



FORMAN'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE INDONESIAN COLLECTION IN THE NÁPRSTEK MUSEUM

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The biggest and the most extraordinary part of Forman's collection is represented by items from Indonesia. It consists altogether of more than one hundred objects from all over the archipelago. The collection of batik and ikat, and textiles generally can be considered as being quite unique. The whole textile collection consists of 73 top quality items. The major part of the collection is represented by batiks from Java, from the main centres of batik producers in Yogya and Solo (see fig. nos. 3, 4, 7, 9, 12). However, the batiks decorated in European influenced styles are interesting to the same degree. Both beautiful and technically demanding to produce are the *songkets* from Sumatra (see fig. nos. 21, 22, 23), and the ikats from Kalimantan and Sumba (see fig. nos. 20, 18, 19,). They prove the perfect mastering of weaving technology and show the place of ritual textiles in these societies. Another important part of the collection involves canvas paintings from Bali, the theme and authenticity of which are quite unique and usually not very numerous in the museum collections. Among the Balinese items there is also a ritual figure made of coins (see fig. nos. 30, 31) which can be declared a real rare specimen. Two Javanese objects (a casket and a mirror), which are dated back to the 10th and 11th centuries (see fig. nos. 29, 28,) as well as a metal animal statue used for ritual purposes from Sumatra (see fig. no. 27) are also among the much valued part of the collection. The Indonesian part of the collection is enriched with a varied set of kris hilts (see fig. nos. 32). The textile collection was much appreciated by Forman himself. Many of the objects were published in his book devoted to the Indonesian textiles.¹ Except for a few objects (as mentioned in the description), most of the items were bought from Ludmila Formanová in 2001.

Indonesian batik.

The history of batik in Indonesia abounds in many theories and despite the fact that batik is generally connected with Java and Indonesia, the earliest known examples of batik-like cloth are fragments dating from the first century A.D. that were found in Egyptian tombs. Taking into account motifs decorating these pieces, scientists believe that they may have

¹ Forman, B.: *Indonesian Batik and Ikat. Textile art-threads of continuity*. 1st publ. London, Hamlyn Publ. 1988. Prague, Artia, 1988.

been made in India.² Batik making also has a long history in Java, although the influences on its development are very difficult to trace. The earliest known and proven reference to batik, according to the scholar G. P. Rouffaer³, is in a *lontar* palm-leaf scroll from southwestern Java that is dated A.D. 1520. The batik workers at that time were called *lukis*, or "painters," and the work they did was called *tulis*, or "writing". An even earlier inscription dates from the twelfth century; it was found in East Java and refers to a unique batik motif that is still in use today, called *grinsing*. Some scholars have drawn the conclusion that the craft of batik was already being practiced during this early period.

Since there are so few written references to batik, there has been a lively debate as to whether batik developed independently in Java or was introduced from overseas, that is, from India. Conversely, other researchers support the theory that batik developed in Java with a minimum of outside influences. They point to the fact that early Javanese batik used dyestuffs and materials that are indigenous to Indonesia and did not rely on imported stocks. *Mengkudu* red dye and the *soga* plants used to produce the distinctive browns characteristic of Javanese batik are native to the islands of the area. Further evidence for batik being an indigenous Javanese art is that many of the motifs which appear on traditional Central Javanese batik are derived from local sources and often represent stylizations of native birds and plants. The *ganggong* motif is an example of this. It is derived from the flower of a marsh plant belonging to the night-shade family (probably *Solanum denticulatum* L.) found in Java, this plant being the source for a variety of Javanese motifs.⁴

If batik developed independently in Java, its antecedents may have been primitive batik techniques that had existed in pre-Hindu Java. Simple batik techniques have still been found in parts of Java and among the Torajans of South Sulawesi until recently. As Torajans were relatively isolated until the end of the nineteenth century, any connection between their batiks and Javanese batiks could have happened only in the distant past. Interestingly, written references suggest that similar cloths were made by other Ancient Peoples in Flores and Halmahera,⁵ but it seems that no examples have survived up to the present.

Whether the seeds of the technique originated in Java or were brought from India, it is in the royal courts of Central Java where the art of batik flourished, reaching unsurpassed technical sophistication and creating motifs of stunning beauty. By the sixteenth century, the tradition of batik making was well established among the ladies of the Central Javanese courts. Over the last two centuries, batik has grown from an art associated primarily with the great courts of Central Java into an important industry. Java's most famous art form has been especially responsive to technical and social changes. By the mid-nineteenth century, the cities of the north coast between Semarang and Surabaya were a thriving center of batik production, specializing in silk batik that was exported to Bali and Sumatra. Other large towns along the north coast such as Pekalongan, Indramayu, Jakarta, Lasem, Tegal, and Cirebon produce distinctive cotton batik. In Central Java there are two major batik producing centers which must be mentioned; Yogyakarta and Surakarta (or Solo). For many years, Pekalongan has been establishing itself as the place of the largest producer of batik in Java, and this city's products are exported throughout Indonesia and Southeast Asia as well as to Europe, Japan, and the United States.

