

Cultural Meaning in Jambi Batik Motifs through Peirce's Semiotic Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Jambi batik is not just a traditional cloth, but a cultural artifact that encapsulates the philosophical, ecological, and spiritual values of the Jambi Malay community. Despite its high cultural richness, most existing studies emphasize the visual and historical aspects. This study aims to explore the meaning contained in Jambi batik motifs using Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic approach. The method used is descriptive qualitative research with data collection techniques through direct observation at the Jambi Siginjei Museum and Azmiah Batik House, and in-depth interviews with museum curators and batik makers. The results of the study show that the objects owned by Jambi batik motifs include natural elements such as plants, animals, history, and forms of objects that are close to the lives of the Jambi people. Representations appear as ornaments or visual motifs such as the Durian Pecah motif, The Tempuk Maggis motif, The Kaco Piring motif, and others, which contain symbolic values. The community understands that the interpretations emerging from the meaning-making process function as religious symbols, markers of social status, and representations of life philosophies. This study concludes that Jambi batik is not only a visual artifact but also a cultural text that contains a complex sign system. These findings can provide theoretical contributions to the development of cultural semiotic studies and practical contributions in preserving batik as an intangible heritage that represents indigenous knowledge and identity.

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INTRODUCTION

Batik has long been recognized as a cultural heritage deeply rooted in Indonesian identity. In 2009, UNESCO designated batik as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, a recognition that affirms its importance as a cultural expression reflecting the historical, philosophical, and cultural values of the Indonesian people (UNESCO, 2009). Each region in Indonesia, including Jambi, has its own distinctive batik motifs and patterns, reflecting the characteristics of nature, culture, and local wisdom that have been passed down from generation to generation.

Jambi batik is a unique form of Indonesian batik, with motifs that are not only visually beautiful but also contain deep philosophical meaning. Motifs such as the Durian Pecah and Tempuk Manggis reflect the rich biodiversity and culture of the Jambi people. Semiotically, these motifs can be considered signs that convey specific meanings about the identity of the Jambi people, in line with semiotic theory, which examines how signs in culture can represent certain concepts that reflect a society's identity and values. Batik motifs can be understood as a representation system that connects visual forms with ecological, social and philosophical meanings rooted in local knowledge systems, thus placing batik as an ontological and epistemological expression of a culture (Saidi et al., 2025)

However, the currents of globalization and the development of digital technology have presented significant challenges to the sustainability of traditional cultures such as Jambi batik. Society is increasingly exposed to a homogenous popular culture, which has the potential to shift the traditional values inherent in batik. Currently, the use of batik cloth is increasing, with various fashions and styles adapting to current developments. The current phenomenon of a significant increase in interest in wearing batik among the younger generation evidences this, through cloth trends. This trend is particularly pronounced among millennials and Generation Z, who believe that traditional Indonesian cloth should only be worn on special occasions (Suzianti et al., 2023). Many perceive batik merely as a fashion trend, without understanding the philosophical and historical meanings embedded in its motifs. Consequently, it is often used merely as a style trend without understanding the cultural values inherent in the cloth. As a result, batik is often misused or even overlooked as a valuable cultural heritage. A study of traditional clothing in contemporary fashion globally reveals that cultural adaptation in the fashion industry can increase cultural visibility, but at the same time has the potential to obscure the depth of symbolic meaning if historical narratives and cultural values are not included in the practice of using it (Jhangra, 2025).

In the academic realm, a semiotic approach, particularly Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotics, offers an appropriate analytical framework for exploring the symbolic meanings of Jambi batik motifs. According to Peirce's theory, a sign or symbol consists of three trichotomous elements: object, interpretant, and representamen, each of which has a specific relationship to the object it represents. This triadic semiotic model emphasizes that signs are not merely visible forms but also representations that convey meaning to interpreters, so that meaning involves an interpretative process that continues to develop (Kilstrup, 2015). Semiotics views culture as a system of signs interconnected through understanding their

meaning. This approach is useful in identifying the deeper meanings within Jambi batik motifs, allowing for a better understanding and preservation of the values of local wisdom.

Thus, efforts to preserve the indigenous knowledge of Jambi batik using Peirce's semiotic approach can significantly contribute to cultural preservation and public education regarding the values embodied in Jambi batik. Through semiotic analysis, the values embodied in Jambi batik can be more comprehensively understood, while digitalization allows for continued access to this knowledge for future generations. The aim of this research is to explore indigenous knowledge in Jambi batik using Peirce's semiotic framework, which includes object, interpretant, and representamen.

RESEARCH METHOD

A qualitative research approach was adopted because it enables an in-depth exploration of the complex meanings associated with cultural objects such as Jambi batik, which contains local symbolism and philosophy passed down through generations. To achieve a deeper understanding of the symbolic meaning of Jambi batik motifs, this study uses a Peircean semiotic approach. According to Charles Sanders Peirce (in Aryani & Yuwita, 2023), semiotics is the study of signs and everything related to the sign itself. In Jambi batik motifs, Peirce's semiotic elements help highlight how each motif functions not only as an ornament but also as a representation of the cultural identity of the Jambi people.

