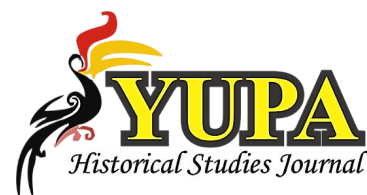


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Traces of Social History in Batu Bara Songket Traditional Crafts in Batubara Regency, North Sumatra Province

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Abstract *This study aims to describe the traces of social history in the traditional craft of Batubara songket in Batubara Regency. Songket Batu Bara woven fabric continues to evolve with the times, songket has even become a popular choice for traditional Malay wedding attire, especially in Batu Bara regency. This study uses a descriptive qualitative research method. Data collection was carried out by observation, document analysis, interviews, and literature studies. Qualitative descriptive data analysis techniques were used in this study. The results of this study indicate that the Batu Bara Malay songket woven fabric is a traditional woven fabric that has become a cultural heritage for the Batu Bara people. Batu Bara Malay Songket was already known during the reign of the Batu Bara Sultanate. The functions of the Malay Batu Bara woven songket include, as a reinforcement of identity, an expression of love, to maintaining the continuity and stability of Malay culture, when someone wears a Malay songket, they are already carrying out the function of the Malay songket woven fabric and also developing culture.*

Keywords: Social History, Songket Batu Bara, Malay, Woven Fabric

Abstrak Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan jejak sejarah sosial dalam kerajinan tradisional songket Batubara di Kabupaten Batubara. Kain Tenun Songket Batu Bara terus berkembang mengikuti perkembangan zaman, bahkan songket menjadi pilihan populer untuk busana adat perkawinan Melayu, khususnya di Kabupaten Batu Bara. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode penelitian kualitatif deskriptif. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan observasi, analisis dokumen, wawancara, dan studi literatur. Teknik analisis data deskriptif kualitatif digunakan dalam penelitian ini. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan, bahwa Kain tenun songket Melayu Batu Bara merupakan kain tenun tradisional yang sudah menjadi warisan budaya bagi masyarakat Batu Bara. Songket Melayu Batu Bara sudah mulai dikenal pada masa pemerintahan Kesultanan Batu Bara. Fungsi dari kain tenun songket Melayu Batu Bara di antaranya ialah, sebagai penguat identitas, ungkapan rasa cinta, hingga penjaga kontinuitas dan stabilitas budaya melayu, ketika seseorang memakai kain songket Melayu maka ia sudah menjalankan fungsi dari kain tenun songket Melayu dan juga mengembangkan budaya.

Kata kunci : Sejarah Sosial, Songket Batubara, Melayu, Kain Tenun



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INTRODUCTION

Batu Bara is one of the regencies resulting from the division of Asahan Regency. The population of Batu Bara Regency is dominated by ethnic Javanese and Malay people. Malay itself comes from the word "mala" which means beginning and "yu" which means country. The Malay word in Tamil means high ground or hill. Another opinion states that Malay comes from the term "malay" which means rain (Budiawan, 2021). One of the cultures of the Malay people is songket weaving (Guslinda et al., 2020). Songket woven fabric is an artefact in culture that acts as one of the ethnic identities, especially for the Malay community, which is one of the largest ethnic groups in the world whose distribution covers the ASEAN region (Zhang et al., 2018). Formerly in the Batu Bara regency, songket was only worn by the nobility and the families of the king's relatives and big people of the country. However, as time goes by, songket is now also used by ordinary people regardless of position or level in terms of usage. Legino (2012) stated that the word songket comes from the word sungkit, which means to pry or pry the thread, while Nabholz-Kartaschoff (2008) stated that songket is a cloth woven using gold or silver threads connected by the process of prying warp threads and making ornaments. Songket is a type of traditional woven cloth originating from Indonesia and Malaysia. Songket is a Malay cultural heritage, woven by Malays and worn by Malays (Mee, 2010).