² Steinmann, p. 2 103.

³ G. P. Rouffaer and Dr. H. H. Juinboll, *De Batikkuns in Ned. India en Haare Geschiedenis (The art of Batik in the Netherland Indies and Its Development)*, Utrecht: Rijks Ethnographisch Museum, 1914.

⁴ Tassilo, p. 37

⁵ Yazir Marzuki, p. 17

Outside of Java, and at one time on Madura Island and Sumatra, mainly Palembang and Jambi, beautiful batik utilizing techniques and variations of motifs adopted from Central Java were produced. However, batik was not produced in southern Sumatra, Jambi, or Madura for many years and examples from these areas are rarely seen outside of museums.

More than a hundred years ago the development of the modern batik industry was set in motion by the invention of a copper stamp, called a *tjap* or *cap* (see fig. nos. 13, 14) in modern Indonesian spelling, that applies wax over a small area of the cloth in a fixed pattern. The cap greatly reduced the time needed to finish a piece of batik, and without it, the batik industry as it is today, would not exist. Before the cap came into use, all batiks were laboriously waxed line by line using a small drawing tool called a *tjanting* or *canting*. Batik is generally labeled stamped (*cap*) (see fig. no. 8) or hand-drawn (*tulis*) (see fig. no. 3), a classification based on the type of tool used to wax the cloth.

Hand-drawn batik patterns are noticeably or slightly irregular; the lines waver a bit and the motifs lack the rigidity of stamped work. If pattern repetitions, e.g. flowers, are compared on various sections of the cloth, they appear slightly different. Another difference between stamped and hand-drawn batik is the cloth. Hand-drawn batik is generally made on a finer grade of cotton cambric (known as *mori*) than stamped batik. Batik was originally made with handwoven, homespun cotton until cambric was introduced to Indonesia from India in the early nineteenth century, and then later from Europe.

Each cloth carries its own specific meaning embodied in its elaborate production process and intricate patterns. We find it in the way batik was used as dress, worn by so many different cultural groups and in various political settings. Sometimes batik was a commodity liable to severe economic competition and social concern; it was and it is a collector's item implying special bonds between insiders and outsiders (see fig. nos. 1, 2).

Batik patterns are more than a form of decoration. They are significant symbols that express various local identities for the people in Java. There are a few major categories for classifying batik. Within these general categories, hundreds and thousands of variations may be invented and named. One of the most important early influences on batik design is related to the conversion of the Javanese people to Islam. The first sign of Islam is dated to 1102 in Leran, and by 1582, when the great Mataram Empire (which eventually split into the courts of Yogyakarta and Solo) was founded, Islam was pervasive in Java.⁶ Since the mid-eighteenth century the courts of Central Java in Yogyakarta and Surakarta have set the artistic and aesthetic standards of Javanese high culture. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, particular motifs were exclusively reserved for the use of the sultans of Central Java as well as for certain members of their courts. In the late eighteenth century, the third and fourth sultans of Solo issued edicts proclaiming specific patterns *larangan*, or "restricted"; that is, they could be worn only by appointed people. The *larangan* motifs include the *parang rusak* (see fig. nos. 7, 12), *udan liris*, *sawat* (see fig. no. 4), *cemukiran*, and *semen* designs with *mirongs*. All Central Javanese batik motifs share some general characteristics, such as an avoidance of straight lines and open space. The most of batik is covered with repeating patterns. Batik in this category used indigo and soga brown (extracted from the root of *Peltophorum ferrugineum* tree) to form patterns that interact with the undyed white space on the cloth (see fig. no. 3). Batik-makers use different colour intensities to interpret a basic repertoire of geometric-dominant motifs. Depiction of life forms is usually very stylized, mostly limited to representations of mythical and symbolic animals (see fig. no. 11).

⁶ Warming, pp. 143–163

Catalogue

1. Sarung

Height: 104 cm
Length: 241 cm
Material: Cotton
Location: Java
Acc No: N5 A 27 092
Published⁷

On this impressive batik, one can see Portuguese in dugout canoes, a sailing ship steered by flowers, steamers, and fish. When the foreigners invade, most of the fish hide, and the sea slugs and crustaceans disappear altogether.

Europeans who lived in Southeast Asia before the Second World War found themselves adapting their lifestyles to the weather and culture there. Sarongs were an informal garment for men, while many of women wore sarong kebaya when entertaining at home. Their financial position also meant that high quality batik, was a compulsory item in their wardrobe.

2. Sarung

Height: 105 cm
Length: 248 cm
Material: Cotton
Location: Java. Date: 1967.
Acc No: A 27 099.

This sarong is decorated with floral patterns and a flying bird- *Luk cuan*, a variation of the Chinese phoenix. Chinese legends say that the phoenix appears only in times of peace and prosperity and its association with good luck has made the bird a popular pattern among Chinese people. It is a common decorative motif on Chinese ceramics and costumes, especially on garments worn by empresses. The mythical creature is a combination of the most beautiful features of many birds, and its long streaming tail and outstretched wings as they are seen on batik are often very Chinese. Sometimes the head and body may be stylized so that only a whirl of feathers dominates the motif.

