Each batik work has a size of 2 x 1 meter. The material uses

*primisima* cotton fabric. The dyeing material is *remasol* synthetic dyes.

No	Visual Transformation	
	Pahakh	Batik Patterns
1.		
2.		
3.		

Tabel 1. Visual Transformation of *Pahakh* Batik Patterns  
Sources: Personal Documentation, 2023

*Pahakh kunyikh* batik is the first work of this creator. *Kunyikh* in the West Coast of Lampung language means yellow. This color, associated with gold and the sun, symbolizes the value of majesty and glory. According to Ngejalang ceremony procedure, there is a praying together activity in order to ask for good things from Almighty God. Based on this, the *pahakh kunyikh* batik means community life will be glorious if people always draw closer and pray only to Almighty God for all good things. The brick red color is associated with the soil, which shows that the belief of the Lampung people is in accordance with the Islamic faith that humans are created by God from the soil. This philosophy teaches that humans must always be aware to be humble and not arrogant so that they can respect and appreciate each other for their peaceful daily living.

*Pahakh ujou* is the second batik work in this creation. *Ujaou* in the local language means green. This color is associated



Figure 4. Pahakh Kunyikh Batik and Detail  
(Sources : Personal documentation, 2023)





Picture 5. Pahakh Ujau Batik Detail

(Sources : Personal documentation, 2023)



Picture 6 . Pahakh Ujau Batik Detail

(Source: Personal documentation, 2023)

with nature, leaves, trees and symbolizes the value of fertility, prosperity, and abundance, etc. It is in line with one of the purposes of Ngejalang ceremony, which is an expression of gratitude for the grace and prosperity given by Almighty God to them. Based on this, *pahakh ujaou* means that humans should always have a sense of gratitude to Almighty God so that they are always given grace and prosperity for their daily living.

*Pahakh Bikhhu* is the third batik work in the creation. *Bikhhu* in the local language means blue color. It is associated with water, rivers, and the sea and also symbolizes the values of peace, tranquility, coolness, etc. It was in line with the purpose of Ngejalang ceremony, which is a manifestation of the Lampung people's life philosophy called Nengah Nyampur. It tells people to take active participation in social life, not be individualistic and always be tolerant of each other in daily living. Based on this, the *pahakh bikhhu* batik pattern means that the community should always be active in social life, not individualistic, and always be tolerant of each other in daily life to make their environment full of peace, tranquility, and calmness.

## CONCLUSION

This research is the writer's expression of the preservation of *pahakh* in the Ngejalang ceremony from the West Coast Lampung people. This study aims to create batik patterns inspired by *pahakh* in the Ngejalang ceremony from the West Coast. This ceremony is a gathering where people keep in touch with each other by eating together and then praying together. That is a representation of showing gratitude and asking for good things from Almighty God. It reflects the way human interacts with nature and the universe. Absolutely, it is also a local wisdom from the Lampung people, especially in Saibatin culture. People care and respect each other. *Pahakh* is the local language for a traditional home tool from Lampung that has a round shape. *Pahakh* is a traditional tool to serve the food which is used by the entire Malay, especially Lampung Saibatin people. It is similar to a plate and has a diameter of about 30 centimeters *pahakh* has two versions, one that is equipped with legs and another one that is not. Legged *pahakh*

uses a round base stand with a smaller diameter than its top part. The stand has a height of about 15 – 20 centimeters while the legless *pahakh* does not use a base stand but only has a round shape. Based on the material, *pahakh* is made of copper or bronze metal and has a scarf wrap on the top part which is called *Puala*.

Today, *pahakh* owned by some people are a legacy from their ancestors. In fact, there are no craftsmen who make these tools in Lampung until now. The reality is many younger generations, especially in Lampung, no longer know about *pahakh* which contains high-value meaning and philosophy for good living. If the condition is ignored and no action is taken to preserve the *pahakh*, this noble cultural artifact will extinct. So, an effort is needed to preserve the *pahakh* preservation so that this legacy can continue to pass down to the next generation.

Batik in Lampung is developing rapidly. There are also many patterns inspired by flora, fauna, and traditional ornament. Variations of creativity, design innovation, and patterns are important as the selling points that are related to goods distribution to consumers in the economic sector. This phenomenon shows that there is a demand for innovation and creativity in the development of Lampung's original batik patterns. Until now, no one has made a batik pattern that was inspired by a *pahakh*. This is an innovation and creativity in the development of Lampung batik characteristics.

