



Preservation of Unique Objects in the Form of Stone Mortar in Sidorejo Village, Kotaanyar

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Abstract:

The mortar stone in Sidorejo Village, Kotaanyar, is a historical relic with cultural, historical, and spiritual significance. This study aims to identify the protection process, challenges faced, and conservation efforts to preserve it as a local cultural heritage. The main issues encountered include potential damage due to natural factors, improper use, and a lack of community awareness regarding the importance of preserving this historical artifact. The research methodology involves direct observation, interviews with local residents, and a literature review on the conservation of historical objects. The findings indicate that the protection of the mortar stone is carried out through physical maintenance, such as regular cleaning, damage prevention, and site monitoring. Additionally, community education and the involvement of the village government play crucial roles in conservation efforts. It is hoped that these measures will help preserve the mortar stone as a cultural symbol and historical identity of Sidorejo Village.

Keywords: History, Unique Object, Mortar Stone

Abstrak:

Batu lesung di Desa Sidorejo, Kotaanyar, merupakan peninggalan sejarah yang memiliki nilai budaya, historis, dan spiritual. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi proses perlindungan, tantangan yang dihadapi, serta upaya pelestariannya agar tetap terjaga sebagai warisan budaya lokal. Masalah utama yang dihadapi adalah potensi kerusakan akibat faktor alam, penggunaan yang tidak sesuai, serta kurangnya kesadaran masyarakat terhadap pentingnya menjaga benda bersejarah ini. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah observasi langsung, wawancara dengan masyarakat setempat, serta studi literatur terkait pelestarian benda bersejarah. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa perlindungan batu lesung dilakukan melalui perawatan fisik, seperti pembersihan rutin, pencegahan kerusakan, dan pengawasan lokasi. Selain itu, edukasi masyarakat dan keterlibatan pemerintah desa juga menjadi faktor penting dalam upaya pelestarian. Diharapkan dengan langkah-langkah ini, batu lesung dapat terus terjaga sebagai simbol budaya dan identitas sejarah Desa Sidorejo.

Kata Kunci: Sejarah, Benda unik, Batu lesung

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a large archipelago, since long ago Indonesia has a culture and history that has existed from the pre-literate era to the time of independence. The finding of unique historical relics in Sidorejo Kotaanyar village is a valuable asset of the village and is a cultural treasure, this is because the unique object contains the meaning of the value of ancestral culture for all time memories, which can be developed as a medium of historical learning for the local community (Wandiyo, 2021).

Stone mortar is a cultural object that is often found in megalithic sites and also in traditional communities in Indonesia. Lesung is generally square in shape and some

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are round or irregular in shape. On the surface there is a hole. Lesung is also made of stone and some are made of wood. The difference in material tends not to distinguish its function. As a cultural object that is still used today, the stone mortar has its own role like other cultural objects (Ketut Wiradnyana, 2011).

As a cultural object that is still used today, batu lesung has a value that is more than just a household tool. It is a part of history that connects the past with the present. Its existence shows that the heritage of the ancestors is still relevant and has a role in the life of modern society. Stone mortar not only functions as a tool for pounding food, but is also often part of various traditions and ceremonies, such as harvest rituals or social activities that strengthen relationships between residents.

In some parts of Indonesia, the use of stone mortar has even deeper symbolic meanings. For example, in certain traditions, the sound of a mortar being pounded together symbolizes togetherness and mutual cooperation, which are noble values in the life of the archipelago. In addition, the mortar stone also witnesses the development of culture and technology, because from this traditional tool new innovations in food processing and agriculture are born.

Thus, the preservation and utilization of cultural objects such as stone mortar is very important so that the historical and cultural values contained in it remain alive and can continue to be passed on to future generations. One way to maintain its existence is to introduce batu lesung to the younger generation through education and cultural activities. The government, community, and cultural institutions also have an important role in ensuring that this heritage is maintained, both through documentation, preservation in museums, and utilization in cultural activities that continue to grow. That way, batu lesung is not only a silent historical relic, but also continues to live as part of Indonesia's identity and cultural wealth.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research used a qualitative method with a descriptive approach to analyze the efforts to preserve batu lesung as a cultural asset in Sidorejo Village, Kotaanyar. Data were collected through direct observation at the location, interviews with community leaders, village officials, and local residents, as well as documentation studies related to the history and utilization of batu lesung. The main source of data came from resource persons who understood the role of batu lesung in the social and cultural life of the community, while secondary data was obtained from village archives and related literature. The types of data used include primary data in the form of interview and observation results, as well as secondary data derived from documents and academic references. Data analysis was carried out qualitatively with data reduction techniques, data presentation, and conclusion drawing to understand the role and strategy of preserving batu lesung in maintaining historical value and increasing village potential.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. History and Origin of the Lesung Stone

In Sidorejo Kotaanyar Village, is one of the villages that has several unique objects of historical heritage including spears, jars, bows, and Lesung. Stone mortar is a historical relic that can be found in various regions in Indonesia. Stone mortar is an

important part of the life of agrarian society in prehistoric times. According to one of the sources explained that the Lesung Stone was found in this village in 1924, precisely around the sacred tomb, the hamlet of Pagar bata. At that time one mortar was found and in 2007 two mortar were found again around that place, then one mortar was taken to the sub-district of Kota Anyar, and two mortar were placed around the sacred tomb to be preserved, but some time later in the place of the mortar stone it became 3 again, and this incident is believed by the community that one mortar came by itself.