Figure 1. Map of Batu Bara Regency (Pemerintah Daerah Kabupaten Batu Bara, 2019)

Batu Bara's songket woven fabric continues to evolve with the times, songket has even become a popular choice for traditional Malay wedding attire, especially in Batu Bara regency. Usually songket is given by the groom to the bride as one of the wedding offerings (Maryani, 2020). Until now, the Batu Bara Malay songket woven fabric has been preserved and developed, but behind the existence of this Batu Bara Malay songket, many people and also young people do not know how the history of the emergence and development of the songket. The community also does not know the motives and functions of the Malay songket woven fabric (Mohlman, 2023). Songket Batu Bara is the same as other types of songket, which is made using the hoe technique, by gouging or hooking.

Batu Bara Regency is one of the regencies in the eastern part of North Sumatra Province, a division of the Asahan regency. This regency was inaugurated in 2007, located on the coast of the Malacca Strait, about 175 km south of the capital city of Medan (Daulay & Ilham Saladin, 2018). The population is dominated by ethnic Malays, followed by Javanese and Batak people.



Figure 2. Songket Weaving uses Traditional tools in Batu Bara Regency (Batubara, 2021)

Songket Batu Bara has various attractive bright color combinations, such as blue, red, green, orange, purple etc. Songket Batu Bara is lighter in weight than ulos. Now the Batu Bara songket craftsmen receive orders from foreign countries, especially Malaysia, Brunei and Singapore. The appeal of this songket cloth is from the unique pattern, color and fabric material. This craft has been passed down from generation to generation from their parents (Putra & Kahdar, 2013).

Songket Batu Bara has good quality fabric because it uses selected threads such as silk, polyester, gold and silver. The Batubara songket has a variety of motifs, such as Shoots of Bamboo Shoots (*Pucuk Rebung*), Mangosteen Flowers (*Bunga Manggis*), Cempaka Flowers (*Bunga Cempaka*), Shoots of Caul (*Pucuk Caul*), Reject *Betikam* (*Tolak Betikam*), to the Fighting Dragon (Naga Berjuang). The advantage of this songket is light and does not fade, so it is more comfortable to wear. Batu Bara Malay Songket is one of the handicrafts in Batu Bara Regency. Apart from being one of the regional cultural identities, it turns out that songket can also be a livelihood for songket craftsmen. However, in the midst of economic competition and the role of a handful of people, songket craftsmen do not experience a significant financial impact from the results of the songket economically (Maswita, 2022).

Songket woven cloth is a formal cloth that is quite luxurious and is part of the art craft. The manufacturing process requires quite high skill and perseverance. In the 16th century songket was the official dress of those in the palace, and even became the main equipment in traditional ceremonies (Nugraha & Kartini, 2018). In connection with the history of the Batu Bara Malay songket woven fabric, there are several sources which say that during the period of the sultanate, kings from the northern part of Sumatra used to wear silk clothes. However, these clothes are thought to be imported goods from China. At the same time, woven fabrics made of

cotton appeared on the mainland of Sumatra, Java and Bali, these three areas grew very fertile cotton plants, where the cotton could produce yarn. Basically, woven fabrics with songket woven fabrics have differences.

Songket woven fabrics are generally made using gold and silver threads, this is why not all ethnic groups or communities can make songket woven fabrics (Anjani, 2021). Songket woven fabrics usually come from areas that have access to foreign nations or traders from outside. For weaving skills, not all people have them, only teenage girls who live in coastal areas have weaving skills. At that time skill in weaving was also possessed by young women of noble descent. This was because it was difficult for the people to get gold and silver threads as decorative patterns in songket, while the aristocrats at that time easily got them through relations with outside traders (Jufrida, 2018).

Songket is a traditional regional weaving that is spread in various regions and is developing in almost all parts of Indonesia (Pebryani et al., 2022). Each region has its own distinctive features and patterns. This happens because each community group that inhabits an area has different resources and environment so that each group experiences different developments. One of the songket-producing areas is Batu Bara Regency, North Sumatra province.

Batu Bara woven products have very important functions and roles in life, both economic functions and roles in the family as well as functions and roles in people's lives (Windari & Thamrin, 2019). In essence, the main livelihood of the Pahang villagers is farming and fishing which is dominated by the head of the family. Work as a craftsman is a job dominated by women, namely girls and housewives (Permatasari et al., 2022). Thus weaving work is the main livelihood for some women and a side livelihood for some other craftsmen. After the development of the variety and function of Batu Bara's traditional woven fabrics with efforts to modify the woven products into men's and women's fabrics (mini jackets), tablecloths, various wall hangings, curtains and so on.

