

## **The Development and Symbolic Meaning of Pagatan Typical Woven Cloth Motifs in Manurung Village, Central Kusan District, Tanah Bumbu Regency**

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**Abstract:** This study discusses the development and symbolic meaning of the typical Pagatan woven fabric motifs produced in Manurung Village, Kusan Tengah District, Tanah Bumbu Regency. The method in this study uses a descriptive qualitative approach. Data were obtained through observation, interviews and documentation to identify the development of Pagatan woven cloth motifs occasionally. In addition, each motif's symbolic meaning is analysed to understand the message and cultural values contained in the typical Pagatan woven fabric. The results of the study show that the motifs of Pagatan woven fabrics have developed in line with the development of the knowledge of the weavers, changes in market tastes, community needs, and the influence of economic and social factors. Although experiencing growth, these motifs retain distinctive characteristics reflecting local wisdom and ancestral traditions. In addition, it was found that each motif has a deep symbolic meaning, including moral messages, traditional stories, and cultural values that describe the life of the people of Manurung Village.

**Keywords:** Symbolic Meaning, Typical Pagatan Woven Patterns, Manurung Village

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## INTRODUCTION

Woven fabric is one of Indonesia's cultural heritage, rich in beauty and uniqueness. In various regions in Indonesia, various types of woven fabrics have distinctive motifs and symbols. Utami (2014) revealed that the diversity of motifs and symbols in woven fabrics is a distinct characteristic of each region. In addition, woven cloth has a value that determines customary rules. Sarmento (2015) said that if there is a violation of customary rules, fines will be paid, which must be paid through traditional fabrics.

Hidayah (2019) said that the manufacture of woven fabrics comes from traditions that arise through experience and the results of the development of human ideas as part of a cultural form. The motifs found in woven fabrics change over time. However, there are elements that remain the same in the weaving tradition, which are continued and preserved. These elements are the basic values of life that come from making woven fabrics.

Each woven cloth in each region has a philosophical content and value in people's lives. In Batu Bara's Malay songket woven fabric, there are several embedded values, such as decency, religious, economic, physical, social, character, aesthetic, and intellectual (Wati, 2021). Hidayat (2014), quoted by Sasmito et al. (2023), reveals that there is a philosophical value contained in this cloth, namely to *nemui-nyimah*, *sakai-sambayan*, *nengah-nyampokh*, *juluk-adok* and *pusaggikhi*. Each word of the philosophical value has a meaning, such as *nemui-nyimah* has meaning friendly and open, *sakai-sambayan* meaning cooperation, *nengah-nyampokh* means sociable, *juluk-adok* means behaving in accordance with the personality and title bears, as well

*pusaggikhi* means dignity (Sasmito et al., 2023).

Pagatan is an area famous for its woven fabric craftsmen. These activities were passed down from generation to generation, so that they exist today. Pagatan's typical woven fabrics have motifs and patterns that are different from woven fabrics from other regions. Pagatan weaving is usually in the form of a cloth or a sarong. The existence of this weaving coincided with the process of overseas migration of the Bugis tribe from Kampere Wajo village in South Sulawesi Province, who then settled in the Kusan Hilir Pagatan section starting in the mid-18th century (Budhi, 2015; Effendi, Mansyur, & Burhansyah, 2019).

Pagatan weaving is not only valuable as part of the economic and cultural development of the Pagatan people. However, it also contains social values, which are shown as characteristics or characteristics of the Bugis people who live and live in the Pagatan area and around the Tanah Bumbu area. The motifs and symbols contained in the Pagatan woven fabric have a deep philosophical meaning and are an important part of the life of the local community.

The development and symbolic meanings contained in woven fabrics have been investigated by several studies. Mubin (2016), who examined the symbolic meaning of the typical Bima woven cloth, revealed that the decoration that became the motif on the woven cloth was based on the beliefs of the people of the Bima region. Ardi et al. (2023), who examined the symbolic meaning of the Rongkong woven fabric, said that this motif has a symbol of belief for the local community known as *ulu karua*. This motif is a symbol of people's beliefs about the origins of the

descendants of the Rongkong tribe, this motif symbolizes eight brothers who are the lineage of the Rongkong indigenous people, namely: Pakondongan, Pauntaran, Padokean, Busa Ulu, Pande Tua, To Lolin, Indo Sanda Pulo, Lando Beluek (Ardi et al., 2023).