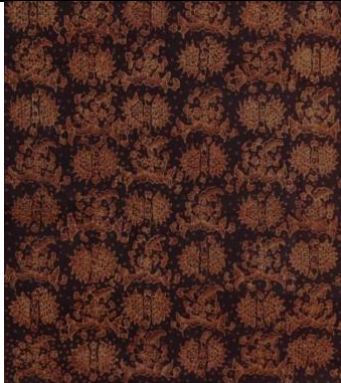
Data collection techniques used included in-depth interviews, observation, documentation, and literature review. This study employed a purposive sampling technique, with informants selected based on their competence in the preservation and understanding of Jambi batik. The informants consisted of a curator from the Siginjei Museum in Jambi and entrepreneurs from Rumah Batik Azmiah Jambi. The curator was selected based on their professional role in managing and interpreting cultural collections, while the batik entrepreneurs were chosen for their experience in the production and development of Jambi batik. All informants were considered competent and credible sources of research data. Data analysis techniques include data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The processed data were then analyzed using semiotic methods, referring to Peirce's semiotic framework. Data validation was performed using triangulation techniques to ensure the accuracy and consistency of the data obtained. Here, triangulation involves confirmation from various data sources.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Jambi batik demonstrates that batik art is not merely an ornament, but a rich and diverse form of cultural expression. The combination of natural elements, religious values, and local symbols in Jambi batik reflects the depth of culture that future generations must preserve and understand so that this heritage remains alive and relevant. Jambi batik embodies indigenous knowledge that is reflected in its motifs and symbolic meanings. These meanings are explored through Peirce's semiotic trichotomy framework, which comprises the representamen, object,

and interpretant. As shown in Table 1, the Durian Pecah motif represents a duality of meaning, such as hard and soft, faith and science, as well as spirituality and technology.

Table 1 The Durian Pecah Motif

Motif	Object	Representamen	Interpretant
	Duality of meaning: hard-soft, faith-science, spirituality-technology.	The split durian and accompanying local flora elements such as resam, kangkung flowers, clove leaves	Batik users are considered to be figures who maintain balance in life, upholding trust, and have spiritual values and social integrity

(Source: Azmiah Batik House, 2024)

The shape of Durian Pecah motif as seen in the Table 1 is inspired by a split or halved durian fruit. As a representamen, the Durian Pecah motif is visually represented through the image of a split durian combined with accompanying local flora elements such as resam decoration, kangkung flowers, clove leaves, and other natural ornaments arranged in symmetrical and repetitive patterns. Peirce explains that a representamen is the perceptible form of a sign that stands for an object and mediates meaning through interpretation (Peirce, 1932). This concept is reflected in the visual structure of the Durian Pecah motif, where the image of the split durian and symmetrical floral ornaments function not merely as decorative elements, but as visual signs that communicate cultural and philosophical meanings within Jambi society. The distillation process of this motif involves abstracting the shape of the durian fruit in a symmetrical and repetitive pattern, depicting a split durian skin, but still maintaining its original structure, depicting a balance between strength and softness.

As an object, the split durian motif refers to the duality of meanings, namely hard-soft, faith-science, and spirituality-technology, which reflect the interconnected balance between moral, spiritual, and technological aspects of life. One side of the durian skin symbolizes a foundation, faith, and piety, whereas the other side represents science and technology. This dualistic combination symbolizes the harmony between spiritual and moral values and technological advancement, particularly in the performance of work-related activities. (Z. I. Sari, 2024). According to Peirce, the object is the reality or concept referred to by the sign (Peirce, 1932). In this research, the object dimension of the Durian Pecah motif does not only refer to the physical durian fruit, but also to the philosophical values of balance, morality, spirituality, and technological progress embedded in the collective cultural understanding of Jambi society

The Durian Pecah motif symbolizes the Jambi people's values of balance in life, reflecting the integration of spiritual and moral principles with technological development. This symbolism suggests that the wearers of Durian Pecah batik are dynamic individuals who remain committed to upholding faith and piety (Supana, 2019). In addition, the use of the

Durian Pecah batik illustrates efforts to maintain harmony in life by maintaining the trust given to someone must be maintained which is the foundation of the social life of the Jambi people, "The use of Durian Pecah batik shows that someone places trust in someone, but if they break it, we will not trust them again, even if they improve their behavior. So, these people to maintain trust, don't break it." (Dhita, Interview 2024). As an interpretant, the Durian Pecah motif generates meanings associated with balance in life, trustworthiness, spiritual values, and social integrity within Jambi society. This symbolic arrangement reflects Peirce's concept that signs continuously generate interpretants through cultural interpretation and social experience (Peirce, 1932).

Table 2 The Merak Ngeram Motif

Motif	Object	Representamen	Interpretant
	Maternal values, such as compassion, responsibility, and sincerity, as well as symbolizing the emotional resilience and sacrifice of women in their reproductive roles.	A peacock circling the eggs it is incubating	The wearer of this batik is associated with gracefulness and moral responsibility, reflecting the ideal of women in the local cultural value system of Jambi.

