



PRINCE MANGKOE NEGORO VII AND HIS CONSORT RATOE TIMOR

THE ART OF BATIK IN JAVA

by

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THE creation of the art of batik is credited by some authorities to the natives of the island of Java. It is known, however, that ornamentation by means of a reserve-process was practiced by the early Sumerians, Egyptians, and later Peruvians, all of whom employed it both for potteries and weaves. But if not created by the Javanese, the art was developed by this people to its highest perfection. It is a matter of regret that this native craft, manifested in such perfection for many centuries, has now passed its zenith, and during the last twenty years or so has fallen rapidly into decay. In some parts of the Far East, adherence to tradition has prevented so far the introduction of western tools and machinery. But in Java a steadily growing demand for necessities, due to the increasing westernization of the people, has deeply affected the position of arts and crafts in the life of the natives. While batik has been for centuries the local industry of the population of this island, at the present time the palaces of the sultans of central Java are the only places where this art is carried on in perfect accordance with traditional rules.

It was presumably during the times of the Hindu immigrations that the Javanese adopted Hindu designs and developed the art of batik. The word itself furnishes a clue to the origin of the technique. Following the generally accepted theory, the syllable "tik" means the dropping of some agent on cloth which is to be dyed. This agent we know now was wax, which, by covering parts of the surface, produced of itself certain designs.¹

It is this wax technique which is generally understood by the term

¹The syllable "ba" was added later.

batik. So numerous and so complicated are the methods of batik technique, that this analysis deals only with processes practiced in Jokjakarta and Solo, the important centers of batik industry in central Java.

THE BATIK TECHNIQUE.

A. *The preparation of the foundation material.* For wax-painting both cotton and silk are used. Although native silk is occasionally employed, cotton materials, with very few exceptions, have always been imported, first from British India, and later from Europe. Even today neither loom nor machine weaving is practiced in the island.

Cotton. Before the actual wax application and the dyeing process can be started, the cloth, cut to the right size, has to be carefully prepared. First it has to be soaked in water for a night or two and then washed. This is necessary to eliminate the lime of which cotton always contains a certain amount. Then the piece has to be boiled in rice-starch for fifteen minutes in order to form a base for the wax-painting.² The quality of the cotton determines the mixture of the solution, for if it is too thick, the wax will not stick sufficiently to the cotton; if, on the other hand, it is too thin, the wax will penetrate too far into the material. After boiling in starch, the dried piece is beaten with a wooden hammer in order to smooth out the surface of the cotton. Sometimes, to secure a very light brown-yellowish tint, the cotton, after being smoothed, is dipped into a dye consisting of a mixture of the bark of the *těgěrang*-tree³ and flowers of the *Cartamus Tinctorius*⁴ and alum. Up to this point the cotton has been treated with six processes: softening in water, washing, drying, starching, beating with hammer, and (sometimes) dipping in light brown-yellowish dye.

Another method of preparation, somewhat different, consists in washing the cotton first, then soaking it in peanut- or castor-oil and lye (made from the ashes of rice stalks). In this solution the cotton is kneaded and trodden with hands and feet. For a period of six to twelve days this is done two to five times daily, the cloth being thoroughly dried between each treatment; in some cases the process is continued for forty

² Probably starch was used as dye-resistant, as we know it from ancient Egypt and from Peruvian pottery. Starch is less sensitive than wax to high temperature, but it is easier to handle. Yet if starch is not sufficiently fluid, it does not stick enough to cotton and silk, nor does it dry quickly enough. In a word, starch is useless for designs of a fine pattern.

³ *Cudrania Javanensis* Trécul.

⁴ *Cartamus Tinctoria* L., a *Compositae*. The safflower (the false saffron).

days, as, for instance, in the manufacture of the "kain bangbangan," a cloth of beautiful deep red color.⁵ On the other hand, twelve to fifteen days of dipping in oil and lye are sufficient as preparation for the "sogã-brown"⁶ batik, which is typical of Solo and also Jokjakarta.

Both of these methods are employed to produce batik on cotton.

Silk. For silk, which is mostly imported from China, but little preparation of the raw material is necessary. Only in Pekalongan, a famous center of batik on the north shore of central Java, methods similar to those used for cotton are observed. Silk is porous and light in weight; when starched it cannot be hung over bamboo-laths, as is done in the case of cotton. It would stretch. Instead, the silk is spread out on the floor, usually on mats. If, however, Java-grown silk is used, which is considered better than the imported Chinese material, the textile is first washed and subsequently boiled in water, to which papaya-leaves are added.⁷

The cotton or silk by this time having received a very careful preparation, the application of wax is the next step in the manufacturing of batik.

B. Wax application. The only kind of wax used in Java at the time of the introduction of the wax method was bees-wax. At the present time, however, imported wax or resins have replaced largely the native product. This is due partly to a notable increase in the population (and therefore workers) which in the last hundred years has risen from twenty to forty millions, and partly to the clearing by Europeans of hundreds of thousands of acres of jungle which are now planted with sugar, rubber, coffee, tea, and other kindred crops.

For batik painting many different mixtures of wax are used, the combination depending upon the type of design.

Batik work proper (differentiated from tie-dyeing), a purely feminine occupation, is practiced among Javanese women not only by the villagers but aristocratic families as well. The writer has many times during his five months' residence in the palace of Prince Mangkoe Negoro⁸ seen the Princess Ratoe Timor engaged in batik work.

Batik work in simple terms consists of "decorating the plain cloth by

⁵ Mêngkoedoe-red (oe=like in too or root; pronounce in the following Malay words: oe=oo) in different shades. See technique of dyeing.

⁶ Sogã, made from *Peltophorum Ferrugineum* Benth, a Leguminosae.

⁷ *Carica Papaya* L., a Passifloraceae.

⁸ Pangeran Adipati Ario Mangkoe Negoro VII.

