



Kartini Princess Of Java Movie Represent The Significance Of Batik Truntum As A Symbolic Expression Worn By Parental Figures On The Wedding Day

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the significance of Batik Truntum as a symbolic expression worn by parental figures on the wedding day in the movie Kartini Princess of Java. Through a literature review approach, the study examines how the film portrays the cultural importance of Batik Truntum and its representation of Javanese marriage traditions. It identifies the cultural elements associated with Batik Truntum and analyze its incorporation in the movie. The findings highlight Batik Truntum's role as a symbol of harmony, balance, and unity within marital relationships in Javanese culture. In the movie Kartini Princess of Java, the characters are parental figures who wear Batik Truntum on their wedding day. The use of Batik Truntum in the film serves to illustrate the character's devotion to their culture and the influence of culture on one's identity. The film captures Javanese customs, placing focus on family, values, culture, and the passing down of traditions. This analysis adds relevance to Javanese culture and their practices in modern society. It stresses the need to uphold traditions and cultural practices even when society uses them as symbols. The film serves as a vehicle for cultural diffusion focusing on the cultural appreciation of Batik Truntum and its use in Javanese weddings.

Keywords: batik truntum, kartini princess, java movie, parental figures, symbolic expression

1. INTRODUCTION

Kartini Princess of Java (2017) depicts a historical fiction drama documentary by the filmmaker Hanung Bramantyo. This film explores the life story of Kartini's biography who, in her own unique way, fought for women's rights, particularly focusing on women's education. It is quite remarkable how, during Kartini's period when women, including those of high birth and noble lineage, were utterly barred from pursuing an education, her courage and determination serves as an inspiration." (Vito & Linando, 2022).



Figure 1. Kartini princess of java movie poster
Source: (IMDb, 2017)

The movie brilliantly takes the essence of Javanese traditions, particularly the rigid societal norms that mandate women's roles primarily within domestic tasks. It strongly characterises expectations placed on women to excel in household tasks such as cooking, grooming, and guiding the art of marital etiquette. By immersing viewers in the cultural milieu of the era, the film sheds light on the challenges and restrictions faced by women at that time (Widyasmara, 2019).

As a remark on national film of *Kartini* unending attention to emancipation with special emphasis to education, Sr. Widyasumara states, "This biographic film attempts to dutifully represent the existence and the life history of Kartini who was a prominent figure during her time". His effort especially aim for modern people and by reminiscing Kartini's story among the modern society praises her as a wonderful person a by 'Kartini Educated'.

The costumes in *Kartini Princess of Java* play a crucial role in communicating and enhancing the visual narrative. Actor's costumes are vivid instruments of communication since they tell a story of a place, days' time, and a period. Information is tailored into specific details that allow an audience to know what era they are currently in (Landis, 2025; Schumm et al., 2012) agree that landscapes and settings captured in motion pictures need blending fashion and style appropriate to the dates being depicted in the scenes so that the audience is transported back in time. Unlike features, *Jawani's* richly embossed kebaya crowned with multiple layers of batik is intricately designed to tell Javanese tales beyond words, bound by geographical boundaries makes it effortless to understand that culture. Unlike features, during the wedding scene, Javanese wedding costume outline vivid portrayal of rituals and custom heritage.

Ultimately, in the bigger picture, the film's narrative advocates for gender equity as well as access to education, reinforcing the breathtaking struggle of women to carve out space for themselves within oppressive patriarchal systems. Beyond serving to highlight a significant historical struggle, the film is powerful in celebrating the sheer strength some women bring to social and cultural confines of society. Through the in-depth analysis of costumes, the film provides the people with an opportunity constructed by the designer's attention appreciate the vibrant cultured customs of Java.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

The research design involves a literature review approach, focusing on secondary data such as book, previous journal, magazines, website and reports. The context of the study will be the film portrays the cultural importance of Batik Truntum and its representation of Javanese marriage traditions.