(Source: Azmiah Batik House, 2024)

As shown in Table 2, the Merak Ngeram motif depicts a peacock or kuao incubating its eggs. This motif is stylized to depict the graceful peacock, with its feathers spread wide, encircling the eggs it is incubating to continue its lineage (Sunarto & Priyono, 2016a). The representamen of this motif is a peacock encircling its eggs. The peacock image is decoratively combined with the egg element as a symbol of heredity. Peirce explains that a representamen is the visible form of a sign that mediates meaning between the object and interpretant (Peirce, 1932). In this study, the visual depiction of the peacock surrounding its eggs functions as a representamen that communicates maternal protection, affection, and continuity of lineage through symbolic visual elements recognized within Jambi cultural understanding.

This statement reflects the symbolization of the experience of motherhood, particularly in patience during pregnancy and childbirth. This batik represents a mother's ability to restrain herself, both physically and emotionally, and to control herself during the pain and long struggle of childbirth. "It symbolizes how patient a mother is in her stagnation. When she stagnates, it's about how long she incubates until her child is born" (Erman, interview 2024). The depiction of the Merak Ngeram is a "symbol of a mother's love and responsibility," a mother who carries out nine months of pregnancy (9 months) and two years of breastfeeding, caressing, and nurturing her child until adulthood. All of this is done without expecting mercy or reward, all done with a sincere heart and a simple face (Sunarto & Priyono, 2016a). In

Peircean semiotics, the visual representation of the peacock protecting and incubating its eggs functions as a representamen that symbolizes maternal affection, responsibility, sincerity, sacrifice, and emotional resilience associated with women's nurturing roles. The object refers to the concept or reality represented by the sign (Peirce, 1932). The findings of this research indicate that the object dimension of the Merak Ngeram motif extends beyond the physical image of the peacock and eggs, referring to the lived experiences of motherhood, emotional endurance, sacrifice, sincerity, and responsibility that are culturally understood within Jambi society.

The Merak Ngeram motif symbolizes elegance rooted in love and a mother's sense of responsibility. The Merak Ngeram motif is considered a reflection of elegance that carries the values of affection and responsibility, especially among women (Sunarto & Priyono, 2016a). This demonstrates how a mother's biological experience can be transformed into broader social and cultural meanings and how these symbols are used to convey moral messages to society in a more profound and universal way. Peirce explains that the interpretant is the meaning formed in the mind through the interpretation of signs (Peirce, 1932). The Merak Ngeram motif produces interpretants related to maternal love, patience, sacrifice, sincerity, and moral responsibility, allowing the motif to function as a symbolic medium for transmitting ethical and cultural values across generations within Jambi society.

Table 3 The Tampuk Manggis Motif

Motif	Object	Representamen	Interpretant
	The values of honesty, sincerity, and harmony between the inner and outer; a metaphor for integrity, where the outer appearance reflects the inner content or character.	Cross section of a mangosteen fruit showing the outer skin, flesh, and seeds inside	Batik users are associated as open, honest, and unpretentious individuals, and uphold moral values and noble personality in socio-cultural life.

(Source: Azmiah Batik House, 2024)

As shown in Table 3, the Tampuk Manggis motif is the mangosteen fruit. The Tampuk Manggis motif is inspired by the shape of the mangosteen fruit, which is widely found in the Jambi community. The Tampuk Manggis motif originates from the shape and layers of the mangosteen fruit, which are hard on the outside but contain sweet flesh inside. The motif, depicting a cross-section of a mangosteen split in half, is based on a motif inspired by the mangosteen rind, which reveals the outer skin, flesh, and core (Roesli, 2024). Peirce explains that the representamen is the perceptible form of a sign that mediates meaning between the object and interpretant (Peirce, 1932). In this study, the visual representation of the mangosteen fruit functions as a representamen because the shape, layers, and inner structure

of the fruit communicate philosophical meanings recognized within Jambi cultural understanding.

The Tampuk Manggis motif is culturally interpreted as a symbol of honesty, harmony between the inner and outer, and sincerity. Through the symbolism of the mangosteen rind and core, the community instills the value that a person should live with integrity, that what is said, done, and felt should be harmonious and in harmony. "For example, if the Tampuk Manggis motif has 6, then there must also be 6 inside. This means that actions and words must be the same. The term "white heart" with the mangosteen fruit indicates that we must be like the mangosteen fruit, meaning that the tampuk chosen reflects our inner attitude" (Dhita, Interview 2024). This motif depicts the open and honest character and nature of the Jambi people, whose words are the same in intent and purpose as what is in their hearts. Furthermore, it can be seen from the skin, which is reddish-black and bitter, but the inside is white and sweet, containing a message to see people not only from their outer appearance but also to recognize their character and personality (Sunarto & Priyono, 2016a). The Tampuk Manggis motif provides the concept that the people of Jambi have refined morals, decent manners, and friendliness that cannot be seen from the outside (Rachmayanti & Hartanti, 2023). The object refers to the concept or reality represented by the sign (Peirce, 1932). The findings of this research indicate that the object dimension of the Tampuk Manggis motif extends beyond the physical mangosteen fruit and refers to cultural values such as honesty, sincerity, integrity, harmony between words and actions, and the importance of inner morality within Jambi society.