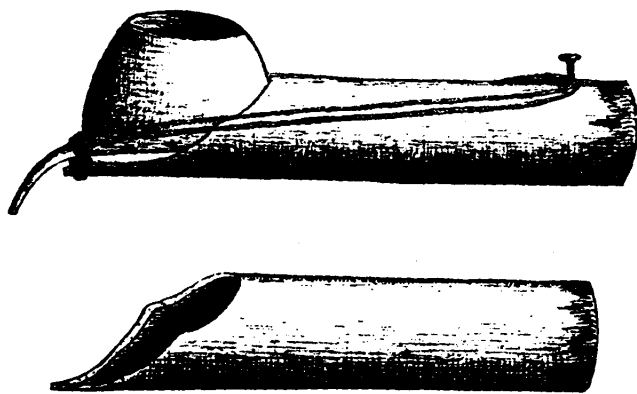


FIG. 1A

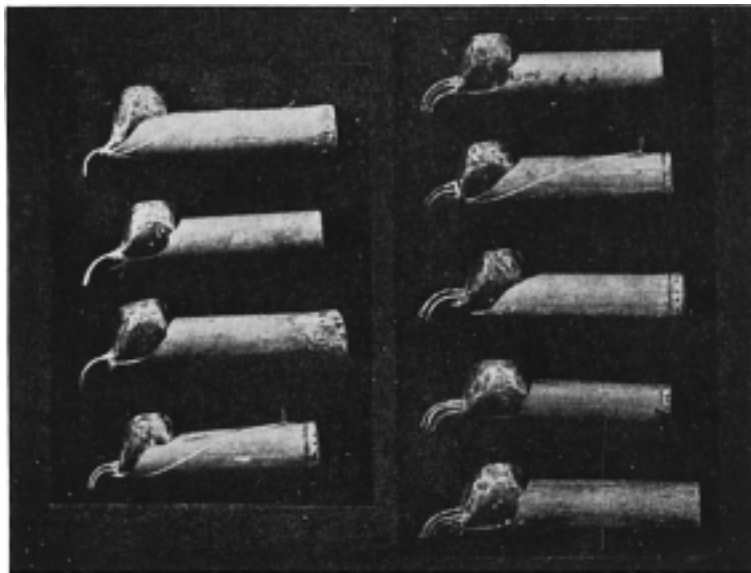


FIG. 1B

painting designs on it in wax and then dyeing the uncovered portions.”⁹ By uncovering afterward certain parts of the waxed design and rewaxing some of the already dyed surfaces, different colors may be obtained through repeated dyeings.

To apply wax to the cloth, a small instrument termed *tjanting* is used. This little device (Fig. 1a and 1b) was invented by the Javanese. It is peculiar to them and is unknown in any other locality where batik is practiced.¹⁰ The word *tjanting* itself is of Javanese origin and signifies “something curled up” and therefore fit for scooping. The little instrument consists of a small bowl with a fine, narrow, downward curving pipe attached to one end; at the other end is a bamboo handle from two to three inches long. Seven varieties of *tjantings* are known:

(1) *Tjanting* “*Klowongan*” or “*Gladaggan*” of which in turn there exist four varieties differing in width of pipe;

(2) *Tjanting* “*Isèn*,” employing a very fine pipe for the fillings of the design;

(3) *Tjanting* “*Těmanggoeng*” with a wider pipe to fill larger parts of the design;

(4) *Tjanting* “*Pěnorong*” with a still wider pipe, used to fill in designs which have already been dyed, but which are not to be touched in a second dipping;

(5) *Tjanting* “*Tjarat Loro*”¹¹ with two pipes, one on top of the other to draw parallel lines; as many as seven lines may be drawn in this way. The terminology of the word varies with the number of pipes used: three=*těloe*, four=*papat*, five=*limâ*, six=*aněm*, seven=*pitoe*;

(6) *Tjanting* “*Nitik*”: four pipes arranged in a square, so as to make four dots in a square at a time;

(7) *Tjanting* “*Bjok*” with seven pipes: six in a circle, one in the center.

It must be understood, however, that owing to differences of languages and tradition, names of instruments, as well as methods of application and designs vary greatly in the many provinces of Java.¹²

The following method of wax-application, one of the many, is that generally adopted and practiced in the district of Jokjakarta.

⁹ Minnie Frost Rands: “Notes on Javanese Batiks.”

¹⁰ In British India are used wax “pencils”; see Rouffaer en Juinboll—plate 74 and page 427.

¹¹ Tjarat means pipe, loro: two.

¹² Java is divided into twenty-two provinces. The language spoken in the western part of the island is Sundanese, in central Java, Javanese proper; while in the eastern provinces—especially in Soerabaya—much Madoerese is spoken, due to proximity of the little island, Madoera, north of Soerabaya.



FIG. 2
WOMEN AT BATIK WORK

The batik worker is seated either on the floor or on a small plank with the prepared cotton hanging before her over a rack made of bamboo (Fig. 2). With her left hand underneath the cloth, she supports the part of the pattern to be covered with wax. With her right hand she dips the *tjanting* into the melted wax, contained in an iron vessel resting on a small clay hearth.¹³ When the *tjanting* is filled with wax, the worker blows through the little mouthpiece to keep the wax fluid. She then traces with the melted wax the first outlines. Expert skill is required to determine the state of fluidity of the wax. If it is too thin, it will penetrate too far into the cotton, making it difficult afterward to remove it from the surface. If too thick, it will coagulate and clog the pipe of the *tjanting*. Consequently, the operator, leisurely by nature, in this instance is forced to work rapidly. So familiar are some of the workers with their designs that they can draw them from memory. But in other cases they work from designs drawn on Chinese paper, or they draw or pounce¹⁴ them on the material itself.

The outlines of the wax design being thus painted on one side, the cloth is reversed and the same design is repeated on the other side. This method of painting on both sides is peculiar to Java.

The next step is to draw in the fillings (see Fig. 4) with a *tjanting* designed for that purpose. Of these fillings there is an infinite variety. After the fillings are put in, the worker covers with wax certain parts of the design also intended to remain white after the first dyeing is done. For this process she uses *tjantings* with wider pipes. For very large areas—like the centers of head cloths—sometimes a brush is used instead of the *tjanting*.

C. *Dyeing of the batiks.*¹⁵ The Javanese have never put emphasis on speed. The native workers possess infinite patience and for them time has no significance. In their batik work the wonderful colors have always been the result of slow and often extremely complicated methods of

¹³ The well-known "anglo."

¹⁴ Powdered charcoal shaken through a perforated pattern.