Based on the explanation above, the study aims to create batik patterns that are inspired by *Pahakh* in Ngejalang ceremony from Lampung culture. The creation is manifested into three batik works using hand-drawn batik techniques. The research uses a qualitative approach to produce descriptive data and the art creation method to produce the works. The art creation method consists of the exploration, design, and embodiment stages. *Pahakh's* form is processed on visual imagination with stylization techniques to produce three alternative batik patterns. The embodiment of a pattern pattern is a combination of the main pattern and complementary patterns with a geometric shape inspired by the *nampan* clothes ornament. The pattern pattern arrangement has a rhythm that uses curved border lines that meet each other so that it gives a flexible and dynamic impression. The arrangement was inspired by the Polynesian

tattoo culture, which still has a common origin with Indonesian, namely proto-Malay. This creation resulted in three designs that were transformed into hand-drawn batik cloth, which are *pahakh kunyikh* batik, *pahakh ujau* batik, and *pahakh bikhu* batik. The techniques consist of *nyorek*, *nyanting*, *nyolet*, *lorod*, and finishing. Each batik work has a size of 2 x 1 meter. The material used is *primisima* cotton fabric and the dyeing material used is *remasol* synthetic dyes.

*Pahakh Kunyikh's* batik is the first work of this creation. It means that community life will be glorious if people always draw closer and pray only to God the Almighty for all good things. *Pahakh ujou* is the second batik work of this creation. It means that humans should always have a sense of gratitude to God the Almighty so that they are always given grace and prosperity for their daily living. *Pahakh bikhu* is the third batik work of this creation. It means that the community should always be active in social life, not be individualistic, and always be tolerant of each other in daily life to make their environment full of peace, tranquility, and calmness. Hopefully, this research result can improve knowledge and insight about the *pahakh* with its meaning and philosophy so that it will raise people's awareness about the preservation of their local wisdom legacy. These artworks will also enrich the repertoire of Indonesian batik cultural diversity.

## REFERENCES

- Anggraini, Renny. 2013. Makna Simbol Dalam Gerak Tari Pahar Agung Di Sanggar KM 1000 Himpunan Pelajar dan Mahasiswa Lampung Di Yogyakarta. Yogyakarta. FKIP UNY.
- Efendi, Nur. 2022. Potensi Pengembangan Industri Batik di Bandar Lampung. Lampung. FEB Universitas Lampung.
- Fadila, Abi. Penerapan Geometri Transformasi Pada Pattern Batik Lampung. Lampung. STKIP Muhammadiyah Pringsewu.

- Guntur. 2019. Inovasi Pada Morfologi Pattern Parang Batik Tradisional Jawa. *Panggung: Jurnal Seni Budaya*, 29(4), 374-390.
- Guntur, Soegeng Toekio M, dan Achmad Sjafi'i. 2007. Kriya Nusantara. Surakarta. ISI Press Surakarta.
- Guntur, Ranang A Sugihartono. 2015. Metodologi Penelitian Seni. Surakarta. ISI Press Surakarta.
- Gustami, SP. 2004. Proses Penciptaan Kriya. Yogyakarta. FSP ISI Yogyakarta.
- Kartika, Dharsono S. .2016. Kreasi Artistik. Karanganyar: Citra Sains.
- Kartika, Dharsono Sony. 2007. Budaya Nusantara. Bandung. Rekayasa Sains.
- Manjasari, Wulan S. 2018. Sai Agung. Yogyakarta. FP ISI Yogyakarta.
- Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Indonesia. 2018. Katalog Warisan Budaya Indonesia Tak Benda. Jakarta. Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Indonesia.
- Nabila, Mutia A. 2022. Islami dan Kearifan Lokal Lampung: Nilai Islami dalam Upacara Ngejalang Masyarakat Lampung Sai Batin. Lampung. Fakultas Ushuluddin dan Agama UIN Raden Inten II.
- Sumardjo, Jakob. 2000. Filsafat Seni. Bandung. ITB Press.
- Sunaryo, Aryo. 2018. Seni Rupa Nusantara. Semarang. Daharaprize.
- Suyanto. 2017. Menggali Filsafat Wayang Beber Untuk Mendukung Perkembangan Industri Kreatif Batik Pacitan. *Panggung: Jurnal Seni Budaya*, 27 (1), 88-98.