

Tradition and Spirituality: Exploring the Motifs of Rifaiyah Batik in the Context of Islamic Values

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Abstract: Batik Rifaiyah is a cultural heritage of the Rifaiyah Community located in Kalipucang Wetan Village, Batang Regency, Central Java. It serves as an expression of Islamic spirituality. This type of Batik represents artistic craftsmanship and is a medium for teaching Islamic values through symbols and motifs. However, understanding the philosophical values and foundational aspects of Rifaiyah Batik is currently limited to the oral traditions passed down by batik makers and the Rifaiyah Community, with insufficient written documentation. This study aims to explore and comprehend the fundamental principles of Rifaiyah Batik as a manifestation of Islamic spiritual art, focusing on the *Pelo Ati* and Materos Satrio motifs. The research employs a qualitative method utilizing a social phenomenology approach. It includes observations of the batik motifs, in-depth interviews with batik makers, and a review of relevant literature. The analysis is guided by the Pyramid Base Guiding Craft Innovation theory, which identifies four crucial dimensions in the batik tradition: Traditional Artifacts, Traditional Ecology, Teaching of Tradition, and Non-Material Culture. The findings reveal that Rifaiyah Batik reflects Islamic values through theological, aesthetic, and artistic ethics. Theologically, it avoids depicting living beings, using arabesque to express Tawheed. Aesthetically, its colors are inspired by the Qur'an. Artistically, its meticulous craftsmanship is an act of worship.

Keywords: batik, rifaiyah batik, islamic spiritual art, fundamental ground, pyramid guiding craft innovation

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A. Introduction

Indonesia has vibrant cultural diversity, making it a multicultural nation (Sari & Najicha, 2022). This diversity extends beyond various art forms and cultural expressions; it is also evident in the perspectives and behaviors of its populace (Djafar & Djafri, 2024). These opinions and behaviors have developed into distinct autonomous cultural systems for each ethnic group, preserving values deeply ingrained within society through their traditions (Umar, 2020). Batik serves as a prime illustration of this cultural heritage, embodying the human capacity for creativity and self-expression derived from the surroundings of its artisans (Yanuarmi, 2020). The formal recognition of Batik as an Intangible Cultural Heritage by UNESCO in 2009 marked a significant step in safeguarding it from claims by other nations (Evita et al., 2022). Therefore, it is important to recognize that Batik is not merely an arrangement of colors or patterns devoid of significance; instead, it encapsulates ideas that reflect the environmental culture of the local community.

Culture embodies human reasoning and illustrates the efforts and ethics involved in creating artistic works (Sjafri, 2022). Batik Rifa'iyah, a particular type of Batik, exemplifies the integration of human reason and morals as depicted in its designs. Within this community, Batik represents a unique cultural phenomenon that strongly connects artistic expression and religious values. This cultural phenomenon is evident in the amalgamation of Islamic spiritual principles that have emerged as a form of spiritual expression among its people, deeply rooted in Islamic teachings and influenced by the ideas of KH. Ahmad Rifa'i (Kamil et al., 2021).

Previous research has highlighted various Islamic spiritual values inherent in Batik. For instance, Prizilla (2017) discovered that Batik practice transcends mere economic activity and carries a value of worship. Similarly, Asih (2019) emphasized that the motifs of Rifa'iyah Batik reflect Islamic beliefs and the teachings of KH. Ahmad Rifa'i. Khasanah (2024) identified several Rifa'iyah Batik motifs inspired by interpretations of Qur'anic verses. These studies collectively underline a common theme regarding exploring the spiritual dimensions of Islam as expressed through Rifa'iyah Batik. However, there has yet to be a comprehensive examination of its foundational aspects, including traditional artifacts, traditional ecology, teachings, and non-material culture.

Tradition is often viewed too narrowly as something static and unchanging, with an identity that is merely inherited and passed down to future generations. Instead, the identity within tradition should allow for opportunities for deeper analysis by engaging the entire community in collaboratively constructing new meanings

(Ciptandi et al., 2022). Conversely, information concerning the philosophical values associated with each foundational element of Rifaiyah Batik is primarily derived from oral traditions shared by sources, cultural practitioners, and scholars. The scarcity of written documentation complicates access to this information for the broader community. Therefore, this study systematically documents the values of these fundamental elements to serve as a readily accessible reference for future research. The objective of this study is to explore the foundational aspects of Batik Rifaiyah, with a particular focus on the *Pelo Ati* and *Materos Satrio* motifs. These two motifs were selected because they hold significant meaning and value in interpreting the Qur'an (Khasanah, 2024). A thorough understanding of these foundational elements is anticipated to be the initial step toward a comprehensive grasp of the culture of Batik Rifaiyah. It is essential for individuals to fully appreciate the values, meanings, and philosophies underlying a cultural product to foster innovations that are rooted in tradition while preserving its identity (Ciptandi et al., 2016).