¹⁵ The elder Pliny, writing in A.D. 70, gives an account of decorated cottons as known to the Egyptians of that date:

"Garments are painted in Egypt in a wonderful manner, the white cloth being first stained in various places, not with dyestuffs, but with drugs, which have the property of absorbing colors. These applications do not appear on the cloth, but when the cloth is afterward plunged into a cauldron containing the dye liquor it is withdrawn fully dyed. It is wonderful that, although there is only one dye in the cauldron, the cloth is dyed of several colors, according to the different properties of the drugs which have been applied to different parts; nor can the colors be afterward removed."

dyeing. Superstition and the veneration of tradition have also played a very important part throughout the procedure.

The coloring process of the textile is not completed in a single dyeing but by dipping the cloth repeatedly into dyes of different colors. Intensifying the beauty of the color shades can only be accomplished by several dyeings.

The simplest type of dyeing employs one shade only, but in different degrees of intensity, whereas elaborate patterns combine a great variety both of colors and shades.

In the sultan's lands three-color dyeing is generally practiced. The process takes about six weeks, although for fine and intricate designs much more time is required. On some pieces—like the *dodots* of the sultan—a year or more may be spent.

This three-color dyeing is done in the following way: after wax-painting the outlines and part of the fillings, the cloth is dipped into the blue or indigo¹⁶ dye. But as only a light shade is desired, the material is left in the dye only a short time, or else a weak solution is used. The cloth is taken out and dried, after which the worker, with a common knife, scrapes the wax from those parts which she intends to dye another color. The knives used for scraping vary according to the parts of the design, from the commonest to the finest types.

Parts of the light blue surfaces, having been dried, are covered with wax and the textile is dipped into the indigo solution, resulting in a deep blue color on the uncovered parts of the cotton. Thus we have now three colors: white (under the wax), light blue and dark blue. Parts which are to remain permanently these three colors are now covered with wax. The cloth is dipped into the yellow dye, whereupon the uncovered white design will appear yellow, the light blue will be light green, and the dark blue dark green. As a result we have visible the following colors: yellow, light green, and dark green, with white, light blue, and dark blue concealed under the covering wax.

For the final stage, the red dye, wax is removed in part from the white, the light blue, the dark blue, and the dark green, while remaining parts (white, light blue, dark blue, yellow, light green, and dark green) are covered. Dipped into the dye, the white becomes red, the light blue purple, the dark blue violet, and the dark green black.

It may be clearly seen how complicated is this process and how much

¹⁶ *Indigofera Tinctoria*, a Leguminosae.



FIG. 3

WAX-REMOVING FROM TEXTILE AFTER DYEING

time in comparison with a simple one or two dye-piece, and how variegated it may be with regard to the number of shades obtained. It must be remembered, furthermore, that in each case the application and removal of the wax are done on both sides of the cloth. After the dyeing is finished, the wax, which to the native worker is an item of no little expense, is saved and cleaned to be used again (Fig. 3).

As to the use of colors, blue and brown are prevalent in central Java. There, also, blue is the first dye to be applied, and there exist professional blue-dyers,¹⁷ mostly men, who work with patience and great accuracy. This dyer has to mix the solution a day before the dyeing takes place. One gallon of indigo and five to six gallons of water are mixed, while about one-third of a quart of molasses-sugar and the same amount of lime are added. Sugar is needed in the mixture to produce so-called "white indigo." The latter will properly penetrate the textile only when combined with lime. Exposed to the air, this solution produces a beautiful deep shade of blue. Dipping and drying of the textile is repeated eight to ten times a day over a period of five or six days. The process is occasionally accelerated by adding some sap of the bark of the tree "*tingi*"¹⁸ to the solution. *Tingi* has the quality of a fixing-bath, stopping the dyeing process abruptly, whereby the color is darkened. Afterward the cloth has to be washed again. Any residue of indigo which may have assembled on certain parts of the cloth is removed by beating the textile thoroughly.

Although the natives handle the wax-covered textile with care and skill, it seems impossible to prevent the wax from cracking or loosening. The dye, of course, penetrates the cotton at these points and "marbling" will appear in the design. Such a pattern of small cracks usually looks quite charming to western eyes; therefore the marbling is sometimes done on purpose. In such cases the batik worker cracks the wax extensively in order to get this effect. Tradition decrees that cracks may occur, technically speaking, only in "soga-brown" batiks.¹⁹ A blue batik showing any sign of vein-marks is considered inferior from the standpoint of batik tradition. In batiks made for the sultan and for high officials, such "lack of skill," as the marbling is termed, is not permitted in either blue or brown batik.

The natives are superstitious. In order to propitiate evil spirits, they quite often add to the dye bits of chicken meat, a few drops of rain-water,

¹⁷ The man is called "Toekan Mëdël."

¹⁸ *Ceriops Candolleana* Arn, a rhizophoraceae.

¹⁹ *Soga*, made from *Peltophcrum Ferrugineum* Benth, a Leguminosae.

a spoonful of kerosene, or ashes from the kitchen. The superstitious beliefs even extend to their daily life. If the blue-dyer had quarreled with his wife while the batik was in the dye, a fault in the coloring would undoubtedly result. Assumptions like these account for the care with which the natives treat all processes of batik, particularly that of dyeing.

All of the foregoing refers solely to the indigo-dyeing process; complicated as it may appear, it is simple in comparison with the process of sogå- or brown-dyeing, invented in Java about the year 1700.

Sogå-brown-dyeing, aside from indigo, calls for the following numerous ingredients:

(1) *Koedoe* or *Měngkoedoe*, which is obtained from the bark of the Indian mulberry.²⁰ The bark of the roots contains both a yellow (*morindine*) and a red (*morinda*) pigment, the latter especially is of high value to the dyeing industry;

(2) Bark of the "*Djirak*"²¹ tree, the roots of which contain a yellow pigment. The latter combined with the one mentioned above, supplies the "Indian red";

(3) "*Sogå*," a big tree, the bark of which is used; the pigment is reddish-brown;

(4) "*Tingi*," a high shrub, the bark of which contains chemicals useful for lye- and fixing-processes;

(5) "*Těgěrang*,"²² a tree, the wood of which contains a yellow sap;

(6) "*Kěmbang poeloe*"²³ (also called "*Kěmbang Kěsoemba*"), the safflower; the flowers of this herb yield a red dye, the carthamine;

(7) "*Blěndok Trěmbalo*," the insect known as cochineal, furnishes a species of gum lacquer in beautiful carmine color;

(8) "*Sari Koenig*," from China imported, dried flowers contain a yellow dye called sophorine, the seeds furnish also a yellow pigment, in Central America called "anatto";^{24 25}

(9) "*Koenir*," the turmeric, the roots of which yield a yellow dye, mostly used for "plangis," a kind of tie-dyeing, not for batiks;²⁶

(10) "*Gondaroe-Kěm*," a resin, used for fixing the colors.²⁷

Of these materials each individual dyer has composed his special pre-

²⁰ *Morinda Citrifolia* L. or *Morinda Tinctoria* Roxb. Rubiaceae.

