



## Batik Innovation: A Harmony of Indonesian Batik Motifs and Kazakh Motifs

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### **Abstract**

This thesis explores the merging of traditional Kazakh ornamentation and patterns with Indonesian batik, delving into the field of textile design. Utilizing the rich cultural legacies of Kazakhstan and Indonesia, the research explores the creative potential that results from the fusion of these two disparate artistic cultures. This study employs an interdisciplinary methodology that incorporates design theory, cultural studies, and art history to investigate the historical, aesthetic, and cultural contexts of traditional decoration from Kazakhstan and Indonesian batik. It points out areas where there could be synergies for fusion by identifying recurring themes, motifs, and design aspects in both cultures. In addition, the study examines the methods of adaptation, reinterpretation, and hybridization in textile design as well as the creative processes involved in fusing traditional Kazakh patterns with Indonesian batik. The study advances our knowledge of cultural exchange, identity, and preservation in modern design practice by examining the aesthetic and cultural ramifications of the fusion designs. It also provides useful advice and insights for designers and craftspeople looking to collaborate on cross-cultural projects. In the end, this thesis seeks to further sustainable cultural exchange, textile design innovation, and cultural enrichment in the international arena of artistic expression.

**Keywords:** *Culture; Indonesian Batik; Kazakh National Ornaments; Pattern*

### **Introduction**

The centuries-old Indonesian art style of batik, with its elaborate motifs and vivid colors, has a unique place in the world of culture. It is listed on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity due to its significance and extensive history (UNESCO 2009). But as globalization advances, there's a rising need to modify and modernize classic creative forms to reflect modern tastes without losing their core qualities. This goal has spurred creative cross-cultural contacts and partnerships, which have given rise to hybridized art forms that transcend cultural barriers (Beech 2023)

The understanding of cultural hybridization and interchange in the field of art and design has greatly benefited from a number of study publications. Furthermore, a thorough examination of the symbolic connotations incorporated into Kazakh motifs may be found in research on the importance of decoration in traditional Kazakh art (Nuriyeva 2019). These investigations, together with others, form the backbone of this thesis, directing the investigation and examination of the blending of traditional Kazakh patterns and ornamentation with Indonesian Batik.

In this thesis, we aim to reinvent Indonesian batik by bringing the elaborate beauty of Kazakh ornaments into it. Wax is poured to fabric to create beautiful motifs in batik, an admired art form in Indonesia. On the other hand, Kazakh ornaments are rich in cultural significance and represent Kazakhstan's rich history.

The purpose of this research is to create new look to traditional Indonesian batik through the integration of Kazakh ornaments. By employing traditional techniques for crafting batiks, our aim is to investigate the poetic merging of these two creative realms.

It is foreseen to preserve the current traditional batik making technique throughout the process of redesigning batik. This project is a monument to the strength of creativity and cross-cultural exchange in addition to potentially producing visually striking designs. We seek to increase awareness of the richness and diversity of the two countries' artistic legacy while advancing the development and preservation of textile traditions in Kazakhstan and Indonesia.

### ***Research Methodology***

A mixed methodology was used in this study, through the interviews, observation, and an extensive analysis of academic publications about batik. Furthermore, drawing from my personal experience and expertise in batik making, I incorporated these elements into the study process. This required actively participating in the batik-making process, experimenting with different methods, and determining if it would be possible to incorporate Kazakh ornaments into customary batik designs. Additionally, observational techniques were used to watch and learn from skilled batik workers as they practiced their trade, offering insightful information on the complexities of conventional batik-making procedures. A comprehensive grasp of the incorporation of Kazakh ornaments into batik was developed through this multidisciplinary method, which included a survey of the literature, personal experience, and observational learning.

### ***Discussion***

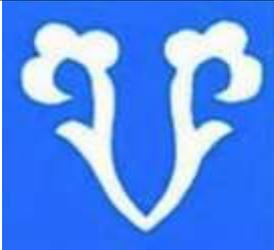
Understanding the design elements and meanings contained in Indonesian batik and traditional Kazakh textiles are crucial. Kazakh ornament is an important part of the culture of the people, who have long led a nomadic lifestyle. It was not only an adornment of a few, the most necessary household items of nomads, but also echoes of ancient beliefs, ideas about the world, the main values of people who lived thousands of years ago. Ornamental elements are found on objects of the Paleolithic period, but it begins to play a leading role in the Neolithic era. It would seem that ornamental patterns are easier to draw than figures, but ornament requires the ability to think abstractly.

