

DESIGNING AN ARTBOOK OF RATU KALINYAMAT'S STORY AS A VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF HISTORICAL STRUGGLES

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Abstract

Indonesia, as a country with a rich historical and cultural heritage, has many essential figures whose roles have not been fully documented visually. One of them is Ratu Kalinyamat, a 16th-century female leader renowned for her bravery, wisdom, and determination, as well as her efforts to uphold the sovereignty of Nusantara. The lack of visual representation of this figure in popular media serves as the main background for the design of the art book about Ratu Kalinyamat's story. The creative process involves observation, literature studies, and interviews, resulting in a visual concept that combines narrative illustrations, colour palettes, typography, and layouts that support the storyline. This art book presents eight main scenes from the queen's life journey, ranging from her background and leadership period to her struggles against colonialism, aiming to serve as both a historical educational medium and a means of appreciating visual art.

Keywords: Ratu Kalinyamat, Artbook, Visual Representation

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a country with a rich history and is home to many heroic figures who have played a significant role in shaping the national identity. These heroes serve as role models who are brave, willing to sacrifice, and have made important contributions not only to individuals or specific groups but also to tribes, nations, and the country. Indonesia's independence was achieved through its relentless struggle, as the nation willingly sacrificed its lives to fight against colonizers, demonstrating extraordinary courage for the nation's freedom (Santoso et al., 2023).

Throughout the history of the Archipelago, various regions have made significant contributions to the nation's social, economic, and cultural development. One of these regions is Jepara, a district located on the northern coast of Central Java, which has played a significant role in the maritime trade history of the Nusantara. Jepara is known as a region rich in natural resources as well as human resources, with a strategic position on the shores of the Java Sea that made it an important trading centre in the 16th century (Hardian, 2023). At that time, Jepara was an influential city that played a crucial role in the economy and became one of the largest trading centers in Java. The existence of Jepara as a significant port attracted many immigrants from various countries to settle in the area. (Anisa, 2020).

As one of the economic centers in the past, Jepara played a role in connecting the Archipelago with the outside world, including Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and Europe (Supriyono, 2013). In addition to being a trading centre, Jepara developed into a centre of high-value carving art. Under the leadership of Ratu Kalinyamat, Jepara not only experienced economic and political progress but also developed into a cultural art centre, particularly in wood carving, which remains a defining aspect of the region's identity. The progress of Jepara at that time was supported by its strategic location and a strong naval fleet (Juwariyah, 2017).

In her time, Ratu Kalinyamat was known as a brave leader. Portuguese sources refer to her as *De Krainige Dame*, which means "the brave woman", while the Portuguese writer Diego de Cauto in *Da Asia* calls her *Rainha de Japara, Senhora Paderosa e Rica*, meaning "the wealthy and powerful queen of Jepara" (Anisa, 2020). During her three decades of leadership, she brought Jepara to the peak of its glory.

Ratu Kalinyamat descended from the lineage of the Sultanate of Demak, the first Islamic kingdom in Java, established by Raden Patah, the son of Kartawijaya (Brawijaya V), the last king of Majapahit, and a Chinese princess (Wardani et al., 2021). Her father, Sultan Trenggono, ruled from 1504 to 1546 and played a significant role in the spread of Islam in Java as well as in political expansion to the coastal areas (Jayanti, 2022). Ratu Kalinyamat inherited the spirit of patriotism, anti-colonialism, and firmness from this lineage (Pontian, 2017). Her realm, Kalinyamat, is located about 18 kilometres from the centre of Jepara, and in the 16th century, it became the centre of government for the rulers of Jepara (Chusnul, 2010).

Although she played a significant role in the history of Jepara and the archipelago, the visual representation of Ratu Kalinyamat is still very limited. Most studies discussing her are more focused on her leadership history and role, as researched by (Rizqillah, 2023), (Anisa, 2020), and (Pontian, 2017), without presenting many visual forms that the younger generation can accept. Visual media has great potential in reviving her stories of leadership and struggle.

