



The Symbolic Meaning of Batik Manding as a Local Cultural Identity of Gunung Kidul using Charles Sanders Pierce's Semiotic Approach

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Abstract

This research journal aims to describe the symbolic meaning and values contained in Manding Batik as the local cultural identity of Kepek Village, Wonosari District, Gunung Kidul Regency. This research uses a qualitative approach with Charles Sander Pierce's semiotics and studying the symbolic meaning of Batik Manding. Indonesia has local arts originating from various regions, namely Batik which is a craft product that has high artistic value and has become part of Indonesian culture, specifically on the island of Java. The local cultural identity that is characteristic of the community has formed a group of craftsmen in Batik Manding Village so that they can develop various distinctive motifs that depict the surrounding natural conditions such as Petai Chinese. The existence of Batik Manding as a local cultural identity of Kepek village, Gunung Kidul Regency has supporting community values that can be explored and studied for understanding and learning for the wider community.

Keywords: *Symbolic Meaning; Batik Manding; Local Cultural Identity; Semiotics of Charles Sandes Pierce*

Introduction

Indonesia has local arts originating from various regions in almost all of the country, one of which is Batik. Batik is a craft that has high artistic value and has become part of Indonesian culture, especially on the island of Java. UNESCO has designated Batik as a Cultural Heritage since October 2 2009 and since that date National Batik Day has been celebrated. This Batik art appears from simple to complex basic forms. Batik making is based on community needs both practically and aesthetically. There are various kinds of batik motifs that have symbolic meanings and characteristics of their respective regions which contain the cultural values of the supporting communities.

The diversity of cultural products in Indonesia is an attraction that can characterize and maintain the continuity of the local cultural identity of its people amidst the development of globalization which is increasingly penetrating contemporary life. One of the cultural products that originates from deep contemplation and thought into the form of objects is batik. Batik in Indonesia has a variety of forms, shapes, colors, techniques and other elements. The existence of batik as a form of object which has a basic concept as a creation made from the technique of blocking dyes can be seen in various corners of Indonesia. The existence of Batik Manding is no exception in Gunung Kidul which is in the Special Region of Yogyakarta. Natural conditions, geography, climate and mobilization have supported the

creation of various Batik Manding creations in Gunung Kidul. Community cultural products in the form of batik represent the culture of the community with various values and philosophical meanings contained.



Figure 1. Batik Manding
(Source: Guntur Susilo.2019)

Local wisdom, which is diverse from that in Gunung Kidul, is a factor that makes batik have its own characteristics. The cultural identity that is characteristic of the community has formed a group of craftsmen in Batik Manding Village to develop various distinctive motifs that describe their identities.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher formulated a problem to explore the symbolic meaning of Manding batik as a local cultural identity in Kepek village, Gunung Kidul district.

Research Methods

The research in the study of Batik Manding is included in the type of qualitative research with Charles Sanders Pierce's semiotic approach. This form of research can answer the formulation of the educational value problem contained in Batik Manding in the form of a descriptive description. This type of research is descriptive qualitative. Qualitative research produces and processes descriptive data, such as interview transcripts, field notes, images, photos, video recordings, and so on (Poerwandari, 2013: 42).

In accordance with the object to be discussed, this method aims to collect, classify and analyze available data so that 1 obtains a comprehensive picture or data related to the symbolic meaning contained in Batik Manding as a local cultural identity in Kepek Village, Gunungkidul. By using a search semiotic approach to find meaning, it can be explored more deeply, namely by looking at history, the background of cultural identity in the community, elements and principles of similarity. Batik Manding has meanings/signs in terms of objects and colors.

Charles Sanders Pierce's triadic semiotics is explained in Albar (2018: 127) that the trichotomy includes Object (Y) which is a reference to reality that is thought to exist, Representation (X) is something that can be captured through the senses which can generate an Interpretant (X=Y). Charles Sander Pierce's semiotics holds that signs in order to function require grounding.

Budiman explained more deeply in Frakas (2022: 196) including representation as something sensory or material as a sign that gives rise to an interpretant as another sign that is equivalent in a person's thinking to an object referred to from reality which is considered to exist as an entity

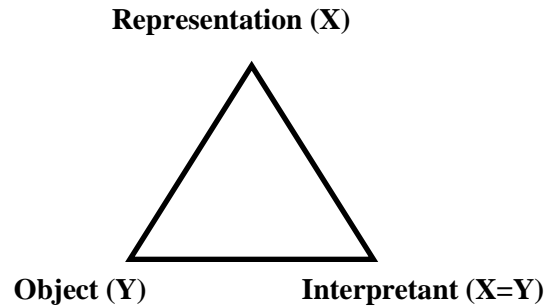


Figure 1. Pierce's triadic semiotic relationship
(Source: Kiriyantono in Rorong, 2019:108)

Discussion and Results

1. History of Batik Manding



Figure 2. Batik training in Kepek Gunung Kidul village
(Source: Roro, 2023)

Batik Manding is located in Kepek Village, Wonosari District, Gunungkidul Regency, a village located in RT 1 RW 8. Guntur Susilo is the creator of the Manding batik motif. He created this motif based on the natural conditions of Kepek village, namely that there are manding plants (Petai cina).

