

ABSTRACT

Alas-alasan ornament motif is a motif representing the phenomenon of *alas* (forest) or *gunung* (mountain). The motif is unique and characteristic because it is different from traditional batik in general and the court batik in particular. A comprehensive approach is a necessity to understand the existence of the motif. This kind of approach enables us to get a complete description of its existence from historical, aesthetic, and semiotic perspectives.

A historical perspective of study shows that *alas-alasan* ornament motif is closely related to the first of Javanese batik in general and the court batik in particular. The motif is based on the Javanese understanding or viewpoint of a forest or a mountain in reality. This viewpoint which has a historical root is related to the existence of the court as the center of political power. The mystic and historical viewpoints are intertwined making forests and mountains as the aesthetic source of creation manifested into *alas-alasan* ornament motif.

An aesthetic perspective of study shows that the description of the phenomenon of forests or mountains is represented through the figure in the shape of animals or trees. The elements are depicted modestly by a single line using golden colour (*perada*) as its accentuation. The organizing system of the elements is symmetric in nature and arranged in horizontal rows, leaving a white lozenge-shaped space in the centre, the original colour of the cloth. *Gurdha* ornament is found at the tip of the cloth. The orchestration of the whole elements is framed by an element in the form of *kawung* which becomes its frame.

The element expressed by yellow (*perada emas*) on the cloth having a dark blue (*bangun tulak*) background and the central space of it is kept white (*blumbangan*) is called *Dodot Bangun Tulak Alas-alasan Pinarada Emas*. While the same element expressed by yellow (*perada emas*) on the cloth having a green (*gadhung*) background and the central space of it is white is called *Dodot Gadhung Melathi Alas-alasan Pinarada Emas*.

Those two kinds of *dodot* are always worn by *Bedhaya Ketawang* dancers in ritual occasions such as the coronation of the king and/or the coronation anniversary and wedding ceremonies in the court of Surakarta. It is a rank that makes *alas-alasan* ornament motif as an inheritance and that is why it is made sacred. It is the rank and function that maintain it so that it does not change until now. The motif is always present at the coronation of the king, the king's anniversary and wedding ceremonies in the court of Surakarta. Through the motif, the message given is always repeated as a reminder and a guidance for a king to run his power and for the newlyweds to live their lives.