

Proceedings

**1<sup>st</sup>** INTERNATIONAL  
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**CONSERVATION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE**

Semarang, April 25th, 2015

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Postgraduate Program  
Semarang State University

**INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON CONSERVATION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE  
PROCEEDINGS**

**Conservation of Batik as the Cultural Heritage of Humanity**

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**Editors:**

Prof. Dr. Supriyadi, M.Si.  
Dr. Issy Yuliasri M.Pd.  
Dr. Masrukan M.Si.  
Dr. Ir. Dyah Rini Indriyanti M.P  
Dr. Wahyu Lestari, M.Pd.  
Dr. Sulhadi, M.Si

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©2015, Postgraduate Program, Semarang State University  
Alamat : Kampus Bendan Ngisor Semarang 50233  
Telpon/Fax : (024) 8449017  
E-mail : pps@unnes.ac.id

## Foreword

International Seminar on Conservation of Cultural Heritage (ISC2H) is an international seminar organized by the Postgraduate Program of Semarang State University (Unnes), Semarang, Central Java, Indonesia. As the university with conservation vision, Unnes continuously guard the conservation effort in environment aspects as well as socio-cultural.

More specifically, ISC2H aims to discuss the whole aspect of cultural heritage in Indonesia as a part of the world heritage. Indonesia merupakan negara kepulauan yang terdiri dari 35 daerah propinsi. Setiap daerah memiliki kekayaan budaya yang tidak ternilai harganya. Beberapa di antaranya telah diakui oleh dunia dan dikukuhkan oleh UNESCO sebagai warisan budaya tak benda, seperti batik, Saman Dance from Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam, Puppet Shadow, Keris and Tosan Aji and Keris (traditional weapon), etc.

ISC2H will be held every two years. The 1<sup>st</sup> seminar of ISC2H in 2015 will be focused on Conservation of Batik as the Cultural Heritage of Humanity and promote the development and dissemination of theoretical knowledge, conceptual research, and professional knowledge in relevance with batik. Various studies and analyses could be explored related to batik conservation and development, including education and training, history and culture, language and oral tradition, conservation and preservation, art and design, fashion and product diversification, economy and marketing, industrial engineering, management, social science and humanity, natural science, human resources, and environmental aspects. The use of ICT and emerging technologies such as social media will also be part of the discussion and proceedings.

Semarang, April 25th, 2015  
Organizing Committee

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## INVENTING VARIOUS CREATIVE KARAWO'S DESIGNS WITH CULTURAL IDENTITY OF GORONTALO TO SUPPORT THE CREATIVE INDUSTRY

Hasdiana, S.Pd., M.Sn<sup>1)</sup>  
School of Craft Engineering  
Faculty of Engineering of Gorontalo State University, Indonesia  
diana\_8224@yahoo.co.id

### ABSTRACT

This research was designed to optimize the potentials of Karawo as the featured product of Gorontalo to have its own signature by creating various creative designs of Karawo, which has the cultural identity of Gorontalo to avoid market's saturation to this local product due to its currently monotonous designs or motives. This research occupied the experimental method. Whereas, the research procedure is done through exploration of the unique new ideas of Gorontalo's culture. The design process has led to the creation of twenty-one alternative sketches, which are the representation and visualization of concepts or ideas of those sketches. From those sketches, the best sketches then transformed into details, where the measurement of each motives, and the design pattern were transformed into the millimeter block for Karawo. The next process in this experimental research was the creation phase, where each design then embedded into the dress through the measurement, creating the basic pattern through practical and Mayneken methods. This process then followed up by adjusting the pattern according to the pattern of the design, making the Karawo Pattern, creating the design of the fabric, preparing the fabric, spreading, marking, cutting, bundling, creating the karawo embroidery, sewing with low speed manual machine, finishing, and the final touch process. The outcome of this research were fifteen design of dress with various creative, original, prospectus, and unique designs of Karawo. These designs would become the vocal point to promote the designs of Karawo, which would eventually improve the brand image of karawo and it would be useful in supporting the development of creative industry.

**Key words: Karawo, dress, decorative designs, and creative industry.**

### Introduction

Traditional fabrics created from various regions in Indonesia are not only Batik and Ikat. One of the fabrics from those regions is *Karawo* or *Karawang* from Gorontalo, Sulawesi. This fabric is one of the potential commodities of Gorontalo to be developed based on the *baseline economic survey (BLS)* conducted by Bank of Indonesia in 2006. The follow up survey on Identification of potentials and leading commodity cluster profile of Gorontalo province in 2009 revealed that the *karawo* embroidery is still one of the potential commodities to be developed.