In Kazakh ornament, as in ornamental folk art in general, color plays a very important role. The folk art of Kazakhstan, beautiful and colorful, has not yet been studied enough. The art of the Kazakh people developed under the conditions of a nomadic way of life and is largely determined by the nature of nomadic production. The emergence of its main types is due to the needs of equipment and decoration of nomadic housing - the yurt, and its furnishings. This is how the production of carpets, wall felts, felt appliqués, patterned felt bags, covers for wooden chests, etc. developed. Various names of patterns, showing the breadth of ornamental content, the breadth of folk creative imagination: sun, golden eagle, horse head, ram, camel footprint, tree, ram horn, amulet (tumarsha), saw, bird's palate, golden eagle's paw and many others.

The Kazakh people created their own unique art of pattern in broad cultural communication with other peoples of Altai, Mongolia, Central Asia, etc. The close artistic connection and kinship of the Kazakh pattern with Turkmen, Buryat-Mongolian, Tajik, and Kyrgyz ornaments is easily traced. We also find motifs close to a number of the oldest Kazakh patterns in the Scythian-Altai circle of art.

## The Language of Kazakh Ornaments

Table 1: Kazakh National Ornaments

No.	Name	Image	Meaning
1	Құсқанаты - Bird's Wings		"Құсқанаты" or "bird's wings" is bird wings. An ornament resembling bird wings follows horn-like elements or an ornament resembling chess squares. The image of this ornament on individual products resembles a flying bird. Currently, the "Құсқанаты" ornament is used together with other ornaments.
2	Тоғызтөбе – Nine Hills		"Тоғызтөбе" - nine hills, is considered one of the oldest ornaments. This ornament has been preserved in the products of applied art of Karluks and Kimaks. The togyztobe ornament was used to decorate the bricks of the dome of the Aisha Bibi mausoleum. Currently, Kazakhs, Kirghizs, Turkmens and Kara-Kalpaks decorate the products of applied art with this ornament.
3	Мүйіз – A Horn		"Мүйіз" – a horn. This is the oldest basis of the Kazakh ornament. The ornament symbolizes the horn. Horn-shaped ornaments have small and large elements. Small ones are used in applied art products made of wood, bone, horn; mainly where finer processing is required. Large ones are used in the decoration of symmaks, tekemets, alash, carpets, in architecture. Horn-shaped elements are divided into the following types: "aimuyiz", "kosmuyiz", "sonarmuyiz", "kyrykmuyiz", "maralmuyiz", "orkeshmuyiz", "koshkarmuyiz", etc.
4	Төртайшық – A Crescent		"Төртайшық" is a crescent - an ornament depicting a crescent moon. Each branch of the "tortayshyk" ornament consists of simple elements depicting a crescent moon. You can cut an ornament from the elements of "tortayshak", which follows indefinitely.
5	Tic – a Tooth		"Tic" is a tooth. The ornament resembles the teeth of an animal. It consists of separate cells in black and white, resembling a chessboard. It is used in the art of embroidery. It is also called "ittis" - dog teeth.

## Indonesian Batik

Since ancient times, batik fabric has been prized for its exquisite and vivid designs and hues. This distinctive style of textile art has a long and rich history, having its origins in Indonesia. The Javanese word "ambatik," which meaning "a cloth with little dots" is where the word "batik" originates (Wardani, L.K, & Sitindjak, R. H. I. 2013). The results of the labor-intensive and lengthy process of creating Batik fabric, which involves a combination of cloth, dye, and wax, are breathtaking. Around the world, batik fabric has been incorporated into homes and wardrobes with its diverse designs, ranging from modern to traditional Indonesian patterns.

The world acknowledges that Indonesian batik is full of techniques, symbols, culture, and profound meaning. Because the value and beauty of Indonesian batik lie not only in its appearance, such as the motifs and colors of batik. Batik work tells the story, events, techniques and skills, personality, social status, culture, spirituality, and philosophy of society. The overall value and meaning are what underlie the final visualization of batik work. The ultimate result of batik work reflects the depth of contemplation, perseverance, and patience in its making. Making batik requires concentration, patience, and perseverance, as well as the purity of the master's soul. The resulting decorative motifs and strokes contain the meaning of hope or requests to the Creator. That is why the motifs created in batik always reflect eternal beauty, full of philosophical meaning. Thus, Indonesian batik has two meanings of beauty: visual beauty and beauty because of the depth of its philosophical significance.