This research aims to systematically explore and document the foundational aspects of Batik Rifaiyah, particularly emphasizing the *Pelo Ati* and *Materos Satrio* motifs. These motifs were chosen due to their significant meanings and values in interpreting the Qur'an, reflecting the intersection of artistic expression and Islamic spiritual principles. By examining these motifs, the study aims to illuminate the philosophical values inherent in each foundational element of Rifaiyah Batik, which are often conveyed through oral traditions rather than written documentation. This approach seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the cultural heritage associated with Batik, facilitating a deeper appreciation of its significance within the community and the broader cultural landscape of Indonesia.

This research contributes to the documentation and preservation of intangible cultural heritage, addressing the gap created by the lack of written records about the philosophical underpinnings of Rifaiyah Batik. By establishing a systematic reference for future studies, this research encourages further exploration of traditional artifacts, ecological contexts, teachings, and non-material culture, fostering interdisciplinary dialogue. Moreover, the study underscores the importance of engaging communities in interpreting and innovating cultural traditions, promoting a dynamic understanding of heritage that evolves while retaining its core identity. This perspective enriches academic discourse and supports cultural sustainability and the continued relevance of traditional practices in contemporary society.

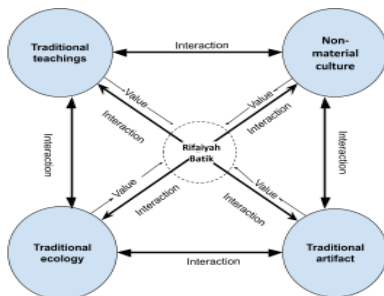
B. Methods

The methodology employed in this study is descriptive qualitative, aimed at elucidating the context and products of the Rifaiyah Batik tradition. Data was collected using triangulation techniques, integrating three primary methods: observation, interviews, and literature review. Observations focused on Rifaiyah Batik products featuring the *Pelo Ati* and *Materos Satrio* motifs, which were accessible at the residence of Miftakhutin, the Head of the Collective Business Group situated in Kalipucang Wetan Village, Batang Regency.

In this observation, the researcher analyzed the visual composition and meaning of the Rifaiyah Batik motif utilizing the visual morphology method by studying the motif and color. Interviews were conducted with batik craftsmen, namely Miftakhutin and Khunipah, third-generation batik makers, and Mbah Umriyah, second-generation batik makers in the Rifaiyah Community. This interview aimed to develop a better understanding of the batik-making process, the values contained in the batik motifs, and the challenges faced in preserving tradition. Literature studies were also conducted to explore previous research on Rifaiyah Batik as an enrichment of insight.

The data obtained from the three sources were then analyzed using the Pyramid Base Guiding Craft Innovation concept (Ciptandi, 2021), as depicted in Figure 1. This concept is used to understand the Fundamental ground of traditional products, which includes four main elements: Traditional artifacts, Traditional ecology, Traditional teachings, and Non-material culture. The concept of the research stages can be observed in Figure 1.

Figure 1.
Concept of the Pyramid Base Guiding Craft Innovation



Source: Ciptandi (2021)

At this stage, the data analysis method uses a phenomenological approach to examine the four main elements to find the most fundamental values contained in

each element. After combining, all of the values contained in these elements will form an identity value and the ground of Batik Rifaiyah. These four elements have a reciprocal relationship between their elements. The traditional artifact elements interact with non-material culture, and non-material culture has an interactive relationship with traditional teachings. At the same time, traditional teaching elements interact with traditional ecology, which is interconnected with traditional artifacts. The interconnectedness of the values of each element has created a complete Batik Rifaiyah product, reflecting the essence and identity of its culture.

C. Results and Discussion

Rifaiyah Batik is a hand-drawn batik produced by the Rifaiyah Community in Kalipucang Wetan Village, Batang Regency. This type of Batik is classified as coastal-style batik, yet it features more intricate, viscous, and smooth details (Fadlia, 2021). As noted by Miftakhutin, the precise origins of this Batik's production remain unclear, as the community has been engaged in batik-making since the village was part of the Mataram kingdom. The analysis conducted in this study employs the concept of the Pyramid Base Guiding Craft Innovation to gain a deeper understanding of the fundamental bases of Rifaiyah Batik. The subsequent discussion will address these four elements.

Traditional Artifact

The traditional artifact element in this research understanding study is divided into several aspects that are considered to be able to be sensed by the five senses. These elements include:

1. Material and Dimension

The production of Rifaiyah Batik faces constraints concerning the origin of the raw materials utilized. However, an interview with Khunipah (a batik maker in Kalipucang Wetan Village) revealed that since the third generation, batik artisans have utilized primis cotton fabric as the primary material for their textiles. This fabric type is tailored to the products being created; for instance, the *Tarikupu* brand primis fabric is designated for jars, while jumbo primis fabric is employed for sarongs.

