

# THE MEANING AND FUNCTION OF KLITIKAN SINTOK MOTIFS IN CYNTOK BHATIK

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**Abstract:** Batik is a work of art of the Indonesian people whereby its beauty is known to the world. Regarded as traditional craftsmanship, the design and manufacturing process requires high creativity. Realizing its potential, attention has been given into the establishment of batik as an artistic product as well as to signify the embellishment of its motifs towards commercialization. This paper discusses about Cyntok Batik, a newly established batik designs inspired by a place named Sintok within the state of Kedah. Cyntok batik reflects the creativity of the designers that blends together the socio-cultural and natural identity to create a typical regional batik. The batik design with the name "Klitikan Sintok" is one of the works of batik art developed based on typical fauna found in Sintok, Kedah particularly. The motif was inspired by native crops within Sintok vicinity, namely Sintok staples and bougainvillea flowers. the investigation of the significance and purpose of the batik design work "Klitikan Sintok" aims to determine the meaning and function content of the work. "Klitikan sintok" batik design contains the functional values with embedded meaning in the composition of the motifs and conformity with the characteristics of Kedah, as well as the content of its philosophical meaning.

**Keywords:** Function Meaning, Batik Design, Klitikan Sintok.

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### INTRODUCTION

Batik is a very old art product, historically dated back 35,000 years ago. Shears (1977) has written about the remnants of batik in Asia such as in China, and Japan. It was revealed that in Lou-Lan, Khara-Khoto and Khocang from Typhoon region in China is known for the four patches of silk batik with white dots on a blue and red background which is believed as a legacy of the Han dynasty that is thought to have been made in the third century AD. Excavations of tombs in Astana found that silk batik patches were thought to have been made between the sixth and eighth centuries AD. In Nara Museum, Japan there is a cloth drawn with batik motifs using two colors, a relic from Emperor Shonmu around the eighth century AD. The oldest artifacts batik are found in Egypt followed by China and Japan. Meanwhile, Storey (1942) explains the cultural heritage of batik in Egypt and India. In Egypt, the existence of batik dated back in fifth century BC found in murals of ancient tombs and pyramids. It was estimated that this cloth was used as early as 2,500 BC. In India, there was no discovery in the form of batik-style cloth although there are remnants in the form of impressive wall paintings using batik techniques found in Ajanta Cave in the early fifth century.

From the available findings on batik, historical evidence proves that the oldest artifact evidence of batik was found in Egypt. But, opinions on batik originating in Egypt have been disputed (Keler, 1967). If batik started in Egypt, it makes sense that this technique would be readily developed throughout Africa and Persia before moving eastward. According to Keler (1967), if batik began in Egypt, Egyptian ornaments should have affected Persian and African batik motifs. Although Keler only challenges the notion that batik started in Egypt, Keler makes no note of where batik started in any of the nearby nations. Batik therefore does not originate from large civilizations like Egypt, India, or China not mentioning any nearby nations as the source of batik. Batik therefore does not originate from large civilizations like Egypt, India, or China. The use of basic methods as in prehistoric cultural cultures demonstrates unequivocally that higher cultures like Egypt, India, and China should not be the source of moderate knowledge (Peacock, 1977).

Study of the original phenomenon of batik and the implementation of theory is important as it is still vague. The debate on the origins of batik is ongoing but UNESCO as the UN agency for education, science and culture supports the world cultural heritage of Indonesia, namely batik on the 2nd and 10th of 2009 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (Kristiani Herawati, 2010; Ari Wulandari, 2011; not mentioning any nearby nations as the source of batik. Batik therefore does not originate from large civilizations like Egypt, India, or China. The use of simple techniques as in primitive cultural Irfa'ina Rohana Salma & Edi Eskak, 2012; Singgih Adhi Prasetyo, 2016; Rudi Heri Marwan & Eddy John et al. 2018; Bayu Wirawan DS, Inva Sariyati, & Yustiana Dwirainaningsih 2018; Hana Saraswati, Ery Iriyanto, & Hermi Yuliana Putri, 2019; Moeksa Dewi, Mulyanto, & Edi Kurniadi 2019). UNESCO's decision to legalize batik as a cultural heritage from Indonesia is based on the term batik, and the development of batik in Indonesia, the word "batik" is Javanese, namely "amba" which means drawing and "tik" with the meaning of small dots. Examples are in other Jawi languages namely "Klitik" (small shop), "klitik" (small lice) and so on (Teguh Suwanto, 1998; Storey, 1942; W. Kertcher, 1954; Keller, Ila. 1967; Siti Zainon Ismail, 1986; Abdullah B. Mohamaed. 1990; Piper, E., 2001; Honggopuro, Kalinggo. 2002; Setiati, & Destin Huru, 2007; Kristiani Herawati, 2010; Ari Wulandari 2011; Lisbijanto, 2013; Prasetyo, & Singgih, 2016; Zamrudin Abdullah. Et Al, 2019).

