CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Java is one of the islands in Indonesia. Java becomes a heart of the nation because of its megacities, mesmerizing natural beauty, magical archaeological sites and profound traditions in art, music and dance (Introducing Java: Lonely Planet, 2016). Java consists of six provinces: Special Region of Yogyakarta, Special Capital Region of Jakarta, Banten, East Java, Central Java, and West Java (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2012). It is the most populated island in Indonesia with the population around 135 million people. About 57% of Indonesian citizens are living in Java (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2012). Beside its people, Java stores variety of landscapes, unique buildings, arts and cultures.

Central Java especially is the center of Java. This region is rich of cultural attractions such as the most visited Borobudur Temple, a world heritage (Asdhiana, 2015). Beside the cultural attractions, Central Java also owns some traditions. For example, shadow puppets, human puppets, ketoprak, Javanese traditional dance, kris, gamelan, and batik. Many foreigners come to Java to learn its traditions and cultures (Arts and Culture of Java: Java Indonesia.org, 2011). Foreigners can learn unique traditions and cultures of Java that they cannot find in the other places.
Batik is one of Indonesian traditional culture products. It has spread all over Indonesian and it has the greatest quality (Ministry of Trade of The Republic of Indonesia, 2008). As a cultural product, batik has become Indonesian identity and a mandatory uniform to wear at a particular time in schools or some workplaces (Elshinta.com, 2016). Batik itself has different motifs, patterns and colors. These features are important in determining the function and symbolic meaning of the design. The symbolic meaning of Central Java’s classical batik and its philosophical sense are influenced by Javanese Hindu culture (Kusrianto, 2013).

Every area in Central Java has batik of its own. The famous city which is producing Batik is Solo City. Batik produced in Solo is nicknamed Batik Solo. Batik Solo is well known throughout Indonesia and even overseas. Beside Batik Solo, Central Java has other attractive batik such as Batik Pekalongan, Batik Yogyakarta, Batik Semarang, Batik Lasem, and Batik Bakaran.

Among other batik, Batik Bakaran is infamous. Batik Bakaran is a batik product of a small city called Juwana, a sub-district in Pati, Central Java. It is infamous because Batik Bakaran is only produced in Bakaran village. The person who brought batik culture to Bakaran village is Nyi Siti Sabirah or Nyai Banowati. She came from Majapahit Kingdom and moved to Bakaran village until she died (Batik Bakaran Wanita, 2012).

The writer is interested in art and culture of Juwana especially Batik Bakaran as the writer comes from Juwana City and lives near
Bakaran village. Some of the writer’s families are from Bakaran village. The writer’s mother is a batik lover. From his mother, he learns a lot about motifs and patterns of Batik Bakaran. The writer intends to do a research in Batik Bakaran to find out the philosophy behind the motifs and patterns of Batik Bakaran. As an Indonesian who concerns with the preservation of Javanese traditional culture especially Batik, the writer wants to delve more into Batik Bakaran. The writer intends to find out the kind of patterns of Batik Bakaran and the philosophy of its motifs and patterns. In writing his thesis, the writer put into considerations a previous research done by Lea Arifianti Handono, a student of Faculty of Language and Arts Soegijapranata Catholic University Semarang who studies Dutch batik. She analyzed the Dutch influence in Indonesian Batik.

1.2 Field of the Study

The field of the study is culture and it is focused on Batik Bakaran’s patterns and philosophies.

1.3 Scope of the Study

This study will explain the patterns and philosophies of Batik Bakaran.

1.4 Problem Formulation

There are important problems which will be answered in this research:
1. What are the patterns of Batik Bakaran?

2. What are the philosophy of the motifs and patterns?

1.5 Objective of the Study

The objectives of this study can be stated as follows:

1. To identify the patterns of Batik Bakaran.

2. To find out the philosophy behind the motifs and patterns of Batik Bakaran.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study will help students and readers to have better understanding on Indonesian cultural product, especially the patterns and the philosophy of it. Hopefully, better knowledge and understanding of Batik Bakaran will encourage the readers to appreciate the rich tradition of Indonesian Batik.

1.7 Definition of Terms

1. Batik

Batik is the most popular traditional cloth in Java. According to Elliot, batik is a way of decorating cloth by covering a part of it with a coat of wax and then dyeing the cloth (Elliot, 1984).
2. **Batik Bakaran**

Batik Juwana is the other name for Batik Bakaran. It is produced in Bakaran Village. Batik Bakaran is a handmade batik which is done traditionally and becomes an icon of Juwana (Kusrianto, 2013).

3. **Motif and Pattern**

Some people might not know the differences between motif and pattern. In textile arts, motif is a smaller element in a whole work. Motif can be a theme of an art work. Pattern is a set of motifs (Chahal, 2010). There are many definitions of pattern, but the writer takes one which is more relevant to this study, which is “Pattern is an underlying structure that organizes surfaces or structures in a consistent, regular manner” (Jirousek, 1995).

4. **Batik Philosophy**

Batik is different from other cloth. The uniqueness of batik is on its motif and pattern. According to Kusrianto, batik has a philosophical meaning based on the view of life as a local wisdom. The masters of batik produce batik design through the process of settling himself, meditation to get the whispers of conscience, which is likened to receive revelation (Kusrianto, 2013).