²¹ *Symploco Fasciculata* Z, a *Styracaceae*, related to the storax-family.

²² *Cudrania Javanensis* Trécul.

²³ *Cartamus Tinctoria* L., a *Compositae*. The safflower (the false saffron).

²⁴ *Sophora Japonica* L., a *Leguminosae*.

²⁵ *Bixa Orellana* L., a *Bixaceae*. The seeds yield a pigment called "orlean."

²⁶ *Curcuma Zedoaria* Rosc; *Curcuma Longa* L., both *Citaminaceae*.

²⁷ A common resin-sort.

scriptions. For the ochre-yellow-brown dye, as employed in Jokjakarta, the formula is as follows: 2 Kati²⁸ of No. 3, $\frac{1}{2}$ Kati of No. 4, $\frac{1}{4}$ Kati of No. 6, 1 Kati of No. 5, $\frac{1}{4}$ Kati of No. 7, 30 grams of No. 10, and 10 grams of sugar. The sogâ-brown process is carried out, of course, in the same way as the simple indigo method, its complicated character resulting from the great number of colors used.

It requires from six to eight days to complete one single brown dyeing, in special cases much more than that. In Solo, the process is usually repeated three times a day over a period of fifteen days. This method of alternating dyeing and drying results in a very warm and beautiful brown color.

After the brown dyeing is completed, the batik is washed in clear water and dried again; then it is dipped into a clear lime-water solution. This is followed by a fixing bath: 90 grams of No. 8, 60 grams of borax, 30 grams of alum, $\frac{1}{2}$ Kati of sugar, and the juice of one lemon. To complete the fixing process, the cloth has to be dipped and dried three times.

The wax-covered parts of the design do not undergo the fixing bath without being affected. The cloth even under the wax will no longer be perfectly white; it will have turned into a soft warm cream color, thus reducing gradually the considerable contrast between the blue or the brown and the original white of the cotton.

In Jokjakarta and Soerakarta—the so-called sultans' lands—a different method is sometimes employed; The entire cloth is dipped first in a solution of: No. 5 plus No. 6 and alum, which results in a uniform shade of pale brown, and then the batik process is started.

During the last fifty years, certain colors, for commercial purposes only, have been painted on with a brush instead of using wax-resistant process. This speedier method was introduced from British India.

The dyes also have undergone a great change. The old original techniques as they have been practiced for hundreds of years are the only methods which produce these beautiful warm colors unaffected by washing and exposure to light. It is a matter of great regret that aniline dyes are now replacing the traditional natural dyes. In addition, aniline colors have always the tendency to run, thus marring the design.

In some parts of Java, the old batik process has been entirely replaced

²⁸ Kati is a Chinese weight, used all over the Netherlands East Indies. (In reply to a request in 1935, publicly made by the Netherlands minister to the U. S. A. in Washington, the term "Dutch East Indies" is changed into "Netherlands East Indies.") 1 pikoel or pikol = 100 Kati; 1 Kati = 625 grams (or $\frac{1}{4}$ Netherl. pound); an American pound = 453 grams.

by stencil work and aniline dyeing. Batiks are occasionally found partly hand-painted, partly stenciled, rather carelessly dyed, and the design entirely debased.

Aniline dyes are often preferred when many colors are to be employed. In such cases it is painter work with a brush, sometimes yellow on blue to produce green, sometimes blue on brown for a detail, such as a leaf.

Occasionally batik may even be re-dyed for purposes of preservation. Yellows, greens, and some reds may fade to a certain extent; the white and blues therefore are wax-preserved in such a case, the other colors renewed.

COLOR CHART.

The following chart will reveal how ten different shades may be acquired through the use of only three dyes, namely blue, yellow, and red. These three basic colors are applied in turn in a four-color batik as seen at the left of the diagram, reading from the top downward. The top line, reading horizontally, states the resulting color shades, while the dyeing result will be disclosed by following the line downward. O—the wax-covered surfaces; X—the dyed parts.

FINISHED COLOR SHADES

	BLUE DYEING			YELLOW DYEING			RED DYEING			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	White	Light Blue	Dark Blue	Yellow	Light Green	Dark Green	Red	Purple	Violet	Black
White.....	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Blue {	Light Blue →	O	X	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
	Light Blue →	O	X	O	O	X	O	O	O	O
	Light Blue →	O	X	O	O	O	O	X	O	O
	Dark Blue →	O	X	X	O	O	O	O	O	O
	Dark Blue →	O	X	X	O	O	X	O	O	O
	Dark Blue →	O	X	X	O	O	O	O	O	X
	Dark Blue →	O	X	X	O	O	X	O	O	X
	Dark Blue →	O	X	X	O	O	X	O	O	X
Yellow.....	O	O	O	X	O	O	O	O	O	O
Red.....	O	O	O	O	O	O	X	O	O	O

DESIGNS.

Designs of batik are subdivided into two groups: those based on geometrical lines, and free-hand designs. In the latter there is manifested the Javanese sense for art and symbolism.

In all primitive art, geometric designs precede more individualistic, complex patterns.

Credit for the introduction of ornamental design may be given to the Persians and Hindus. Although they were not unacquainted with symbolism, it was, however, not developed so highly among them as it was among the Javanese. While the ornamental design departs from its original character to such an extent that it is often difficult to identify it, the symbolic motive is clear and perfectly defined.

The naïve character of old designs may be attributed to the individual conception of the native worker who bent all her attention upon creation of a symbolic design. In later years with the advent of the commercial era the pattern lost its individual effect.²⁹

Every design in batik art has its particular name dependent upon simplicity or complexity of the pattern. The name often refers—at least in part—to some symbolic meaning.

CLASSIFICATION OF DESIGNS.

