

Symbolic Meaning of Indonesian Batik Motifs

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Abstract

This study aims to describe the meaning and symbolism of Indonesian batiks in the socio-cultural context. Qualitative research method has been used for this research. Data collection methods include interviews, observations, field notes, and documents to understand the classic Javanese batik motifs. Then, data presented as a descriptive analysis.

The study found that batik type can be divided into 4 styles; the first characteristic divided by the batik process such as batik tulis batik cap and printed batik. Secondly divided by time such as classic batik and modern batik. Thirdly, divided by origin such as batik Palace and batik shores.

In the beginning, painted cloth "batik" was used as ceremonial and religious cloth, batik ornaments were linked to spiritual and symbolical purposes. The art of Indonesian batik was first explored by the court particularly by noblewomen. By the 18th century, the Sultan of Surakarta reserved for himself and his close relatives designs that were forbidden for commoners. These designs exclusively reserved for the ruler and his family were Parang this motif is a symbol of King's power, greatness and fast movement. Gurda easily recognized as a swooping bird, the Garuda motif is a symbol of life and masculinity. Udan Liris batik is a symbol of fertility prosperity, courage, and determination to rule the nation. Cemukiran motif is an element of life that symbolizes courage, ambition greatness and prosperity. Semen Rama (pronounced Semen Romo) motif is often connected to the Ramayana story, which features the teaching of Hastha Brata, Thus Semen Rama embodies the teaching of the essential qualities of a king or leader, it is an expression that expresses respect for the sacred, the wealth, and the universe. The Meru comes from the word Mahameru, which refers to the holy mountain, according to Hindu beliefs as a symbol of the origin of life. The kawung motif refers symbolizes long life and purity.

The meaning of a pattern is complicated we should know three important things. Firstly, we should understand that the language used in naming the classical patterns is Ancient Javanese. Secondly, to understand the Javanese philosophy, we need to have some knowledge of the Hindu-Javanese way of thinking. Thirdly, we should have an insight into what an object means to a traditional minded Javanese. As conclusion, the cultural meaning is three elementary expressed in textiles through motifs, colors, and the actual meaning of the name given to the batik.

Keywords: Symbolic meaning, Batik Motifs, Indonesian Batik