The Tampuk Manggis motif symbolizes a wearer who upholds honesty, openness, sincerity, and harmony between words and actions. Symbolically, the wearer of this batik also voices the cultural identity of Jambi, which emphasizes the importance of integrity and wisdom in behavior. If drawn from the historical aspect, the Tampuk Manggis motif depicts the personality of the queen of the Jambi Malay kingdom, who has an honest nature, because each mangosteen fruit will be equal to the number of calyxes (Adawiyah & Rosandini, 2017). Peirce explains that the interpretant is the meaning produced in the mind through the interpretation of signs (Peirce, 1932).

Table 4 The Kapal Sanggat Motif

Motif	Object	Representamen	Interpretant
	A metaphor for life, the journey towards a goal, and a symbol of stagnation or obstacles that suggest failure due to lack of determination or disruption in the life process.	A ship that sails with isen-isen in the form of marine biota (fish, snails, shells, etc.) and sails that point in the opposite direction to the bow of the ship.	Batik wearers are associated as individuals who are determined, careful, and goal-oriented in life, and have an awareness of the importance of completing each process to completion.

(Source: Azmiah Batik House, 2024)

Table 4 indicates that the Kapal Sanggat motif carries philosophical meanings related to life as a journey, the pursuit of goals, and the obstacles that may disrupt the process of achieving them. The Kapal Sanggat motif is inspired by the shape of the boats frequently used by the Jambi people in their daily lives to traverse the Batanghari River. This motif's distillation involves the ship's shape visualized in linear patterns, conveying a clear sense of direction and purpose. The filler motifs, or *isen*, in the Kapal Sanggat motif include marine life, such as fish, snails, jellyfish, crabs, shellfish, and others. Another element, the sail or flag at the top of the mast, points in the opposite direction from the ship's bow. Peirce explains that the representamen is the perceptible form of a sign that mediates meaning between the object and interpretant (Peirce, 1932). In this study, the visual representation of the sailing ship, marine elements, and opposing sail direction functions as a representamen that communicates symbolic meanings related to life journeys, direction, obstacles, and social struggle within Jambi cultural understanding.

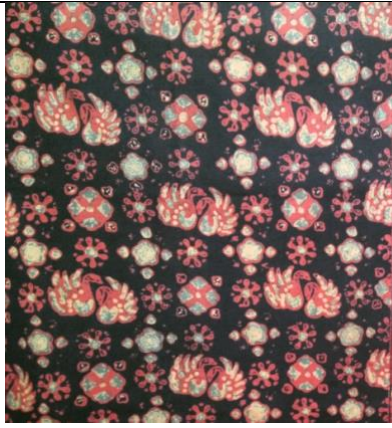
The phrase "Kapal Sanggat" symbolizes a state of stagnation or failure to achieve a goal, where the ship, as a metaphor for life, a system, or a social journey, is no longer moving. This term reflects a critique of stagnant situations, both individual and collective, because of internal or external obstacles. Culturally, this expression demonstrates how local communities understand and comment on social reality through everyday symbolism. "Kapal Sanggat means a ship that is stuck, whereas a ship must sail to its destination. Now, if it is stuck and doesn't reach its destination, it means it's no longer sailing." (Erman, interview 2024). the object refers to the reality, idea, or concept represented by the sign (Peirce, 1932). The findings of this research indicate that the object dimension of the Kapal Sanggat motif extends beyond the physical image of a ship and refers to philosophical meanings concerning perseverance, responsibility, life goals, social struggle, and the dangers of stagnation within the collective experience of Jambi society.

Kapal Sanggat symbolizes the condition of "not reaching its destination." This is a meaning and warning to society that in living life, one must have goals or aspirations. The Kapal Sanggat motif reflects the values of perseverance and responsibility in completing a goal, where desires are seen as having to be carried out to completion. The concept of "sangat" is used as a metaphor to describe a condition of being hampered or stopped in the middle of a road, which reflects the failure of the process. Culturally, this expression emphasizes the importance of continuity and resistance to congestion as a symbol of stagnation in life or struggle, "If, for example, we have a desire, it must be completed, don't give up halfway. Sanggat is like being stuck in a traffic jam, stuck in the middle of the road, or being hampered (Dhita, Interview 2024). The visual representation of a sailing ship functions as a representamen that symbolizes life's journey, direction, perseverance, responsibility, and the struggle to achieve one's goals despite obstacles and challenges.

The Kapal Sanggat motif symbolizes a person who is cautious in life, possesses strong determination, and has clear goals, strives to avoid temptations that can hinder the achievement of goals, and continues to move forward with patience despite facing various obstacles. The ship symbolizes caution in life, determination, and life's purpose. Like a ship

sailing, there are waves, waves, storms, and typhoons, if you are not careful, you will run aground midway (Sunarto & Priyono, 2016a). Peirce explains that the interpretant is the meaning produced in the mind through the interpretation of signs (Peirce, 1932). The findings of this study show that the Kapal Sangat motif generates interpretants related to perseverance, caution, determination, responsibility, and resilience in facing life obstacles, allowing the motif to function as a symbolic medium that communicates moral values and collective wisdom within Jambi society across generations.