So the creativity of craftsmen is highly demanded to be able to align their knowledge and skills with consumer tastes (Manfredi Latilla et al., 2019). On the other hand, with the preservation of the traditional craft of Batu Bara songket cloth, the names, functions, motifs and terms of traditional Batu Bara weaving equipment/equipment are also preserved, along with their results. Based on the explanation above, this research aims to describe the social history traces in the traditional songket Batu Bara craft in Batubara Regency, North Sumatra Province.

METHOD

This study uses a descriptive qualitative research method. Qualitative research is research that places more emphasis on observing the phenomenon of social historical traces in the traditional Batu Bara songket craft and requires sharp instincts from researchers.

Qualitative research usually studies the relationship or interaction between several research variables, in this context social history and Batu Bara songket traditional crafts with the aim of understanding the events being studied and usually researching case studies on a certain theoretical basis (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Data collection was carried out by observation, document analysis, interviews, and literature studies. Qualitative descriptive data analysis techniques were used in this study. In qualitative research, the problem formulation is usually taken from the case studies to be studied (Sugiyono, 2017). There are several qualitative data collection techniques, including through interviews, questionnaires or direct observation (Polkinghorne, 2010). Descriptive data analysis techniques in this qualitative research are in the form of analyzing, describing and summarizing events or phenomena from data obtained through interviews or direct field observations. The purpose of the qualitative descriptive analysis is to fully and in-depth describe the Batu Bara songket and the social history of the songket itself.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A Brief History of Songket Batu Bara

With regard to songket from Batu Bara, some sources say that the king from the northern part of Sumatra already wore silk clothes. But it is estimated that these clothes are still imported goods from abroad, namely China. In the same decade, woven fabrics made of cotton appeared on the mainland of Sumatra, Java and Bali. Because these three places can thrive cotton plants that produce yarn.

In contrast to ordinary weaving, generally songket weaving uses gold or silver thread, so not all tribes or people make songket weaving. In general, songket weaving comes from areas that have access to foreign nations or traders (Mohamed, 1995), so it is not surprising that some of the skills in songket weaving are owned by teenagers who are in coastal areas. In the past, the ability to weave was only possessed by young women of noble descent. This is because it is difficult for them to get cotton thread, gold thread, silver thread as decorative patterns in songket. It was generally easy for nobles to obtain it through the relations of outside traders, because at that time gold and silver threads were only found in Penang (Malaysia) originating from India.

A story says that Datuk Yuda, as a ruler on the east coast of Sumatra (the Batu Bara sultanate), was also a wealthy merchant who carried out trading activities abroad in Penang. Through this trade, it was not difficult for his daughters to get the materials they needed. The occurrence of this relationship between fellow Malays also caused the technique of making, style, or decoration of the Batu Bara songket to have similarities with the Malaysian songket. This similarity causes many people on the east coast of Sumatra to use songket from Malaysia.

Another source states that Datuk Yuda, who was the king of the Batu Bara Sultanate who was also a wealthy merchant, established trade relations outside Penang. It was through this trade that his daughters easily obtained gold and silver thread for songket weaving needs. Based on a written source entitled *Mission to the East Coast of Sumatra 1823*, written by Anderson, it is estimated that the Batu Bara Malay songket already existed at that time. Anderson was a British envoy visiting East Sumatra, including Batu Bara (Sadalia et al., 2019). He recorded all his activities during his visit to the area. At this time, from 30 December 1822 to 5 April 1823, his entourage was accompanied by a delegation from the Kingdom of Deli, namely Syahbandar Ahmud, who visited Batu Bara and described the existence of Malay clothing in the Batu Bara area.

Historical evidence that supports the existence of the Batu Bara songket, among others, is Anderson's statement during his journey in 1823 (Jufrida, 2018), "Many Batu Bara people became captains along the coast of East Sumatra, from Deli to Asahan, which numbered no less than 600 boats/barges. The bodies of the Batu Bara people are straight/strong, they are experts in the craft of weaving.

