

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS

This present research formulates two research questions. The first question deals with the meaning of using the peacock motif in batik clothes from cultural and religious perspectives. To answer this question, the writer uses the information from the interview with the batik sellers, who also turn out to be the batik peacock motif conceptors at *Kampung Batik Semarang*. Although they are not the batik motif makers, the concept they give to the batik makers is relevant to this research. The concept they give is related to the information from the readings gathered in academic journal articles and books. To analyze the data, the writer inserts sample pictures of the peacock batik motif from several shops at *Kampung Batik Semarang*.

The second research question concerns the connection between using the peacock motif in batik clothes and how the flora and fauna motifs found in batik cloth deliver the idea of bringing awareness to people about taking care of the environment. Therefore, in the data analysis, the writer also uses data from academic journal articles and books to discuss whether or not the peacock motif in batik clothes reflected the idea of ecocriticism.

4.1 Omah Batik Ngesti Pandowo

The writer's first shop visit at *Kampung Batik Semarang* is *Omah Batik Ngesti Pandowo*. It is the biggest and the only batik shop with an air conditioner at *Kampung*

Batik Semarang that local and foreign tourists drop by to see their various kinds of batik clothes. They sell pants, shirts, t-shirts, scarves, dresses, and more. An interview reveals that the owner, Mr. T, built the shop in 2009. Most products sold *at Omah Batik Ngesti Pandowo* use Batik Semarangan motifs. However, Mr. T also sells batik motifs from Solo, Pekalongan, and Jogja in the shop. The price of his batik collections starts from Rp50.000,00 to Rp2.000.000,00.

The writer meets Mr. T to interview him about his batik collections. When the writer asks him about batik materials with a peacock motif, he needs some time to find them. It turns out that his shop rarely has batik materials with a peacock motif. He is only able to show one batik cloth. All of his other tailor-made clothes turned out to have no peacock motif. Mr. T states that the batik peacock motif is rare because it is usually only made by order due to its complexity. Although he is not the batik maker, he is the batik conceptor of the peacock batik motif like that shown in Figure 4.1 below.

Figure 4.1

Blue and Red Peacock Couple



Note: (The peacock batik cloth sold at Omah Batik Ngesti Pandowo)

Figure 4.1 shows the only batik cloth with the peacock motif at Mr. T's shop. As can be seen above, the 2-meter cloth shows two peacocks that are surrounded by flowers. The flowers seen in Figure 4.1 are lotus and plum blossoms. Mr. T says that it is important to have these flowers around the peacock because the flowers are representative of Chinese culture. The Chinese often use peacocks, lotus, and plum blossoms to decorate their clothing.

Haris & Amalia support the significance of the lotus flower because it is attached to the legends and traditions of the Chinese people (2018, p. 16). Culturally, Haris & Amalia (2018) explain further that Dewi Kwan Im is the goddess of

compassion, kindness, and love. She usually appears on a lotus flower throne. The lotus flower is also important to He Xiang, who is the only goddess among the seven gods who inhabit Fenghai, by always bringing lotus flowers to cure illnesses.

Although Mr. T is Javanese, he understands that the only goddesses who wear attires with lotus are the Chinese. It is an iconic flower for the Chinese. In support of Mr. T, Haris & Amalia explain that in everyday life, the lotus is often used to symbolize women's beauty (2018, p. 16). Their petals and colors are beautiful, just like women, which most likely gives reason for Dewi Kwan Im to choose the lotus as her throne. Using an ecocriticism perspective, it is learned, therefore, that the lotus is important to preserve as it has an important meaning for the religion and culture of the Chinese.

Religiously, in Buddhism, the lotus has an important meaning (King, 2010, p. 133). This becomes one of the reasons why Mr. T conceptualizes his batik motif to have the lotus flower. He believes the lotus flower advocates the purity of the mind to reach enlightenment. He explains that the lotus is a flower that usually emerges from the dirt of a muddy and dark pond. Thus, it represents how humans may have started their lives in the gloom of ignorance and fear. However, just like the lotus flower, which only blooms in the daylight, the human mind is said only to unfold when there is enlightenment. This entails that the Chinese and Buddhists use lotus flowers as a significant plant. Hence, people must provide ways for the lotus flowers to always exist.