This fabric is not sourced from Batang Regency but is procured from the market, with batik makers indicating that it comes from Pekalongan, the nearest batik center. Primissima fabric is favored due to its superior quality and tightly woven fibers (Khamidah et al., 2024). Historically, the dyeing materials used were derived

from local plants in the Batang area, serving as natural dyes. For example, the roots of the mengkudu plant were used for red, turmeric roots for yellow, indigo plants for blue, and avocado leaves for brown (Asih, 2019).

According to an interview with Khunipah, since entering the third generation, batik makers have started using synthetic dyes in line with the changes that also occurred due to the rapid progress factor in the overall batik industry market, which prioritizes practicality, time efficiency, and low cost (Ciptandi & Arumsari, 2024). The coloring of Rifaiyah batik from the past to the present uses *Bang Biron* (adding two colors) and *Tiga Negeri* (adding three colors simultaneously on a piece of batik cloth). The *Tiga Negeri* type of coloring is an acculturation of the dominant red color of Lasem batik, the dominant brown color of Solo batik, and the dominant indigo-blue color of Rifaiyah batik itself. Acculturation is also called part of the touch of European and Chinese Patterns. Historically and currently, the main product of this Batik is a *Jarit* (Batik shawl) cloth measuring 270 x 105 cm. The representation of the *Jarit* cloth and the configuration of the fabric's divisions can be observed in Figure 2.

Figure 2

Structure of the Pelo Ati Motif Batik Section

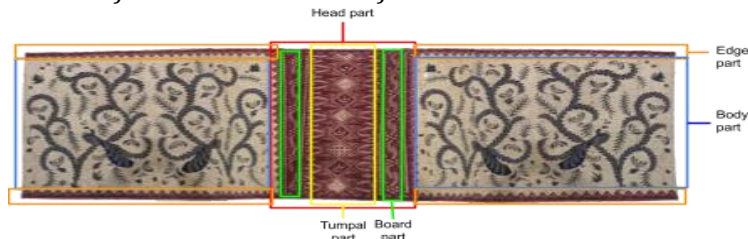


Source: Personal Document (2024)

In addition, another form is a sarong measuring 220 x 110cm, which has been maintained since the beginning of its manufacture. Figure 3 illustrates the sarong and its division structure.

Figure 3.

Structure of the Materos Satrio Motif Batik Section



Source: Personal Document (2024)

2. Batik Process

With the advent of the third generation of batik artisans, the base material utilized for this mori cloth has shifted to cotton, tailored to specific products. For instance, primis *Tarikupu* is employed for *Jarit* cloth, while primis jumbo cloth is reserved for sarongs. The fundamental materials for this cloth are not sourced from local villages or Batang Regency; rather, they are collectively procured from the market.

According to the batik artisans, these materials are primarily sourced from Pekalongan, the nearest batik center to Kalipucang Wetan Village. The origins of the materials used by previous generations remain undocumented. However, historical distribution records of Rifaiyah Batik indicate that these materials originally came from Mroto, Bojong, Paesan, and Madukaran Villages in the Kedungwuni District of Pekalongan (Fadlia, 2021).

Other tools and materials used and the process of making Rifaiyah Batik are identical with other hand-drawn Batik. All production of tools and materials does not come from within Kalipucang Wetan Village or Batang Regency but is supplied from the nearest batik center area, Pekalongan. Other tools and materials used include:

- a. *Canting*. It consists of a sizeable klowongan canting for thick lines, an *Isen Canting* for covering small area (*Isen-Isen*), and a *tembok Canting* for filling the broader area using *Malam* (wax).
- b. *Gawangan* is a wood or bamboo structure that stretches more cloth during the batik process.
- c. *Anglo* was a heater used in the past, and charcoal was used as fuel. Currently, its replacement is a small stove used to heat *Malam*.
- d. *Wajan* is used as a container to melt the *Malam*.
- e. *Malam* is a mixture of *gondorukem*, cat's eye, paraffin, beeswax, and fat. Three types of differentiating *Malam* exist: *Carik Malam* / cat's eye *Malam*, which is slightly yellowish to make smooth hand-drawn batik; *Dindingan Malam*, which is brown stain to cover the block (white); and *Biron Malam*, which is browner than *Dindingan Malam* to cover the blue color.