Songket Batu Bara is used by the Malay community along the east coast of Sumatra (Damanik et al., 2021). In the past, every layer of society used songket with different colors and decorations, depending on the social conditions of the wearer, such as royalty, soldiers, or people with high socio-economic levels or ordinary people. Yellow songket may only be used by nobles such as sultans and tengku. The green color was used by the progenitors, the blue color was only used by the wealthy, and the red color was for the soldiers. While ordinary people may wear other than these colors.

Apart from color, motifs also play a very important role for the wearer, because through motifs one can identify one's social status (Gani & Daulay, 2021). Before the social revolution occurred on the east coast of Sumatra, the Malay sultans often used songket with dragon snake motifs, which at that time became a source of pride. This motif fills the songket section which is often used as a sarong. After the revolution when the Malay sultans joined the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, the songket with the dragon snake motif never appeared again. This is not a prohibition for the Malay sultans to wear it, but due to the difficulty of making and working with such motifs. In addition, only a few people can work on the dragon motif, so now this motif is not made or even never existed again.

Oral Traditions History of Batu Bara Songket

According to one of the songket craftsmen, this coal songket has existed since ancient times, which is marked by the existence of a legend that tells about the origin of the coal songket. This is a story about a king who had not had children for a long time, after all this time the empress finally got pregnant too. The king who liked to hunt one day went hunting, before

leaving the king advised the empress that if later the child was born a girl, then the baby must be killed. While hunting the king got lost in the forest until finally the empress gave birth to a baby girl. The Empress who received the order to kill her baby could not afford to do it. Finally the empress slaughtered a goat and buried it under the palace steps. While the baby she gave birth to was thrown away by the ladies in a forest.

One day the king came home, and the queen told him that her child was a woman and had been killed according to the king's orders. One day while giving food to his pet crows, one of the crows told him the truth. And the king also expects the truth from the empress. Finally the empress told the truth. So the king ordered his maid to fetch him back. During the period of exile, the abandoned princess turned out to fill her days with weaving, because around her grew cotton trees which she spun into yarn and used for weaving. When the lady-in-waiting met the princess and asked her to come home, the daughter refused and would go home when her weaving was finished. Finally the princess returned to the palace while hiding her woven cloth in her bun. The king who was waiting for him instead shot him so that the princess died. When he fell due to an arrow, the woven cloth fell from the princess's bun. The king was sorry and remembered his daughter that all the looms in the forest were brought to the palace to be continued. Until finally the weaving continues to grow until now. That is a glimpse of the legend that tells about the coal songket (Direktorat Warisan dan Diplomasi Budaya, 2016).

Songket Batu Bara Motif

Songket Batu Bara is one of the handicrafts created by the Batu Bara community (Qorib, 2015). The cloth craft is the result of culture that has been passed down from generation to generation and still exists today. The characteristics of a community in developing their skills reflect their own characteristics in each region, one of which can be seen in the songket cloth crafts in Batu Bara. Songket or songket cloth is the result of weaving threads to produce cloth. The cloth from this weaving is called 8 songket (Prastiwi et al., 2014). Starting from the word *mengungkit* which means to embroider with gold thread in the Big Indonesian Dictionary. Songket is a very beautiful art. Songket, a type of traditional woven cloth, is found in the Malay ethnic groups of Riau, Palembang, Minangkabau, Bali, and almost throughout the archipelago. Not only in Indonesia, they are also famous abroad, such as in Malaysia and Brunei. Songket is woven using gold or silver thread and is generally worn on formal occasions. Lustrous threads woven against the back of the fabric create a brilliant sheen effect. Songket has traditional motifs that are characteristic of the culture of this craft-producing region (Takari & Fadlin, 2016).