*Karawo* is not a mass produced fabrics. Therefore, each of the fabrics has its own signature and uniqueness, which emphasized on the detail composition, the decorative designs, and the designs pattern used. *Karawo* also contains the elements of balance and harmony of color, shape, and size. Therefore, *karawo* is also categorized into high fashion. There are some creative innovations done in *karawo*. Today, there are some ready to wear karawo available. However, the motives are still general motives that can be easily associated with general motives of traditional fabrics across Indonesia.

There is no particularity in the decorative designs of *karawo* that reflects the tradition or local customs of Gorontalo. This research has succeeded in creating creative decorative design that applied in design of the clothes and has become the “spoke person” to conserve and to develop the local custom, so it can improve the brand image and the value of *karawo* in the market.

### Literature review

*Karawo* is traditional embroidery that has been passed for generations as Gorontalo’s women’s skill. *Karawo* was first identified in 1713 in Ayuladistrict in Gorontalo. The name *karawo* is derived from the word “*mokarawo*” which means, “slicing or punching”. This naming is suitable with the technique of making the *karawo* embroidery, in which, the thread fiber in the fabric will be sliced and punched by pulling out the thread in certain places of the fabric. This slicing and pulling out of the fabric will be adjusted to the size, motives, and shapes of the decorative design. Following the thread pulling process, the embroidery process is executed based on the decided motive.

As a whole, the technique of making *karawo* embroidery, from the creation of the motive to the embroidery process are still done manually. In the beginning, the outputs of *karawo* embroidery were small and simple pieces with the same color shade. In times, the *karawo* embroiderers have tried to produce the fabrics that are ready to be sewn and made from different kinds of fabrics especially for women. Many creative innovations have been continually evolving, where now *karawo* is used in many different functions such as fans, hand bags, purse, Muslims’ apparel, shirts, head covers, suits, even t-shirts that are made from various colorful motives. These innovations have helped the promotion of *karawo* and many people who visited Gorontalo have asked for *karawo* as souvenirs.

*Karawo* embroideries are usually made from oxford fabrics (for bed sheet and table cloth), belini fabrics for suit and t-shirt, and chiffon for women clothes. Other kinds of fabrics used for *karawo* embroidery are Santana, cotton mermaid, friendship, accura, and claudy. Even today, silk has been used as raw material for *karawo* to produce high quality embroidery. Threads, under neat fabrics, sponge, and fan handles. The tools used by the craftswomen are needle, razor blade, *pamedangan* (tool to strengthen and pull the fabric that will be embroidered), scissor and sewing machine.

### Research method

The principal method in this research was experimental method. The data in this research were data on customs and arts of Gorontalo that will be used as source of ideas, data on the current state of *karawo* embroidery in Gorontalo, and data on the prospect of *karawo* embroidery. The data in this research were collected through observation, literature review, and documentation. The research was conducted in four steps namely exploration, designing, visualization/materialization, and evaluation (Gustami, 2004).

### Results and discussion

The first step in this research was exploration on what would be used as source of ideas and inspiration to create the decorative designs; what would be needed to create the decorative designs; and how would the decorative designs shape.

In order to have answer for the inquiries above, observation focused on the traditional elements of arts and culture in Gorontalo was conducted by studying the relevant literatures and documentations, visiting the arts exhibition, as well as visiting the arts gallery, and gathering other relevant data and literatures.

This available data and documents were then analyzed to narrow down which ideas are more possible to be shaped into decorative designs. In this exploration phase, concepts and ideas on what would be the basis of decorative designs were selected and then visualized in the designing phase. In this designing phase, verbal ideas and concepts then translated into two-dimensional designs. Several aspects were considered when visualizing the decorative designs of *karawo* with its traditional local customs of Gorontalo in it into two-dimensional designs. First, the production aspects of materials used for the designs, which is the characteristics of the fabrics used as materials and embroidery technique of *karawo* implemented; second, esthetics aspect, which consists of shape and designs of the decorative designs; third, agronomical aspect that deals with safety and comfort; fourth, philosophical aspects, which is symbolism and message or meaning behind the designs; and the economic prospect or market opportunity for the products.