It was uncertain the origin of batik in Indonesia. The skilled of the Javanese people of the region was influenced by Hindu culture (Hall, 1973). The batik techniques in Indonesia is known to have been applied even though there was no candle. Before the discovery of candles, in West Java, people use marrow porridge or porridge made from black glutinous rice as ink to paint ornament on cloth.

There were artefacts (batik block) from the Tarumanegara administration period that utilized elements from glutinous rice porridge as a barrier. (Azyumardi Azra, 2008; Bayu Wirawan D. S., Inva Sariyati, & Yustiana Dwirainaningsih, 2018). Batik was already used as a visual communication tool during the Majapahit period. When leading soldiers to battle in the 10th century, Patih Majapahit, Maha Patih Gajah Mada, donned batik gloves with grinsing ornaments because grinsing is a symbol of protection (Kartini Parmono, 1995; Anwar, et al, 2013). Thus, batik in ancient times was not just a clothing but the motifs have certain meanings and functions. Batik gringsing motif has the meaning of immunity and was used in war garments. Eventually, batik was developed in Indonesia and other kingdoms around the world.

Batik Malaya started in Kelantan and Terengganu. The technique used in Batik Malaya differs from Java. (Arney, 1987; Abdullah Jummain Abu Samah, 1990; Zamrudin Abdullah, et al., 2019). The clothing was introduced to Tanah Melayu from regional and international trade activities during the golden age of the Malay Srivijaya and Majapahit (ages 7-13). According to Abdullah, F. 1983; Zamrudin Abdullah, et al., (2019) batik industry in Malaysia had developed in most parts of Malaysia until now (Azmi et al., 2009).

The emergence of batik motifs marked by Kedah culture, namely Batik Cyntok has made a huge impact in the development of batik in Malaysia. Batik Cyntok has nine motifs with "special" features inspired from combinations plant elements from Sintok, Kedah, namely Sintok tree and Bougainvillea tree. Batik Sintok now is the latest icon of the state of Kedah.

One of the motifs of sintok batik is the klitikan sintok batik ornament which has been patented and had copyrights with a siri No 19-E 0062-0101. The commercialization of Batik Cyntok is still in the early stage. Nevertheless, this study of the meaning and function of batik ornament *klitikan sintok*, can be used as a method to represent as well as to preserve the culture.

## 1. MEANING OF BATIK MOTIF KLITIKAN SINTOK

According to Rohidi (1993), who conceptualises art as a symbol that is part of the symbolic device for expressing emotions or expressive symbols, art objects are typically symbolic communication. This viewpoint therefore emphasised that batik is a means of spiritual expression.

The full symbol system used in traditional batik art allows for the transmission of messages to subsequent generations. (Kartini parmono, 1995; Siti Rama Dhani, Sri Wiratma, Misgiya, et al., 2020). There are many forms of interaction conveyed in batik ornament. Batik ornament contains meanings in the form of: expression, imagination, metaphor, teachings, prayer, and hope. In general, classical batik motifs have meanings consisting of messages or ancestral teachings, which are still beneficial to us until now (Prawirohardjo, 2011; Irfa'ina Rohana Salma, Edi Eskak et al., 2012).

The symbolic meaning of batik is also found in the form of the ornament itself. (Toekio, 2000). This symbolic meaning is a medium for expressing feelings. Ornaments are present as a medium for expressing feelings that are manifested in a visual form, in which the creation process influenced by environment (Wiwit Dyahwati & Fera Ratyaningrum 2016).

Denotation and connotation are the ideas of Roland Barthes that are frequently used to explain language. The denotation is characterized as the unbiased significance of a word or group of words that is founded on the designation of an idea or object in language. While implication connects a thought to the main word. Denotation, in a nutshell, is the idea that a word's or a language's connotation has a distinct significance based on the thoughts and emotions of an individual. Roland Barthes goes into great detail to describe the connection between meaning and designation.

Fiske provides an additional explication of Barthes' concepts of denotation and connotation in his 1990 work *Introduction to Communication Studies*. Saussure focused on the first level of signification during his research. It explains the connection between the signified and the signifier within the sign as well as the connection between the sign and what it refers to in the world outside the sign. This arrangement is referred to as denotation by Barthes. This is referring to the obvious, commonsense interpretation of the symbol (Fiske, 1990).