Observing Figure 4.1, it is seen that Mr. T decides to conceptualize two kinds of the lotus: the red and blue lotus. Mr. T states that he conceptualized the batik motif to have the red lotus to symbolize the importance of love and passion in humans. With

the many colors that a lotus flower may have, the red lotus is the highest caste of lotus; that is why this flower is considered sacred and highly respected (Miskaningsih, 2017, p. 84). Meanwhile, the blue lotus is the most difficult one to find. Mr. T understands that the blue lotus symbolizes wisdom and intelligence. According to Ariyani et al. (2022, p. 60), the lotus flower has to appear in a combination of two colors to show that if a lotus was a person, he or she has to be beautiful inside and outside.

Mr. T also states that the red and blue lotus in Figure 4.1 is designed with open petals to symbolize the openness of the human heart. Mr. T gives the explanation from a philosophical point of view about the flower. Even though the lotus lives and grows in a pond with muddy soil, it can continue to grow until it reaches the surface of the pond's water and blooms beautifully. The lotus flower is not affected by the dirtiness of the muddy ground. Thus, it teaches people how they should not be affected by the negative environment around them. As a consequence, people have to take care of the environment to support the flower's life continually.

In addition to the lotus, the batik cloth conceptualized by Mr. T also includes plum blossom or Meihua, which also shows how the Chinese people give pride to this particular flower for the philosophy it carries (Natalia & Rudiansyah, 2021, p. 22). In the interview, Mr. T argues that the Meihua is as important as the Sakura flower in Japanese culture. The Meihua is a symbol of hope, happiness, and good luck (Suliyati, 2011, p. 81), Mr. T explains that the spring in China would be marked by the Meihua blooming to signify new hope in human life. Mr. T believes that when the Meihua blooms, the beauty of it will attract people and make them happy.

Mr. T informs further that the flower is usually used as a decoration during Chinese New Year. It is a particular tree that usually has red envelopes hanging on it. The Chinese believe the red envelopes to be a lucky container that stores a good amount of money. Therefore, the blooming of the plum not only informs people about the coming of the Chinese New Year celebration but also marks the time for people to be joyful.

It is interesting to note that not only are the flowers beautiful, but the fruit also brings many benefits (Natalia & Rudiansyah, 2021, p. 22). Although Mr. T is a Javanese, his readings on Chinese culture and plum fruit are deep enough. He informs the writer that the plum could be used as a medicine to relieve coughs, dysentery, and constipation. Thus, one of the essential foods prepared for the Chinese New Year is plum jam and sweets. This makes the writer of this research understand better why the batik motif conceptualized by Mr. T has to have three flowers, the lotus, sakura, and plum. He wants people to preserve those flowers continually.

Although it is important to discuss the flowers above as proof that ecocriticism is concerned for the livelihood of both flora and fauna, this research gives more focus on the batik peacock motif. Therefore, the researcher analyzes how the two peacocks are designed. As seen in Figure 4.1, the peacocks face each other to show up some forms of contrasting points. First, the left one is colored predominantly red, while the right is blue. Even though colors have no gender, red is usually identical to women and blue to men (Anindya, 2016, p. 108). This is confirmed by Mr. T, who says the red one was the female peacock, while the blue one is the male. Blue is a masculine color

because it represents a man's loyalty, wisdom, and intelligence. Meanwhile, the red color in Chinese culture means good luck and joy. It is also a feminine color. According to Setiawan (2005, p. 7), red and blue will create a good combination. It is most likely the explanation why, in this batik cloth, the red and blue peacock is used to signify the marriage partnership.

Their position also explains another important thing. According to Mr. T, the position points out men's and women's status. The position of women is usually lower than men. This explains why in Figure 4.1, the position of the red peacock or the female peacock is lower and smaller than the blue one. It represents the influence of Confucianism from China, where women are placed in a lower position than men (Roosiani, 2016, p. 73). This lower position is influenced by the historical past when Chinese girls from low-income families are sold as slaves to wealthy families (Mardiana, 2019, p. 77). If not sold, they are enslaved by their own families by having them do all the household chores, including taking care of their younger siblings.