3. Fragment of kain panjang

Height: 105 cm
Length: 152 cm
Material: Cotton
Location: Yogyakarta, Java.
Acc No: A 27 100.

Batik tulis, decorated with the *parang tud-*

ing or *parang curiga*, *garis miring* motif. *Kain panjang* on primissima cotton. In Javanese, *tuding* means "pointing", "accusing" and "menacing"; it is derived from the verb *todong*, "to point". This pointing *parang* motif has been linked to a *kris* and in earlier large scale it was worn by the Sultan. *Curiga* means "suspicion", so the alternative name for the pattern can be translated as "pointing the finger".

4. Sarung

Height: 81 cm
Length: 136 cm
Material: Cotton
Location: Java.
Acc No: A 27 102.

A fragment of kain panjang in the classical style with regal presence expressed in the crisp white of *parang rusak*, and accentuated by the Garuda motif - *sawat*.

5. Sarung

Height: 106 cm
Length: 204 cm
Material: Cotton
Location: Java.
Acc No: A 27 106

The batik design has a European appearance - flowers, flying butterflies, and birds. Batiks produced for Europeans and Indo-Dutch Eurasians form an interesting group of fabrics. These European batik workshops were highly organized and managed by family members. Many European women, were themselves designers and founders of their respective batik businesses. They were also responsible for introducing elements from the European artistic movements into the language of batik.

6. Sarung

Height: 106 cm
Length: 202 cm
Material: Cotton
Location: Java.
Acc No: A 27 107.

Batik produced under European influence with abundant floral motifs. This very particular type of batik involves styles from two areas. As a reflection of this, the type was given the general name of *dua negeri*, meaning "two

⁷ Forman, p. 114

countries". One section of the cloth was completed in one region, then the fabric was sent to another region to be finished. Such batiks are divided into two parts. The former is called the *kepala*, head, whereas the latter is called *badan*, body. Each part is different, and the motifs and colours that are used are often in sharp contrast to each other.

7. Sarung

Height: 107 cm

Length: 215 cm

Material: Cotton

Location: Java.

Acc No: A 27 109.

The *parang rusak* design has many interpretations. One is that the slant of the S-like motif represents dexterity and its curves represent the waves that Sultan Agung, noticed slapping against the rock while meditating on the southern seashore in the 17th century. In Hindu-Javanese thinking, the *parang rusak* is the concentration of Nature's energy and kingly power or simply represent the rays of the sun.

8. Sarung

Height: 101 cm

Length: 234 cm

Material: Cotton

Location: Java

Acc No: A 27 113

The *ceplok* variations are generally inspired by the cross-section of a fruit, while expressing the concept of the cardinal directions: North, South, East, West, all of which complement the centre. A *ceplok* motif is also inspired by flowers and insects. Each design element has its own integrity, but it also exists as a part of a larger design unit. Geometric designs are also typical for the Arab-descended community and consist of row after row of attached circle-like figures. It is believed to have been adopted from a treasured species of Indian trade cloth.

9. Sarung

Height: 107 cm

Length: 243 cm

Material: Cotton

Location: Java. Acquisition: 2001. Collection of B. Forman

Acc No: A 27 116.

Batik *pagi/sore*, "morning-afternoon" type. This type of batik was very popular because of its practical use. It is often divided vertically or diagonally into halves, each decorated with a different design, one of more dark colour than the other. The dark half served as morning house-wear and the light half as evening wear. One stream of batik design led into a baroque process of adding another dominant pattern to the already patterned backgrounds. Clusters of vivid, multicoloured flowers were particularly favoured. While more restrained in colour than some other examples, this batik from the 1920's exemplifies this trend. Here large sprays of bright colourful flowers are set on a background of diagonal lines created by *parang rusak* and *kawung* elements. During World War II, because of a critical shortage of cotton imports, batik workers began to spend a great deal of time on a single length of cloth and developed this style of elaborate layering. The wartime batiks as a group are called Jawa Hokokai after a political organization established on Jawa during the Japanese occupation.⁸

10. Slendang

Height: 51 cm

Length: 202 cm

Material: Cotton

Location: Java

Acc No: N5 A 27 079

Batik offered batik makers a way to create new and unusual images. They were inspired by new technological developments, political events and the colonial lifestyle. This scarf shows a European couple in the coach, escorted by four servants riding horses.

11. Slendang

Height: 51 cm

Length: 160 cm

Material: Cotton

Location: Java.

Acc No: A 27 120.

Slendang . A shawl, batik, a pattern of brown and white colour on an indigo blue background depicts various zoomorphic motifs – garuda's wings. The narrow brim is decorated with triangles.