This study also applies a qualitative interpretative approach to analyze visual elements presented in the film, particularly focusing on costume and symbolic representation. The analysis emphasizes how Batik Truntum is visually constructed and contextualized within wedding scenes, including its use by parental figures. By examining costume as a narrative device, this research draws on theories of costume design in film to understand how visual details communicate cultural identity and historical context (Landis, 2025; Schumm et al., 2012).

urthermore, a semiotic perspective is employed to interpret the symbolic meaning embedded in the Batik Truntum motif. This approach allows the researcher to explore how the motif signifies values such as harmony, guidance, and continuity within Javanese culture, particularly in the context of marriage traditions. The interpretation is supported by previous studies on the meaning of Batik Truntum and Javanese cultural practices, highlighting its philosophical and social significance (Soekarba et al., 2021; Supriono, 2016; Warpani, 2015).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Javanese weddings are rich in cultural traditions and symbolism. It involves various rituals and customs that reflect the values and beliefs of the Javanese people by the wedding. The wedding ceremony, known as *manten* in Javanese. The groom and bride are ornated in such a way as to look like a king and queen by the era the implementation of Javanese traditional weddings,

They wear attire and makeup according to the rules and regulations specific to the region. In Javanese traditional weddings, the rules and protocols followed not only cover beauty but also carry philosophical values and functions in community life (Warpani, 2015).

The Javanese weddings (Perkawinan Jawa) generally consist of a series of intricate traditional ceremonies which are usually spread over several days, the traditional Javanese ceremonies are not as stipulated as other cultures, and it is hard to find two Javanese wedding ceremonies that are exactly the same, Javanese people believe that the

ceremonies will become worse by time their get old, based entirely on the Adat (Javanese culture) and religion as well as the kejawen.



Figure 2. Siraman tradition
Source: (Indoindians, 2016)

The Javanese wedding is always a colorful, festive occasion (*mithah*) and celebrated with a series of ceremonies that are rather elaborate, but are less so than Javanese court weddings or other forms of matrimonial celebrations, although wedding has specific illustrations of Indonesia as well of Java. By religion (Islam, Protestantism and Catholicism) the ceremony differs, the cultural aspects are biggest on the islands of Java and Bali. Furthermore, traditional music, dances and cultural performances are a regular feature of Javanese nuptial celebrations, lending to the lively and vibrant scene (Liddle, 1996).

In Javanese weddings, the bride and groom bring a deep significance to the symbolic clothing, playing a vital role in conveying cultural values and traditions. The groom's attire, typically a traditional Javanese costume known as *beskap* or *blangkon* (a traditional Javanese crown) is a groom's cloth for traditional Javanese costume. It consists of embellishments such as a traditional sword called a *keris*. A belt of *keris*, meaning masculinity, honour, and his preparation to receive his duties as a husband. Furthermore, the bride wears a lovely traditional Javanese bridal outfit, known as a *kebaya* and *kain batik* (batik fabric). The *kebaya*, a beautifully embroidered blouse, expresses femininity, grace, and elegance in *Kebaya*. On the other hand, the bride's cultural roots mark her transition into married life, reflected by *Batik* with its detailed patterns and motifs. The couple's devotion to tradition and their dedication to preserving their cultural legacy are shown by the selection of attire in a Javanese wedding. Joining them to their descendants and the broader Javanese society by visually symbolizing their life together (Warpani, 2015).



Figure 3. Javanese weddings attire
Source: (Pinterest, 2023)

Each batik motif that is worn in Javanese weddings carries its own meaning and philosophy. A motif itself is the foundation or basis of a pattern. It serves as the core or center of the design, allowing the conveyed symbols, symbols, or signs of the batik motif to be expressed and interpreted (Wulandari, 2011).

During wedding ceremonies, various types of batik motifs are used. According to Sabatari (2012), these motifs include *grompol*, *cakar ayam* (chicken claw), *simbar lintang*, *parang kusuma*, *sida luhur*, *sida mukti*, *sida asih*, *semen ageng* and the commonly used one by the parental figure is *Truntum*.

The term *Truntum* has its etymological origins in the Javanese language, specifically derived from *Truntum* or *Tumaruntun*, which conveys the meaning of regrowth and continuous blossoming (Supriono, 2016). In the context of batik, the *Truntum* motif is characterized by its delicate and intricate patterns, resembling the scattered arrangement of small abstract flowers known as *Tanjung* flowers. The design also incorporates star-shaped elements, symbolizing the scattered stars in the night sky. Creating the *Truntum* motif on a piece of fabric requires considerable time and meticulous attention to detail.