The final result of the design aims to produce an illustration packaged in the form of an art book focusing on the figure of Ratu Kalinyamat to revive stories, struggles, and values of patriotism from the past through an attractive visual presentation, so that young generations can better recognize and be inspired by the noble values she has inherited. Artbooks are chosen as a medium because they can deeply integrate visual and narrative elements and are favored by various groups, as supported by a survey (Keytimu et al., 2023) conducted among elementary school children, which found that 56% of the children preferred artbooks, while the remaining 44% tended to prefer pop-up books. This finding offers fascinating insights into children's visual literacy preferences, with artbook emerging as the more favored choice.

This work will eventually be available in both physical and digital formats (e-book) to expand accessibility, with an artistic interpretation approach based on historical sources and the context of the struggle, rather than a reconstruction of the original scenes. The depiction of the figure of Ratu Kalinyamat through visual media, such as an art book, can be an effective means to reintroduce the values of struggle, patriotism, and leadership to the younger generation. Modern visualization, packaged with an artistic approach, can convey historical messages in a more engaging and easily understandable way. Based on the description, the theme of the story of Ratu Kalinyamat as a visual representation of the values of struggle of historical figures is raised because: (1) Ratu Kalinyamat represents the spirit of struggle and courage against colonialism; (2) visual media is effective in introducing the values of struggle and leadership

to the younger generation; and (3) modern illustrations can enhance appreciation for history and the values of the struggle of Nusantara.

IMPLEMENTATION METHOD

This research employs a qualitative approach, aiming to explore the topic in depth through in-depth information and data analysis. The qualitative approach yields findings obtained through observation and study in a natural context, without relying on statistical calculations. (Alaslan, 2020).

1. Data Collection Methods

a. Observation

The observation method is a data collection technique that involves direct observation of objects in a specific situation, whether structured or unstructured (Soegiyono, 2011). Observasi dilakukan langsung di situs sejarah yang relevan, yaitu Kompleks Masjid Mantingan, yang terletak di Jepara, Jawa Tengah. Observations are conducted directly at relevant historical sites, namely the Mantingan Mosque Complex, located in Jepara, Central Java. This observation aims to collect visual references, architectural forms, and ornament motifs that can be interpreted as visual elements in the art book.

b. Literature Study

A literature study was conducted to establish the historical and cultural foundation for the design of the art book of Ratu Kalinyamat “*Melacak Gerakan Perlawanan dan Laku Spiritualitas Ratu Kalinyamat*” (*Tracing the Resistance Movement and Spiritual Practices of Queen Kalinyamat*) (Achmad, 2020), which discusses the life journey and spiritual aspects of the figure. The thesis work (Anisa, 2020) provides a chronological narrative framework based on historical data. The article (Alrianingrum, 2017) examines the perspective of women's historiography, while the journal (Chusnul, 2010) highlights the influence of Ratu Kalinyamat, which was noted by Portuguese sources as Rainha de Japara, Senhora poderosa e rica. All of these sources serve as narrative and visual references, including costume design, symbols, and settings in the art book..

c. Interview

An interview was conducted with Mr. Muhammad Asrori, the management of the Great Mosque Museum of Demak, to obtain local perspectives on the history of the Demak Sultanate, the lineage of its rulers, its strategic role, and its political relations with Jepara during the reign of Ratu Kalinyamat. This information complements the literature data and helps visualise the details of the narrative and the artistic elements of the art book historically and culturally.

2. Data Reduction

Data reduction is carried out based on the alignment between the content of the data and the goals of designing the artbook, which is to create a visual narrative that encompasses the life journey, transformation, and struggles of Ratu Kalinyamat as a female leader from Jepara. Focus is given to events that have a significant emotional, historical, and symbolic impact, as well as having strong visual potential for visualisation. This reduction is done to filter information from observations, literature studies, and interviews so that only relevant data is

used in the artbook design. The information is categorised into three main categories: historical narrative, visual elements, and emotional atmosphere. The result is eight main scenes that will form the framework for the illustrations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Concept and Artistic Approach

A visual approach utilising digital anime-style illustrations to engage a young audience while preserving historical detail. Considering the limitations of 16th-century visual references, the illustrations are not intended as a complete historical reconstruction, but rather an emphasis on the mood and emotional atmosphere that represent the values of Queen Kalinyamat's struggle. Dramatic lighting, symbolic composition, and thematic colours are used to evoke feelings of awe, respect, and empathy towards the character.