⁸ Tirtaamidjaja, N., Jazir Marzuki and Benedict R. O. G. Anderson, Batik: *Pola and Tjorak - Pattern and Motif*. Djambatan. Jakarta. 1966.

12. *Slendang*

Height: 104 cm

Length: 106 cm

Material: Cotton

Location: Yogyakarta, Java. Date: cca 1900.

Acc No: A 27 121.

The diamond is perceived in Buddhism as the genesis of space. The exclusion of everything undesirable intimates great strength. Cloths with diamond centres, including batiks, were formerly worn by personalities of the highest order, since only they were believed to be strong enough to control such power. On this *ikat*, the *parang rusak* can be seen. The *parang rusak* design has many interpretations. One of them says that the slant of the S-like motif represents dexterity and its curves represent the waves that Sultan Agung noticed slapping against the rock while meditating on the southern seashore in the 17th century. In Hindu-Javanese perception, the *parang rusak* is the concentration of Nature's energy and kingly power.

13. *Cap*

Height: 10 cm

Length: 7.6 cm

Material: Wood

Acquisition: 1998. Gift of B. Forman

Location: Java. Date: 20th century.

Acc No: A 25 879.

A *cap* is used to apply a wax pattern to a large area of cloth. This *cap* is decorated with a floral motif.

14. *Cap*

Height: 9.5 cm

Length: 9.5 cm

Material: Wood.

Acquisition: 1998. Gift of B. Forman

Location: Java. Date: 20th century.

Warp Ikat

A part of the textiles from Forman's collection which are considered as particularly unique are called warp ikat. In the technique of warp ikat, individual colors of the pattern are painted on a warp or on a weft before weaving and then attached to the loom for weaving. It is one of Indonesia's oldest methods of decorating textiles and dates back many centuries. Sometime between the 8th and 2nd centuries B.C., the Neolithic people then living in Indonesia came into contact with a bronze culture that had developed

Acc No: A 25 878.

A *cap* is used to apply a wax pattern to a large area of cloth. This *cap* is decorated with a geometric motif.

15. *Decorative textile*

Height: 108 cm

Length: 222 cm

Material: Cotton

Location: Java.

Acc No: A 27 081.

Most batiks with *wayang* are highly commercial and not intended for the discerning home market, but hangings such as these shown here, are simplified *wayang bèbèr* scrolls. *Wayang bèbèr* is considered to predate theater shadow puppets (*wayang kulit*), and the screen behind which the *dalang* (puppeteer) performs may have evolved from these scrolls. They are a superficial but often entertaining reflection of one of the oldest Javanese traditions.⁹ In the centre of the batik there is *gunungan* – a leaf which plays very important role in *wayang kulit*. The figures standing around are from high, royal rank – judging from the type of cloth, hair-style, long nose, and gentle look.

16. *Decorative textile*

Height: 95 cm

Length: 136 cm

Material: Cotton

Location: Java.

Acc No: A 27 087.

Another *wayang* scene. Good characters – mostly from royal ranks, one of them riding an elephant during a battle with demons – rakṣasa. Birds depicting mythical Garuda are situated in each of the corners and their wings are in the middle of scene.

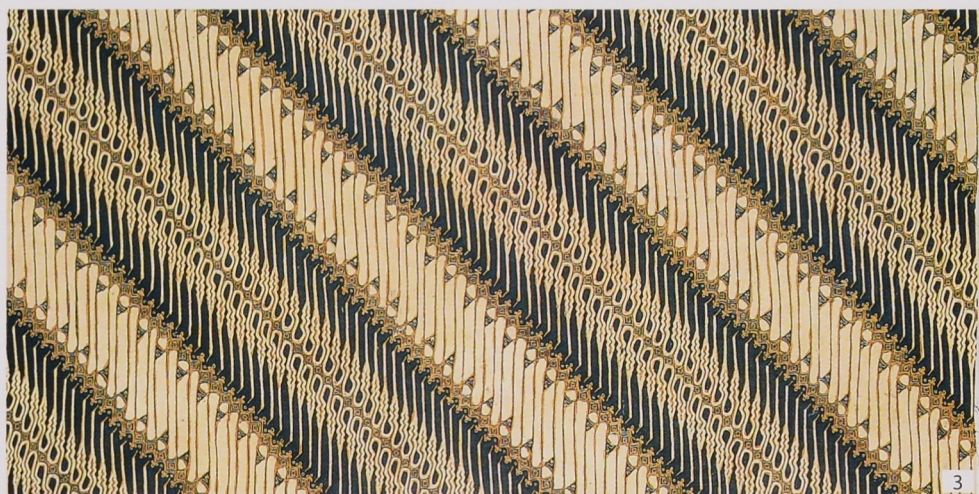
⁹ Forman 1988, p. 80.