The history of the *Truntum* batik motif in Surakarta can be attributed to Queen Ratu Kencana, also known as Queen Beruk. Queen Ratu Kencana, the honoured wife of Sunan Paku Buwana III, turned to spiritual reflection because she felt ignored and undervalued as his king's spouse, and eventually, his new concubine consumed his attention.

One evening, the peaceful, star-filled sky and the captivating scent of Tanjung flowers falling in her garden touched her. These natural elements were her partner in loneliness, sparking a deep sense of inspiration within her (Supriono, 2016).

Amidst her profound loneliness and sorrow, Queen Ratu Kencana found solace in the art of batik-making, channeling her emotions and creativity into this craft. For her, creating batik was a spiritual practice. With steadfast dedication, prayers, and hopeful intentions, she infused her heart and soul into crafting the *Truntum* motif, seeking to fill the emptiness within her. Through her artistic pursuits, she earnestly aimed to connect with the spiritual realm and convey her deep love. Her perseverance and prayers eventually caught the attention of the king, who observed her newfound engagement in creating beautiful batik fabrics. Alongside this observation, feelings of love and affection for Queen Ratu Kencana rekindled within him. As a result, the love and affection between the king and queen were rekindled, and the king ultimately abandoned his plans for remarriage (Supriono, 2016).

The *Truntum* batik design features intricate patterns of blooming flowers arranged in a precise geometric manner. Learning, which involves gaining knowledge through experience, is reflected in changes in behavior during training. This learning behavior depends on a variety of neural and cognitive processes that operate on different spatial and temporal scales [1–3]; however, many of these processes cannot be accessed experimentally.

It signifies the parent's commitment to support and guide their children throughout their marital journey. The motif itself reflects the essence of love, growth, and harmony within a family unit. Just as the *Truntum* motif features delicate and intricate floral patterns, the parents' presence and influence are like the nurturing roots that enable their children to blossom and flourish in their marriage (Supriono, 2016).



Figure 4. Batik Truntum
Source: (Pinterest, 2023)

The parents of the bride and groom perform traditional Javanese wedding ceremonies called *Truntum*. The newlyweds, as they enter a new phase of life, namely married life filled with joys and challenges, will be guided and supported by their parents, as reflected by *Truntum* motifs. The marital life will endure with ever-blossoming love and care. This classic Javanese pattern is worn by both sets of parents during the reception, symbolizing their crucial role in imparting knowledge and guiding their children toward a blissful married life.

Among family and larger society, putting on Batik *Truntum* on the wedding day also signifies the parents' role in creating a harmonious environment. In Javanese culture, a positive impact on relationships with others in society is reflected by its peaceful and well-behaved family. The *Truntum* motif in its rich cultural heritage sums up the wisdom passed down through the generations. Harmonious relationships and contributing positively to the community remain important. As it was said earlier, the immediate family positively influences peaceful relationships among family members and extends to harmonious interactions with the broader community, which is believed to be a harmonious marriage in Javanese society.

This harmonious connection is deeply rooted in one's personal relationship with the divine. The inspiration for the *Truntum* motif arose when the queen sought guidance from God during her solitude. The process of creating the *Truntum* motif requires patience and meticulousness, much like nurturing a marital bond (Soekarba et al., 2021).

Additionally, the attire for parental figures represented the choice of Batik *Truntum* as a deep-rooted connection to spirituality and their reliance on divine guidance.

The inspiration for the motif often appear from moments of introspection and seeking divine intervention. The patience and dedication required in cultivating a strong spiritual connection and nurturing a successful marriage are manifested by the intricate process of creating the *Truntum* motif. It reminds us that the journey of marriage is not only physical and emotional but also deeply intertwined with one's spiritual growth and connection with a higher power (Soekarba et al., 2021).

The portrayal of parental figures' roles in Javanese weddings in the movie *Kartini Princess of Java* highlights their significance and contributions to the wedding ceremony. The movie depicts the important role played by parents in guiding and supporting the couple as they embark on their marital journey. Throughout the film, specific moments emphasize the involvement of parental figures in various wedding rituals and their efforts to ensure a harmonious and joyous union for their children. (Widyasmara, 2019).

One scene in the movie showcases the parents' active participation during the *Siraman* ceremony held in *Soelastri* wedding, where they symbolically cleanse and bless the couple before the wedding. Through their actions and gestures, the parents convey their love, care, and desire for the couple's happiness and prosperity in their married life.