What is interesting and still a mystery is the phenomenon that happened afterwards. Some time after the two mortar stones were placed in the sacred tomb, the local community found that the number returned to three. This incident led to various speculations among residents, many of whom believed that one additional mortar stone appeared on its own, as if "returning" to its original place. This event is then considered a sign or phenomenon that has mystical and spiritual value.

The community's belief in this phenomenon further strengthens the belief that the mortar stone in Sidorejo village is not just an ordinary object, but has a close connection with history, tradition, and perhaps also the spiritual aspects inherited by the ancestors. Until now, the stone mortar in Sidorejo Village has been maintained and preserved as part of the local cultural wealth. The village government and the local community continue to strive to maintain and introduce the existence of this historical object to the younger generation so that the values and meanings contained in it are not lost to the times.

Through this preservation effort, it is hoped that the community can better understand and appreciate the cultural heritage around them. In addition, the existence of stone mortar and other historical objects can also be a historical tourism attraction that has the potential to increase awareness of the importance of preserving the heritage of the ancestors. Thus, Sidorejo Village will not only be known as a village with historical relics, but also as a place that maintains the traditions and cultural values that have been passed down since ancient times (Winoto, 2024).

B. Stone mortar protection process

Stone mortar protection process is a traditional tool used to pound foodstuffs such as rice, spices, and tubers. It consists of a mortar (a concave container) and pestle (a beating tool). The mortar stone is made of natural stone or strong wood, so it is durable and effective in smoothing food ingredients. Before the existence of grinding machines, the mortar stone was the main tool in the food processing process. In traditional cultures, this tool is also used in traditional ceremonies and even as a musical instrument in some regions. Although now rarely used, the stone mortar still has historical value and is used in some households to maintain the natural flavor of food.

The process of protecting a stone mortar can be done by:

1. Keeping the stone mortar clean

Maintaining the cleanliness of the stone mortar is the first step that must be taken in its care. After use, the mortar must be cleaned properly so that food scraps or ingredients that have been ground do not stick and accumulate on its surface. Leftover food debris can cause the mortar to become dirty and smelly, and can even attract insects or other pests.

2. Preventing Physical Damage to Stone Lesungs

Apart from maintaining its cleanliness, stone mortar also needs to be maintained so that it does not experience physical damage. Lesungs that have cracked or broken will not function properly and risk getting damaged if they continue to be used. Therefore, it is important to pay attention to the following points in maintaining the physical integrity of the stone mortar:

- a) Avoid hitting or tapping the mortar with other hard objects, such as hammers, other stones, or metal tools, as this can cause cracks on its surface. Although the mortar is made of strong stone, repeated impacts can cause structural damage.
- b) Do not drop the mortar stone onto the floor or a hard surface, especially if the mortar is stored at a high place. If dropped from a height, the mortar may break or develop irreparable cracks.
- c) If the mortar is used outdoors, make sure not to expose it to continuous rain or water, as water seeping into the pores of the stone can cause long-term damage.
- d) If you start to see signs of small cracks, you should immediately carry out maintenance or consult with a stone craftsman so that it can be repaired before the damage becomes more severe and makes the mortar unusable.

3. Preventing the Growth of Moss and Fungus on Stone Lesung

Lesung stones that are often exposed to water or stored in damp places are very susceptible to the growth of moss and mold. This not only makes the mortar look dirty and unkempt, but can also affect the cleanliness and durability of the mortar itself. Moss and mold that grow on the surface of the mortar can make it slippery and less comfortable to use.

4. Preserving the Cultural and Historical Value of Batu Lesung

Stone mortar is not just a tool for pounding rice or other foodstuffs, but also has very important historical and cultural values. In many regions, stone mortar has a symbolic meaning in people's lives, especially in agricultural traditions and household life. Therefore, preserving them is not only limited to preserving them physically, but also ensuring that the next generation understands their meaning and function.



Documentation of Batu Lesung Sidorejo Kotaanyar

C. Purpose of Protecting Batu Lesung

The protection of *batu lesung* aims to preserve cultural heritage that holds historical, archaeological, and cultural value for the people of Sidorejo Village. *Batu lesung* is not just a traditional tool but also tangible evidence of past community life. It contains valuable information about their way of life, the technology they used, and the cultural developments that took place during that era.

As a historical artifact, *batu lesung* plays a role in understanding the social and economic changes of past societies. Through proper protection, it can continue to serve as a learning resource for future generations. Children and the people of Sidorejo Village can deepen their knowledge of their ancestors' traditions, fostering a sense of pride in their local cultural identity.