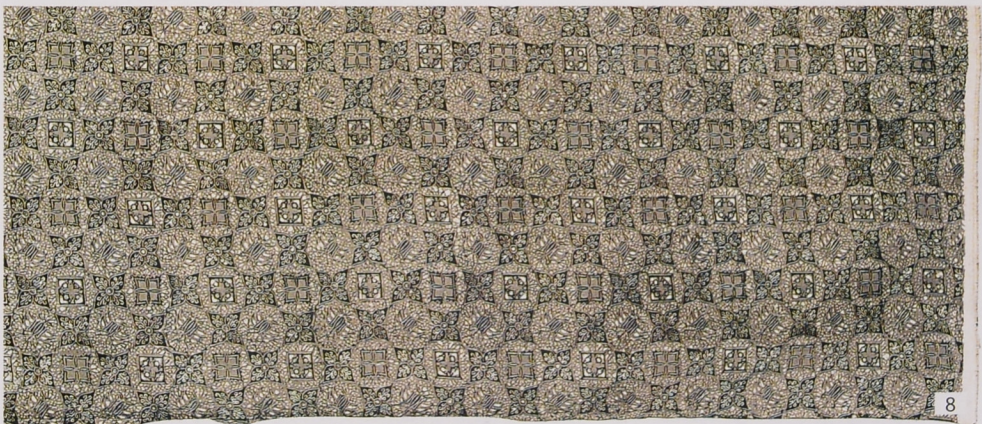


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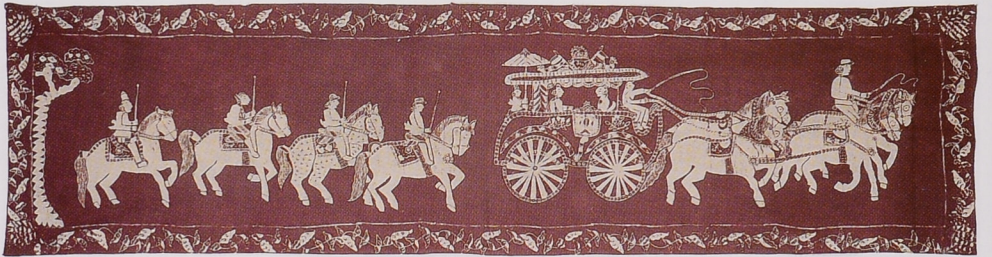
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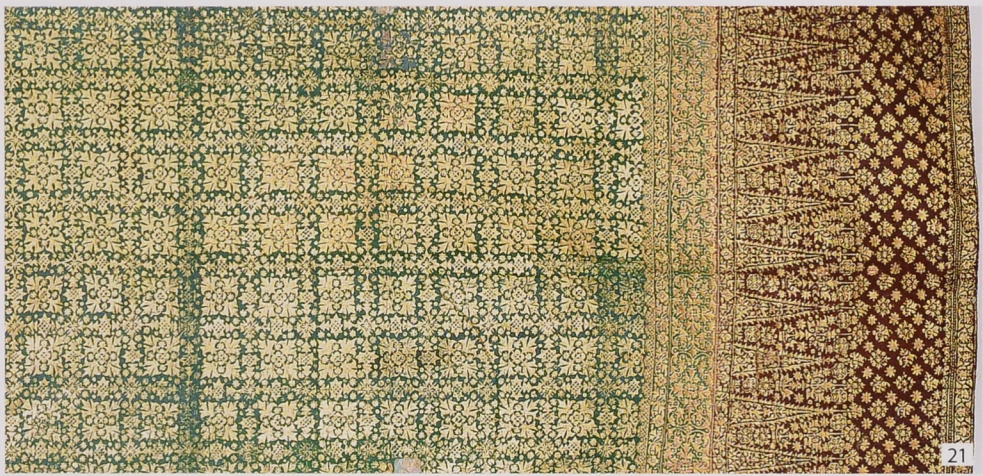
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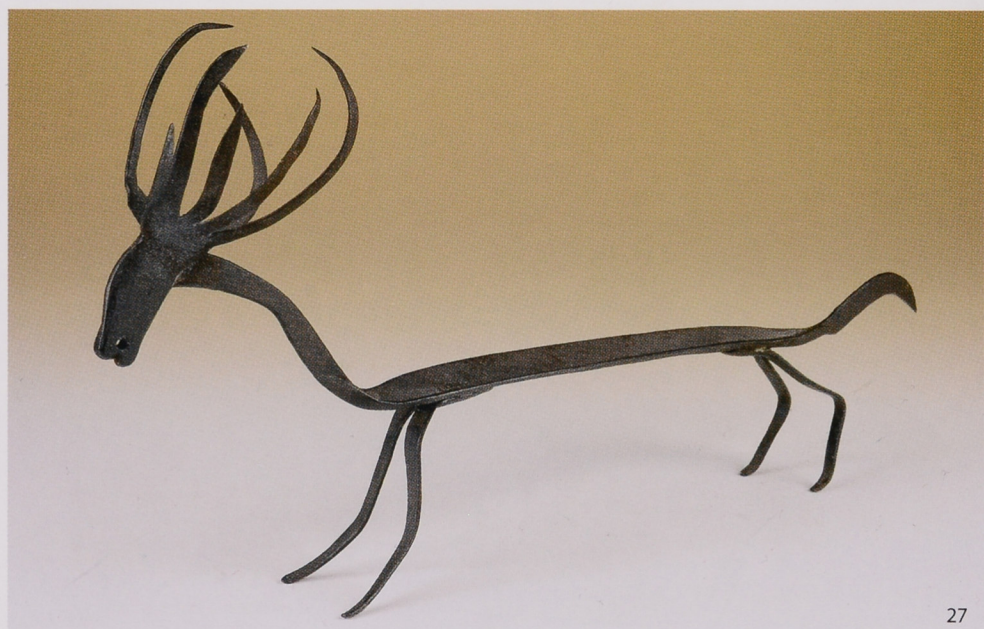