2. Artbook Concept

Artbook “*The Rainha Veera: An Artbook of Ratu Kalinyamat*,” is designed as a narrative-visual medium that combines digital illustrations and short narratives, organized chronologically to help readers understand the life journey of the figure. The structure considers three main aspects: book format, storyline, and visual consistency.

a. Format Book

Type of book : Artbook
Dimensions : 26 X 18 cm
Title of artbook : *The Rainha Veera: An Artbook of Ratu Kalinyamat*.
Contents : Illustration images
Language : Indonesian
Number of pages : 30 pages

b. Content Structure

A total of eight main scenes were selected to be included in the art book. Each scene represents a pivotal phase in the life of Ratu Kalinyamat, from her youth to the culmination of her struggle. The storyline is arranged to flow logically, showcasing the dynamics of the atmosphere from calmness to tragedy, resurgence, and the climax of struggle, culminating in a final reflection..

1. Queen Kalinyamat (Ratu Kalinyamat)

Daughter of Sultan Trenggana, she inherited the noble blood of Majapahit, Islam, and Champa. From a young age, she led the Kalinyamat region with firm and wise leadership.

2. Sekar Dipa and Sang Kesatria's (Sekar Dipa dan Sang Kesatria)

Marriage to Sultan Hadiri united the powers of Jepara and Mantingan, building a religious and tolerant government.

3. On the Way Home (di Jalan Pulang)

The succession conflict in Demak claimed the life of Sunan Prawata. On the way home, Prince Hadiri was killed in an attack by Arya Penangsang's troops.

4. Blood and Tears (Darah dan Air Mata)

The loss of two loved ones became an emotional turning point, triggering a

determination to seek justice.

5. The Oath of Tapa Wuda (Sumpah Tapa Wuda)

Performing the tapa wuda asinjang rikma as a symbol of inner jihad until the death of Arya Penangsang.

6. The Rise of the Queen (Bangkitnya Sang Ratu)

After her enemies were defeated, she resumed leadership in Jepara, strengthening the port and naval fleet.

7. The Malacca Expedition (Ekspedisi Malaka)

Leading two major expeditions against the Portuguese, known to the Portuguese as "the rich, powerful, and brave Queen of Jepara".

8. The Twilight of the Queen (Senja Sang Ratu)

Spending her old age in Mantingan until her death around 1579 AD, leaving a legacy of maritime heritage and female leadership.

These eight scenes are also accompanied by narratives that reinforce the context and emotions, making the story of Ratu Kalinyamat more vivid and easier to understand.

3. Process of Creating Illustrations

a. Sketch

The sketching stage is the initial process in creating illustrations, forming the foundation for composition, pose, and character expression. The sketch serves as the visual foundation before moving on to the stage of refining shapes and coloring. The sketching process is carried out digitally using a drawing tablet and Clip Studio Paint software. This stage begins with the creation of gestures and the placement of key visual elements such as body poses, clothing, and facial expressions. Sketching also takes into account the page composition to align with the narrative that needs to be conveyed.



Image 1. Sketching process

Source: Author's documentation

b. Line Art and Base Color

The line art and base colour stage is the process of reinforcing the lines on the sketch to form clean and sharp line art. This process is performed using a digital brush that mimics the texture of pen ink, yielding dynamic and expressive lines. Next, the lines that have been formed are given a base colour that matches the theme and mood.



Image 2. Line and base color process

Source: Author's documentation

c. Rendering and Detail

The rendering stage is carried out after the line art and basic colouring are completed, with a focus on determining the light source, adding shadows, and refining visual details. This process involves adjusting the shadow colour to match the environment. Atmospheric effects, such as fog, splashes of water, and surface textures, are added to enrich the atmosphere. The process concludes with colour grading and colour correction.



Image 3. Finishing process

Source: Author's documentation

4. Layouting

The layout process is carried out to arrange the illustrations, narrative text, and supporting elements in a way that makes the art book easy to read and has a flowing visual narrative. Each page is composed with consideration for the balance between images and text, so that neither dominates the other.