According to Mr. T, the peacock is one of the most famous animals in Chinese culture. It is both beautiful and rare. This gives reason for the Chinese to glorify the peacock. In China, the peacock is an essential animal because it is believed to have an outstanding philosophical value (Ningsih & Ramadhani, 2021, p. 8). It brings good luck and happiness. Mr. T mentions the importance of the peacock's placement when used as a symbol at home. If the peacock symbol is placed in the south direction, it is believed to bring great luck. Meanwhile, it is believed to create household harmony if it is placed in the southwest direction.

The importance of the peacock is also shown in how the Chinese believe in its relevance to those who are in high positions. The Potehi puppet from China, made from cloth, displays characters that consist of warriors, soldiers, generals, commanders, kings, gods, demons, prime ministers, commoners, and empresses. In Potehi puppetry, the empress doll uses the peacock motif on her clothes (Rahma & Doerjanto, 2016, p. 211). The peacock in the empress's attire symbolizes beauty and immortality. It is in line with Mr. T's explanation that only the royals wear the peacock motif in their clothes. This is why in the batik industry, Mr. T points out that the batik clothes with the peacock motif are ordered mainly by only the high officials, such as the mayor and governor. For him, those wearing peacock motifs look more attractive and authoritative in the eyes of society.

The peacock is culturally associated with the goddess Dewi Kwan Im (King, 2010, p. 133). In Chinese Buddhism, Dewi Kwan Im is identical to Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara, which is the pinnacle of mercy, compassion, kindness, and love. The peacock is one of her companion animals. Mr. T shares a myth of Dewi Kwan Im. He says that she turns a bird into a gorgeous peacock with a thousand eyes on its tail to help her keep an eye on creatures who may be fighting on earth. If any creatures fight, the peacock will inform Dewi Kwan Im. In short, her purpose is to protect humanity with the assistance of the peacock.

Another piece of information about the peacock is that the bird is another manifestation of the phoenix, which is included as one of the Twelve Symbols of Sovereignty. The peacock or phoenix is a collection of important historical Chinese

symbols representing the ancient emperor's Chinese royal authority (Shen, 2018, p. 3). The twelve symbols relate to the twelve months of the lunar year. Mr. T emphasizes he understands that these symbols of imperial power are embroidered on the emperor's sacrificial robes. Only members of the royal family can wear these robes. Mr. T informs the writer that the bird represented beauty and fortune. Meanwhile, the peacock's colorful and wide feathers' appearance in blue, red, gold, and green symbolize beauty and glory, representing the emperor's abundant knowledge, peace, and elegance.

4.2 Batik Temawon

The writer's second shop visit at *Kampung Batik Semarang* is *Batik Temawon*. Compared with the first shop, *Batik Temawon* does not have many collections of batik clothes. However, one of the shop's staff, Ms. O, is a batik conceptor. Like Mr. T from *Omah Batik Ngesti Pandowo*, she only has one batik cloth with the peacock motif in her shop, which is a piece of *batik tulis*. Regarding price, *batik tulis* tends to be more expensive. The processing technique is still manual and traditional, so it takes longer compared to other batik types. She explains that her *batik tulis* maker will usually need several months to finish it. However, *batik tulis* is more special since there will be no duplicates for each cloth. In Ms. O's shop, the price of *batik tulis* starts from Rp500.000,00 to Rp1.000.000,00. She says that the price depends on the complexity of making the motifs and coloring.

Figure 4.2

Brown Tailed Peacock



Note: (The peacock batik cloth sold at Batik Temawon)

The batik cloth that has a peacock motif in Ms. O's shop is shown in Figure 4.2. Just like in Mr. T's shop, it can be seen that the batik cloth has flora and fauna aspects. First, it has flowers and leaves. Second, the peacock is found as the only animal in the motif. Ms. O explains that the flower is *kembang sepatu* or *Hibiscus rosa-sinensis*. It is an ornamental plant from the *Malvaceae* family that can grow in subtropical areas. The colors are varied from pink to yellow. *Hibiscus rosa-sinensis* is a native plant in China but has been widely used as an ornamental plant in Asia, such as India and Indonesia. The flower is also known as the Chinese rose or hibiscus (Maharlika, 2018,

p. 72). Both the flowers and leaves are useful (Silalahi, 2019, p. 133). In Indonesia, *Hibiscus rosa-sinensis* is better known as an ornamental plant because it has various flower characters with various colors and crown shapes. Ms. O continues to explain that Indonesian people use *Hibiscus rosa-sinensis* for hair fertilizer and fence decoration.

