



## VARIATIONS OF BATIK MOTIFS IN KULON PROGO

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p><b>Article history:</b> Received: 11 March 2025 Received in revised form: 10 April 2025 Accepted: 19 June 2025 Available online: 30 June 2025</p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> Kulon Progo batik; Batik motifs; Descriptive qualitative research; Local culture; Cultural identity</p>	<p>This study aims to understand the variety of distinctive batik motifs from Kulon Progo using a descriptive qualitative approach. Data collection was conducted through a literature review of various sources, including scientific articles, books, and other documentation related to Kulon Progo's characteristic batik. Data collection techniques included library studies, observation, documentation, and interviews. Data analysis was carried out through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results indicate that Kulon Progo batik consists of: (1) <i>gringsing batik</i>, <i>galaran batik</i>, <i>pulo batik</i>, <i>abstract batik</i>, and <i>geblek renteng batik</i>; and (2) Kulon Progo's characteristic <i>batik</i> represents the local natural beauty, such as rivers, seas, and mountains, reflecting local wisdom and cultural richness that form the foundation of the community identity of Kulon Progo.</p>

### 1. Introduction

*Batik* has long been one of Indonesia's cultural heritages, embodying high aesthetic, philosophical, and symbolic values. The *batik* motifs from each region have distinctive characteristics and carry the unique identity of the area from which they originate [1], [2]. Similarly, the characteristic *batik* of Kulon Progo represents variations of motifs inspired by the local culture and natural wealth passed down through generations within the Kulon Progo community.

Motif is defined as a compositional design created by involving certain patterns derived from nature, culture, society, religion, and the environment surrounding humans [3], [4]. Motifs are also identified through repetitive methods, thereby forming a pattern [3]. Broadly, motifs consist of geometric motifs, natural motifs, ornamental motifs, abstract motifs, or combinations thereof [5]. Motifs originating from nature have specific characteristics where their shapes resemble natural objects such as animals, plants, and other naturally occurring elements [3], [5]. The manifestation of a *batik* motif is influenced by geographical factors, traditional beliefs, the surrounding environment, and relationships between *batik*-producing regions [6].

The word "*batik*" comes from two Javanese words, "*amba*," meaning to write, and "*nitik*," meaning cloth with small dots [7]. *Batik* is an art of painting on a piece of cloth using wax as a resist to prevent dye from penetrating the fabric fibers, thus forming certain motifs [7]. Therefore, a *batik* motif is a particular compositional design created using *batik* techniques, where the design is

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painted with wax to create these motifs [6]. The contrast between lines and areas covered by wax and those left open produces beautiful decorative motifs [8].

Kulon Progo *batik* has unique motif variations that display beauty and possess significant economic potential. Over time, Kulon Progo *batik* has undergone various motif changes influenced by shifts in the background of the Kulon Progo community [9]. The diverse development of Kulon Progo *batik* motifs offers better commercial opportunities to keep up with market trends. However, with the increasing variation in *batik* motifs, Kulon Progo's characteristic *batik* faces significant challenges. The growing variety of motifs risks diminishing the uniqueness and traditional values of the original motifs. Furthermore, the emergence of new motifs in the market raises concerns that the original Kulon Progo motifs may gradually be forgotten and lose their market presence. Therefore, documentation and description of Kulon Progo's *batik* motif variations are necessary efforts to preserve and promote the uniqueness and cultural distinctiveness of Kulon Progo. Additionally, understanding the forms and meanings of *batik* motifs is essential so they can be applied appropriately based on the occasion. This study aims to understand the variety of Kulon Progo's characteristic *batik* motifs using a descriptive qualitative approach. Hence, this research is titled "Variations of Kulon Progo's Characteristic *Batik* Motifs."

## 2. Method

This study was conducted using a descriptive qualitative method. The research aims to provide an in-depth description of the variety of characteristic *batik* motifs from Kulon Progo. A descriptive qualitative approach was chosen because the study seeks to explore information and present data comprehensively and thoroughly regarding the object under investigation, as well as to uncover the meanings behind it [10]. Therefore, this research focuses on the variation and meaning of Kulon Progo's characteristic *batik* motifs, with the expectation of providing a comprehensive and detailed portrayal of these variations.

Data collection techniques in this study included observation, literature review, and documentation. Observations were conducted by visiting various *batik* production centers in Kulon Progo. This direct observation aimed to observe the real variations of Kulon Progo's characteristic motifs in the field, thereby enhancing data validity through direct interaction with the research object. The literature review involved gathering references related to the variations and meanings of Kulon Progo's characteristic motifs to help the researcher understand the research context and strengthen the theoretical framework. Documentation was carried out by recording observation results in the form of field notes and photographic evidence. Documentation serves as physical proof that strengthens the credibility of the research findings.