Table 5 The Angso Duo Motif

Motif	Object	Representamen	Interpretant
	The values of balance, harmony, harmony, and purity, and rooted in local legends about the origins of Jambi City and the symbolic legitimacy of the power of the Jambi Sultanate.	Depicting a pair of swans facing each other or side by side, visualized in a symmetrical composition.	Users of this batik are associated as individuals who uphold social harmony, unity, patience in struggle, and respect equal relations between each other and with the surrounding environment.

(Source: Azmiah Batik House, 2024)

As presented in Table 5, the Angso Duo motif embodies the values of balance, harmony, unity, purity, and social togetherness. This motif is depicted as two swans' side by side, facing each other, and so on. The motif has several variations, such as swans' side by side, swans facing each other, and so on. Peirce explains that the representamen is the perceptible form of a sign that mediates meaning between the object and interpretant (Peirce, 1932). In this study, the visual representation of two swans facing each other or standing side by side functions as a representamen that communicates symbolic meanings related to harmony, balance, unity, and social relationships within Jambi cultural understanding.

The Angso Duo motif is associated with the founding of the Jambi kingdom, which is associated with the journey of a leader and a guide as a sacred swan, whose decision was considered divine guidance for selecting the location of the center of power. The place where the swans stopped was regarded as a sacred, chosen region, and became the center of government. "Once upon a time, there was a king named Kaya Gita who married Princess Mayang Murai, daughter of Tuan Tenggara Murah Mato in the Guantanah area. They both wanted to establish a kingdom. To find the right location, they traveled downstream, carrying a pair of swans. Legend has it that the place where the swans stopped and refused to leave was considered the ideal location for establishing a kingdom. Eventually, the swans stopped in what is now known as Jambi City. This location is near the Great Mosque of Jambi, which was once the center of the Jambi Sultanate. Therefore, the swan symbol is used in the Jambi

Provincial emblem as a reminder of the kingdom's origins." (Erman, interview 2024). Stories like these reinforce the community's collective identity and provide historical legitimacy to regional symbols that are still used today. The object refers to the concept, reality, or idea represented by the sign (Peirce, 1932). The findings of this research indicate that the object dimension of the Angso Duo motif extends beyond the physical image of swans and refers to historical narratives, leadership, sacred guidance, collective identity, and the origins of the Jambi kingdom embedded within the cultural memory of Jambi society.

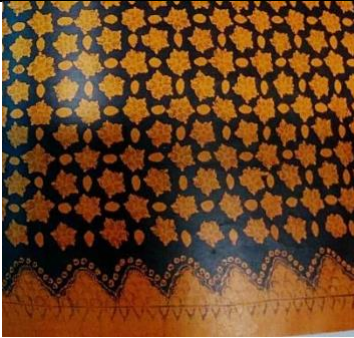
Furthermore, according to Djunaedi T. Noor (Sunarto & Priyono, 2016a), historically, during the Jambi Kingdom, the Orang Kayo Hitam identified themselves with the Angso Duo, wielding the Siginjei Keris, a symbol of the Jambi Kingdom's majesty. They successfully defeated Temenggung Merah Mato, a powerful figure from the Air Hitam region of Pauh. Orang Kayo Hitam then married the Temenggung's daughter, Princess Mayang Mengurai, after successfully fulfilling the required dowry requirements. After their marriage, following their father-in-law's advice, Orang Kayo Hitam and Mayang Mengurai sought to find a suitable area for their kingdom by following a pair of large swans (Angso Duo). The Angso Duo are a pair of swans believed to have guided Princess Mayang Mangurai and Orang Kayo Hitam when searching for a place to live or to establish a new land, now known as Jambi City (Marta & Akbar, 2020).

The Angso Duo motif symbolizes harmony among living beings, balance, unity, and social cohesion. The pattern of the swans in pairs represents a harmonious relationship. This motif carries a profound message, emphasizing the values of persistence and patience in endeavor, as well as harmony among God's creatures (Sunarto & Priyono, 2016a). Furthermore, the Angso Duo motif also embodies harmony and gender equality, persistence, patience in endeavor, and harmony among humans (Tiara & Ramadhan, 2019). This interpretation of the Angso Duo motif demonstrates that traditional decorative motifs serve not only aesthetic purposes but also as a medium for conveying moral and ethical values within collective life structures. Peirce explains that the interpretant is the meaning produced in the mind through the interpretation of signs (Peirce, 1932). The Angso Duo motif symbolizes harmony, unity, mutual support, and peaceful coexistence, strives for harmony and peace, and values the importance of unity, mutual support, and respect for balance in every relationship. Another message conveyed is the value of patience in pursuing a goal. In the legend of Angso Duo, the search for the Selected Land required the patience of the Black Kayo People, given the long journey.

