

ABSTRACT

This study examines Batik Rifaiyah as a form of local Islamic visual art influenced by the teachings of KH. Ahmad Rifa'i in Batang Regency, Central Java. This batik tradition is distinguished by its unique visual characteristics and Islamic values that have been passed down through generations. However, challenges such as modernization, shifting market preferences, and a lack of regeneration have led to a major issue: visual changes in contemporary motifs, particularly in the depiction of fauna, that no longer conform to the classical standards of Batik Rifaiyah. These changes raise critical questions about a shift in the artisans understanding and orientation toward Islamic art, moving from a conservative to a more moderate level. To address this issue, the study adopts a qualitative approach using realist ethnography, including observation, interviews with batik artisans and Rifaiyah religious figures, as well as documentation of motifs. The data were analyzed using the Pyramid Base Guiding Craft framework and a comparative approach between classical and contemporary motifs. The findings indicate a shift in the interpretation of tashwir (image-making) from a conservative to a moderate approach, as reflected in the new ways fauna are represented in contemporary motifs. This research contributes to the development of Islamic batik design and provides a foundation for visual innovation that remains spiritually rooted and true to tradition, while also being responsive to contemporary contexts.

Keywords: *Batik Rifaiyah, Visual Transformation, Pyramid Guiding Craft, Visual Culture, Motif Design*