A. *Geometric Designs:*

1. Fillings (*Isèns*).
2. Border designs (*Tjěmoekirrans*).
3. Swastika designs (*Bandjis*).
4. Small detached designs: stars, circles, lozenges, polygons (*Tjěplockans*).
5. Conventionalized native plant designs (from the *ganggong* plant).
6. A medallion design (*Kawoeng*).
7. A diagonally running design with conventionalized lotus-leaf fillings (*Parangs*).
8. Diagonally running designs other than *Parangs*.
9. Weaving designs (*Nitik*).

²⁹ These patterns and stencils are preserved for generations in the families of the batik workers and lent to those members of the family lacking in originality. Ignorant of the significance of these motives, these workers mix them with patterns of other districts; consequently the artistic value of the old free-hand designs gradually disappears.

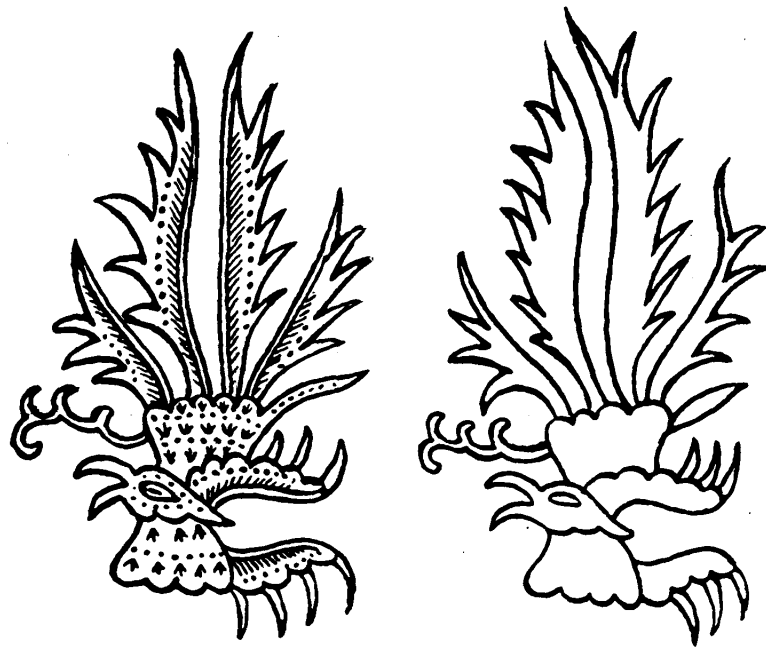


FIG. 4

B. *Free-hand Designs*:

1. Floral designs combined sometimes with animal motives (*Sěmèns*).
2. Designs of foreign origin or influence.

C. *Proscribed Designs*:

1. (*Larangans*) hands off.

A. THE GEOMETRICAL DESIGNS.

I. The Fillings (*Isèn*).³⁰

The *Isèn* designs (Fig. 4) form but a small part of the designs as a whole. They have to serve both as ornament and as illustration to the figure which they fill. They have no bearing upon the significance of the motive itself: scales of a dragon, feathers of a bird, etc.

In the sultans' lands the following fillings are the most widely employed (see Fig. 5a and 5b):

1. Dot-lines: *tjětjěk*.
2. Fish-scales: *sisik*.
3. "Glossy" scales: *sisik mēlik* or white scales.
4. Seven dots (six in a circle, one in the center): *tjětjěk mēlik* or *tjětjěk pitoe*.³¹
5. Triangular wickerwork: *hěrangān*.
6. Falling flowers: *kěmbang tiba*.³²
7. A native flower: *kěmbang lombok*.³³
8. Footprints of pigeons: *tapak dārā*.
9. Rice and grain: *oepan-oepan*.
10. Pigeon eyes: *mata děroek*.
11. Rice stalks: *ādā-ādā*.
12. Buds of the coconut: *manggaran*.
13. Part of leaf of the coconut: *blarak sahirit*.
- 14 and 31. Innumerable insects: *měroetoe sěwoe*.³⁴

³⁰ *Isèn*: Javanese, to fill.

³¹ *pitoe*—seven.

³² *kěmbang*—flower.

³³ *Lombok*—*Capsicum Annuum* L.; a *Solanaceae* (wild pepper).

³⁴ *Sěwoe*—thousand.