Hibiscus rosa-sinensis is often used to symbolize women and is called a feminine flower (Marta et al., 2019, p. 4). Ms. O explains that she reads on the internet how Tahiti and Hawaiian girls' ears were traditionally tucked with these flowers when dancing the Hawaiian dance. It is interesting to notice that the woman is married or in a relationship when the flower is worn behind the left ear. She is single or openly willing to be in a relationship if the flower is worn on the right. *Hibiscus rosa-sinensis* also symbolizes fame and beauty in China. If someone gives this flower, it means they acknowledge the recipient's beauty. Ms. O continues that it is named *kembang sepatu* because Indian people used the flower to polish their shoes to make them shiny. The part that is used is the sap on the petals. In addition, *Hibiscus rosa-sinensis* is included as a sacred flower for Hindus (Silalahi, 2019, p. 133). Ms. O explains that it is because the flower is used as an offering to Dewi Kali and Dewa Ganesha in Hindu worship.

In Figure 4.2, there are mainly two kinds of *Hibiscus rosa-sinensis*. First, the red one. Red hibiscus flowers symbolize love and passion (Marta et al., 2019, p. 4). Ms. O explains that if someone wears a cloth with this motif, he or she would be showered with love. They will be powerful and filled with respect. Second, the blue one. Blue is included as a cool color (Karja, 2021, p. 110). It means that blue can

embody calm and peace. Ms. O believes that the existence of the blue hibiscus flowers will bring a good vibe. Both the red and blue flowers are beautiful. This flower can be easily found anywhere in Indonesia because it grows in tropical weather.

Hibiscus rosa-sinensis has health benefits (Efendi et al., 2021, p. 134). Not only the flowers but also the leaves and stems can be used. For example, people can use hibiscus oil for burns. It is understandable, then, to find why ecocritics see this flower as one to be preserved due to its many functions for people. This is why Ms. O sees it as a flower to be designed in her batik cloth.

Ms. O says that the existence of the peacock is related to Dewi Saraswati in Hinduism. She is the wife of Brahma and the Goddess of science and art (Pitriani, 2022, p. 61). Hindus depict Dewi Saraswati as a beautiful woman riding on a swan or peacock. According to Pitriani (2022, p. 61), the peacock represents Dewi Saraswati's beauty. The peacock has beautiful feathers that amaze people. Moreover, the birds also have a characteristic of charismatic leaders. Peacocks are very enthusiastic and passionate in everything they do. It is in line with Ms. O's explanation that Dewi Saraswati has a beautiful face and is also intelligent.

Ms. O continues that Dewi Saraswati is also always passionate about giving knowledge to people. Saraswati believes that if people do not have knowledge, they will not know what to do with their lives. Their lives will not be directed so that it becomes useless. This teaching makes Hindus always look up to her because she gives a good lesson as a goddess. Hindus emphasize that people should always be thirsty to seek knowledge, which is the foundation of life. Learning knows no age and can be

done for life. Hindus believe that without knowledge, the dynamics of human creativity will be low and uncertain. Ms. O believes the peacock motif on batik cloth is not just to pay respect to the clever and beautiful Dewi Saraswati. Still, as Hindus, it shows the efforts of absorbing her teachings to improve the quality of life by learning new things daily.

The peacock is the representative of Dewi Saraswati's beauty as a woman. She is depicted as a woman who is beautiful, caring, charming, thoughtful, and allures everyone (Pitriani, 2022, p. 68). People who see her will automatically adore and respect her. It is in line with Ms. O's explanation that Hindus hold the view that women have a significant role in all aspects of life, for being a child, a wife, and a mother. Women are educated and responsible for the harmony of the family and society. It is why Hindus value women. Hindus emphasize that women are the source of happiness for their children, families, and society, and will bring prosperity to them.