The motif of the Batu Bara Malay songket woven cloth The Batu Bara Malay songket cloth is used by the Malay community along the East Coast of Sumatra. In the past, people used different songkets, depending on the social conditions of the people who wore them. At that

time, the yellow songket cloth was only used by sultans and tengku, the green color was worn by datuks, the blue color was worn by wealthy people, and the red color was worn by soldiers, while ordinary people were only allowed to use songket colors other than these colors (Jufrida, 2018). The motifs and patterns used are also different. The following are the various types of motifs used in the Batu Bara Malay songket woven fabric, namely:

First, motif *Pucuk Rebung* (Bamboo shoots motif). According to Mrs. RN (head of the songket weavers at Batu Bara), the bamboo shoots motif is the inspiration for the weavers because many bamboo shoots grow in the Batu Bara area, besides this bamboo shoots motif has its own meaning and philosophy. Shoots of bamboo shoots mean the smallest part of the bamboo shoots, similar to educating children, we must educate them from childhood. Then the shoots of this bamboo shoot have nine and also fine thorns that cannot be touched just like that, this means that educating children must be careful, not to be arbitrary to children and so on. In detail, the shoots of bamboo shoots have the meaning of how parents play an important role in educating children. If parents want to educate children well, then they should be wise and wise, such as setting a good example, giving advice so that children can imitate the actions and behavior of their parents, and parents should be wise in educating their children, so that the child is also wise in to live.

Second, motif *Pucuk Betikam* (*Betikam* shoots motif). *Betikam* shoots are almost the same as the bamboo shoots motif. The difference lies in the motifs that face each other. Initially, the *betikam* shoots were also inspired by the bamboo shoots motif. As with bamboo shoots, *betikam* shoots also have their own meaning and philosophy. If bamboo shoots mean how to educate children, then the meaning of *betikam* shoots means kinship. In the family, it is expected that each member has the attitude of helping each other and also mutually reinforcing one another, being open when there are problems and other things.

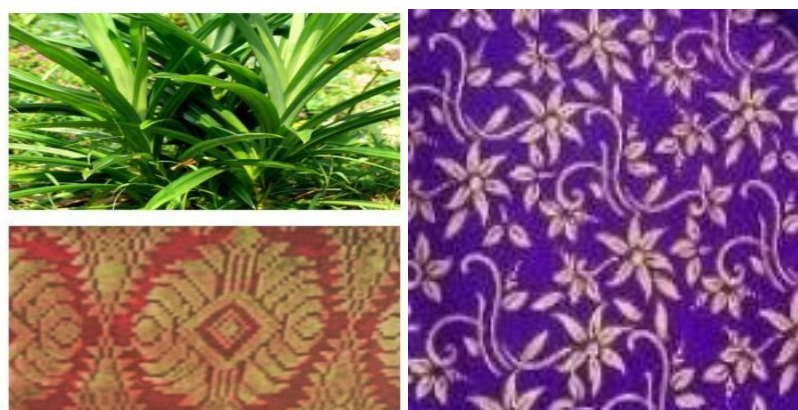


Figure 3. Motif Pucuk Pandan Figure & Bunga Kenanga

Third, motif *Pucuk Pandan* (*Pandan* Shoots Motif). One of the meanings and philosophies taken from the *pandan* leaf motif on the Malay songket woven fabric is the benefits that exist in *pandan* leaves. In addition to these plants growing in the yards of the Batu Bara people, they are

widely used as food ingredients, food fragrances, coloring and are also materials that are always used for bathing with the intention of welcoming the fasting month for the Batu Bara people.

Fourth, *motif Bunga Kenanga* (Kenanga Flower Motif). The *kenanga* flower motif has a philosophy that is almost the same as the *pandan* leaf motif, it's just that this motif is more towards being gentle, kind and likes to spread kindness to others. Because the fragrance is so fragrant and is often used as an ingredient in perfume making, this *kenanga* floral motif can be interpreted as a person's attitude to always make the family's name proud through a good attitude.



Figure 4. *Motif Bunga Mawar & Bunga Anggrek*

Fifth, *motif Bunga Mawar* (Rose Flower Motif). This one motif certainly has a meaning that is quite unique. Roses are usually symbolized by liking, love, romantic expressions and so on. However, the meaning of love and affection is not only manifested for a lover, but for family and friends. Sixth, *motif Bunga Anggrek* (Orchid Flower Motif). Orchid flowers have a meaning about the process and journey of one's life. Orchid is not an easy plant to live and grow, it takes patience and perseverance in caring for it. This means that in living this life, nothing is instant, everything requires patience and perseverance.