Besides its educational aspect, protecting *batu lesung* also serves to prevent the risk of damage or loss due to natural factors or human actions. Without proper care, *batu lesung* may erode due to weather conditions, be displaced by regional development, or even be misused without understanding its historical value. The loss of this artifact could lead to a decline in public awareness of local history and traditions.

Protection efforts can be carried out through various measures, such as physical maintenance, site monitoring, and educating the community about the importance of preserving historical objects. The village government, cultural institutions, and the local community must actively participate in ensuring the preservation of *batu lesung*.

By preserving *batu lesung* as a cultural heritage, Sidorejo Village not only safeguards its history but also ensures that future generations have access to knowledge about their ancestors' way of life. This cultural heritage serves as a reminder of the wisdom and values passed down through generations, which remain relevant in shaping the community's identity in the future.

D. Efforts of Sidorejo Residents to Protect Batu Lesung Community Efforts to Preserve Batu Lesung as Cultural Heritage

Batu lesung is a historical relic with significant cultural, archaeological, and historical value. Therefore, its protection and preservation are crucial to ensure its continuity and inheritance for future generations. The local community plays a major role in safeguarding the existence of *batu lesung* through physical maintenance, monitoring, and education. Below are some efforts that residents can undertake to protect *batu lesung*:

1. Maintaining and Caring for Batu Lesung

Regular maintenance of *batu lesung* is necessary to preserve its authenticity. Residents can clean it from dust, moss, or dirt using safe methods that do not damage its surface. The use of chemicals that may cause corrosion or discoloration should be avoided. Additionally, if minor damage such as cracks is detected, residents should report it to the relevant authorities for proper treatment.

Caring for *batu lesung* also means protecting it from environmental factors that could cause degradation. For instance, if *batu lesung* is located outdoors, measures should be taken to shield it from heavy rain or excessive sunlight, which can accelerate weathering. With proper maintenance, *batu lesung* can remain in good condition for a longer period without significant damage.

1. Avoiding Unintended Alteration or Improper Use

One of the threats to *batu lesung* is its misuse beyond its original purpose. Some residents may repurpose *batu lesung* for other uses, such as construction materials or foundation stones, which can damage its original shape and structure. Therefore, it is essential for the community to understand that *batu lesung* is not just an ordinary stone but a historical artifact that must be preserved. *Batu lesung* is also sometimes used as decoration without recognizing its historical significance. In some cases, it is moved from its original location without proper documentation, thus losing its historical context. Therefore, residents must ensure that the shape, position, and condition of *batu lesung* remain unchanged to maintain its historical value.

2. Reporting the Discovery of Historical *Batu Lesung*

Batu lesung is not always found in locations already identified by the government or cultural institutions. Sometimes, residents come across *batu lesung* in fields, home yards, or construction areas. If anyone discovers a suspected historical *batu lesung*, they should promptly report it to relevant authorities such as the village government, cultural agencies, or archaeological research institutions.

Timely and accurate reporting allows historians and archaeologists to conduct further studies to determine the stone's age, original function, and its connection to the history of the village or surrounding area. Additionally, this step helps prevent the risk of theft or damage that could occur if the *batu lesung* is left unprotected.

3. Protecting the Location of *Batu Lesung*

If *batu lesung* is located in a specific area, such as an ancient heritage site or village-owned land, residents must actively participate in maintaining the site's preservation. One of the common threats is land development or exploitation, which can damage or even erase the existence of *batu lesung*.

For example, during housing or infrastructure projects, historical objects are often seen as obstacles and moved without careful consideration. Therefore, residents must ensure that construction near *batu lesung* does not interfere with its presence. The village government can also designate certain areas as cultural heritage sites to protect historical sites from exploitation.

Additionally, residents can install fences or warning signs around *batu lesung* to prevent uninformed individuals from touching or damaging it. These efforts help reduce the risk of accidental damage or contamination.

1. Educating the Community on the Importance of *Batu Lesung*

Public awareness of the significance of *batu lesung* as cultural heritage must continue to be strengthened. One effective way is to educate residents, especially the younger generation, about the history and cultural values embedded in *batu lesung*.

CONCLUSION

The *batu lesung* in Sidorejo Village, Kotaanyar, is not merely a traditional tool but also a historical relic with cultural, historical, and spiritual significance. Its continued preservation by the community reflects their awareness of the importance of safeguarding ancestral heritage. The protection of *batu lesung* is carried out through various means, including maintaining cleanliness, preventing physical damage, and avoiding the growth of moss and fungi. Additionally, preserving its cultural and historical values remains a priority to ensure that future generations understand its significance. The primary goal of this protection effort is to preserve local cultural identity and prevent the loss of a historical artifact that could diminish the community's understanding of their history and traditions. The efforts of the community in maintaining *batu lesung*, protecting its location, and educating the younger generation are crucial in ensuring its continued preservation. Through these measures, *batu lesung* can remain a valuable part of cultural heritage—not only as a historical symbol but also as a tourist attraction that strengthens the identity of Sidorejo Village.

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