Hindus always honor women to achieve good things (Pitriani, 2022, p. 66). Ms. O understands that respecting women will make gods happy. Gods will bestow many good things upon people. However, only sacred ceremonies will be rewarded if women are respected. In other words, gods are unhappy and will not give their blessings. Therefore, people who want to be prosperous must always respect women by giving gifts, such as jewelry and beautiful clothes.

Ms. O believes that women who wear batik with the peacock motif will be honored and glorified in their lives. Those women will also bring happiness and blessings to their surroundings. In Hindu mythology, the peacock is associated with

Dewi Lakshmi, who symbolizes happiness, wealth, and fertility (Yeni, 2018, p. 145). She is the mother of the universe and the wife of Dewa Wisnu. Ms. O explains that Hindus worship Dewi Lakshmi to get the happiness of life, plant fertility, and abundant gold wealth. Not only that but Ms. O also believes that women who worship Dewi Lakshmi will be given fertility so that they can have children as desired. Therefore, the batik cloth with the peacock motif fits women.

Hindus regard peacocks as sacred because they perceive the spots on the birds' tails as the eyes of the Gods. Dewa Krishna is one of the significant Gods in the Hindu religion. He is depicted wearing a crown decorated with a peacock feather (Sundari, 2022, p. 12). Ms. O, who studies Hinduism, also asserts that the peacock feather on Dewa Krishna's crown is called *Mayura Pankha*. Then, she shares the story of *Mayura Pankha*.

Dewa Krishna plays a flute with such a beautiful tune on the Govardhana hill. It makes the peacocks circle around Dewa Krishna while dancing happily. Satisfied with their happiness, one of the peacocks offers Dewa Krishna a beautiful feather as a gift. *Mayura Pankha* is also associated with Dewa Krishna's lover, Radha. She is the goddess of love, tenderness, compassion and devotion. According to Ms. O, they are enamored by seeing the peacocks dance together. Therefore, the existence of *Mayura Pankha* in Dewa Krishna's crown also symbolizes his romantic love for Radha. He knows how much she loves the peacock, so he keeps the peacock feather in his crown to symbolize that his love for her never dies. Ms. O sees the importance of having a peacock motif in her batik to reflect the story about the King's love for his loved ones.

The peacock is Dewa Kartikeya's war animal. He is a famous Hindu god among the Tamils in India and Sri Lanka. Dewa Kartikeya is the god of war and protector of the land of the Tamils. He is depicted as a young deity, riding a peacock, and armed with a spear. Because of that, Ms. O concludes that the peacock is a symbol of strength. Thus, in designing the batik with the peacock motif, she hopes that those who wear the batik cloth also have the same strength as Dewa Kartikeya to face all the difficulties in the world.

According to Dokras (2020), Hindus believe that peacock is created from the feathers of the Garuda bird, which belongs to Dewa Wisnu (as cited in Wulandari et al., 2021, p. 25). Furthermore, the bird is linked to Dewa Indra, the thunder god, who transforms into a peacock and is given one hundred eyes so he could keep an eye out for the demon Ravana. Ms. O believes that those who wear batik cloth with the peacock motif will be considered special because it is always associated with the gods and goddesses of Hindus, who are always on guard for any demons that may pass by.

4.3 Batik Arjuna

The writer's third shop visit at *Kampung Batik Semarang* is to *Batik Arjuna*. It is owned by a middle-aged woman named Ms. M. Like the other two shop owners, she is not the one who made the batik clothes, but she is the person that made the concept. The writer also does not find many batik clothes with the peacock motif at her shop. There is only one cloth, and it is a *batik tulis*. The price is Rp700.000,00, the average price for a piece of *batik tulis* cloth. Ms. M says it takes her two months to make the

batik tulis cloth with the peacock motif. The production of *batik tulis* is very complicated (Nurainun et al., 2008, p. 126). Ms. M explains the making process takes a long time and requires patience.

