

JLAMPRANG BATIK VISUALIZATION AS A COMMUNICATION OF PEKALONGAN COMMUNITY

Meimanah¹ & Mukaromah²

^{1,2}Dian Nuswantoro University

Correspondence Email: mukaromah@dsn.dinus.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Pekalongan is known as the city of batik with various batik motifs. One of them is the motif that is Jlamprang batik. This batik is popular with geometric motifs such as squares, rhombuses, and circles. Batik is a communication medium for the community through the motifs it displays. This study aims to determine the meaning of the Jlamprang batik motif as a form of communication through the medium of batik cloth. The research method used is qualitative research by collecting data from informants, a humanist, and educator guide at the Pekalongan batik museum. This article found that Jlamprang batik is taken from the word Jlamprang which is the name of a Jlamprang tree. This kind of tree is now quite rare in Pekalongan that is close to the tomb of a prominent figure in the spread of Islam on the coast of Java, Sheikh Maulana Al Magribi. Along with the introduction of Islamic teachings, the Jlamprang batik motif is more prominent with geometric motifs attached to the values of Islamic spiritual teachings such as the claw motif, which motivates Pekalongan people to be diligent in earning a fortune. The Jlamprang fruit motif, which is round in shape, depicts faith. In addition, the Jlamprang batik motif is also interpreted as the consistent nature of the Pekalongan people.

Keywords: Batik Jlamprang; Pekalongan; communication

1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia has several heritages from its ancestors, one of which is Batik. In 2003 and 2005, Wayang and Keris were recognized by UNESCO as oral masterpieces and intangible cultural heritage for humanity. Then, in 2009, Batik was recognized by UNESCO in the same category. UNESCO recognizes that Indonesian batik has techniques and cultural symbols that are the main identity for Indonesian people from birth to death. UNESCO included batik in the Representative List category because it met the criteria for the symbols and philosophy of life of the Indonesian people. With the session and recognition from UNESCO on September 28–October 2, 2009. That's

why Batik Day in Indonesia is celebrated every October 2 in accordance with UNESCO's provisions (Lusianti & Rani, 2012).

Batik has two major meanings for Indonesian people. First and foremost, batik is considered the ancestors' cultural heritage of the Indonesian nation. Second, batik is part of an industrial work of art that is the basis of life or employment for the community. Batik that develops in coastal areas is called coastal batik. This batik has a characteristic that lies in its striking and bold colors. Coastal batik was influenced by traders who arrived in the 15th century and were also known as ethnic Chinese, Dutch, Indian, Japanese, and Arab. Coastal batik is widely developed in the areas of Cirebon, Pekalongan, Demak, Kudus, Tuban, and Madura. Apart from batik from coastal areas on the north coast of Java, batik also develops in areas far from the north coast, which are located closer to the palace area and are often referred to as "inland batik." Inland batik, or Solo-Yogya batik, has a symbolic batik pattern. Inland batik grows in the palace environment, so in its development, it has its own rules. Inland Batik tends to have symbolic, philosophical, and magical motifs. Inland batik has simpler colors compared to coastal batik motifs, which have bright and bold colors. Outback batik itself consists of three colors: brown, black, and white (Teguh Prayitno, 2019).

Various batik motifs can be used as a form of communication by the local community, such as batik, which is used only for certain sacred events. One illustration is the Parang batik motif, which is prohibited from being worn by individuals outside the Mataram palace. However, over time, after the Mataram palace joined the Republic of Indonesia, the parang batik motif gradually became acceptable for a variety of uses, with the most prevalent one being as a form of clothing for important occasions like attending official events and other significant occasions (Kristie et al., 2019). In addition, other batik motifs are only used on certain occasions, namely the Sidomukti batik motif. This batik motif is only used during certain events, such as application processions and weddings, for Solo customs (Meindrasari & Nurhayati, 2019).

Batik from different places has been extensively discussed in prior study, including the Creation of Batik Motifs like Lumajang Regency Icons, Lontara Batik, and many more. An affirmation of the legitimacy and identity of Bugis-Makassar, Classic Batik Patterns and Contemporary Myths of Lebak Regency Identity An Attempt to Develop Regional Identity in Bojonegoro Through a Variety of Bojonegoro Batik Motifs, The Importance of Parang Batik Patterns as Inspiration for Interior Design Ethnomatics in Yogyakarta Kawung Batik in

Transformation Geometry; Ethnomatics in Jlamprang Batik Motifs in Pekalongan City as an Application of the Transformation Geometry Concept. However, some of these studies have looked more closely at how batik serves as a way for people to take pride in the symbol of their community and have also looked at batik from an ethnological angle, namely the way that culture views mathematics.