Data analysis in this study was carried out through several stages, including: (1) data reduction; (2) data presentation; and (3) drawing conclusions. Data reduction was performed to filter relevant information aligned with the research objectives [10]. This step simplifies the data to enable more effective and focused analysis. The reduced data were then presented in the form of descriptive narratives, images, or tables. Data presentation aids the researcher in understanding patterns and relationships within the data, allowing for more structured information. Conclusions were drawn based on the results of data analysis through the formulation of a general description of the variations in Kulon Progo's characteristic *batik* motifs.

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### 3.1. Results

Based on field observations and documentation, several characteristic motifs of Kulon Progo inspired by nature and local wisdom include the *Gringsing batik* motif, the *Galaran batik* motif, and the *Geblek renteng batik* motif.

These various *batik* motifs have their own characteristics, distinctiveness, and meanings, explained as follows:

##### 3.1.1. *Gringsing Batik*

*Gringsing batik* is one of the *batik* styles said to originate from a village named *Gringsing* in Kulon Progo [11]. However, other studies mention that *Gringsing batik* comes from Bantul Regency [6]. The *Gringsing* motif features a pattern of “isen-isen” with small circles approximately  $\frac{1}{2}$  cm in diameter that intersect and are neatly arranged [6]. The *Gringsing* motif generally serves as the background for various ornamental motifs depicting the surrounding nature, such as plants, flowers, butterflies, and others [6], [11].

Variations of the *Gringsing* motif include fish scales with black dots resembling eyes. The word “*gringsing*” in the *batik* motif originates from two words: “gring,” meaning “sick,” and “sing,” meaning “not,” thus “*gringsing*” means “not sick.” Therefore, *Gringsing* conveys prayers and hopes for good health and long life [6]. Several variations of the *Gringsing batik* motif are shown in Figure 1. The classic *Gringsing batik* color is sogen (brownish), but over time, this motif has been developed with more varied colors to meet market demands [6].



Fig. 1. The Example of *Gringsing Batik*

##### 3.1.2. *Galaran Batik*

*Galaran Batik* is a Kulon Progo *batik* that is well-known in Yogyakarta. The motif name “*galaran*” comes from the word *galar*, which means a bamboo mat or similar material used as a floor covering on raised platforms. The *galaran* motif features small diagonal lines arranged straight and is generally used as a background motif. Kulon Progo’s characteristic *galaran batik* is known for its delicate, detailed, and lively appearance [11]. The *galaran* motif is used as *isen-isen* (filler pattern), consisting of diagonal straight lines on the background [12]. The shaded *galaran* motif symbolizes togetherness [12]. Based on usage occasions, *galaran batik* is commonly worn by men, while *gringsing batik* is typically worn by women [11]. Several variations of the *Galaran batik* motif can be seen in Figure 2.



Fig. 2. The Example of *Galaran Batik*

### 3.1.3. Pulo Batik

*Pulo Batik* is a new style of *batik* from Yogyakarta that combines classic Mataraman motifs such as parang, kawung, truntum, or other traditional motifs, designed in a collage-like manner or as pieces filled with these classic *batik* motifs [11]. Another distinctive feature is that the collage or motif pieces are created in large sizes with irregular patterns [11]. The *Pulo batik* motif was born as a creative expression of *batik* artisans toward abstract *batik* motifs, which tend to be made freely in terms of color choices and motif composition. The *Pulo Batik* motif is produced by the creative industry *Batik Banyu Sabrang* [13].

The *Pulo Batik* motif is shown in Figure 3 below. The meanings of the *Pulo batik* motifs vary according to the motif development variations created. The *oplok* motif in *Pulo Batik* is inspired by the word *oplok-oplokan* or *eplek-eplekan*, referring to playing with clay and wax. This motif was created by its owner to commemorate their childhood memories of playing *oplok-oplokan* using clay. Other motifs include the *ukel birowo* and *gradasi semburat* motifs. The *Ukel Birowo* motif symbolizes spirit and clear purpose. Meanwhile, the *gradasi semburat* motif is a development of the *ukel birowo* motif with a color composition and form combining elements of the *ukel* and *truntum* motifs.