To begin, the cloth should be washed with TRO (Turkish Red Oil) and starch to remove any adhering substances. It will make the coloring stage easier. The second stage is designing the motif. The process of designing is not done directly on the cloth but with the help of paper to minimize errors. The maker will copy the motifs onto the cloth using a marker. Then these motifs are made with liquid wax by *canting*. The third stage is the coloring process. It is done several times according to how many colors the maker wants. The dyeing begins from lighter colors to darker colors. After that, the batik is dipped in a chemical substance to dissolve the wax. Finally, the finished cloth is dried in the sun. Ms. M adds that the motif of one *batik tulis* cloth depended on the creation and imagination of the maker.

Figure 4.3

Red Feathered Peacock



Note: (The peacock batik cloth sold at Batik Arjuna)

In Figure 4.3, there are two different kinds of flowers. However, when the writer asks Ms. M about the type of flowers, she says they are not specific Indonesian flowers. Ms. M is trying to portray Japanese Sakura flowers in Javanese form because she loves the flowers so much. Sakura flowers are sacred to the Japanese (Yuwana, 2010, p. 19). The flower is a symbol of hard work. Japan is known for being a hardworking country with a tight work ethic and devoted workers. The people value punctuality and hard work to give their best to themselves and their surroundings. It is the same with Sakura flowers, which can overcome all the difficulties and obstacles of the fall season to

present beautiful scenery in autumn. Sakura flowers will only last about 7 to 10 days (Yuwana, 2010, p. 19). That is why it is a flower that people must preserve.

Japanese Sakura flowers are unique. The flower buds will grow first and then the leaves will follow. Everything will bloom simultaneously and then fall slowly at the same time. In Japan, the tree only flowers once a year in the spring, so many people highly anticipate its presence. During this season, the mass media in Japan are also busy reporting on *Sakura Zensen*, which predicts the appearance of Japanese Sakura flowers in various places in Japan (Yuwana, 2010, p. 10). Media broadcasts aim to get people ready for the warmer air in spring and to hold special events such as the Hanami festival. When the flowers bloom, all levels of society can enjoy their beauty. The Japanese people always hold the annual celebration because the event appreciates the temporal beauty of nature, which is also a symbol of renewal. As a result, the Japanese will always have to find a way to preserve the tree.

Ms. M confirms that for Japanese people, the flower is a symbol of mortal life or *Mujokan*. According to Japanese philosophy, it means nothing is certain. She adds that it is related to the Buddhist belief that nothing is permanent in the world. Everything will change, whether it is feelings, thoughts, or experiences. Buddhists believe that the belief exists so life can go on. Moreover, it teaches people not to be greedy.

Sakura flowers represent women (Novelisari et al., 2020, p. 9). Ms. M states that people often compare the beauty of Sakura flowers to the beauty of Japanese women. Japanese women have beautiful, smooth, healthy, and fresh faces. She hopes

that using this motif in the batik cloth will positively impact the wearer, such as being humble and hardworking. If the wearer is a woman, Ms. M hopes that the person who chose to wear her batik cloth will look as beautiful as a Japanese woman through her batik motif.

Ms. M informs the writer that she is influenced by the Japanese Buddhist religion, which emphasized on the peacock. Kim (2017, p. 120) confirms the importance by informing that the peacock deity, Mahamayuri, always stands behind the peacock or sits on a peacock throne. Mahamayuri can protect people from poisoning both physically and spiritually. It makes the Buddhists believe the peacock is an animal that can protect people from any disaster. In China, there is a dance called the Peacock Dance performed by the Dai Ethnic (You, 2016, p. 21). Dai people dance to worship the peacock, which is revered in their tradition as a divine bird. In their minds, the bird represents good fortune, purity, and beauty.

Ms. M shares her knowledge about the Dai people and peacocks. Buddha descends to earth, and a large group of Dai people assemble at the temple to hear his sermon. The peacock also wants to approach Buddha but cannot because it is very crowded. The peacock is heartbroken, but at that very moment, Buddha observes the peacock's genuine devotion to his teachings and sends a beam of Buddha's light in its direction. The light beam's shimmering colors brighten the peacock's feathers. That is how the peacock becomes beautiful. The peacock then dances to show off its beautiful feathers in honor of Buddha. Many significant occasions, including religious rites and festival celebrations, featured the peacock dance (Ruiji & Roongruang, 2022, p. 189).