Figure 4

The Process of Making Rifaiyah Batik

a. Nglowongi; b. Rengsi; c. Mopok; d. Coloring; e. Lorod; f. Drying



Source: Youtube "Setra Disdikbud" (2024)

Creating Rifaiyah Batik is identical to other hand-drawn Batik, as seen in Figure 4. The process starts with more cloth soaked in peanut oil for 1-3 days to remove starch and dirt. Then, the central motif is drawn using a sizeable *Klowong Canting* (*nglowongi*), and the details are filled in using a *Isen Canting* (*Isen-Isen*). After the drawing process, the wax is applied with a *Canting Mopok* in the *Mopok* process (filling in batik patterns or designs with specific colors), and the coloring stage is carried out using two techniques: *Bang Biron* (twice coloring) and *Tiga Negeri* (three times coloring). The colored Batiks were soaked in hot water to remove the wax before finally being dried under the hot sun.

3. Color and Visual Composition in the Pelo Ati & Materos Satrio Motifs

In general, the color of the Rifaiyah Batik motif is dominated by white as the background, while the central motif uses red (*Bang-Bang*), blue (*Wedel*), and green (*Grading*). The supporting motifs' colors vary, including red, blue, green, black, brown, and white (Prizilla & Sachari, 2017). The colors in *Isen-Isen* combine red, green, and white and are inspired by the natural colors around the Batang coast (Asih, 2019). The colors that appear on Batik Rifaiyah with the *Pelo Ati* motif can be defined in Figure 5.

Figure 5

Colors on the Pelo Ati motif



Source: Prizilla (2017)

Similar to the Pelo Ati motif, the Materos Satrio motif features white as the predominant color of the base. The design incorporates blue for the plant elements and red along the edges. The color scheme of the Materos Satrio motif is illustrated in Figure 6.

Figure 6
Colors in the Materos Satrio Motif



















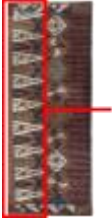

Source: Personal Document (2024)







The Pelo Ati batik motif is a captivating example of *Jarit* cloth, renowned for its meaningful visual composition that intricately combines shape and color. This motif is thoughtfully divided into three main sections. The first section, known as the body, showcases the central motif accompanied by decorative elements known as *Isen-Isen*. This area serves as the focal point of the design. Next is the head section, which features various components, including the *Tumpal*, the edge of the *Tumpal*, *Tanahan*, and *Papan*. Each element contributes to the overall aesthetic and narrative of the motif. Third, the edge section of the cloth encompasses the central motif, an edge board, and additional *Tanahan* along the fabric's perimeter. This careful arrangement enhances the visual appeal and coherence of the design. This classification and the intricate details of the *Pelo Ati* batik motif are further illustrated in Figure 2. For a more comprehensive understanding of the motif's shape, refer to Table 1, which outlines its various divisions (Prizilla & Sachari, 2017).

Table 1
Description of The Shapes and Colors in the Pelo Ati Batik Motif According to Its Division


Body Part			
Motif Name	Part Details	Motif Shape	Description
Chicken Liver (<i>Ati</i>)			The central motif is <i>Ati</i> , in the stylization of a bird with a separate head at the top and a heart that remains intact as a sign of a non-living creature.

			<p>The colors seen in this motif are green in the comb shape, red for the head, and blue for the neck. The heart is dominated by red, with green and blue in the middle, blue for the edge, and brown and green on the feathers.</p>
Chicken Gizzard (<i>Pelo</i>)			<p>Another central motif is <i>Pelo</i>, a stylization of a bird's gizzard outside its body. This motif uses green to dominate the gizzard, red in the middle, and brown on the edge attached to it. The tips of the feathers vary in brown.</p>
Sunflower			<p>Sunflowers are a complementary motif. Their petals are different, consisting of red, blue, and green, while the disk floret (center of the flower) is red. This flower can follow the sun's direction (heliotropism) and is often interpreted as a symbol of steadfastness, hope, and truth seekers.</p>
Clover Leaves			<p>Another supporting motif is a cloverleaf with five green petals. Clover leaves with five petals symbolize the five pillars of Islam, which are essential in a Muslim's life.</p>



Tendril Leaves			<p>Another motif is the blue tendril leaf motif attached to the <i>Hanahan</i> motif. Tendril leaves symbolize growth and life, the connection between humans and nature, and resilience in facing challenges.</p>
Plants			<p>The supporting motif consists of leaves and flowers as a filler for the edge. Blue dominates this edge, while brown and green dominate the colors of plants and flowers.</p>
Filler Motif (<i>Isen-Isen</i>) on the Body part			
Leaves			<p>The filler motif in the central part is dominated by a leaf motif shaped like a fern leaf. Each leaf has a different color: green, red, and blue.</p>
<i>Gringsing Sisik</i>			<p>The <i>Isen-Isen</i> motif is dominated by the <i>Gringsing Sisik</i> motif as the filler of the entire body of the cloth. This shape has a brown color throughout.</p>
<i>Tumpal</i> edge			<p>The <i>Tumpal</i> motif consists of an arrangement of geometric shapes in the form of an isosceles triangle facing 90 degrees to the right. This triangle is filled with non-geometric shapes of flowers and leaves.</p>