Table 6 shows that the Melati Bengkulu motif is inspired by the jasmine flower (*jusminum*), a flower often used in Jambi traditional ceremonies, particularly in traditional wedding attire for women. "Melati Bengkulu" is gardenia in Indonesian. Melati Bengkulu comes from the flower of the queen. There are many jasmine plants, and the flower of the queen, the flower of Jambi, is the flower of the queen." (Dhita, interview 2024). The distillation of this motif presents a simple yet elegant pattern that depicts the beauty of the jasmine flower, thus displaying its delicate and symmetrical shape. Peirce explains that the representamen is the perceptible form of a sign that mediates meaning between the object and interpretant (Peirce, 1932). In this

study, the visual representation of blooming and budding jasmine flowers functions as a representamen that communicates symbolic meanings related to purity, beauty, elegance, and traditional values within Jambi cultural understanding.

Table 6 The Melati Bengkulu Motif

Motif	Object	Representamen	Interpretant
	The values of purity, beauty, health, and respect for tradition, especially in the context of wedding customs and symbols of graceful femininity and pure spirituality.	Depicting jasmine flowers (Jasminum/Gardenia), visualized in the form of blooming flowers and buds symmetrically.	The wearer of this batik is associated with purity of heart, gracefulness, and respect for traditional values, graceful in attitude, respects traditional values.

(Source: Azmiah Batik House, 2024)

The representamen of this motif is the jasmine flower, which depicts two forms of jasmine, a blooming jasmine flower and a budding jasmine flower. This motif emphasizes the importance of respect and physical and spiritual health. The visual representation of blooming and budding jasmine flowers functions as a representamen that symbolizes purity, beauty, modesty, gracefulness, spiritual cleanliness, and harmony between physical and inner well-being (Sunarto & Priyono, 2016). The object refers to the concept, idea, or reality represented by the sign (Peirce, 1932). The findings of this research indicate that the object dimension of the Melati Bengkulu motif extends beyond the physical jasmine flower and refers to philosophical meanings concerning purity, modesty, spiritual cleanliness, harmony of body and soul, elegance, and respect for cultural traditions within Jambi society.

In the past, the people of Jambi interpreted this motif as a representation of purity and beauty, but today it is considered an important reminder of the importance of maintaining a clean heart and body. Users of this motif are expected to maintain graceful and respectful attitudes and behavior, while upholding the traditional values of their community. Peirce explains that the interpretant is the meaning produced in the mind through the interpretation of signs (Peirce, 1932).

As described in Table 7, the Daun Keladi motif is a taro leaf, whose basic pattern consists of three leaves per stem. The economic and cultural significance of taro has inspired artisans to incorporate it into Jambi batik through the Taro Leaf Motif. In this motif, the shape of the leaf is stylized using strong and prominent lines (Sunarto & Priyono, 2016). Peirce explains that the representamen is the perceptible form of a sign that mediates meaning between the object and interpretant (Peirce, 1932). In this study, the visual representation of the taro leaf, including its strong veins, thick lines, and ability to hold water, functions as a representamen that communicates symbolic meanings related to loyalty, firmness, usefulness, and solidarity within Jambi cultural understanding.

Table 7 The Daun Keladi Motif

Motif	Object	Representamen	Interpretant
	Jambi society's ethical values include steadfastness in principles, collective loyalty, and moral integrity. The ability of the leaves to hold water symbolizes social solidarity.	Stylization of the genus plant <i>Caladium</i> (tribe Araceae) which is characterized by a morphological structure of three leaves per stem, firm bones, and a waxy leaf surface that is hydrophobic.	This motif expresses the ideal construction of the cultural subject as an individual who is honest, consistent in speech, and has a collective orientation.

(Source: Azmiah Batik House, 2024)

This is based on an understanding of the structure of taro leaves, which clearly illustrates the thinking patterns of the three Jambi cultivators. The influence of Chinese, Arab and Malay culture is closely related to the motifs and colors of Jambi Batik. The meaning of taro leaves is related to their behavior in nature. Taro leaves are a highly tolerant plant because they can be found in open spaces, such as roadsides, rivers, forests, agricultural lands, and plantations (Prasetyo et al., 2018). The representation of the taro leaf motif depicts the ideal way of life of Jambi society, namely to become a society that is superior, kind, and beneficial to others (Febrian, 2019). The object refers to the concept, idea, or reality represented by the sign (Peirce, 1932). The findings of this research indicate that the object dimension of the Daun Keladi motif extends beyond the physical taro leaf and refers to philosophical meanings concerning solidarity, tolerance, honesty, responsibility, loyalty, and social usefulness embedded within the collective cultural values of Jambi society

The Daun Keladi motif symbolizes cooperation, strength, and loyalty. "The taro motif also contains important meanings. The motif contains a kind of advice or teaching, one of which is that every word or utterance must be held and guarded. This reflects the values of honesty and responsibility in our culture" (Erman, interview 2024). The value of commitment is reflected in the expression: "Be firm with your promises in three-centipede stoves; how can a round one be rolled down, and how can a flat one be floated?" The proverb advises individuals not to resemble water on a taro leaf, which is unstable and easily displaced. Rather, it emphasizes the importance of keeping promises and maintaining trustworthiness. As part of cultural heritage, this motif functions as a medium for educating values from generation to generation, showing that the symbols in traditional cloth have an important role in shaping social character and strengthening local cultural identity (Sunarto & Priyono, 2016a). Peirce explains that the interpretant is the meaning produced in the mind through the interpretation of signs (Peirce, 1932). The findings of this study show that the Daun Keladi motif generates interpretants related to honesty, trustworthiness, responsibility, solidarity, cooperation, and loyalty, allowing

the motif to function as a symbolic medium that reinforces moral teachings and collective cultural identity within Jambi society across generations.