5. Implementation of Design

This stage presents the final results of the art book *The Rainha Veera: An Artbook of Ratu Kalinyamat*, which has gone through the colouring process from the previous sketches. Starting from the cover of the art book to the contents of the eight illustrations of key scenes depicting the life journey of Ratu Kalinyamat. The illustrations are created with an artistic approach to highlight the mood and atmosphere of the character's struggle.



Image 4. Cover book design
Source: Author's documentation



Image 5. Page Spread 1-3
Source: Author's documentation



Image 6. Page Spread 4-6
Source: Author's documentation



Image 7. Page Spread 7-8
Source: Author's documentation



Image 8. Page Spread 11-12
Source: Author's documentation



Image 9. Page Spread 11-13
Source: Author's documentation



Image 10. Page Spread 16-18
Source: Author's documentation



Image 11. Page Spread 19-21
Source: Author's documentation



Image 12. Page Spread 22-24
Source: Author's documentation

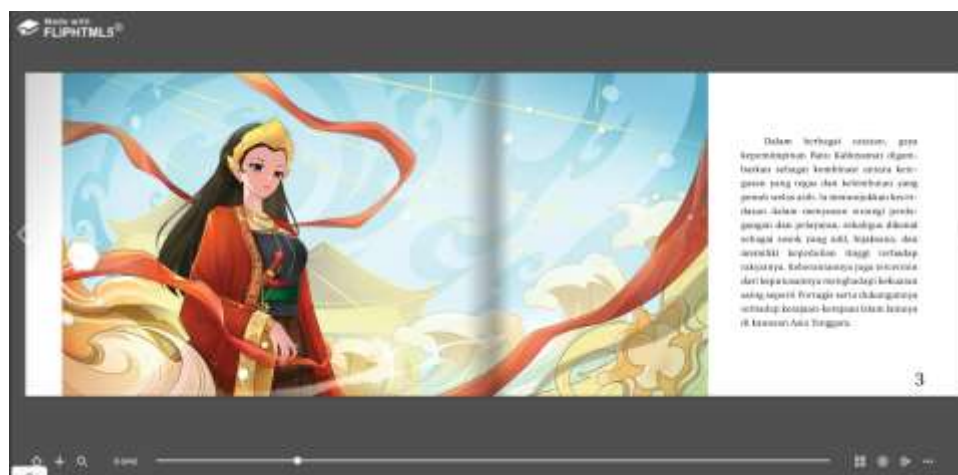


Image 13. Flipbook view
Source: Author's documentation

6. Potential

The potential use of art books as a medium for historical education lies in their ability to combine visual narratives with aesthetic appeal that is relevant to the target audience. The use of visual media, such as art books and illustrations, in conveying historical narratives is effective in increasing interest in learning history among the younger generation, especially

among students. Several studies have demonstrated that visual-based learning methods can enhance students' understanding and retention of historical material by providing engaging visual presentations. (Zumaroh et al., 2020) emphasises that the combination of images and text can attract students' interest, thereby encouraging an improvement in their learning process.

Art books also have potential that extends beyond the context of historical education, and can be applied to popular culture, tourism promotion, and the preservation of cultural heritage. In the tourism sector, art books featuring local historical figures can serve as promotional media that enhance regional identity. Furthermore, in the creative industry, artbooks can become part of a transmedia storytelling strategy, for instance, being adapted into animations, comics, or art exhibitions, thus broadening audience reach and maintaining the relevance of historical narratives in the digital era. To reach a wider audience, these art books can also be released in e-book format, making them easily accessible through digital devices and potentially reaching readers in various regions.

CONCLUSION

The design of the art book "The Rainha Veera," based on the story of Ratu Kalinyamat, is intended to present a visual representation of the figure of Queen Kalinyamat, who has been minimally portrayed in narrative visual works. The design concept is based on the values of struggle, leadership, and steadfastness, which were obtained through stages of observation, literature study, and interviews. These values serve as references in the selection of visual styles, colour palettes, typography, layouts, and storylines that shape the narrative of eight main scenes in the queen's life journey, from her youth, through the tragedy of loss, to her leadership period and the end of her struggle. This art book serves not only as a work of visual art but also as a medium for historical education, reviving awareness of the important role Queen Kalinyamat played in Indonesian history. The work is accompanied by supporting elements in e-book format, making it accessible and appreciated by a wider audience.

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