Batik Tulis or written batik is a type of batik that is produced by etching wax or wax on cloth using a canting according to the desired motif, then continuing with the coloring process.

Canting is the main equipment for making batik which functions to take and inscribe wax on batik cloth. In accordance with its function, canting is made of copper with wood or bamboo as the handle. Thus, canting is used to write batik patterns with wax according to the motif to be made.

Traditional batik utilizes finely woven cotton, occasionally silk, as its primary materials. The cotton fabric employed for the finest batik necessitates a tightly woven, uniform surface.



Figure 1: Applying wax on the cloth

## Dyeing Process

Dyeing is a series of batik making activities after painting. This step is carried out by repeatedly dipping the canted cloth into a solution containing materials or dyes to get the desired batik painting color. Coloring in making batik paintings can also be done by dabbing with a brush. However, it could also be a combination of these two methods. Previously, this coloring was achieved by immersing the fabric in a dye solution obtained from plants. Nowadays, many artists use synthetic dyes such as naphthol,

indigotin, or remazol. To prevent the color of batik painting from fading, each synthetic dye contains its own fixative. For example, using remazol dye requires the addition of liquid glass and so on. Drawing and coloring actions can be repeated multiple times to achieve the desired color composition for batik painting.



Figures 2, 3, 4: Dying the batik

*Pelorodan* represents the ultimate phase in the batik process, intended to remove the wax coating from the fabric's entirety, thereby revealing the intricately drawn designs and motifs. This step is carried out by the master artisan, who submerges the batik into boiling water. As the wax layer dissolves or separates from the fabric, the batik is withdrawn from the water. Subsequently, the batik undergoes rinsing with fresh water and is then hung up to dry. Once dried, the fabric reveals the exquisite artistry of batik in its full splendor.



Figure 5, 6: Finished batik

\* *The batik piece above was created by me through a fusion of traditional Indonesian batik motifs, specifically the Parang Sumba, with Kazakh ornaments, employing time-honored batik-making techniques.*

## Indonesian Batik Motifs and Their Meaning

Table 2: Indonesian batik motifs and their meaning

No.	Name	Image	Meaning
1	Ganggeng		Ganggeng itself means seaweed (algae). This means that in life we act gently, which does not mean we are weak, but we can also protect and be useful to other people.
2	Batik Motif Sidomukti		Sido means continuous or becoming and mukti means living in abundance and happiness. It can be concluded that this motif symbolizes hope for a good future, full of happiness for the bride and groom.
3	Batik Motif Banyumas		This motif is one of the typical Indonesian batik motifs. The meaning of this motif is beauty or beauty that will make people who see it become enchanted.
4	Batik Gringsing		Gringsing Batik has a philosophy of balance, prosperity and fertility. The colors used in Gringsing batik are very diverse, some are dark, medium or light colors.
5	Motif Kawung		Sometimes, this motif is also interpreted as an image of a lotus flower with four blooming leaves. Lotus is a flower that symbolizes long life and purity. This motif usually depicts the name of the palm tree flower (frond fruit).

## Conclusion

To sum up, the combination of traditional Kazakh decorations and Indonesian batik is an intriguing investigation of creative creativity and cross-cultural interchange. This project has shown the enormous possibilities for cross-cultural collaboration in textile design by integrating these two diverse traditions. This project has shown a great deal about the nuances of the batik-making process and the incorporation of Kazakh motifs by using qualitative research techniques, such as reading scholarly publications, watching expert artisans at work, and creating our own batiks.

- 1 The study has shown the difficulties of fusing these many creative traditions, from introducing symbolic Kazakh adornment to modifying conventional batik processes. It has brought attention to how crucial it is to embrace creative innovation and adaptation while still protecting cultural heritage. The study also emphasizes how important cross-cultural communication and cooperation are to promoting respect and understanding amongst people.
- 2 The results of this study have the potential to guide further investigation and testing in the field of cross-cultural design. They provide theoretical contributions to the domains of art, culture, and design in addition to practical insights for designers and craftspeople wishing to partake in related creative efforts.
- 3 Essentially, the combination of traditional decorations from Kazakhstan and Indonesian batik bears witness to the timeless ability of artistic expression to bridge cultural divides and bring disparate groups of people together. I hope this research encourages the next generation to embrace creativity, teamwork, and cross-cultural interchange in their own creative endeavors as we continue to investigate and appreciate the richness of cultural variety.

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