This village is a place to introduce batik, increase the love for batik, as a tourist village, a place for preserving and inheriting batik culture. The history of the founding of batik manding occurred because manding used to be a hedge plant between the yards of people's homes. Manding is a type of plant which is usually called petai cina/kepek/lamtoro, it flowers and bears fruit. This manding is used to be eaten and made into chili sauce, bothok as a food requirement for the villagers. This is to preserve ancestral culture. Traditional batik makers Regarding the potential for arts and crafts, Kepek Village has the best potential for batik. There are several groups of batik craftsmen whose members have received quality assurance certificates from the government. There is a batik motif that is a sign/icon of Kepek Injih Village, Batik Manding. Batik Manding is located in Kepek Village, Wonosari subdistrict, Gunungkidul Regency.

The development of the batik village in Kepek Village is growing rapidly. Potential for arts and crafts, Kepek Village has the best potential for batik. There are several groups of batik craftsmen whose

members have received quality assurance certificates from the government. There is a batik motif that is a sign/icon of Kepek, Batik Manding.

The main factor in the development of the batik village in Kepek Village is the feeling of wanting to progress and develop as well as the feeling of continuing to learn among local residents. Another supporting factor is the high level of creativity that is channeled well. Kepek Village has superior batik, namely Manding batik. Batik Manding is closely related to Kepek Village. As the batik village in Kepek Village develops, it is hoped that the economic potential in the Kepek Village will become more stable and develop. The economic impact in the Kepek area is that there is additional income for residents, namely by making batik and earning income. The process of making batik has its own obstacles. Members and local residents responded well to these obstacles who were aware that the area was also a cultural village. The obstacles that exist include human resources, then the materials are not easy but the essence is there, then another obstacle is marketing which requires the support of many parties because of competition for local batik in Gunung Kidul.

The residents of Kepek village hope that this village will be able to develop and become more advanced with their proud batik, namely Batik Manding, and this cultural village has the enthusiasm to develop batik that is characteristic of Kepek, namely Batik Manding.

2. Vision and Mission of Kampung Batik Manding

The vision and mission of Kampung Batik Manding is to preserve batik, which is a cultural art inherited from our ancestors, to invite people to learn batik and increase people's income.



Figure 3. Exhibition of selected batik villages in the Special Region of Yogyakarta
(Source: Roro, 2023)




3. Batik Manding

The word "manding" comes from Javanese which, when translated into Indonesian, means lamtoro or chinese petai. Manding has the scientific name *Leucaena Leucocephala*. This plant originates from Central America and is thought to have been growing in Indonesia for hundreds of years. Manding can adapt and can grow and develop well, especially on the island of Java.

Batik Manding is one of the typical and superior motifs of the Batik Manding Village itself. This motif was deliberately created by Guntur. Manding motifs in general are a reflection of the village residents themselves. Young manding plants here can be interpreted as Kepek village residents who are very enthusiastic and young at heart. Manding plants also have various benefits for humans, animals and nature in Gunungkidul.

The description of the symbolic meaning of Manding Batik using Charles Sander Pierce's triadic semiotic approach (three basic elements), namely representation [sign = T; something], object [O; something in human cognition], and interpretation [I; process of interpretation]. According to Pierce, in every human life there are not far from signs, because signs exist meaning. Then the meaning has a message in communicating with the visual object audience.

Table 1. Symbolic Meaning of Manding Batik (Charles Sander Pierce Semiotics)

Sign (T)	Object (O)	Interpretation (I)
	Motif (Petai Chinese)	The symbol of a young manding (Petai Chinese) signifies that the spirit of the people of Kepek village is always young and blazing.
	Leaf Symbol	The leaf symbol means the hope of the Kepek village community to remain fertile and maintain its environmental sustainability. The meaning of this leaf is always synonymous with land and the life within it. This leaf symbol shows the hope that life in Kepek village can prosper and develop.
	Mountain Symbol	This mountain symbol is a collection of mountain ranges, depicting the condition of the people in Gunung Kidul who are always strong and can survive during a water crisis or drought. These mountains mean the power of the universe or the inner strength of the people of Gunung Kidul.

a. Motif Manding (Petai Chinese)

A symbol of a young manding plant which signifies the spirit of Kepek Village which is always young and blazing.

b. Leaf Symbol

the leaf symbol is the hope that Kepek Village will remain fertile and maintain its environmental sustainability. Leaf ornaments are among the plant ornaments that are often found in cement motifs. The cement motif itself comes from the term "semen" from the word semi which means blossoming or prosperous or developing life. This leaf ornament is always synonymous with land and the life on it.

c. Mountain Symbol

The symbol of the mountains here means the inner strength of the Gunung Kidul people which is difficult to shake or be strong. So, even though the natural conditions are often dry, they still survive and are creative in utilizing every plant that has potential in these conditions. On the spiritual side, mountains here are also considered the macro cosmos, namely the power of nature. Mountains are also often considered to be the abode of gods. This ornament symbolizes the existence of various life on earth. The life depicted is a human life that often experiences ups and downs.