The designing phase was begun with the experimental design that is creating sketches of designs as pre-designs. From those sketches, the best sketches were chosen to be converted into detail pictures and size of the decorative designs. Pieces and detail of designs and pattern of the *karawo* then were drawn into millimeter block. Finally, the decorative designs then put together with the designs of the clothing that each has to match between the designs of the clothing and the decorative designs.

The materialization and evaluation phase was preceded by preparing the designs of projected clothing and decorative designs of *karawo* into the actual size, of the models and in centimeters.

To obtain the actual size, models were selected and measured, followed by the modification of the pattern, preparation of the fabrics (spreading, marking, cutting, bundling, and finishing).

## A. Preparing materials/fabrics and tools

### 1. Materials/fabrics

Each fabric has its own characteristics. Therefore, in selecting the fabrics, one should know what the fabrics for and who will be using that fabrics. As for the fabrics used in this *karawo* embroidery for this research purpose are plain woven fabrics or generally known as plain cross. Plain cross is the simplest cross in the double-sided surface. In this cross, the woof yarns cross above the warp yarns and then cross underneath the warp yarns etc. this cross can be stated in the formula of 1/1 meaning that one warp yarns is above one weft yarns etc. Because the cross between the woof and the warp yarns is mostly found in the plain cross, the fabric with plain cross is the sturdiest fabrics. Therefore, it is easier to add the decorative designs such as batik and embroidery to these kinds of fabrics. Some famous weavings with plain cross weave are muslin, mori, nainsook, voile, organdy, calico, etc.

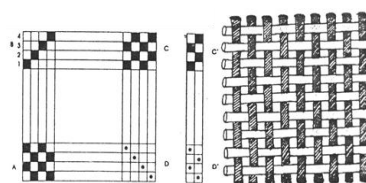


Figure 1. Scheme and design of plain weaving

Kinds of fabrics used in this research are:

- a. Main Fabrics: shantung fabrics, chiffon, velvet, flowery fabric, printed-chiffon, and prada fabric.
- b. additional fabric used in this research is the under neat fabrics. The under neat fabrics are fabrics that gives the neat and comfort feeling, as well as covers the area where the threads have been pulled out and the decorative designs are embroidered there. The under neat fabric is also helps the user to put it on and off. In addition to, that the under neat fabric also helps to strengthen the shape of the dress.



Additional materials used in this research are:

- 1) Underlining used to strengthen the hem of the clothes and the detail construction of the clothes, prevent stretching, and to reinforce the hem, as well as gives a vague impression of the body as this is *karawo*, where there are spaces between threads that might be too revealing for some people.
- 2) Interfacing used to strengthen and protect parts of clothes such as front part of the hem, the collar of the cloth, space between sleeves, and vents
- 3) Lining used to cover detailed construction and to help easing the process of putting on and taking off the clothes.
- 4) fashion garniture, used in this research is application of decoration that is being sewn or glued to the clothes, flower corsage, ribbons, tassel to hang the threads and to emphasize the designs, and some beads.

## 2. Tools

Some tools in this research are:

- a. *Karawo* tools such as needle, razor blade, and pamedangan (frame to stretch the fabrics that will be embroidered), and scissor.
- b. Tools to create the pattern such as as, pattern ruler, scale, centimeter, 2B pencil, red and blue pencil, eraser, scissor, and pencil sharpener.
- c. Sewing kit such as, hand needle, machine needle, pins, fabric scissor, threads scissor, seam ripper, tracing paper, fabric marker, and sewing machine.

## B. Selecting and measuring the model

There were 15 models in this research to model 15-designed dress. All models were females.

The standard height for all models was at least 160 Cms with proportional weight. Following the selection of this model was the measurement of all models to fit the designed dress.

## C. selection and modification of dress pattern

In tailor made dress, the pattern of each dress is fitted to the style and size that has been previously prepared.

1. The basic pattern is the pattern that has been measured against the size of the model and has not been modified according to the design of the dress. There are some methods in creating this basic pattern, but for the purpose of this research practical basic pattern and Mayneken basic pattern were used.

2. Adapting the pattern to the design of the dress

3. fabrics/material design

Fabrics/material design was created to ensure the amount of fabrics needed to create the dress for each model. The fabric design was usually created in the scale 1:4, but for the purpose of this research, the scale was 1:6 due to the data would be presented in the A4 sized papers.