According to Charles Sanders Peirce's theory, meaning does not reside inherently in signs, but emerges through a continuous triadic relation between object, representamen, and interpretant, shaped by experience, cultural context, and habitual understanding (Smith, 2005). Peirce explains that signs operate through a triadic relation consisting of the sign itself, the object it refers to, and the interpretant produced in the mind, where meaning develops continuously through semiosis (Peirce, 1932). In the representamen dimension, Jambi Batik motifs display stylized forms of proper objects such as durian fruit, ships, swans, and even taro leaves, while maintaining their physical resemblance. This makes the motifs iconic, signs that resemble their referents, making them visually recognizable by the Jambi people. In Peirce's theoretical assumptions, objects are not passive referents, but rather active components in the process of semiosis, where meaning emerges through human perception and experience-based interactions (Bergman, 2007). This corresponds to Peirce's category of Secondness, which emphasizes actual relations and experiential encounters between signs and reality (Peirce, 1932). This concept aligns with the findings of Amalia et al. (2024), who stated that batik motifs are perceived through visual forms as cultural symbols that are intuitively recognized and based on local wisdom. This visualization shows how representamen is analogous to the real world. Semiotics embodies a mode of inquiry that relates cultural facts to concepts such as signs, structures, and texts, as a result, it enables researchers to uncover the meanings embedded in cultural artifacts, including Jambi batik motifs (Sofiyev, 2022). Objects, in this context, become the starting point of the semiotic cognition process, where humans realize and associate visual forms of batik such as taro leaves, peacocks, ships, mangosteens, or jasmine flowers with empirical and cultural experiences through sensory perception. Peirce emphasizes that every cognition must involve an object because perception connects human consciousness with experiential reality (Peirce, 1932). This means that the forms in Jambi batik motifs are not merely static visual entities, but sign objects that function as triggers for cultural awareness in the collective mind of society. This finding aligns with research on Sasadu in the Sahu community, where traditional buildings are understood not merely as physical structures, but as symbolic objects that trigger collective identity awareness through the community's visual and spatial experiences (Nindatu, 2018). This suggests that both batik motifs and traditional architecture function as semiotic objects that activate cultural memory and collective experiences. Every cognition must have an object (the subject of a proposition); the ability that makes humans aware of their relationship with objects is known as perception or sense (James, 2014).

The representational dimension in Jambi batik motifs demonstrates an indexical character as stated in Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotics, namely the existence of an existential relationship between a sign (representamen) and the object it represents. In Peirce's view (James, 2014), representation is something that shows or states an object by creating a similarity or understanding (agreement) between the representation itself and the object it refers to. From Peirce's perspective, representation is not simply a reflection of reality, but

rather a mediation process that constructs meaning through the relational correspondence between signs and lived experiences (Sánchez-Ovcharov & Suárez, 2024). Peirce states that representation functions because signs mediate human understanding of reality through recognizable qualities and relations (Peirce, 1932). According to Peirce, a representation is considered true when it corresponds to its object. This correspondence is termed *verisimilitude*, which denotes a resemblance to truth. Representations characterized by such correspondence are known as *copies*. This idea is reflected in motifs such as *The Kapal Sanggat*, which depicts a motionless ship and is interpreted as a representation of failure to achieve a goal, as well as *The Daun Keladi* which is able to hold water and is symbolized as a symbol of solidarity in the social life of the Jambi community. This relationship is *indexical* because these meanings are derived from a direct connection with ecological experiences, cultural practices, and the social structure of the local community. This is in line with the statement of Nur et al. (2022) that cultural signs were obtained from the analysis process as an effort to preserve the embedded cultural meanings, which emphasizes that cultural signs are the result of an interpretive process rooted in the reality of collective life. The study of Purwaningsih et al. (2018) on Banyumas batik also shows the same thing, that visual signs such as the *Jahe Rajang* and *Serayuan* motifs contain local values such as honesty and simplicity that are recognized *indexically* through their connection to the environment and culture of the community. Similarly, the results of research by Sari, Putri, and Hasibuan (2023) through a semiotic study of Riau Islands batik found that the colors and shapes of batik motifs contain symbolic and *indexical* meanings that arise from a direct relationship with the cultural identity and historical experiences of the local community. Thus, Jambi batik motifs are not merely aesthetic forms, but also archives of cultural signs that contain a dynamic structure of meaning between objects and representations.