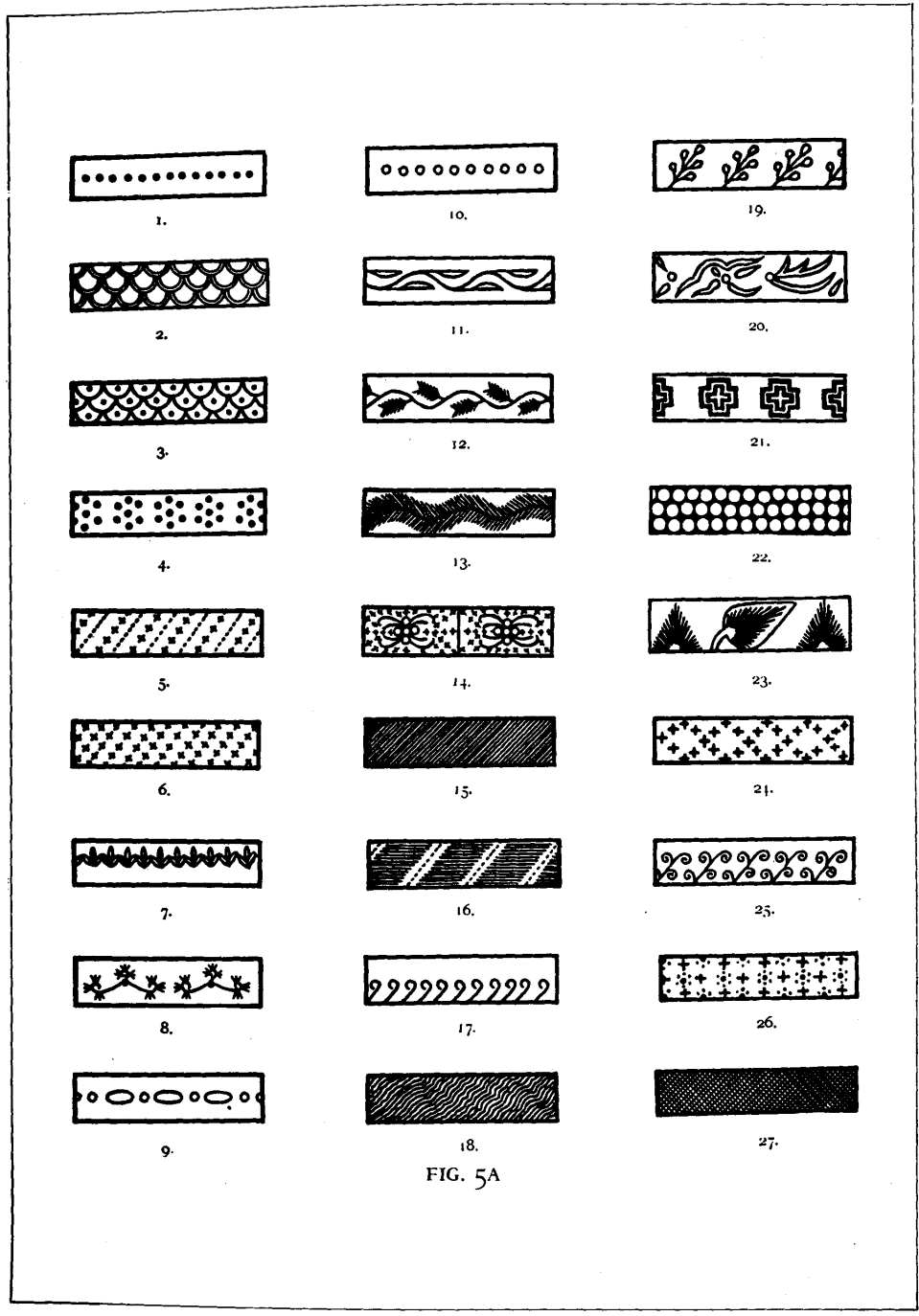


FIG. 5A



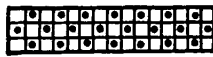
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36.



44.



29.



37.



45.



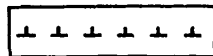
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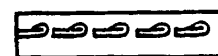
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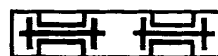
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48.



33.



41.



49.



34.



42.



50.



35.



43.



51.

FIG. 5B

- 15 and 23. Petal veins: *sawoet*.
16. Petal veins combined with drops: *tjětjěk sawoet*.
17. Hanging strings: *srawéjan*.
18. Hair: *ramboetan*.
19. Crocus: *Kěmbang Krokot*.³⁵
20. General symbol of batik: *sawat*.
21. Line of crosses: *gringsing*.
22. Pattern resembling fish-scales: *gringsing sisik*.
24. "Shuttled" crosses: *owal owil*.
25. Tendrils: *oekěl*.
26. Conventionalized flower: *kěmbang waroe*.³⁶
27. Grooves of the *nangka* fruit: *tjatjah*.³⁷
28. Roof tiles: *sirappan*.
29. Squared line pattern with dots in alternating squares; general weaving pattern in squares: *polèng*.
30. Squared line-pattern (see No. 29) in different colors (red, yellow, white, and black), derived from the robe worn by the famous Bima figure in the Javanese theater; pattern noted for its richness: *polèng bintoeloe adji*.
32. Fruit of the so-tree; ³⁸ the lozenges of the *parang* design: *mlindjo(n)*.
33. Flower design: *kěmbang pèpè*.³⁹
34. Snakes: *oelěr-oelěran*.
35. A small river fish: *oetjěng oetjěngan* or wick of a lamp: *oetjěng oetjěng*.
36. The clove-gilly-flower: *kěmbang tjěngkèh*.⁴⁰
37. Flower of the teakwood tree: *kěmbang djati*.⁴¹
38. Flower of the lemon tree: *kěmbang djěroek*.⁴²
40. "To be proud": *plěnta plěnti*.⁴³
41. Jointed reed: *těboe sakeret*.
42. Drops: *tritis*.
43. Long wavy hair: *andan-andan*.

³⁵ *Krokot-Sesuvium Portulacastrum* L., a *ficoideae*.
³⁶ *Hibiscus Tiliaceus* L., a *Malvaceae*; pattern made with *tjanting bjok*.
³⁷ *Nangka-Artocarpus integrifolia* L., a *Urticaceae*.
³⁸ *Gnetum* *Gnetaceae*, a *Gnetaceae*.
³⁹ *Pèpè-Oxytelma Esculentum* R. Br., a *Asclepiadaceae*.
⁴⁰ *Tjěnkèh-Eugenia Caryophyllata* Thumb, a *Myrtacaceae*.
⁴¹ *Djati-Tectona Grandis* L., a *Verbenaceae*.
⁴² *Djěroek*—a *Citroes*.
⁴³ *Plěnti*—abundant.

44. Ear jewels: *grompol*.
45. Hook: *tjantèl*.
46. Twisted rope: *slimpěd* (or *srimpěd*).
47. *Gion* (untranslatable).
48. Swastika: *bandji*.
49. Diagonal pattern, crosswise, featuring soft designs: *liris*.
50. Button-holes: *oetěr*.
51. Small ponds: *rawan*.

The illustration Fig. 6a and 6b, two very fine *Oedan liris*⁴⁴ “light rain,” gives the reader some idea of the extent of the patterns from which the batik worker may choose.

2. Border Designs (*Tjěmoekirrans*).

These designs appear along the inside edges of the square or lozenge-shaped⁴⁵ fields found in the center (*těngahan*) of some of the batiks, particularly the headcloths: some of these *tjěmoekirrans* are also used to border the piece itself (Fig. 7a, 7b, 7c, 7d, and 7e).

The diagram, Fig. 6c, illustrates the variety and use of these border designs:

- A. Center field: *těngahan*.
- B. Fringes: *pěngådå* (Fig. 10a and 10b).
- C. Second edges: flower and leaf-motives: *kěmådås* (Fig. 9a and 9b).
- D. Leaf-ornaments: *modang* (2) (Fig. 8a and 8b).
- E. Corner designs: conventionalized flower-motives: *pontjot* (Fig. 11a and 11b).
- F. Diagonal running leaf-motives: *tjěmoekirrans*.
- G. Leaf-motive (base of line D): *oempaks*.

3. The Swastika (*Bandjis*).

This motive⁴⁶ is one of the most widely used designs in the history of

⁴⁴ *Oedan*—rain; *liris*—light.