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28



29





30, 31



32a



32c



32b

into what is now being called northern Vietnam. This Dong-Son culture, as it is known, introduced metalwork and advanced agricultural methods to many islands in Indonesia. The backstrap loom and warp ikat technique is generally considered to have appeared during this period. The production and using of ikat has spread all over the Indonesia and it continues to flourish even now. Ikat is usually produced from the finest materials – such as silk, or fibres of cultivated cotton. In Forman's collection we can find more than twenty-five ikats from Sumba, Sumatra, and Kalimantan.

The distinctive cloth from Kalimantan is *pua* (see fig. no. 20), large cloths which are hung up at religious ceremonies. Textiles occupy an important place in the Dayak's traditional lifestyle.¹⁰ The best known textiles are from Iban tribe.

With their bold, often strikingly realistic motifs, Sumbanese cloths are among the best-known Indonesian textiles (see fig. nos. 18, 19). Weaving is mainly concentrated in the eastern part of Sumba where the weaving and use of patterned textiles was traditionally reserved for the nobility. Many cloths were made for export, which affected the choice of designs and the quality of the ikat work. Apart from this, textiles were also produced for local Sumbanese use and these cloths, which had to match up to traditional standards, were woven with great care. Large quantities of cloths were exchanged for agricultural products with the inland populations, who were prohibited by *adat* (customary law) to apply the ikat process.¹¹ Textiles were also exchanged in certain ceremonies, such as marriages. The family of the "bride-givers" exchanged textiles for other goods with the family of the "bride-takers". This sort of ritual exchange of "female" for "male" objects is widespread throughout the Indonesian culture area. The ritual textiles were the *hinggi*, worn by men, and the *lau*, worn by women.

17. *Lau pahudu*

Height: 84 cm

Length: 125 cm

Material: Cotton with warp ikat and supplementary warp patterning

Location: Sumba.

Acc No: A 27 140

Woman's ceremonial sarong. Whereas men's textiles bear mostly patterns of warp ikat, women's sarong are ornamented with a number of decorative techniques, such as warp ikat and supplementary warp patterning, and sometimes with beaded panels. This sarong is decorated with motifs of horses and stylized trees.

Man's ceremonial shoulder cloth. Noblemen in East Sumba wear two identical *hinggi kombu*, one around the shoulders, the other around the hips. The weaving and wearing of these colourful textiles used to be the privilege of the nobility. The textiles depict a variety of motifs including human figures, skull trees and an assortment of animals such as horses, various birds and sea creatures. The textiles fulfil several functions in Sumba society. As family heirlooms, they play a prominent role in the ritual exchange of gifts and, most important, in funeral rites. Deceased rulers are wrapped in large number of sacred textiles to facilitate the passage of the soul to the world where their ancestor spirits live.

20. *Pua*

Height: 117 cm

Length: 220 cm

Material: Cotton with warp ikat patterning

Location: Iban, Kalimantan.

¹⁰ Dayak – indigenous population of Kalimantan.

¹¹ *A Passion for Indonesian Art*, pp. 81–99.

Acc No: A 27 144

Ceremonial cloth with "potent" motifs. This *puja* is decorated with images of crocodile and anthropomorphic figures. Textiles decorated in this manner are used in Iban religious life to mark off holy places, to decorate altars and offerings to the gods, and to wrap or to cover the deceased. Iban women are initiated into the art of dyeing and weaving these intricate ikat motifs by certain spirits. Young girls begin copy-

ing patterns and many years later, after becoming accomplished weavers, they would create ritually powerful new designs. Before setting out on an expedition, Iban head-hunters would sleep under a blanket with powerful motifs. They hoped to communicate with the gods and to have dreams predicting the favourable outcome of the expedition. After a successful raid, the severed heads were collected by the women in the textiles with powerful motifs.

Songket

The splendid weaving tradition of the Minangkabau and of Palembang, South Sumatra are represented by nine cloths. These cloths were either in supplementary gold and silver weft yarns or warp ikat or a combination of the two, called *songket*. The *songket* technique had been introduced by traders visiting Indonesia and is still practiced today. These areas were relatively accessible to trade routes and the people living there were wealthy enough to be able to afford the imported silk and the gold and silver threads. Songket are woven by the Acehnese and the Karo Batak (both northern Sumatra), the Minangkabau (West Sumatra), the Balinese, the Sumbawanese, and some Bugis people, but the songket of Palembang, South Sumatra, is considered to be the finest in Indonesia (see fig. nos. 21, 22).