The length and width of the fabrics were also considered when designing the fabrics; and whether the fabrics have had been properly arranged were also important.

4. Inventing the karawo pattern

In this research, the karawo pattern would be made in the actual size, which is in centimeter size.

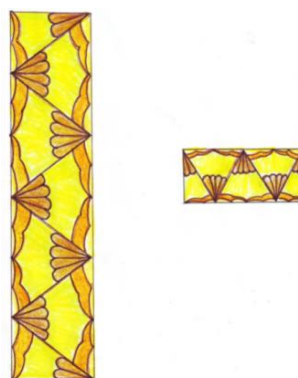


Figure 2. Pangge decorative design

#### D. Spreading, Marking, Cutting and Bundling

During the preparation and cutting stage of the fabrics for tailor made dress, the fabrics were spread, then the pattern were put on top of the fabric. Next the fabric is marked according to the pattern, and finally the fabrics were cut based on the marking.

##### 1. Spreading

Spreading is a process to spread the fabrics layer by layer to create stacks of needed fabrics.

##### 2. Marking

Marking is a process to mark the pattern on to the fabric as desired.

##### 3. Cutting

Cutting is the process to cut the fabric according to the marked pattern.

##### 4. Bundling

Bundling is a process to put together part of dress according to the pieces of dress that have been cut. Each part of the dress is marked with information such as, pocket, hem, sleeves etc.

#### E. sewing process

The sewing process uses the manual sewing machine or low speed sewing machine so it takes longer time to complete. The low speed sewing machine is used due there are parts of the dress that too complicated that cannot be finished using the high-speed machine.

#### F. process of creating karawo embroidery

The karawo technique used in this research was karawo manila technique, in which the embroidery threads are filled repeatedly for five times according to the decorative designs that have previously made.



Figure 3. Karawo process

Technically, the *karawo* manila is easier technique compared to other *karawo* techniques. This is due to the *karawo* manila was only sewn using puncturing basting technique. This technique is chosen due to the limited research time.

#### G. Finishing process

The finishing process is the final touch process to make the dress neater and perfect. Creating the buttonholes and buttoning are among some activities in this final touch process. All the processes in this final touch are manually done, including ironing, folding, and packing.

#### H. Fitting

Fitting process is the final process to adjust the dress with the model shape. Mistakes in the creation of patterns and the sewing process would be revealed in this fitting stage.

#### I. Application of decorative designs of *Karawo* in the dress.



Figure 4. Prototype of the research outcome

#### Conclusion and Recommendations

The researcher has tried to rewrite and reintroduce the identity of Gorontalo's customs and culture through the decorative designs of *karawo*. These designs are visual art, which have some potentials to be published and developed for the public consumption. This research can be a new beginning for the creation of decorative designs of *karawo*. The ideas in this research were stimulated by

the current phenomena in Gorontalo where the young generation have seem to be disconnected from their culture. Therefore, an immediate action to reconnect the generation with their culture is needed. Another idea on the creation of these decorative designs of *karawo* has also come from the traditional wedding ceremony and the ancient structures in Gorontalo.

The outcomes of this research are, 15 dresses with 15 decorative designs of *karawo* with each of their signature on Gorontalo's custom and culture. The activities in this research are well documented and fully supported by maestro of *karawo*. The ideas for the decorative designs were based on clear-cut source and inspiration, which is the traditional customs and culture of Gorontalo. This is important for the originality of the product and this product also has opportunity to get the patent.

Therefore, the result of this research is expected to support the creative industry in Gorontalo because the product is visual art product. In turn, the product of this research is expected to improve the brand image of *karawo*.

The following suggestions are made in order to improve the role of this research product to the community:

1. Based on the researcher's experience, it was difficult to find data and information on the arts and customs of Gorontalo, therefore, a center for Gorontalo's culture is needed to be built.
2. Development of craftsmanship in Gorontalo should be based on the local elements of arts and culture of Gorontalo, therefore, the products will automatically bear the identity of local arts, customs and culture to distinguish the products from other products and to enable the products to compete in national and international market.
3. To improve the brand image of *karawo*, revitalization of decorative designs, which based on the local values and identity of Gorontalo people, is

needed. This is also for preserving the culture of Gorontalo itself.

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