For this reason, Ms. M sees the importance of designing the peacock with the opening of its feathers in the batik cloth.

Moving to another country, the peacock in Korea is considered a precious animal because it brings good luck and prosperous life (Kang, 2013, p. 39). Kang further explains that if Korean people dream about a dancing peacock, sooner or later they will become a famous writer. Furthermore, if Koreans put a peacock painting on the wall, they believe they will be successful as officials. It can be interpreted that the bird symbolizes splendor, wealth, and prosperity. This probably became why married brides frequently embroider the peacock on their pillows, make fans out of the bird's feathers, or draw the peacock on their fans. The peacock fan, called *Gonjakseon* in Korean, is a traditional Korean fan. Although the traditional fan is made without peacock feathers, it is designed to resemble a male peacock spreading its feathers. Ms. M confirms that the peacock designs are usually made for royal use only.

The peacock feathers in Korea also symbolize different statuses in the Joseon dynasty (Baihui, 2019, p. 292). Joseon is Korea's last dynasty, lasting from 1392 to 1897. Lasting for more than 500 years, it is still reflected in Korean culture today. Dramas, movies, and plays frequently depict this historical period. The strict clothing regulations in Joseon caused different status groups to dress differently, leading to significant wealth gaps; between the rich and poor. One of the regulations is hat-wearing. This is confirmed by Ms. M that the aristocrats wear hats decorated with peacock feathers to give them a special aura. Meanwhile, the poor do not have peacock feathers attached to their hats.

In Persian belief, the peacock symbolizes safety (Green, 2006, p. 61). According to Ms. M's understanding, the peacock is frequently carved on royal palaces, rooms, and thrones as protection against evil spirits, bad luck, and negativity. This is the same as the Persian people's belief about feeling safe when the peacock symbol is around them.

Next, in Egyptian culture, the peacock is an important creature to be preserved because it is connected to the all-seeing eye of Horus. The peacock feathers are said to have one hundred eyes linked to Horus's eye. The ancient Egyptian god Horus is known as the falcon-headed god. He is now one of the most widely recognized icons of Egypt, which is why he appears on Egyptian airlines as well as in hotels and restaurants of the country. Based on Ms. M's understanding, culturally, the Egyptians believe that the Horus eye stands for strength, safety, and royal authority. The left eye of Horus has a stronger connection to the moon than the right eye, which is a sign of power and represents the sun. Together, the two eyes stand for the universe. The function of the all-seeing eye of Horus is also to protect the universe from negative things. Finding this information, Ms. M is ever more convinced that her decision to use a peacock motif in her batik cloth will bring goodness into the wearer's life in all aspects.

4.4 Batik Puspasari

The writer's last shop visit at *Kampung Batik Semarang* is *Batik Puspasari*. The writer meets Mr. N at the shop. He is the batik conceptor for some of his shop's

collections. The writer only finds one piece of cloth in this shop with a peacock design. This confirms that peacock motifs are rare, and to find one is a precious opportunity. Mr. N says that it is because in the batik industry, the peacock motif is only used in *batik tulis*, and only those who can afford it would buy the cloth. As a result, the batik cloth with the peacock motif is only made by order. The buyers usually order the cloth for specific events, such as *Sangjit*. In Chinese culture, it is a private proposal event, with only the closest family members being invited.

Figure 4.4

The Peacock and The Full Moon



Note: (The peacock batik cloth sold at Batik Puspitasari)

Figure 4.4 is captured by the writer. The peacock, which stands beautifully on a tree branch, is the central element in the cloth. Plants, such as flowers and leaves, surround it. The full moon looks like it is shining on the bird, making the bird look magnificent. The blue background makes the ornaments look alive. Mr. N does not choose a specific flower in the design, but he only wants to flaunt the beauty of the peacock. He adores the peacock and uses it as his lucky charm. Mr. N has always been pleased if the buyer requests to buy a piece of batik cloth with the peacock motif, mainly if it is used for formal occasions. Not only because he loves to design the peacock motif, but he also feels satisfied knowing that other people adore the peacock. In response, the writer inquiries about what the peacock meant in various cultures and religions.