Figure 5. Soelastris wedding's

Source: (Bramantyo, 2017)

In addition to their significant roles in the Javanese wedding ceremony, the movie *Kartini Princess of Java* further highlights the invaluable support and guidance provided by parental figures during the wedding reception. The portrayal of parental figures as hosts at the reception showcases their active involvement in ensuring the success of the celebration.

Throughout the *Kardinah* wedding reception scenes, the parents are depicted as warm and gracious hosts, actively engaging with guests and attending to their needs. They make genuine efforts to create a welcoming and inclusive environment, ensuring that every guest feels valued and appreciated. Whether it's personally greeting guests, engaging in meaningful conversations, or ensuring everyone is well taken care of, the parental figures exude a genuine sense of hospitality and warmth.

Their commitment to fostering a harmonious atmosphere extends beyond the logistics of hosting. They strive to create a joyful and memorable experience for all attendees, going the extra mile to ensure that the reception reflects the couple's personalities and cultural heritage. This can be seen through the careful selection of traditional elements, such as music, dance performances, and culinary delights, which enrich the overall ambiance of the event.

Through their active presence and attentive demeanor, the parental figures play a crucial role in setting the tone for the wedding reception. They serve as role models for the newlyweds, demonstrating the values of respect, gratitude, and community-building. By actively engaging with guests and promoting a sense of inclusivity, they foster a spirit of togetherness and unity, strengthening the bonds between families and friends.

The movie's portrayal of parental figures' support and guidance during the wedding reception underscores their deep commitment to ensuring the success of the celebration beyond their primary roles as parents. Their dedication to creating a warm and inclusive atmosphere contributes to the overall joy and happiness experienced by all, leaving a lasting impression on the couple and their guests.

In the movie *Kartini Princess of Java*, a poignant moment captures the father of Kardinah wearing the *Truntum* batik motif at their wedding reception, symbolizing his significant role in creating a harmonious environment within the newly formed family and the broader community. This act holds deep meaning as it represents the parents' blessings and their heartfelt wish for the couple to embrace their cultural heritage and values as they embark on their journey together.

Kardinah's father, adorned in the *Truntum* batik, becomes a visual embodiment of wisdom and guidance. His choice to wear the *Truntum* motif signifies his role as a patriarch, offering his unwavering support and leadership to ensure the well-being and unity of the family. As he stands among the guests, the *Truntum* motif serves as a powerful symbol of his commitment to preserving and honoring their cultural traditions while navigating the modern world.



Figure 6. Kardinah wedding's
Source: (Bramantyo, 2017)

The inspiration for the *Truntum* motif often emerges from moments of introspection and seeking divine intervention. The intricate process of creating the *Truntum* motif mirrors the patience and dedication required in cultivating a strong spiritual connection and nurturing a successful marriage. It reminds us that the journey of marriage is not solely physical and emotional but also deeply intertwined with one's spiritual growth and connection with a higher power (Soekarba et al., 2021).

Kardinah's father wearing the *Truntum* batik at the wedding reception not only showcases his pride in their cultural heritage but also reinforces the importance of embracing tradition in building a strong foundation for the newly formed family. The *Truntum* motif acts as a visual representation of the family's values, reminding the couple and their guests of the significance of their cultural roots and the wisdom passed down through generations.

This moment in the movie underscores the profound role of parents in guiding and nurturing the couple, not only in their physical and emotional well-being but also in their spiritual journey. Through the symbolism of the *Truntum* batik, Kardinah's father

imparts his blessings, wisdom, and hope for the couple's harmonious and prosperous future, creating a profound impact on their lives and the broader community.

The visual representation of Batik Truntum worn by Kardinah's father can also be interpreted through the lens of film as a cultural text, where costume functions as a narrative language that conveys meaning beyond dialogue. In this context, the costume is not merely decorative but operates as a symbolic code that communicates social status, emotional depth, and cultural values to the audience. The deliberate use of Truntum in the wedding reception scene reinforces the father's role as a moral anchor within the family structure. Through *mise-en-scène*, including costume, posture, and spatial positioning, the film constructs a layered meaning that allows viewers to understand the importance of parental guidance in Javanese marital traditions. This aligns with the idea that film costumes are essential storytelling tools that provide contextual cues about characters and their cultural backgrounds (Landis, 2025; Schumm et al., 2012). Moreover, the integration of traditional attire within cinematic narratives helps bridge historical values with contemporary audiences, making cultural symbols more accessible and relatable.