The thread used in the old Palembang songket textiles contributed a great deal to their rich, lustrous beauty. Imported from India, this special thread (*benang emas cantung*) was covered with real gold or silver. Unfortunately, today metallic thread is commonly used instead. There is a variety of songket sarong, selimut, and smaller selindang (shawls). Songket cloths have a material value due to the real gold or silver that was once incorporated into them. Although songket is part of the gift exchange necessary for a marriage, it is given by the groom's family to the bride's family. This is contrary to the normal custom, for textiles are generally regarded as feminine throughout Indonesia and are usually a gift from the bride's family. So in this case, songket seems to be valuable in the same way as money or livestock – the usual masculine gifts. Songket cloths are considered a kind of wealth and as part of the traditional dress, but like other relatively newer types of textiles such as weft ikat cloths, they do not seem to have any ritual uses or deeper levels of meaning.¹²

21. Shawl

Height: 95 cm

Length: 198 cm

Material: Silk with warp ikat and supplementary gold patterning

Location: Palembang, Sumatra.

Acc No: A 27 117.

Songket, ceremonial shawl. Favorite motifs of weavers in this area are represented with an eight-pointed star and rose design. Most Palembang selimut include a row of triangular *tumpal* motifs along the fringed edges and

stripes containing patterns along the selvages. This layout clearly resembles the basic design of the Indian patola.

22. Sarung

Height: 90 cm

Length: 210 cm

Material: Silk with warp ikat and supplementary gold patterning

Location: Palembang, Sumatra.

Acc No: A 27 130.

The tails of the sarong and the *kepala* of

¹² Warming, pp. 127–142.

the sarong are decorated with the ubiquitous *tumpal* (spearhead) motif. Brocade, on silk background golden pattern made with auxiliary weft, geometric in lengthwise stripes, on both ends transverse. Wine colour. Well preserved, almost untouched, only small fissures along longer edges.

23. *Selindang*

Height: 34 cm

Length: 180 cm

Material: Silk with warp ikat and supplementary gold patterning

Location: Minangkabau, Sumatra.

Acc No: A 27 129.

Detail of a Minangkabau supplementary weft selindang. Gold threads against a wine-colored silk warp.

Ship cloth

The weaving tradition of the Lampung region (South Sumatra) has produced remarkable ship cloths, some of which are the most spectacular cloths of the whole Indonesian archipelago.

The major design elements involve ships, animals carrying riders, tree forms, birds, and many others. As images suggesting transition, they are appropriate designs for textiles used in naming, circumcision, marriage, and death ceremonies. Earlier literature tended to label the ship motifs as "ship of the dead", but it is evident that the designs have greater significance than only the transition to the other world. The people of South Sumatra utilized the ship conformation as a major structuring principle, and it appears as the basic conceptual form for houses and ceremonial processions. These cloths were hung at ceremonies and they became graphic representations of the hierarchical structure of the society. Because of the predominance of the ship motifs, these textiles are often called "ship cloth", but in Sumatra they have three different names, given according to single types. One is the *palepai* ("ship") or *sesai balak* ("big wall"), the second is the *tatibin*, and the third type is called the *tampan* ("beautiful"). In Forman's collection there are four pieces found: one *tatibin* (the word with no meaning in modern Indonesian language), one *palepai* and two pieces of *tampan*. *Palepai* (see fig. 24) are very long narrow cloths, their maximum length being 500 and width 60 centimetres. They were produced only along the south coast. Several styles of *palepai* can be distinguished, but they all depict one, two or more large ships in red or blue, with people, animals, masts, buildings and trees standing on deck. These cloths were the lineage heirlooms of prominent families and served a symbolic function in rituals and on ceremonial occasions. *Tampan* (see fig. nos. 25, 26) are small textiles measuring approximately 90 by 40 centimetres. They depict a wide range of motifs: one large ship with people and animals, a number of smaller ships, one large bird or merely geometric forms. Like the *palepai*, there are various styles of *tampan*.

24. *Palepai*

Height: 37 cm

Length: 103 cm

Material: Cotton with supplementary weft patterning

Location: Kroë, South Sumatra.

Acc No: A 27 153.

Ship cloth showing one large sailing ship with very stylized pair of people and a tree of

life. *Palepai* served as wall hangings during life-cycle ceremonies such as births, marriages and deaths. The ship on the cloth symbolizes the passage from one status to another, the ship "structuring" the inherently unstructured moments of transition.¹³ *Palepai* depicting one ship were used exclusively in marriage ceremonies, and symbolized the joining of the two families or the union of the male and female elements.

¹³ Dijk, pp. 60–65.

¹⁴ Holmgren, p. 72.