Figure 3. The Example of *Pulo Batik*

### 3.1.4. Geblek Renteng Batik

*Geblek renteng Batik* is a Kulon Progo *batik* motif that has officially been declared as the icon of Kulon Progo *batik*. The *Geblek renteng* motif is the winning design from a *batik* design competition held by the Kulon Progo Regency Government to commemorate National *Batik* Day every October 2nd. The winning design belongs to Ales Candra Wibawa [9]. The *Geblek renteng* motif is inspired by a traditional Kulon Progo food made from cassava, shaped into two circles joined together resembling the number eight [9], [14]. Originally, *Geblek* was formed as a single circle, but due to sales needs, the shape was made into two or three circles combined into one to facilitate sales [11]. Subsequently, the figure eight (8) motif became known as the *Geblek renteng* motif and serves as a new symbol of Kulon Progo's characteristic *batik*. The number eight was chosen because it represents the total number of villages in Kulon Progo, which is 88 villages [11]. The choice of the number eight also symbolizes the bond among various community elements united by the spirit of mutual cooperation, solidarity, and collaboration, resulting in unity and harmony [14]. The *Geblek renteng batik* motif is displayed in Figure 4.

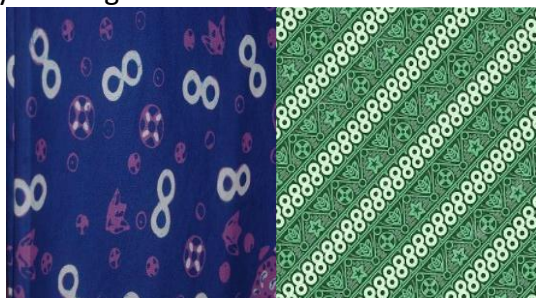


Fig. 4. The Example of *Geblek renteng Batik*

### 3.2. Discussion

This study found that several characteristic motifs of Kulon Progo are inspired by the natural wealth and local wisdom of the Kulon Progo community, combined with the cultural values of the local society. The identified characteristic motifs of Kulon Progo include: (1) the *Gringsing* motif; (2) the *Galaran* motif; (3) the *Pulo* motif; and (4) the *Geblek renteng* motif. Each motif carries a distinct history, characteristics, and unique meaning.

First, the *Gringsing batik* is characterized by a design consisting of small, neat, and structured circles. Some designs are varied with a dot in the center, resembling fish eyes. *Gringsing* holds a philosophical meaning of “not sick,” symbolizing prayers for a healthy and long life. Originally, the *Gringsing* motif was designed with sogan color, but later evolved with various color variations and combined motif compositions to meet market demand. Second, the *Galaran batik* generally features fine, dense diagonal lines. The motif is inspired by the *galar*, a bamboo mat used as a floor covering. *Galaran batik* is commonly worn by men, whereas the *Gringsing* motif is typically worn by women.

Third, *Pulo batik* is a new style that combines classic motifs designed in large, irregular abstract collages. This type of *batik* is used by artisans to explore and express their creative freedom in composing motifs with varied color choices. Lastly, *Geblek renteng batik* is the iconic motif of Kulon Progo, consisting of two circles joined to resemble the number eight (8). This shape was chosen to represent the 88 villages in Kulon Progo Regency and symbolizes togetherness, mutual cooperation, and community spirit, which is hoped to foster ongoing unity and solidarity.

Based on the results and discussion, it can be concluded that the variations of Kulon Progo’s characteristic *batik* motifs reflect the cultural richness and unique local identity of the Kulon Progo community. This study successfully identified Kulon Progo *batik* motifs including *Gringsing*, *Galaran*, *Pulo*, and *Geblek renteng*, each with its own characteristics and meanings. For example, the *Gringsing* motif symbolizes prayers and hopes for health and longevity, while the *Geblek renteng* motif represents unity and togetherness among the Kulon Progo community. Each motif not only displays aesthetic value with economic potential but also embodies noble life values. Therefore, although the variations of Kulon Progo’s characteristic *batik* motifs continue to evolve to meet market needs and demands, it is hoped that these developments will not diminish the existing values and will maintain the original design characteristics.

### 4. Conclusions

The characteristic *batik* of Kulon Progo represents a fusion of Kulon Progo’s identity, local wisdom, and strong cultural values. The *batik* motifs produced in Kulon Progo Regency not only enrich the diversity of *batik* motifs in Indonesia but also create a strong and enduring identity for the Kulon Progo community. Future research is recommended to explore the influence of these motifs in the tourism and creative economy sectors of Kulon Progo. Additionally, further studies could focus on efforts to develop more innovative *batik* motifs while still respecting cultural values without losing the essence of local heritage.

### Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest. The funders had no role in the design of the study; in the collection, analysis, or interpretation of data; in the writing of the manuscript; or in the decision to publish the results.



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