In addition, the presence of Batik Truntum in the wedding scene reflects the continuity of intergenerational values within Javanese society. The motif serves as a visual medium through which cultural teachings are *transmitted* from parents to children, emphasizing the importance of harmony, respect, and responsibility in married life. This intergenerational transmission is deeply rooted in Javanese philosophy, where family plays a central role in shaping individual identity and social behavior. The use of Truntum by parental figures symbolizes not only their blessing but also their ongoing involvement in the couple's life journey. It highlights the expectation that marriage is not an isolated union between two individuals but a merging of families guided by shared cultural principles. Previous studies have shown that Javanese wedding traditions are rich in symbolic meanings that reinforce social cohesion and cultural continuity (Warpani, 2015; Wulandari, 2011). Therefore, the depiction of Truntum in the film strengthens the narrative of cultural preservation and familial unity.

Furthermore, the symbolic meaning of Batik Truntum can be examined from a semiotic perspective, where the motif operates as a sign consisting of both denotative and connotative meanings. Denotatively, Truntum appears as a repetitive floral and star-like pattern; however, connotatively, it represents enduring love, guidance, and spiritual devotion. The father's use of this motif in the film transforms it into a signifier of hope and continuity, emphasizing the enduring bond between parents and their children even after marriage. This interpretation is supported by semiotic studies on Javanese batik, which highlight how motifs function as carriers of philosophical messages embedded within cultural practices (Soekarba et al., 2021; Supriono, 2016). Additionally, the spiritual dimension associated with Truntum underscores the belief that marriage is a sacred union guided not only by social norms but also by divine influence. Through this layered symbolism, the film successfully portrays Batik Truntum as a powerful cultural artifact that encapsulates emotional, social, and spiritual dimensions of Javanese life.

4. CONCLUSION

Kartini Princess of Java is a captivating historical fiction drama-documentary that authentically captures Javanese traditions while portraying the inspiring story of Kartini, an advocate for gender equality and women's education. The film transports viewers to the historical context through meticulous attention to costume details, showcasing traditional attire such as kebaya and batik fabric. The wedding scenes vividly depict Javanese wedding customs, highlighting the significance of symbolic attire worn by the bride and groom. Javanese weddings, rich in cultural traditions, encompass various rituals and customs that reflect the values and beliefs of the Javanese people. The attire worn by the couple represents their roles and status within the ceremony, with the groom donning *beskap* and *blangkon*, and the bride adorned in kebaya and *kain* batik. Each batik motif carries its own meaning, with *Truntum* being a commonly used motif, particularly by parental figures. These motifs and attires hold significance, emphasizing respect for tradition and the couple's commitment to preserving their cultural heritage. The *Truntum* batik motif holds significant meaning and symbolism in Javanese culture. Originating from Queen Ratu Kencana's personal journey, it represents love, growth, and harmony. The motif features intricate patterns of blooming flowers and is prominently worn by the parents of the bride and groom during Javanese wedding ceremonies. It symbolizes the parents' guidance and support, creating a harmonious environment within the family and the wider community.

The movie Kartini Princess of Java highlights the significant roles of parental figures and the symbolic meaning of *Truntum* that is worn by parents in their child wedding day. They actively participate in rituals and ensure a harmonious and joyous union for the couple. The movie portrays parents as warm and gracious hosts during the wedding reception, creating a welcoming environment for guests. Their dedication to fostering inclusivity and unity is seen through their engagement with guests and careful selection of traditional elements. A poignant moment in the movie showcases Kardinah's father wearing the *Truntum* batik motif, symbolizing his role in creating harmony within the family and community. The *Truntum* motif represents cultural heritage and values, reminding the couple and guests of their roots. It also signifies the father's leadership and guidance, reflecting the importance of tradition and spirituality in building a strong foundation for the family. This moment emphasizes the profound impact of parents in guiding and nurturing the couple, both emotionally and spiritually, leaving a lasting impression on their lives and the community.

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