One of the three ways that signs function in the second level of signification is referred to by Barthes as having a connotation. It describes the relationship that takes place when a user's feelings or emotions and cultural norms encounter a sign. When the translator is affected by the person who interprets just as much as by the thing in question or symbol, the implications shift towards the arbitrary, or at least the intersubjective. (Fiske, 1990).

The Klitikan Sintok Batik ornament's symbolic significance can be analyzed using sign principle, which is also used to analyze the symbolic meaning found in visual art.

To explain the meaning of connotation, it is necessary to first define denotation. Essentially, the structure and components of the Klitikan Sintok batik motif were used to illustrate the denotative meaning of the motif.

### 1.1 The Meaning of the Denotation of The Klitikan Sintok Batik Motif



Figure 1. Klitikan Sintok Batik Motif

In the ornamental structure of the klitikan sintok ornament, the elements are in the Sintok tree consist of roots, leaves, stems and Sintok fruit. Together, they formed a propeller as illustrated in Figure 1.

## 1.2 The Connotative Meaning of The Elements of The Klitikan Sintok Batik Motif



Figure 2. Detail 1

In general, the representation of elements in the sintok tree predominates in klitikan sintok decorations. Generally speaking, the diamond or robus shape is the primary type of klitikan sintok. The greenery, branches, blossoms, and bases of this plant flawlessly encapsulate all of its constituent parts. There is no prominent part of the plant in the klitikan sintok ornament.

There is nothing unique about this ornament because all components are depicted in such a manner, other than the natural depiction of the sintok plant (Figure 2).

Only the sintok plant is the subject of the ornamental portrayal in the singular variant of this representation. However, some image variants merit special attention to be explained in the elements of this klitikan sintok ornament, including variations of the sintok fruit depiction. Blooming sintok fruit found at the top, bottom, right and left as well as other elements that are in the details of ornamental variety. Diamond or rhombus with four angles. This is as contained in a square where the four sides are the same length and balanced between one another as shown in figure 3. The second method is based on how plants grow naturally. This mode is a geometrical pattern which describes the shape of the plant with a spiritual meaning (Naam, 2019). This spiritual meaning is expected to give confidence to the wearer, either he is or what he wants.



Figure 3. Detail 2

Ornaments klitikan sintok has a centralized structure in which the decorative form has a midpoint and then spreads out symmetrically to the border of the field in the form of a propeller (refer to Figure 4). It divides the field into equal symmetrical arrangement. There is an element of repetition of shapes that produces the same picture or in other words a picture of a mirror image. Repetition is a way to get orders; in this arrangement peace of mind will be achieved (Naam, 2019; Mulyadi, 1983). Or it could be that life must follow rules. In the decorative style of Cyntok batik ornament is divided symmetrically with diagonal lines.



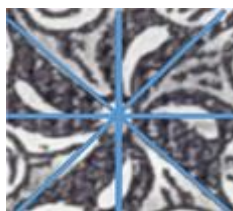
Figure 4. Detail 3

In general, the layout of the elements in the klitikan sintok ornament is based on the fictitious line of the divider, proportional and equal between the right and left sides as well as the lower and higher



sides. This balance had religious meaning. The denotative meaning of horizontal and vertical imaginary lines is the division of fields horizontally and vertically. In the horizontal part will appear the top and bottom, and the vertical imaginary part will appear right and left spaces.

At the top and bottom, known as the macrocosm and microcosm, the universe (large world) and the underworld (small world). The universe refers human. The relationship between nature and man and its creator is an intact unity. Thus, human must maintain the harmony of life, preserve the nature and worship God aka *Gusti Kang Murbeng Dumadi* or *Sang Hyang Akarya Jagad*. In Islam, which is better known as *habluminallah*. While the right and left side make the same balance with human relations with other human beings, one ethnicity with another ethnicity, one religion with another religion. Or in Islam better known as *hablum minannas* (Naam, 2019).



Picture 5. Detail 4

In klitikan sintok ornaments, if seen perpendicular from the top is the field of ornaments. From the side is the direction of movement of the ornament. From the center of the ornament there is a movement that radiates like sunlight. Ornaments with radiant motions have concepts such as fan ornaments (Naam 2019).

The ornament is centered on a diamond or small circle. The element of ornament called *intinan* is a circular element that exists in the shape structure of the klitikan sintok ornament, the *intinan* is always located in the middle of the ornament. The circle has the meaning of the beginning of all creation. Loops are associated with symbols of greatness as well as power (Cooper, 1990). While the highest power in this world is the King.