Functions of Batu Bara Malay Songket Woven Cloth

Songket functions as a guardian of the continuity and stability of Malay culture. Songket is seen as part of Malay cultural identity or identity. A Malay who wears songket in a traditional ceremony will be legalized as a Malay who performs and lives Malay culture (Marianti & Istiharini, 2014). By wearing songket, he is seen as helping to maintain the continuity and stability of Malay culture, which will never disappear on earth. The continuity and stability of Malay culture are also supported by Malay people, who among their activities are wearing Malay clothing. Songket is seen as the main core of Malay culture, including those of Batu Bara. Songket also functions as an expression of the aesthetic system of Malay culture (Wati, 2021). Through songket beauty is emitted in the form of motifs, colors, thread quality, and other aspects of beauty. This beauty is an expression of Malay artists, especially songket weavers and designers, which are also passed down from generation to generation. The beauty in songket is also expressed through colors. Generally color is communicated to everyone. Another function

of songket is as a vehicle for integration and entry of someone who is not Malay to become Malay. In Malaysia, a Malay is considered as an ethnic group as well as a nation.

In North Sumatra, the Malays are seen as ethnic groups, and people who are Muslims. Entering Malay means converting to Islam. When someone who is not Muslim then converts to Islam, and becomes a Malay. So he will follow Malay customs, including wearing Malay clothes in certain contexts. By wearing Malay clothing, including the use of songket, he is considered part of the Malay community and part of the Islamic community at the same time. Another function of songket weaving is to reinforce Malay identity. It has become a common norm in the Malay community in every traditional ceremony such as marriage, circumcision of the Prophet, traditional festivities and others, spontaneously he will wear his traditional clothes, which usually also use songket. Songket is worn as a shawl, cloth, tengkuluk, headband, side cloth and others.

By using this songket, it means that a Malay person strengthens Malay cultural identity. Another function of songket is as an expression of love. This expression of love may be in a broad sense, or a narrow sense. Humans living in the world are given the pleasure to share love with all creatures in the world. In a more specific sense, a person will choose his soul mate as a life partner who is definitely expected to coexist eternally as husband and wife. A Malay man in expressing his love often gives a songket to his female idol as a feeling of love, affection and affection. Likewise, when heading to the aisle, often a man gives a gift in the form of a set of wedding clothes and jewelry, including songket. In such a context, songket functions as an expression of love from a lover to his partner. Its further function is to continue human descent in this world so that it is eternal and maintains Malay culture (Takari & Fadlin, 2016).

If it is dug in depth, it turns out that the Malay community in Batu Bara regency, especially songket craftsmen, can be disciplined. The myth that weaving at night is not good and brings bad luck can they be obeyed and implemented, this should be utilized by songket entrepreneurs by improving better procedures and more measurable management by making Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) that can causing discipline to songket craftsmen so that songket craftsmen work according to procedures and discipline and obey the rules in their work as they comply with the myth which states that weaving songket at night is bad luck. Basically, discipline is an important thing to maintain in a company as well as in the songket weaving business in Batu Bara regency.

The process of making tools, making cloth to marketing songket cloth provides a separate education for songket weavers. One example of songket weaving is that not just anyone can learn it because they have certain difficulties in weaving Batu Bara Malay songket. Based on the story of the local community, there is a mythology that is believed by the community that the knowledge of songket weaving is very difficult to teach and pass on to

others outside Padang Genting Village, Talawi District, Batu Bara Regency, North Sumatra Province. Meanwhile, if it is taught or passed down to the local community, it will be easier to understand and master the knowledge of songket weaving. This was proven when a training was held by the Langkat regency government to train several people from Langkat Regency to learn songket weaving in the Batu Bara regency. It turned out that after three months of training, they still had difficulty understanding and mastering, some even didn't understand at all. about the science of weaving Batu Bara Malay songket cloth.

This condition is very different if it is carried out in the local community. When training was held for the local community, it was very easy for the local community to understand and master the knowledge of songket weaving. In fact, not only with direct practice training, in fact by just seeing it they already understand and understand the art of weaving Batu Bara Malay songket cloth. The community believes that the knowledge of songket weaving has flowed within them so that by just observing a few times they will understand and be smarter than people outside the Padang Genting Village area.