Head			<p>The head motif consists of non-geometric shapes of plants and flowers. The dominant background color is red.</p>
<i>Cecek Pitu</i>			<p>The <i>Cecek Pitu</i> motif dominates the edge of the <i>Tumpal</i> cloth. This motif is a series of tiny dots neatly arranged, often in a circle or ellipse, into an image like a white flower.</p>
<i>Tanahan</i>			<p>The <i>Tanahan</i> motif consists of non-geometric motifs such as plants, leaves, and flowers that fill the board. The colors vary, such as red, blue, and green.</p>

Filling Motifs (*Isen-Isen* on the Head part)

Flowers			<p>The <i>Isen-Isen</i> motif on the triangular <i>Tumpal</i> is filled with various variations of flower and leaf shapes. The colors also vary. The triangle is white; the flowers are blue, red, green, and brown with white <i>cecek</i> details as decoration inside the flower petals.</p>
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Board part (edge)

Plants			<p>Flower motifs, tendrils, leaves, and other plants dominate the board's filling on this edge. The board's dominant color is red.</p>
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Source: Personal Document (2024)

The object of research conducted on the *Materos Satrio* motif is a sarong. In an interview with Mbah Umriyah, a second-generation batik maker, *Materos* in Javanese comes from the word "teros" or "continuous," which means "continuous." *Satrio* refers to a "hero or knight". The shape and color of the motif have been identified in Table 2.



Table 2
Description of the Materos Satrio Batik Motif's Shape and Color According to Its Division



Body part			
Motif Name	Part Details	Motif Shape	Description
<i>Lung-lungan</i>			The main motif shape on the body of the Rifaiyah batik displays ornaments in the form of plant tendrils, leaves, or twigs that spread. The identified color is dark blue, which is the dominant color.
Peacock			The central motif shape on the other body is a stylized peacock motif with no complete head—the shape of the transformation of a peacock into a creeping plant. The identified color is dark blue.
Filling Motifs (Isen-isen) on the Body part			
<i>Ukel</i>			The motif that fills the central part is a uke shaped like a small brown climbing plant. The <i>Isen-Isen</i> motif dominates the entire background of the body.

Leaves			<p>Another filler motif is a leaf with a stem similar to the shape of a fern leaf with a dominant blue color and white color details in the middle in the form of dots and lines.</p>
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Flowers			<p>Another filler motif is a shape like a flower from the side placed at the leaf's tip. The color blue dominates this flower shape.</p>
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Head Part

Geometric			<p>The head section is filled with a geometric rectangular shape that can be said to be inspired by <i>Dapel</i> (traditional food from Batang Regency). In the geometric form, there are non-geometric motifs in the form of plants, such as flowers and leaves, and the <i>ceplok</i> motif is also visible. In this section, the dominant colors are red and white.</p>
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<i>Tanahan</i>			<p>The board motif is filled with leaf tendrils and flowers resembling jasmine flowers. The color is white, following the basic color of the Batik, while the board section is dominated by red.</p>
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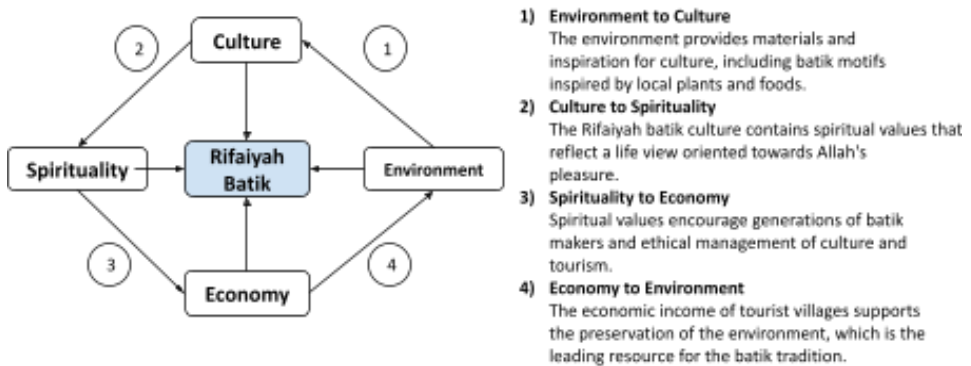
Board Part (edge)



Traditional Ecology

The Rifaiyah community in Kalipucang Wetan Village has a distinctive traditional ecosystem, and each element is connected and supportive. The natural environment provides the leading materials and inspiration for cultural traditions. Local traditions (culture), including Rifaiyah batik motifs, are inspired by flora, fauna, and symbols that reflect a view of life oriented towards Allah's pleasure (spirituality). These spiritual values encourage the regeneration of batik makers and the management of spiritual-based tourism villages (economy). Furthermore, income from the economic sector, such as tourism villages, contributes to environmental preservation as the leading resource for the batik tradition. This reciprocal relationship creates a harmonious ecosystem and is reflected in the Rifaiyah Batik motif. To understand this ecosystem visually, see Figure 7.