⁴⁵ In the writer's private collection is a beautiful large batik, so-called *dodot*, with a green, lozenge-shaped centerfield with *tjěmoekirrans*.

⁴⁶ Chinese—*ban-dzi*: *ban*=10, *dzi*=1000, the motive of the ten thousands. *Sanscrit*: *su*=good, *asti*=to prosper, *ka*=is an affix; good luck, prosperity. Javanese—*balak bosok* *balak*=misfortune, *bosok*=to pass away; thus=good luck.

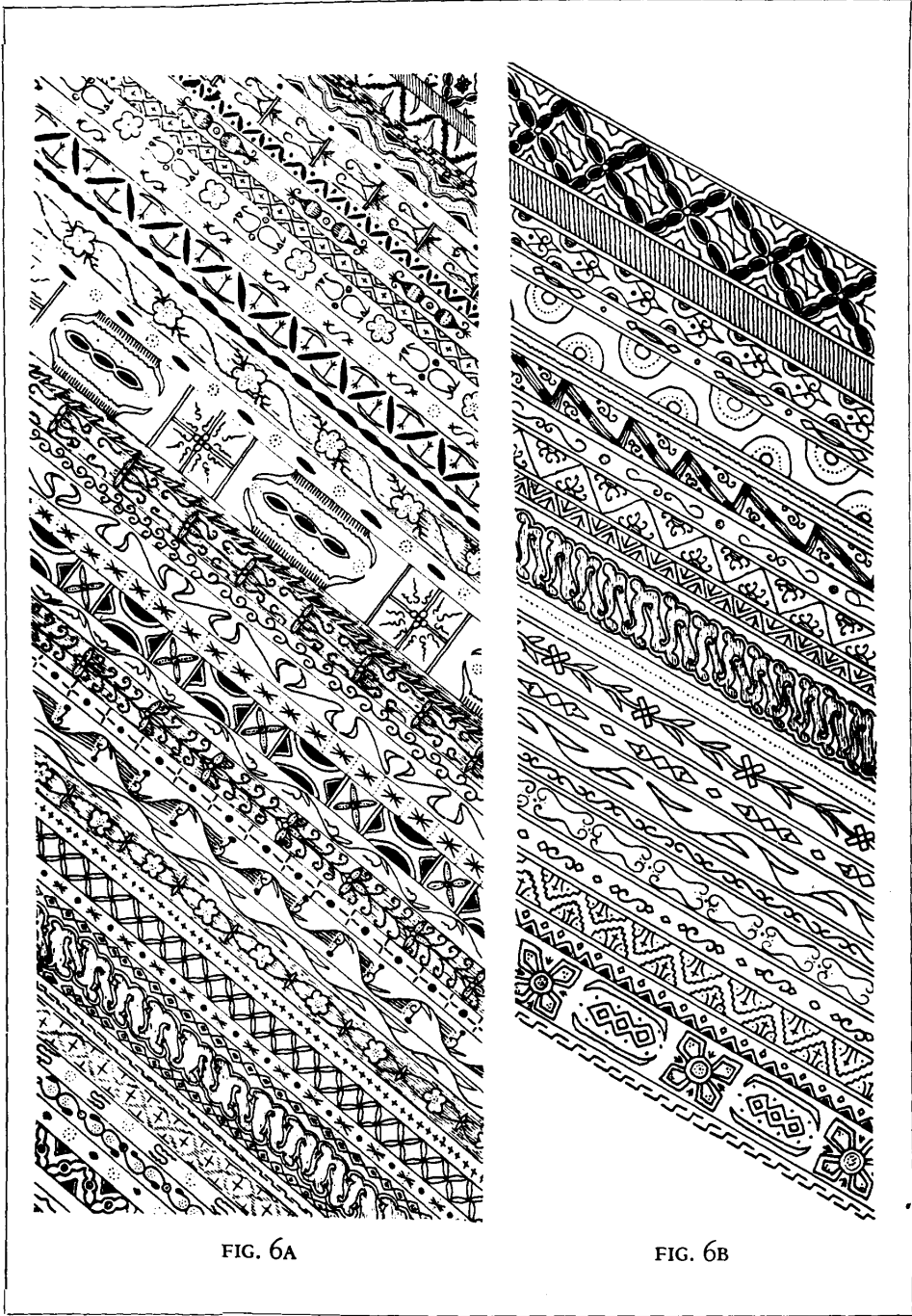


FIG. 6A

FIG. 6B

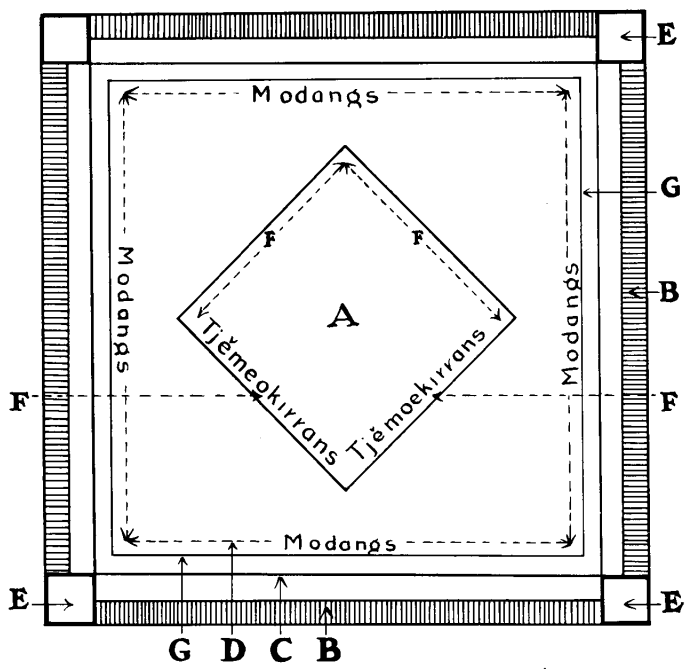


FIG. 6C

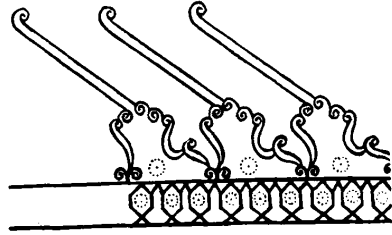


FIG. 7A

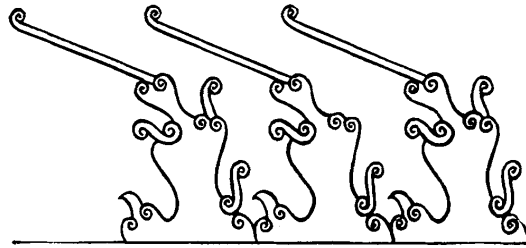


FIG. 7B

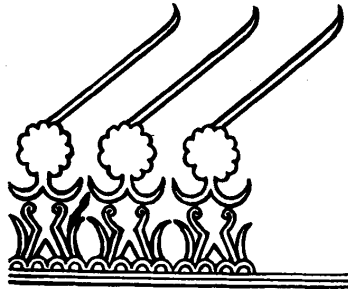


FIG. 7C

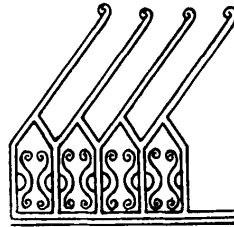


FIG. 7D

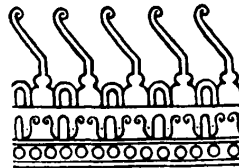


FIG. 7E

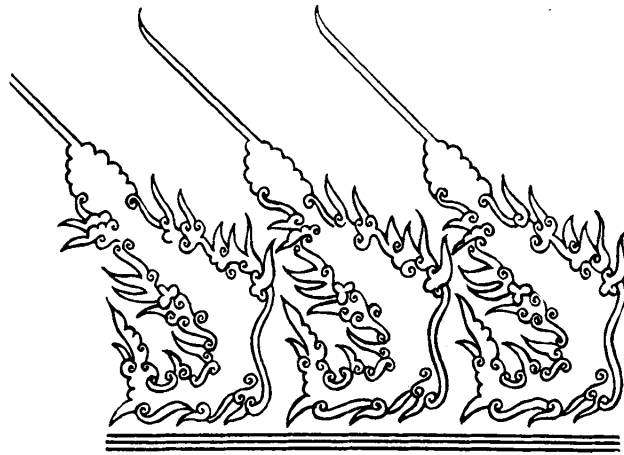


FIG. 8A

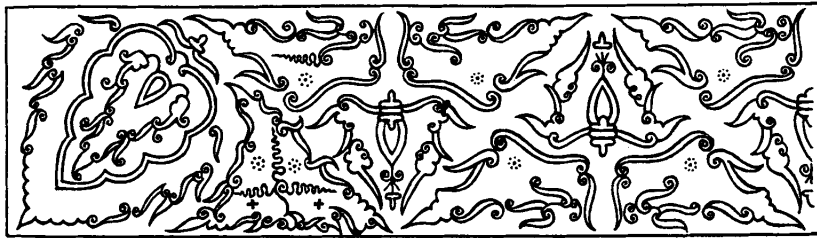


FIG. 8B



FIG. 9A



FIG. 9B

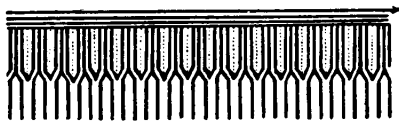


FIG. 10A

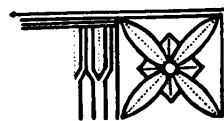


FIG. 11A

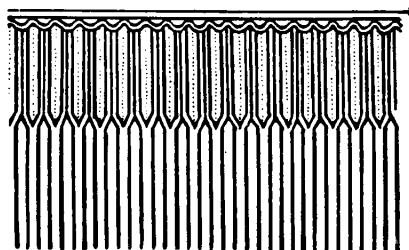


FIG. 10B

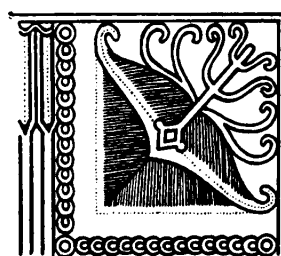


FIG. 11B

ornament, and so numerous are its varieties that sometimes the fundamental lines are difficult to recognize.⁴⁷

The following illustrations show some of the different versions of the swastika⁴⁸ (Fig. 12a to 12h).

There are known some seven names for designs derived from the swastika:



1. Swastika on dark (black) background (Fig. 13a).
2. Swastika on light (white) background (Fig. 13b).
3. Floral design: *bandji ganggong*.⁴⁹
4. The yarn wheel: *bandji lokassan*.
5. Crooked, bent: *bandji bengkok*.