2. Batik Manding as a Local Cultural Identity.

Society in its life and maintaining its life requires adaptation to its environment, as well as to each other. Relationships between humans require communication that can unite a common understanding of ideas, notions and thoughts to fulfill their life needs. As social creatures, humans will always have relationships and cooperation with other humans which are realized through language. As stated by Santoso (2006: 1), humans in their relationships with other individuals need a means of communication which is realized in the form of language.

Language in everyday life in society basically plays a role in characterizing and giving the unique form that is presented. Language as a sound symbol system according to Kenjono in Chaer (2003:30) is arbitrary in nature and is useful for members of social groups in order to work together, communicate and identify themselves. So it can be interpreted that language is not just a sound, syntactic and morphological system, but also provides cultural identity and social status to its people. The existence of language is able to provide information on the identity of individuals and social groups from their existence among existing communities. The language conveyed by society in communicating can be in the form of words, gestures or other symbols which can have the same meaning for individuals in a community. Manding batik as a means of conveying ideas is a language expressed in the form of objects that have the characteristics of the community.

Currently, the influence of globalization on new and old cultures tends to play a balancing role on the influence of globalization. People are stimulated to build relationships related to their identity and their region. According to (Pasaribu, 2020) the ideal modern society is a person who is maximized in consuming all cultural products through his reasoning in an integral way with his own values. This opinion proves that modern society acts as a consumer of value, especially novelty. The negative impact of globalization on city culture can be a stimulus for society to create or maintain its own cultural identity. If there is a loss of local culture from an area, it can eliminate cultural values as a mindset and lifestyle of the existing community. Cultural identity is a cultural identity belonging to a society, ethnicity, and so on. Cultural identity contains various cultural characteristics and cultural personalities of society. According to (Julia, 2012) every nation, community or region is created and born in accordance with environmental conditions, community character and cultural background. In line with the concept of identity in Anthropology, the creation of Batik Manding as a cultural identity is a form of human being that gives birth to culture with patterns of perception, thoughts and feelings.

To find out the characteristics of a cultural identity requires an examination of the perception patterns, ways of thinking, and ways of feeling of humans themselves. Therefore, the diversity of human characters, human nature, and natural conditions of an area creates a diverse culture. This diversity makes every culture belonging to a society or region unique in itself. One culture that can become the characteristic and identity of a society or region is batik.

Based on the previous discussion, batik has decorative motifs that represent the natural and human resources of a region or region. So the batik motif can show an identity from the region or community. The characteristic of Batik Manding is the floral motif (Chinese petai motif). All of these motifs form the identity of Batik Manding, which is a natural resource in Kepek Village, Wonosari District, Gunung Kidul Regency. An example of the reality of using batik cultural identity is the use of batik uniforms for school children, agencies and community groups. From one region to another, batik uniforms definitely differ. The batik uniforms are in accordance with the characteristics of batik from each region.

The implementation of the use of Batik Manding as another cultural identity is in the batik motif design competition, including Kepek Village which presents five typical batik motifs. In this condition of globalization, maintaining local cultural identity is an urgency that needs to be considered, including the motifs on regional batik. There are various efforts that can be made to maintain the existence of this cultural form, including:

- 1) Maintain the existence of batik by using it proudly. Both at formal and non-formal events.
- 2) Raise its existence by selling products that have elements of the batik motif. Such as fashion products, to crafts.
- 3) Inviting and involving the next generation to produce Batik Manding products. Apart from being an educational tool, this effort can provide meaningful experiences for them.
- 4) Of course, government support has a big influence on efforts to maintain the existence of the Motif Batik Manding.

Conclusion and Suggestions

The symbolic meaning of the Batik Manding motif is leaves and mountains. Leaves have the meaning of fertility and prosperity. Meanwhile, mountains have the meaning of inner strength that will never be shaken. The Kepek community is expected to maintain natural fertility so that they can live prosperously. Even though drought strikes, you still have inner strength that will never waver and remain creative in your work.

The Batik Manding motif consists of the main motif in the form of a stylized manding fruit (Chinese petai), complementary motifs in the form of stylized leaves and mountains, and the isen motif in the form of dots. Manding fruit (Chinese petai) is used as the main motif which has a symbolic meaning of independence, harmony, protection and being useful for others. The Kepek community is expected to maintain a spirit of independence that upholds harmony, is useful to others, and is willing to maintain or protect the fertility and preservation of nature.

Batik Manding is classified as modern batik. Artist Guntur Susilo created Batik Manding to adapt to the natural conditions around Kepek Village in order to represent the uniqueness of the area itself, as a local cultural identity in Kepek Village, Wonosari District, Gunung Kidul Regency.

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