Figure 7
Scheme of Interrelated Ecosystems in Kalipucang Wetan Village's Traditional Ecolog



Source: Personal Document (2024)

The Batang Regency area is characterized by a diverse landscape that includes coastal regions, lowlands, and mountainous terrain. The people of Batang are predominantly engaged in agrarian activities, with many from the interior population working in agriculture, plantations, and animal husbandry (Fadlia, 2021). This livelihood includes the Rifaiyah community, which is situated in Kalipucang Wetan Village, Batang Regency. As a result, batik motifs in this region often depict plants, flowers, or birds.

The village environment is marked by a serene green atmosphere and welcoming residents. Kalipucang Wetan Village is recognized as the center of Rifaiyah Batik production, where women play a crucial role as batik makers, preserving traditional practices. Although traditional attire, such as *Jarit* cloth, is primarily worn by the older generation daily, younger individuals are increasingly adopting modern clothing styles.

The name "Rifaiyah" is attributed to this community, honoring the legacy of KH. Ahmad Rifai was a prominent cleric from the 18th century. Batik activities in this village date back to when it was still part of the Mataram kingdom. The influence of Islamic spiritual thought began to manifest in the motifs, which often avoided the complete representation of living beings, a practice that developed during KH. Ahmad Rifai's residence in the village, even during his exile.

In addition to non-geometric motifs, such as flora and fauna, there are also geometric motifs, such as the *Dapel* motif, inspired by local cuisine. *Dapel*, made from sticky rice, is rectangular and tastes sweet. It is usually served at important events such as weddings and big day celebrations. This rectangular shape inspired the creation of the Rifaiyah batik motif, which does not depict living things and symbolizes the heart's steadfastness in seeking Allah SWT's pleasure to fulfill daily needs. Rifaiyah batik artisans can transform the forms of living things into beautiful and elegant floral designs (Fadlia, 2021, p. 202).

Since 2013, Kalipucang Wetan Village has been inaugurated as the Rifaiyah Batik Tourism Village. The local government has been actively promoting Rifaiyah Batik through the annual event "Celebrating Rifaiyah Batik," held since 2022, to preserve this cultural heritage. This event involves art, exhibitions, and cultural discussions inviting the younger generation to familiarize Rifaiyah Batik. Despite the government's efforts to promote development, daily activities in the village remain relatively low in intensity. Batik production occurs primarily in the homes of individual batik makers rather than in a centralized workshop or gallery established by the government. An interview with Khunipah noted that the village's workshop

hall and gallery are utilized mainly for cultural events, sales, or community gatherings. Miftakhutin indicated that the Rifaiyah community was historically a somewhat insular group, with batik sales confined to within the community, particularly during joint religious study sessions. However, as time progressed, beginning with the third generation of batik makers, the marketing of Rifaiyah batik began to extend beyond the community, establishing it as an important cultural heritage of Kalipucang Wetan.

Teaching Tradition

The term "Rifaiyah batik" is not commonly recognized within the community itself; researchers introduced it to differentiate the hand-drawn batik products of the Rifaiyah community from other batik styles prevalent in the coastal regions of North Central Java, particularly in Pekalongan and Batang. The initial center for Rifaiyah hand-drawn batik was established in Kedungwuni, South Pekalongan. However, in the 1990s, the number of batik makers declined. Production of Rifaiyah batik continued in Kalipucang Wetan Village, Batang Regency while adhering to Islamic teachings imparted by KH. Ahmad Rifai prohibited depicting forms that were considered misleading.

The continuity of this tradition is upheld through the close kinship among artisans and their shared tastes and trade practices, resulting in batik motifs from Kalipucang Wetan being similar to those from Madukaran (Fadlia, 2021, pp. 122-123). The oral culture within the Rifaiyah community plays a crucial role in sustaining the knowledge of batik. Much like batik instruction in other regions, oral traditions convey motifs' meanings, forms, names, and origins through contemporary batik artisans (Ciptandi, 2021, p. 3). Techniques and philosophies related to batik motifs are transmitted orally from generation to generation, typically from mothers to daughters, without written documentation. Teaching methods vary among families, with some girls learning directly from their mothers while others observe before creating batik independently. These skills and knowledge are also incorporated into extracurricular programs across all educational levels, from elementary to advanced education (Fadlia et al., 2020, p. 236).

Establishing the Rifaiyah Batik Tourism Village has prompted local and district governments to provide a workshop gallery for individuals outside the Rifaiyah community who wish to learn the art of batik. Alongside batik techniques, the Tarajumah Book serves as a reference for the Rifaiyah community in their work; this book has been routinely taught in Islamic boarding schools and madrasahs since

elementary school. Using stairs or shalwar is also integral to the batik process, highlighting that this activity transcends mere artistry and embodies a form of spirituality within the Rifaiyah tradition.