Various regions have batik motifs with their own characteristics, but the area that is known as the "city of batik" is Pekalongan. Based on sources from the official website of the Pekalongan city government, Pekalongan is one of the cities with the nickname "the city of batik." This is inseparable from the history that, for hundreds of years until now, most of the people of Pekalongan produced batik. Batik is thought to have been in Pekalongan since 1800, even though there is no formal documentation of when it first became popular there. The Chinese immigrants to Pekalongan's coastal regions influenced the first batik to emerge at that period. The little tree pattern in this batik painting first appeared after the Diponegoro War. (Pekalongan & Barat, 2018) In addition to these motifs, Pekalongan also has other batik motifs that are well known among the public, such as Buketan batik, Encim batik, Javanese Hokokai Pekalongan batik, and also Jlamprang batik. Almost all Pekalongan-based batik themes feature flora and fauna, although Jlamprang batik is one example of a typical Pekalongan batik motif that does not feature any living things.

Jlamprang batik is a form of adopting motifs from woven fabrics from Gujarat, India, namely Patola cloth. Pekalongans began to incorporate patola woven cloth into a batik motif drawn on a piece of cloth. The people of Pekalongan began to adopt the motif from this patola cloth to become the Jlamprang batik motif because, at that time, there were many Jlamprang trees in the city of Pekalongan, where the Jlamprang batik motif first appeared. Because most Pekalongan people followed Islam at the time, and according to their beliefs, using motifs in the form of living things was considered bad, the Jlamprang batik motif did not use images in the form of living things, such as animals, and instead used fruit from the Jlamprang tree as one of the motifs, which has a meaning or meaning as a symbol. When creating Jlamprang batik, a Canting Cucuk Papat or Canting four nozzles produce neatly rectangular-shaped dots called nitik engraved on the fabric.



Figure 1. Canting Cucuk Papat
Source: Informant personal documentation

This paper aims to determine the meaning of the Jlamprang Batik Motif as a Form of Pekalongan Community Communication in the context of delivering nonverbal communication, as well as how the Jlamprang Batik Motif implicitly depicts Pekalongan society through the images and patterns it creates. The theoretical approach that will be used to review this is the theory of non-verbal communication. Non-verbal communication is a communication process without sounds or words, so it has a broad meaning. Messages from non-verbal communication are natural or can be called analogical. The information conveyed through non-verbal communication reflects the symbols, and the analogy process depicts emotions or feelings. According to Judge Burgoon, the interpretation of non-verbal communication can include the meaning of the environment, which describes the guiding rules and behavior of the people and then creates a reaction. The interpretation of this non-verbal communication can be in the form of symbols, patterns, and motifs that generally depict meaning. The depiction of these motifs, symbols, and patterns can be translated through non-verbal communication, in which the intent and purpose of the motifs, symbols, and patterns will be seen.

According to Judge Burgoon, nonverbal communication is the interpretation of the context, which can imply a set of rules and guidelines for behavior in a community environment, which will

then cause a reaction. The driving factor's cultural background may have an impact on this (Burgoon et al., 2016).

One example of an image that can be translated through non-verbal communication is batik. Batik in each region has different patterns and colors, and with the differences in batik motifs in each region, of course the batik patterns and colors have different meanings batik motifs in each region, of course the batik patterns and colors have different meanings. Batik is made from generation to generation by ancestors and has been passed down until now. The process of creating batik has a different meaning when it is created, such as describing the condition of an area's territory or its people's nature as something thick with a community and a region.

2) METHODS

The approach used in this study is a qualitative research approach. A qualitative approach is a technique or procedure for testing theoretical ideas by seeking a deep understanding of a fact, phenomenon, or reality. This discussion of reality and facts can be traced and understood in depth by researchers. (Dr. J.R. Raco, M.E., 2010). The type of research used is descriptive research. In this research, the researcher employs a transcendental phenomenological study, which aims to maximize important questions about the phenomenon being studied by putting aside the researcher's prejudices about the phenomenon being studied (Creswell, 2015). The research method used is qualitative research by collecting data from informants, a humanist, and a guiding educator at the Pekalongan batik museum. We also obtained data from archival documents and memoirs in books, journals, and articles in previous research.

3) RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of observations and interviews with informants consisting of Abdul Wahab, a humanist who understands the work of Jlamprang batik, and the second informant, Denny Pujianto, an educator and guide at the Pekalongan Batik Museum.

Jlamprang batik is a form of adoption of cloth originating from Gujarat, namely Patola cloth. Jlamprang batik has geometric building patterns that are made systematically and regularly. This Jlamprang batik began to be adopted by the people of Pekalongan when many traders from outside the island visited the northern coastal area. One of the areas visited was Pekalongan. Many Indian

traders traveled to Pekalongan's north coast to conduct business, and one of the goods they brought was a woven fabric known as patola cloth.

Due to the high interest of the upper class in the motifs of the patola cloth, the supply of the cloth is decreasing. The scarcity of patola cloth has made local batik producers from Arab, Chinese, Indian, and Javanese descent make other alternative motifs from patola cloth. Batik producers make alternative patterns from patola cloth using geometric patterns taken from trees around the city, namely the Jlamprang tree.

The creators of the Jlamprang motif are the descendants of four different ethnic groups who live peacefully in Pekalongan, so the Jlamprang motif develops has several different motifs with different bright colors representing each of the ethnic creators(Alvatica, 2022). In contrast to typical Pekalongan batik motifs such as Buketan, Liong Batik, and Terang Bulan Batik, which depict living things such as animals, the adoption of the Patola woven fabric motif was made by the people of Pekalongan without depicting living things (animals) in it, but the visualization of the adoption of this motif is only in the form of shapes: geometrically arranged, systematically, and regularly. The people of Pekalongan, who are predominantly Muslim, believe that wearing clothing with elements of living things in it is strictly prohibited by Islamic teachings, so that geometric patterns are created. Apart from that, the pattern for adopting the Patola cloth was made by taking a sample from the split fruit of the Jlamprang tree. This batik motif with the fruit of the Jlamprang tree was made by the people of Pekalongan because, in ancient times, many Jlamprang trees thrived in the Pekalongan area, especially in the village of Krapyak. In addition, this Jlamprang tree is believed to be a tree of faith by the people of Pekalongan and its surroundings, who are diverse in Islam. This Jlamprang tree is rarely found in Pekalongan; it is known that until now there was only one tree remaining in Wonobodro, close to the grave of Sheikh Maulana Al Maghribi.



Figure 2. Jlamprang batik stamp tool
Source: Informant personal documentation

In addition to the Jlamprang batik motif, which is taken from the fruit of the Jlamprang tree, the Jlamprang batik has also other types, such as Jlamprang Kotak Andang, Jlamprang Cakar, Jlamprang Berukel Rhombus, Jlamprang Gondosuli, Rengganis, etc.

The theory of non-verbal communication related to Jlamprang batik is shown through symbols and motifs that convey messages. For example, the Jlamprang Cakar or Jlamprang Cakar batik motifs have their own philosophy for the people of Pekalongan. The depiction of the Jlamprang batik motif with geometric shapes also reflects the behavior of the Pekalongan people, who are obedient to religion. The Pekalongan people in ancient times were very thick with religious knowledge, especially adherents of Islam. They believed that wearing clothes with living things in them was not permissible according to Islamic teachings as a society that embraces Islam, the people of Pekalongan comply with the prohibitions of Islam, which do not allow wearing anything that contains images of living things (Fitinline, 2013). As per the hadith from Abu Hurairah *radhiyallahu'anhu*,

Jibril 'alaihi salam asked permission from the Prophet, so the Prophet said, “come in”. Jibril replied, “How can I enter while there is a picture curtain in your house?” It is better if you cut off the head or make it a mat to lie on because we Angels will not enter a house where there are pictures” (Narrated by Abu Dawud No. 4157 and An-Nasai No. 216).

One of the Jlamprang batik motifs that has meaning for the people of Pekalongan is the Jlamprang Cakar or Jlamprang Cakar batik motif. This batik motif has a geometric pattern in the form of systematically arranged circles and detailed patterns such as chicken paws. As is well known,

in every day, chickens look for or scavenge for food with their claws; from there, the meaning of the Jlamprang Cakar or Jlamprang Cakar batik motifs is taken. The meaning of the Jlamprang Cakaran batik motif is associated with the people of Pekalongan, namely, that it is hoped that the people of Pekalongan as humans must always be active in earning a living.