In the interpretive dimension, Jambi batik motifs emphasize the symbolic role in Peirce's semiotics, namely signs whose meaning is formed through socio-historical conventions. In Peirce's semiotic theory, the *interpretant* plays a central role in the production of meaning, because it represents the cognitive and cultural responses that continuously transform signs, so that meaning is dynamic, not fixed (Smith, 2005). Peirce explains that the *interpretant* is not merely a personal reaction, but a process through which signs generate habits, laws, and shared cultural meanings within society (Peirce, 1932). Motifs such as *The Angso Duo* are not simply illustrations of two swans, but are interpreted as symbols of royal legitimacy and collective harmony of the Jambi people, *The Merak Ngeram* becomes a symbol of sincere motherly love, and *The Tampuk Manggis* symbolizes moral integrity and individual honor. A symbol is a sign that refers to the object it represents based on general ideas, the meaning of a symbol as a sign depends on a customary interpretation, namely the conventional way of thinking of an individual or group of people (Beynon-Davies, 2018). According to Peirce (Peirce, 1932), every sign refers to a specific object, when someone sees a sign, their mind forms a meaning or interpretation based on experience and culture. This is under the visual representation in Jambi batik, where ornamental forms are not merely literal illustrations of natural objects, but the result of social construction that depicts the social and spiritual reality

of the Jambi people. Within the framework of the Communicational Interpretant, the meaning of a sign can emerge only through 'commens'—the shared basis of understanding between the sender and recipient of the sign. Commens encompasses all tacitly shared knowledge between the maker and interpreter of the sign and thus enables effective symbolic communication (Schmidt, 2022). In Jambi batik, this means that symbolic meanings such as those in Jambi batik can be understood because of the shared cultural space that has been built in Jambi society. This reflects Peirce's concept of Thirdness, where meaning is stabilized through habits, conventions, and socially shared interpretations (Peirce, 1932). This finding is reinforced by research by Suryani and Galih Jati Vidya Riani (2022) on Bangka Malay traditional marriages, which shows that traditional symbols function as a nonverbal communication medium that is passed down from generation to generation and understood through shared cultural agreements. Jambi batik motifs also operate as cultural symbols whose meanings are formed through collective customs and historical experiences of the community and become a nonverbal communication medium between generations. Peirce expands the category of symbols not only limited to signs formed by cultural conventions but also to signs born from habits and even natural human dispositions (Noth, 2010). This means that the symbolic meaning of motifs is not only based on explicitly established rules but also on patterns of habits and cultural dispositions that are naturally internalized by Jambi society through generations. Thus, the symbolic meaning of Jambi batik motifs is not merely the result of formal cultural decisions, but is also a reflection of the formation of meaning through habits that have become part of the collective disposition of Jambi society.

This research emphasizes Peirce's semiotics not only as an analytical framework but also as a theoretical basis for explaining the formation of meaning in Jambi batik motifs. In Peirce's semiotic perspective, meaning is not static or inherent to signs, but is formed through an ongoing process of semiosis that develops through experience and cultural context. Peirce argues that semiosis is an unlimited process because every interpretant can become a new sign that generates further interpretations (Peirce, 1932). This process is dynamic because each sign will produce new interpretations that continue to broaden the meaning in social life. Jambi batik not only represents visuals but also produces meaning through the collective experience of society. Jambi batik functions as a living sign system, where its meaning is understood as the result of a continuous process of semiosis in the social and cultural space of society. Peirce's semiotic theory emphasizes that signs are always in a never-ending process of interpretation (Unlimited Semiosis), thus allowing the continuous formation of new meanings.

CONCLUSION

Jambi batik is a cultural medium that serves not only as an aesthetic expression or textile commodity but also as a symbolic representation imbued with the cultural values and meanings of the Jambi people. Through Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic approach, this study reveals that each Jambi batik motif contains a complex sign structure, consisting of objects, representamen, and interpretants. Visual objects such as durian, peacock, mangosteen, ships, swans, jasmine, and taro leaves are the basis of the signification process, where the stylistic

motifs emerge as representations of the ecological, social, and spiritual experiences of the local community. The motifs in Jambi batik contain deep moral and philosophical messages, such as balance in life, integrity, compassion, social responsibility, honesty, steadfastness in principles, and harmony between people and nature. These values do not exist as a single meaning, but as the result of cultural construction that has been internalized in the lives of the people and passed down across generations. Jambi batik plays a role as a symbolic and communicative cultural archive, a place where ethics, spirituality, and collective identity are codified in visual form.

This research confirms that the symbols in Jambi batik operate not only based on cultural conventions but also through collective dispositions and habits that shape people's perspectives on the world. Batik is not only a reflection of culture but also an instrument for forming and preserving local values that are contextual and relevant to the realities of Jambi society. Therefore, the preservation of Jambi batik should encompass not only physical and economic aspects but also the strengthening of public understanding of its meanings and symbolic functions as a form of indigenous knowledge. In this way, Jambi batik can continue to function as a medium for cultural education, a unifying identity, and a guardian of a legacy of values that contribute to the sustainable development of community character.

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