While four sintok or four *carangan* moves diagonally when combined into an octagonal star decoration. Hinduism recognizes the Arabesque motif as a sign referring to the goddess Lakshmi of wealth. This sign has eight beams or emanations so it is known as *Ashtalakshmi*, which is represented by two forms (opening and buds) interconnected to form eight corners. *Emmanation* relates to the eight forms of wealth that include finances, ability to transport, relentless prosperity, victory, patience, health and nutrition, knowledge, and family. Islamic culture realizes the form of the eight symbolic meanings of the relationship between earth and heaven or the world and the hereafter. Medieval Islamic culture recognized the wide octagonal star as a symbol of Islamic art. This form is called *Khatim* or *Khatim Sulaiman*, the seal of the prophets, as in the seal ring. The phrase "seal of the prophets" is also used in the Qur'an and has a certain ideological meaning for Muslims. *Zillij* craftsmen in Morocco also associate octagonal stars with *sibniyyah*, *sabniyyah*, which is after the number seven *sab'ah* (Hartono, 1999: 52; Rizal Wahyu .2020; 2018: Rudi Heri Marwan, Eddy John, et al; Sunyoto, A. 2016).



Figure 6. Detail 5

In the klitikan sintok ornament, the ornament; if viewed vertically in the path of the decoration motion, starting at the top of the decoration field, from the center of the ornament there is a propeller-like rotation. The elements of the propeller shape in the structure of the shape of the spinning wheel are found in (Figure 5). No equivalent meaning found in the literature but can relate to Peirce's theoretical



theory about the meaning of the opening in the structure of the round shape. The shape of the sintok fruit with four repetitions on the structure of the round shape resembles a propeller. The propeller is identical to the rotation. While the element of plants or seeds is synonymous with life, thus this element means the rotation of life.

Sintok fruit in the ornamental form has three seeds meaning the result of plant or life (Figure 7). So the meaning of this sintok fruit is the fact of life in the teachings of Islam is three: *Iman*, *Ikhsan*, and *Ekhsan*. It is the basis of belief (pillars of faith) while *ikhsan* is the fruit or result of the actions of five things (Pillars of Islam) (Zainudin, 2006).



Figure 7. Detail 6

In the klitikan sintok ornament four *carangan* each have a duplicate. *Carangan* specifically consisted of three parts: the *patran* foliage, a sintok berry with all three sintok seeds, and a sintok root components of the *carangan* form on the shape's construction of the round sintok found in (Figure 7) in general *carangan* or sucker with one leaf, sucker contains the meaning of the symbol of life or society, and one *patra* means singular which means living only once. On the curved round element, curving and turning is a symbol of patience, always submissive, submissive and humble (Na'am, 2019). The quality of being submissive, obedient and humble is the nature of *kiyai* (Islamic religious leaders). The syllable root shape element forms an element in the Synthetic Round structure found in (detail 6). In the meaning of Peirce's theoretical theory, i.e. symbol, root contains the meaning of root or the basis of life.

### 1.3 Connotative Meaning of The Structure of Klitikan Sintok

The structure and meaning of the klitikan decorative pattern on the different types of Cyntok batik represent new elements when interpreted as a whole. The word "robus" means "aspiration" or "assurance," which is another word for "ambition." The significance of imaginary diagonal lines is either peace or order. The horizontal vertical imaginary line: vertical dividing the top two down has the meaning of *hablum minallah* while the vertical dividing the two kana left has the meaning of *hablum minannas*. The eight beams' fictitious line represents eight wealth. The structure in the form of the Sintok round has a reference to communal living. The meaning of existence can only be found in one *patra*. The root sintok contains the essence of life, and the three-seeded sintok fruit contains a trilogy of divine lessons. Conclusion: The rounded sintok structure represents the image and self-assurance of the Malays, the deeply ingrained precepts of Islamic law, and Islam as the Malays' belief, with their religious leadership and monarch serving as an example of how to apply shariah.

## 2. SOCIAL FUNCTION OF FORM STRUCTURE

The structure of klitikan sintok in this decorative style not only beautify the clothes but more importantly convey the above message to the consumers. It fits to be use by religious leaders, and can be worn in travelling to religious gatherings or worship locations. Therefore, the klitikan sintok batik ornaments wearer represent as Kedahan, religious leaders, especially Muslims or people who perform worship and to celebrate special events.

## 3. CONCLUSION

The study provides evidence that the symbolic relationship and meaning of batik motif work as an expression medium as well as visual communication media. Batik ornaments klitikan sintok represents the identity of its users because the existing symbols can be interpreted as characters and unique identity.

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