There is a clear difference between the past and present, in fact there have been many changes that have made it easier for songket craftsmen to produce songket cloth. The changes that occur in the manufacturing process and the results obtained from songket weaving in the present compared to the past did not occur in a period of one or two days, it underwent a process that took a long time to produce quality songket as it is today. However, the process of change that occurs in the quality and process of making songket cloth will not last long because the patterns that occur in the Batu Bara songket weaving craftsmen community in running the songket business still experience some weaknesses. This pattern has been going on for a long time and is still being maintained today so that gradually it will have an impact on the development of the Batu Bara songket business. Basically, the development of the songket cloth business can be classified into two patterns, namely modern patterns and traditional patterns.

The two patterns are modern patterns and traditional patterns. The pattern that until now has been used by the songket business community in Batu Bara regency still tends to use traditional patterns. This is what causes weaknesses in developing the Batu Bara songket business, so there is a need for a model for developing an up-to-date songket business without abandoning the local wisdom that exists in this Malay songket weaving culture (Sriani et al., 2022).



Figure 5. *Okik* Being Used (Mulyani & Sitinjak, 2019)

The songket craftsmen in Batu Bara Regency are still using *okik* looms. This tool is a traditional loom, which at the end is attached to a tree/house pole or to a board that stretches with a certain construction and thus has the function of weaving cloth. Apart from *okik*, it turns out that there is also another loom used by the Batu Bara community, namely *Alat Tenun Bukan Mesin* (ATBM, Non-Machine Looms). However, this ATBM is still few in use because it has an expensive price. Apart from the relatively high price compared to *okik*, it turns out that ATBM has a weakness in the process of incorporating motifs into songket cloth, so that songket craftsmen return to using *okik* as a tool for weaving songket cloth (Sazali et al., 2022).



Figure 6. *Alat Tenun Bukan Mesin* (Non-Machine Looms)

If a comparison is made with regions that also have songket weaving craft businesses, for example Wajo Regency, the looms in Wajo district, especially weavers in Wajo Regency, in their production activities use three types of looms, namely the gedogan loom, Non-Machine Looms (ATBM) and Machine Looms (ATM, *Alat Tenun Mesin*) (Hidayat et al., 2021). In 1951 there was a revolution in the use of looms among the Bugis community in general and the Wajo community in particular. This is indicated by the use of Non-Machine Weaving Tools (ATBM) in weaving activities. Wajo is one of the areas in South Sulawesi Province which first used non-machine looms. The ATBM was brought to Wajo by two friends, namely Akil Amin and Ibrahim Daeng Manrapi. Both of them are inter-island traders who often go back and forth Makassar-Surabaya.

Entering the beginning of 2004, there was a modernization of weaving equipment. This was marked by the entry of a Machine Weaving Tool (ATM) purchased by a weaving entrepreneur from Wajo named Haji Arifuddin from a weaving entrepreneur in Majalaya, West Java. From the explanation above, it turns out that Wajo district is far more advanced in the use of looms so that the weaving community in Batu Bara regency must improve and modernize their looms. For this reason, in terms of the looms used by the Batu Bara songket weaving craftsmen, a change in the model for using the loom should be made, namely the use of traditional tools to switch to modern looms. This modern loom is in the form of a special loom that is able to increase the quantity of production and support the economy of the artisan community.

CONCLUSION

From some of the descriptions put forward, the hope to be conveyed is that the Malay community, especially the Coal Malays, will continue to protect and preserve songket weaving from extinction. Because songket weaving is one of the assets in Indonesian cultural treasures. The Batu Bara Malay songket woven fabric is a traditional woven cloth that has become a cultural heritage for the Batu Bara people. Batu Bara Malay Songket was already known during the reign of the Batu Bara Sultanate. Songket is a traditional regional weaving that is spread in various regions and is developing in almost all parts of Indonesia. Each region has its own characteristics and style. This happens because each community group inhabits an area that has different sources and environment so that each community experiences different developments. The motifs used in the Batu Bara Malay songket woven fabric are also very diverse, but basically the motifs they use are floral or plant motifs. The functions of the Malay Batu Bara woven songket include, as a reinforcement of identity, an expression of love, to maintaining the continuity and stability of Malay culture, when someone wears a Malay songket, they are already carrying out the function of the Malay songket woven fabric and also developing culture.

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