Wahyuni (2015), researching the aesan gede songket weaving, said that the existence of the cloth was influenced by the nobility in the Darussalam sultanate, which was centred in the Ki Gede Ing Suro area. Initially, songket weaving was only intended for aristocratic families, but in its development, songket could be owned by anyone and from any background (Wahyuni, 2015). Kusumastuti (2016), who examined the development of songket weaving, said that from the 2010-2015 period, there were addition of 6 new motifs to the weaving, namely the *kemang satange beru*, *bintang kesawir*, *lasuji kemang sasir*, *cepa'beru*, and *jajar kemang baleno* all of which still use geometric shapes.

The development of the typical Pagatan woven fabric in Manurung Village is also interesting to study. From time to time, weaving techniques, motifs and patterns in Pagatan woven fabrics continue to develop. These changes can reflect changes in the social, cultural and economic life of the people in Manurung Village and its surroundings. The development and symbolic meaning of the motifs behind this woven fabric is still an interesting thing to explore.

This study aims to provide a deeper understanding of the development and symbolic meaning of Pagatan woven cloth motifs. In this study, the development of the typical Pagatan woven fabric in Manurung Village will explain the philosophical meaning contained in the existing motifs and patterns.

## METHODS

In this study, the method used by researchers using a descriptive qualitative approach. The main characteristics of this research method are that researchers are directly involved in the field, act as observers, create categories of actors, observe phenomena, record them in observation books, do not manipulate variables, and focus on natural observations (Wekke, 2019). Qualitative methods will examine in depth and produce data that is descriptive in nature and can provide an understanding of matters relating to the research subject. A qualitative descriptive approach is in accordance with the aim of this study to provide a deeper understanding of the development and symbolic meaning of Pagatan woven cloth motifs.

Data obtained by researchers obtained through observation, interviews and documentation. Observations were made to observe the process of making woven fabrics, from selecting threads to weaving processes and selecting motifs. Observations were also made to understand the use of woven fabrics in the daily life of the people of Manurung Village. Then interviews were conducted in-depth with woven craftsmen who are experts in making Pagatan woven fabrics. In addition, to obtain information about the development and symbolic meaning of motifs. Documentation is carried out by collecting documents, photographs or historical records related to Pagatan weaving in the area.

After the data is collected, then the analysis is carried out. Data analysis was carried out qualitatively using an inductive approach. The results of the analysis are used to interpret the development of Pagatan woven cloth motifs from time to time, as well as to understand the symbolic meaning contained in each motif.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### **The Development of Classical and Modern Motifs of Pagatan Woven Fabrics**

According to Budhi (2015), based on diaspora records, the Bugis people who migrated to the Pagatan area brought a number of cultures from their place of origin, namely in South Sulawesi. Then these cultures meet and experience acculturation with cultural traditions that are overseas, for example, in the application of Pagatan weaving.

Pagatan weaving has a resemblance to the motifs from the area of origin brought by the Wajo Bugis community who live in the coastal area of Pagatan. The motif from the traditional Bugis Wajo weaving has a design that is divided into two, namely the head or also known as the spit and the body or body (Rahayu, 2021). The application of the use of this weaving is used daily on the top, or the head is used on the back, this is because, based on history, the leaders or kings always walked in front of the warlords and bodyguards (Sulvinajayanti et al, 2015). Based on this history, it is also the design of the motifs that exist on each strand of Pagatan woven fabric, especially the most classic ones following the region of origin, namely the Wajo Bugis tribe.

The existence of Pagatan weaving was originally brought into development along with the arrival of the Bugis people, even today, it is still produced using traditional techniques and equipment (Budhi, 2015). However, several traditions of the Bugis Pagatan coastal community are different from the Bugis ethnic traditions in their area of origin. In fact, there are several forms of the Bugis Pagatan tradition that are not known or not practised by the Bugis ethnic group in South Sulawesi. This implies that there has been a change or acculturation as well as the dynamics of the traditions brought from their area of origin with other traditions in overseas areas. This is in accordance with the results of the interview, which stated:

*"In fact, the creation of this motif is now more advanced, not just monotonous, that the motif must be in accordance with the designs of the ancients. It is more flexible and varies according to what the weavers themselves imagine, but this is also inseparable from knowledge and the implicit symbol of the meaning to be conveyed. For example, the renewal of the motif on the image of the ship, which was originally the oldest motif, there are small boats, and there are sailing ships. Then there is the bombang shape or what is called a wave, and some are even mixed with banjar motifs, especially in the coloring section, which can be said to be more striking than the colour of Pagatan weaving (R45)."*

This opinion shows that the making of Pagatan woven motifs is currently experiencing significant developments, while these motifs come from the ideas and ideas of weavers as motif makers who come through knowledge that has been learned along with life experiences. Pagatan weaving is also currently not only developing on how the Pagatan Bugis people practice their daily lives but also developing based on acculturation which is clearly visible in the application of Pagatan woven cloth motifs which do not only use motifs originating from the Bugis ethnic community but also use Banjar tribal motifs, for example, teeth haruan.