Non-material Culture

The foundation of Rifaiyah Batik is rooted in a profound philosophy, notably derived from the interpretation of the Tarajumah Book authored by KH. Ahmad Rifai. In an interview, Mbah Umriyah indicated that this book contains verses from the Qur'an and hadith translated into Javanese while still utilizing hijaiyah script. It outlines teachings that serve as standards in the creation of Rifaiyah batik, reflecting principles of Islamic spiritual art. The core philosophy of Rifaiyah Batik emphasizes the greatness of Allah and adherence to Islamic teachings, which is particularly evident in the regulations surrounding the depiction of living beings. Within this tradition, there is a prohibition against illustrating living entities in their entirety, which is regarded as a sign of respect for Allah's creation.

The motifs in Rifaiyah batik emphasize the principles of Islamic art, such as symmetry, balance, and moral-spiritual values (Shaykh-Baygloo, 2018). In addition, the batik-making process is noticed as a form of worship, accompanied by dhikr and *syi'iran*, to strengthen the religious aspect during the batik-making process (Fadlia, 2021). *Pelo Ati* motifs in Batik Rifaiyah contain symbolic meaning about the relationship between good and evil in humans. In this philosophy, the heart is considered a place to filter good human traits such as asceticism, patience, *tawakal* (rely on God), and sincerity. In contrast, bad traits such as greed and ostentation (*riya'*) are depicted as dirt that needs to be removed (Prizilla & Sachari, 2017).

Another motif, *Materos Satrio*, depicts a close and unbroken brotherhood, as reflected in a neat arrangement of vines. This motif teaches the importance of maintaining brotherhood in social life, as taught in An-Nisa Chapter Verse 1, reminds humans to help each other and maintain family ties. In addition, this motif also contains strong character values in building harmonious friendships and kinship, so it is continually used in bridal gifts as a symbol of a strong and inseparable relationship (Khasanah, 2024). The aesthetics of Rifaiyah Batik focus on values that contain deep spirituality, where each motif and manufacturing process has a philosophical meaning closely related to Islamic teachings and local wisdom.

Islamic Values in Rifaiyah Batik

Based on the analysis of the four fundamental values underlying the production of Batik Rifaiyah, the following Islamic values are identified:

1. Theological Aspects

One of the distinctive characteristics of Batik Rifaiyah is the absence of complete depictions of living beings in its motifs. It aligns with the principle of Tawheed in Islam, which discourages the portrayal of living beings in complete form to avoid imitating Allah's creation (Dharmawan et al., 2024). Instead, Batik Rifaiyah motifs are predominantly inspired by arabesque designs, utilizing repetitive patterns, particularly in depictions of plants, leaves, and geometric shapes that symbolize Allah's supreme, indivisible, and infinite nature (Dharmawan et al., 2024). Additionally, Batik Rifaiyah incorporates ethical values within its designs. For instance, the *Pelo Ati* motif represents the dual nature of the human character, encompassing both good and bad traits. In contrast, the *Materos Satrio* motif conveys the value of *ukhuwah* (brotherhood) (Khasanah, 2024). These motifs reflect the theological concept of Tawheed in Islamic art (Arminah et al., 2023).

The *Pelo Ati* motif, which translates to "heart" and "gizzard," symbolizes human morality as described in the Qur'an. It illustrates the coexistence of good and bad character traits by depicting a split bird. Meanwhile, the *Materos Satrio* motif, representing fraternity, is illustrated using interwoven vine patterns, symbolizing the interconnectedness of brotherhood.

Incorporating ethical values in Rifaiyah Batik's designs deepens the cultural and spiritual significance of the motifs. For instance, the *Pelo Ati* motif, which symbolizes the duality of human character, not only illustrates the coexistence of virtuous and flawed traits but also encourages self-reflection and moral growth among its viewers. Similarly, the *Materos Satrio* motif embodies the principle of *ukhuwah*, highlighting the importance of brotherhood and social cohesion within the community. These motifs are not merely aesthetic choices; they are imbued with the theological concept of Tawheed, which underscores the oneness of Allah and the interconnectedness of all creation. This relationship between design and spiritual belief enriches the cultural narrative of Rifaiyah Batik, transforming it into a medium for promoting ethical behavior and reinforcing communal values, thereby ensuring that each piece serves an artistic and a didactic purpose in Islamic art.