First, in Greek mythology, the peacock feather is associated with Hera, the wife of Zeus (Yeni, 2018, p. 145). Hera creates the peacock from Argus, a giant with 100 eyes. The story relies on when Hera tells Argus to watch over Io, who has been turned into a cow by Zeus. Io is Zeus' concubine. Hera wants to keep Io away from Zeus because of his jealousy. With Argus' hundred eyes, Zeus will not be able to take Io. Some of his eyes remain open even when he is asleep and watching Io. Knowing that, Zeus sends his son, Hermes, to kill Argus. Hermes disguises himself as a shepherd and puts Argus to sleep by playing music. Hermes kills Argus so that Io can be free. After Argus dies, Hera takes all of Argus' eyes and attaches them to the tail of her favorite bird, the peacock. Hera does it to commemorate Argus' loyalty.

The peacock also represents Hera's beauty as a goddess of matrimony and fertility (Kang, 2013, p. 40). Mr. N adds his understanding that Hera is also the queen of heaven and the guardian of married women. She is very kind and protects women at all costs. However, when a woman has a sexual relationship with Zeus, she will not forgive her and will do anything to get rid of her. Werness (2006) states that the peacock symbolizes immortality in Greek culture (as cited in Kumoratih, 2020, p. 80). The ancients believe that the peacocks have flesh that does not decompose after death. It remains tough and sturdy. Mr. N confirms that the Greeks used to cover human bodies with peacock feathers to prevent them from decomposing.

Second, moving to the Romans, Mr. N asserts that they are also very fond of the peacock. Not only because of its beautiful feathers, but the flesh is also delicious. Only the wealthy Romans, however, can eat the bird (Kang, 2013, p. 35). Mr. N continues that the peacock is expensive and included as a top-class food. The wealthy Romans usually purchase the bird to decorate their gardens. In short, they keep the bird as a pet. In Rome, the peacock is an exotic animal. It is the holy bird of Juno, an ancient Roman goddess of protection and special counsel (Kang, 2013, p. 35). Upon this information, Mr. N shares the famous tale between Juno and the peacock.

The story starts with the peacock visiting Juno because the peacock is unable to accept itself. The bird complains about its ugly voice. The bird wants to have a melodious voice like others. Then, Juno consoles the peacock and says that the bird is already superior in other aspects, such as its beautiful feathers and large size. Still, the peacock does not accept that and insists there is no point in having those silent beauties

if the voice is unpleasant to be heard. Juno, then, teaches the bird that every life is predetermined by the fates. While the peacock is allotted beauty, the eagle is given strength, and the nightingale is given a sweet voice, and more. Juno adds that each creature has its own gift, which is something we should be thankful for. Mr. N emphasizes that the goddess helped the peacock realize its worth in the world. That is why the peacock also symbolizes self-worth and appreciating life. The Romans also use peacocks as decorations in their mosaics, frescoes, tombs, and funeral lamps (Green, 2006, p. 33). Mr. N highlights that it is commonly used as catacombs and tombstones by Jewish Romans because they believe the peacock is a symbol of immortality.

Moving to religions, Mr. N begins with Christianity. Christian culture believes that the peacock symbolizes renewal and resurrection (Liandry et al., 2021, p. 3). Mr. N confirms that it is because the bird sheds its old feathers every autumn and grows new ones every spring. He adds that King Solomon is also known to have a peacock as a symbol of his immense wealth.

The peacock has a rich symbolism in Islam. It symbolizes beauty and renewal (Green, 2006, p. 56). Mr. N explains that the peacock is adored by the inhabitants of heaven due to its beauty. Regarding that, the peacock is called a bird of heaven. Mr. N continues to point out that the bird's spreading feathers represent light in Islam. Muslims believe that the light will lead them into the right path. That is why peacock is meaningful in Islam. In the past, peacock feathers are used to write and mark verses from the Quran. Ancient Muslim elites also wear peacock feathers as luxury

headdresses. Readings and information from the four shop owners and batik conceptors above confirm that the peacock is very important and must be protected for them to survive on earth.