Acculturation in Pagatan weaving does not only appear in terms of motifs but is also based on the colours used. The original Pagatan woven fabric is generally dark in colour, in contrast to the typical Banjarese cloth, which is generally light in colour. The use of fabric colours and motifs was created based on the creative ideas of the Pagatan woven fabric weavers. Even though the ideas and creativity come directly from the weavers, this, of course, still gives a meaning that is contained in each of the

motifs, this meaning is usually in the form of the spirit of the Bugis Pagatan people when carrying out life and is closely related to maritime for example ship, wave and other motifs.

The classic Pagatan woven cloth motifs are works of art that are of high value due to the lengthy manufacturing process by the weaving craftsmen. Not all Pagatan woven cloth craftsmen in Manurung Village can make it. The elders usually make the classic Pagatan woven cloth motifs of the Pagatan woven cloth craftsmen. For the manufacture of modern Pagatan, woven fabric motifs in Manurung Village are an adaptation to the times and an adjustment to the needs of life, both for users and craftsmen.

#### **The Meaning of Pagatan Woven Fabric Motifs**

Pagatan Weaving is a form of the result of a long process of activities carried out, starting from the activity of preparing materials in the form of threads, dyes, motifs, and looms, both gedog and ATBM (Non-Machine Weaving Tools) as a form of manufacturing technique. This is what causes Pagatan weaving to have a variety of beauties, both from the colour and the typical motifs produced (Halim et al, 2019).

In everyday life, Pagatan weaving is not only meaningful as a cloth. Instead, Pagatan weaving is a cultural and social symbol of its use. Therefore, in terms of its use, Pagatan weaving dominates in customary and traditional activities, which implies a symbol of identity from its use as an illustration of the Bugis Pagatan people and the social status indicated by the material from which the Pagatan weaving is made.

Broadly speaking, the process of making Pagatan woven cloth is described by interpreting the philosophy of the motifs and history of Pagatan woven cloth. Pagatan woven fabric motifs have the philosophical meaning of traditional or classic motifs, for example, in the ship motif. This motif has the meaning of human adventure in finding new areas that are peaceful and prosperous for the

community through the activity of crossing the seas in order to create a better life. The Pagatan woven motifs are in the form of fish, which means fish life under the sea dancing between mangrove roots and rocks, as well as coconut trees which means a picture of coastal life in the Pagatan area, which is overgrown with coconut trees.

Pagatan weaving also describes the meaning of the cultural resilience of the Bugis people who live in South Kalimantan. This cultural resilience is shown by the meaning of strength and firmness towards the attitudes of ethnic groups in maintaining native culture as a regional culture that is free from the influence of other cultures. Although in practice at this time, Pagatan weaving has been acculturated with sasirangan cloth. This acculturation does not reduce the real meaning of the existence of Pagatan weaving which means a physical symbol of the existence of the Bugis tribe in Pagatan.



**Figure 1.** Sasirangan motif

Source: Personal Documentation, 2021

The picture above shows a combination of Banjar people's motifs in the form of sasirangan, which is applied to the Pagatan woven fabric with more than just one motif. The picture shows strands of Pagatan woven with two types of sasirangan motifs, namely teeth haruan and iris pudak. This motif is then combined with the ship motif, which is the original motif of the Pagatan woven fabric.

In the following, the images and meanings of each Pagatan woven fabric motif, from classic to modern, are presented. The classic Pagatan woven fabrics include the following.



**Figure 2.** *Cappu Paranga* Motif  
Source: Personal Documentation, 2021

The image above shows the motif *cappu paranga* (rambai fruit cover) made using the sobe are weaving technique. Rambai plants can be found along the Kusan River in Pagatan, and this was the initial inspiration for making the *cappu parangga* motif. Weaving with this motif gives meaning in the form of respect for nature, especially for plants that have provided a living for humans.



**Figure 3.** *Cappu Cila* Motif  
Source: Personal Documentation, 2021

The picture above shows the wave and *cappu cila* motifs (place for eyelashes). This motif means beauty or the beauty of Bugis Pagatan women.



**Figure 4.** *Bombang* motif  
Source: Personal Documentation, 2021

The picture above shows the *bombang* or wave motif as a characteristic of the classic Pagatan woven motif. The *bombang* motif means the nuances of the sea accompanied by the calm of the waves.