2. Islamic Aesthetics

The dominant use of white as the base color in Batik Rifaiyah carries a spiritual significance in Islam, symbolizing light that provides guidance. White is associated with positive attributes such as brilliance, lightness, simplicity, purity, sincerity, and honesty (Syafi'i, 2017). The colors used in Batik Rifaiyah align with those mentioned in the Qur'an, including shades of blue, red, white, and green (Hidayat, 2020). In the

Pelo Ati motif, contrasting colors are employed to visually differentiate between good and evil moral qualities within human nature. Conversely, the *Materos Satrio* motif is illustrated using a single color, emphasizing unity and brotherhood.

The intentional choice of white as the predominant base color in Batik Rifaiyah not only reflects aesthetic preferences but also embodies a deep spiritual symbolism within Islamic thought. White, often regarded as a representation of divine light, serves as a metaphor for guidance and enlightenment, aligning with the Islamic values of purity and sincerity (Syafi'i, 2017). Additionally, incorporating colors mentioned in the Qur'an, such as blue, red, and green, further connects the art form to religious texts and traditions, reinforcing its cultural significance (Hidayat, 2020). In the *Pelo Ati* motif, the strategic use of contrasting colors effectively highlights the dichotomy of moral qualities, visually communicating the struggle between good and evil within human nature. This contrast not only enhances the visual complexity of the design but also invites contemplation on ethical behavior. In contrast, the *Materos Satrio* motif's reliance on a singular color underscores the ideals of unity and brotherhood, suggesting that a cohesive community is rooted in shared values despite individual differences. This interplay of color and meaning within Batik Rifaiyah ultimately enriches its role as a vehicle for spiritual expression and moral reflection in the Islamic tradition.

3. Ethics in Artistic Creation

Islamic artistic ethics emphasize that art should possess aesthetic value and convey spiritual and ethical meanings (Fuady, 2022). The production of Batik Rifaiyah employs the traditional hand-drawn batik technique, which requires patience, precision, and high skill. This meticulous process is regarded by its artisans as a form of worship, bringing them closer to Allah.

The adherence to Islamic artistic ethics in Batik Rifaiyah underscores the belief that art transcends mere visual appeal, serving as a medium for spiritual and ethical expression (Fuady, 2022). The traditional hand-drawn batik technique, characterized by its intricate patterns and labor-intensive methods, exemplifies this philosophy through its demand for exceptional skill, patience, and precision. Artisans engaged in this meticulous craft view their work as an artistic endeavor and a spiritual practice that fosters a deeper connection with Allah. This perspective transforms the act of creating batik into a form of worship, where each stroke of the *canting* (batik tool) is imbued with intention and devotion. As artisans immerse themselves in the process, they reflect on the ethical values embedded within their designs, allowing their creations to embody the principles of beauty and spirituality

inherent in Islamic art. Thus, the production of Batik Rifaiyah becomes a holistic practice that integrates artistry with faith, reinforcing the notion that true art is not only visually captivating but also rich in moral and spiritual significance.

D. Conclusion

Based on the result analysis of the fundamental grounds of Rifaiyah Batik, specifically the *Pelo Ati* and *Materos Satrio* motifs, it was found that in traditional artifacts, the most fundamental thing about Rifaiyah batik is the symbolic meaning of the motif's design, including the shape and color of its visual composition. The motif's design has a deep meaning because it reflects religious, moral, and ethical values. However, the manufacturing process, including rails and tools, is not entirely traditional.

In traditional ecology, the most fundamental thing is the harmonious relationship between nature and culture, culture and spirituality, spirituality and economy, and economy and nature, which form an ecosystem in the Rifaiyah community. In the context of teaching tradition, the most fundamental thing is the inheritance of Islamic spiritual values in the design and philosophy of batik motifs. It is because it is the standard for designing Rifaiyah batik motifs.

The most fundamental non-material culture is the connection between the motif's symbolic meaning and the manufacturing process, which involves chanting Islamic poems from the *Tarajumah* book as the basis of the ideology of the Rifaiyah community. Batik Rifaiyah reflects Islamic values through theological aspects, Islamic aesthetics, and ethical principles in artistic creation.

Theologically, this Batik avoids depicting living beings in complete form, replacing them with arabesque motifs that embody the principle of *Tawheed* while also incorporating moral values in the *Pelo Ati* and *Materos Satrio* motifs. From an aesthetic perspective, using white as the base color symbolizes purity and divine guidance, while other color combinations are derived from those mentioned in the *Qur'an*. In its production process, Batik Rifaiyah is regarded as a form of worship, emphasizing patience, precision, and high craftsmanship as part of ethical artistic practice in Islam.

Batik Rifaiyah is a cultural artifact and a medium for conveying spiritual values passed down through generations. Future research recommendations for developing innovations should consider the fundamental elements of Batik Rifaiyah's cultural identity by understanding the philosophy behind its existing motifs. Innovations may include exploring new colors, combining patterns, or using

different media, provided that the spiritual values embedded in Batik Rifaiyah are preserved.

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