Palepai were hung on the right wall in the inner room of the house as a backdrop to the central figures in the rite.¹⁴

25. *Tampan*

Height: 50 cm

Length: 49 cm

Material: Cotton with supplementary weft patterning

Location: Kroë, South Sumatra.

Acc No: A 27 154.

Ship cloth with *wayang*-like figures, tree of life form and stylized geometric ornaments. *Tampan* were used in a range of transition rites, as a part of the ritual gift exchange, as ceremonial seats for the bride and groom and as pillows for the deceased.

26. *Tampan*

Height: 54 cm

Length: 60 cm

Material: Cotton with supplementary weft patterning

Location: South Sumatra

Acc No: A 27 155

The great majority of *tampan* found in South Sumatra have geometric patterns as this example with simple diamond patterns.

27. Ritual vessel

Height: 24 cm

Length: 49 cm

Material: Iron.

Technique: forged

Location: Sumatra

Acc No: A 27 068.

Black iron container, shaped in the form of mythical animal with long body (ship), for the soot used in the teeth-filing ceremony.

28. Mirror

Height: 7.5 cm

Length: 7.5 cm

Diameter: 12.5 cm

Material: Iron.

Technique: cast

Location: Java. Date: 10th-11th century

Acc No: A 27 071

Cast iron mirror with adding discus. Handle is decorated with simple figure. The figure symbolizes a female goddess in a very gracious posture with many jewels.

29. Casket

Height: 13 cm

Length: 29 cm

Depth: 11.5 cm

Material: Copper.

Technique: beaten

Location: Central Java. Date: 10th-11th century

Acc No: A 27 067 ab

Published¹⁵

A box of rectangular shape decorated with floral and animal reliefs grouped in small lockets. Similar boxes were used for jewels and manuscripts – for example we can see the same type of boxes in the reliefs at Borobudur in Central Java.

30.-31. Ritual figures

Length: 49 cm, 47 cm

Material: Coins, wood, cotton string.

Location: North Bali. Date: cca 1800

Acc No: A 27 064, A 27 065

Published¹⁶

Arca lingga or pratima (figures made of gold, precious wood, or as here, old coins sewn together) are kept in temple until, at the temple festival, deities are invited to enter the figures and make them alive. Chinese coins are from 18th century.¹⁷

Hilts

Richly decorated hilts in Indonesian kris are very famous all over the world and they have become objects of interest to many collectors. The kris is exclusively a male implement, in some way identical with its wearer, a “brother” or his double. Its function reminds one of the medieval European sword.

¹⁵ Forman, 1980, plate 137.

¹⁶ Forman, 1983, p. 73.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 72.

The so-called Madjapahit kris can be regarded as the basic form, and the types known and used today are derived from it. The Madjapahit kris first appeared in the 6th and 7th centuries, and is a small dagger with either a straight or wavy blade, with the hilt and blade forged out of a single piece of iron. The hilt often shows a human or mythological figure, facing the spectator with hands linked on the chest or resting one the knees. We have our first definite evidence of the existence of the kris from the Central Javanese period, but its real significance developed in the Eastern Javanese era. As to its function, the kris is at the same time a weapon, an ornament, and a cult object, something every Javanese adult male had to possess. The kris is the link between the owner and his ancestor – even if the father had the kris newly made for his son entering adulthood – for it is the form, the sacrifice presented at its forging and compliance with the rules in its shaping that gives a “soul” to the kris and in this way links the young man to his ancestors.

Skill in the making of the Javanese kris was passed on by the Javanese settlers to several parts of the Archipelago. Although somewhat modified in form, it is found on the Malay Peninsula, in certain parts of Sumatra, especially East and South Sumatra, in West and Sont Kalimantan, in some part of Sulawesi and in the islands of Bali and Lombok. Richly decorated hilts of Indonesian *kris* are very famous all over the world and they have become objects of interest to many collectors. Each single part of *kris* bears many meanings and symbols. The hilts are usually made of wood, but hilts of ivory, bone or stone are also common. Hilt shapes exist in a considerable number of variations.

Kris were not only weapons, but were also an inseparable part of the traditional costume. They indicated the social rank of their owner and symbolized the owner's tie to his ancestors. Further, they were symbols of power and audacity. Having a *kris* at home meant welcoming fortune, decreasing labour pains, protection from illnesses, fires or floods. Noblemen's *kris* were said to influence the destiny of the whole country. In times of war, each warrior carried his *kris* on the left side ready for action, whereas in times of peace, *kris* were carried on the right side. Other ways of carrying kris were considered impolite, or perhaps insulting. The Javanese carry their *kris* mounted on the back.

32. Hilts of kris

Height: 11.5 cm, 8.5 cm, 8 cm

Material: horn, wood

Location: Bali, Lombok, Sunda Island.

Acc No: A 27 052, A 27 053, A 27 054

Variations of *kris* hilts from different parts

of the archipelago. The Balinese hilt is shaped as a human figure with the demonic face. The second hilt is in the form of two squatting figures. The third example is also stylized in the form of a squatting human figure with a bird head.

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