**Figure 5.** Ship Motif  
Source: Personal Documentation, 2021

The picture above is a ship motif, meaning a story from the Bugis people who live on the outskirts of the Pagatan coast, with the majority as sailors. Therefore, the ship motif means the adventure of humans who are looking for areas of economic livelihood in fulfilling the welfare of life as sailors. This is because the majority of Pagatan people in ancient times were fishermen, and until now, there are still many who work as fishermen. Meanwhile, the wives and children of the fishermen in Pagatan will weave while their husbands are out at sea.



**Figure 6.** Lily Flower Motif  
Source: Personal Documentation, 2021

The picture above is Pagatan woven fabric with a lily flower motif made with the *sobe sumelang* technique. The lily has a meaning of purity, purity and modesty.



**Figure 7.** *Cappu Kaluku* Motif  
Source: Personal Documentation, 2021

The picture above is a Pagatan woven fabric with the *cappu kaluku* (coconut cap) motif associated with the *bombang* motif. This cloth has a meaning as a description of the life of the coastal area, which is filled with sea waves and falling coconut trees.



**Figure 8.** *Panji* Motif  
Source: Personal Documentation, 2021

The picture above is a Pagatan woven fabric with a *panji* motif that has the characteristic of squares filled with cloves. It is made not through *ikat* or *songket*, but with direct weaving techniques through weft or *pasulu* threads that are woven on standing threads (Hidayah, 2014).

As for the modern Pagatan woven fabric motifs, the images include the following:



**Figure 9.** Sun and Plants Motif  
Source: Personal Documentation, 2021

The picture above is a Pagatan woven fabric with sun and plant motifs combined with *bombang* or wave motifs. This woven cloth means serenity by embodying a picture of seaside life around Pagatan beach, starting from the hot sun, sea waves and the plants around it.



**Figure 10.** Peacock Motif  
Source: Personal Documentation, 2021

The picture above is a Pagatan woven fabric with peacock motifs combined with *bombang* or wave motifs. The meaning contained in this woven fabric is in the form of *bombang* or waves, which symbolize waves on the beach. Meanwhile, the peacock means joy and fitness in life. Therefore, as a whole, this weaving describes the life of a coastal community who work hand in hand in solving life's problems together both in a state of grief, even though the problem looks very heavy but once faced, it will give joy and joy.



**Figure 11.** Rose Flower Motif  
Source: Personal Documentation, 2021

The picture above is a Pagatan woven fabric with a rose motif. This motif is meaningful as warmth, love, and a symbol of affection. Generally, the rose motif is sung by men to the Bugis Pagatan women's family in the delivery of engagement or marriage events.



**Figure 12.** *Balubu* Motif  
Source: Research Documentation, 2021

The picture above is a Pagatan woven cloth decorated with a *balubu* motif or flower pot or urn. The meaning of this weaving shows wealth, but in modern motifs, it is interpreted as a form of beauty where the flower grows and blooms.



**Figure 13.** Wave, ship, crab, fish and anchor motifs  
Source: Research Documentation, 2021

The picture above is a Pagatan woven fabric with many variations of motifs, including wave motifs, ship motifs, crab motifs, fish motifs, and anchor motifs. This motif directly describes the story about the activities of the Bugis Pagatan community and their environment. Pagatan woven fabrics not only look beautiful because of the soft colours and distinctive motifs that are patterned on the cloth. In terms of colour, for example, the colour of the Pagatan woven fabric is a blend of colours in the traditions of the



Bugis and Banjar people, which are contradictory (Zulfa, 2016). Hendraswati (2018) said that Pagatan woven cloth is not only used as a cover and body armour but is also used as clothing in traditional ceremonies. Furthermore, he revealed that in the economic field, Pagatan weaving can be traded or traded commodities (Hendraswati, 2018).

Halim et al. (2019) said that the motifs contained in the Pagatan woven cloth were obtained from images around Pagatan, such as ships, coconut trees, and so on. The diversity of motifs on woven fabrics will become an attraction for visiting tourists. This was also revealed by Pangestu & Santoso (2021) that various motifs have high appeal because of their novelty according to market tastes.

## CONCLUSION

Pagatan woven cloth motifs have developed over time. This development was influenced by various factors, starting from developments in the knowledge of weavers, changes in market tastes and community needs, as well as the influence of economic and social factors. Although experiencing development, these motifs still retain their distinctive characteristics, which reflect local wisdom and ancestral traditions. In addition, the deep symbolic meaning of each motif is related to the life of the people of Manurung Village. Each motif becomes a means of conveying moral messages, ancestral stories, and cultural values that are an integral part of the life of the local community.

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