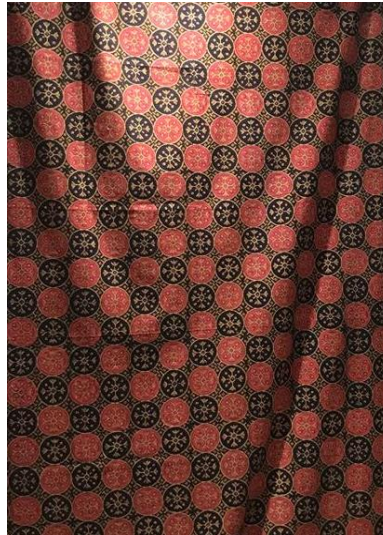


Figure 3. Jlamprang Cakar
Source: Author Personal Documentation

The cultural identity of the Pekalongan people is shown through their batik. Pekalongan is an area located on the north coast of Central Java Province. Pekalongan City is a city that is famous for its religious nuances because most of its people embrace the Islamic religion and have Islamic religious traditions that cannot be found in other areas, such as the *Syawalán* Tradition, Earth Alms, and so on. The large number of Pekalongan people who are Muslim is one of the strongest reasons for the creation of Jlamprang batik to be worn by Pekalongan people who are diverse in Islam at that time. Following one of the descriptions of the identity of Pekalongan, namely the majority of the people who embrace Islam and then adopt the pattern from the Patola cloth, the cloth is made without depicting the living things in it, only depicting a regular geometric pattern, ranging from flat shapes to flora. One of the motifs derived from flora is the Jlamprang plant.

Based on the results of an interview with the educator-guide of the Pekalongan Batik Museum, the Jlamprang batik motif has many interpretations of its meaning. Based on the explanation from the Educator's Guide of the Pekalongan Batik Museum, this motif, which is composed of geometric buildings, fits perfectly with the consistent characteristics of the Pekalongan people, especially the

Pekalongan people who are Muslim. The depiction of the consistent nature of the Pekalongan people in the Jlamprang batik motif is very reflective of the Pekalongan people, who remain consistent in maintaining religious traditions based on Islamic teachings. It is proven by the routines of the Pekalongan people, who still preserve religious traditions such as *Syamalan*.

REFERENCES

- Alvatica, D. A. A. (2022). Jlamprang Batik: Pekalongan Cultural Identity from Natural Resources in the Environment.
- Burgoon, J. K., Guerrero, L. K., & Floyd, K. (2016). Nonverbal communication. In *Nonverbal Communication*. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315663425>
- Creswell, J. W. (2015). *Penelitian Kualitatif & Desain Riset Memilih di Antara Lima Pendekatan* (S. Z. Qudsy (ed.); Edisi Indo). PUSTAKA PELAJAR.
- Dr. J.R. Raco, M.E., M. S. (2010). *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif Jenis, Karakteristik dan Keunggulannya* (A. L (ed.)). PT Grasindo, Anggota IKAPI.
- Fitinline. (2013). Keunikan Makna Filosofi Batik Klasik : Batik Jlamprang. <https://fitinline.com/article/read/keunikan-makna-filosofi-batik-klasik-motif-jlamprang/#:~:text=Terdapat juga pendapat jika motif Jlamprang merupakan motif,Mereka lebih suka ragam hias yang berbentuk geometris.>
- Kristie, S., Darmayanti, T. E., & Kirana, S. M. (2019). Makna Motif Batik Parang Sebagai Ide Dalam Perancangan Interior. *Aksen*, 3(2), 57–69. <https://doi.org/10.37715/aksen.v3i2.805>
- Lusianti*, L. P., & Rani, & F. (2012). Model Diplomasi Indonesia Terhadap UNESCO Dalam Mematenkan Batik Sebagai Warisan Budaya Indonesia Tahun 2009. *Jurnal Transansional*, Vol. 3 No.
- Meindrasari, D. K., & Nurhayati, L. (2019). Makna Batik Sidomukti Solo Ditinjau Dari Semiotika Sosial Theo Van Leeuwen. *WACANA, Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Komunikasi*, 18(1). <https://doi.org/10.32509/wacana.v18i1.718>
- Pekalongan, T. K. P. P. K., & Barat, P. (2018). Sejarah Singkat TIM KOMUNIKASI PUBLIK | 28 Agustus 2018 Sejarah Singkat Kota Pekalongan Kota Pekalongan adalah salah satu kota di pesisir pantai utara Provinsi Jawa Tengah .
- Teguh Prayitno. (2019). *Mengenal Produk Nasional Batik dan Tenun* (Susilo (ed.)). ALPRIN.