6. Confused, intricate: *bandji kasoet*.
7. Round bolsters: *bandji goeling*.⁵⁰

4. Small Detached Designs; Stars, Circles, Lozenges, Polygons, etc. (*Tjěplokkan*).

The word *ijěplokkan* means: ornaments of the metal clasp type with roses, stars, and other little things. The worker uses these patterns as a general frame-work for her motives in the conventionalized forms of flowers, fruit, birds, insects, fish, etc. The designs included in this category demonstrate conspicuously the great ability of the natives to conventionalize natural designs. The native worker does not intend to portray her subject in naturalistic form, she simply uses it as inspiration for her ornament; thus the clove with leaf and bud in the batik pattern takes on the outline of a conventionalized gourd-form.

The designs of this type may be subdivided into four classes: flowers, animals, miscellaneous, and abstract motives. These flowers and animal life designs in particular represent objects in familiar use among the natives; the clove, for instance, fulfilling the function of spice, medicine, perfume, and weaving material all in one.

The Flower Design—Fig. 14a shows the clove⁵¹ and Fig. 14b is a

⁴⁷ The swastika proper: the right turning wheel  and the left turning wheel 

See Thomas Wilson, Smithsonian Inst., U. S. National Museum, 1896.

⁴⁸ See also Fig. 5b, No. 48.

⁴⁹ *Solanum Denticulatum* L., a Solanaceae.

⁵⁰ *Goeling*: derived from the feather-filled bolster, the "Dutch Wife," peculiar to the Netherlands East Indies.

⁵¹ *Tjěnkèh-Eugenia Caryophyllata* Thumb, a Myrtaceae.

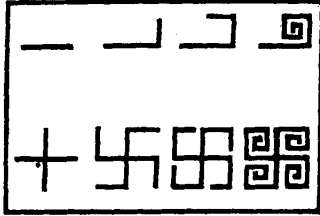


FIG. 12A

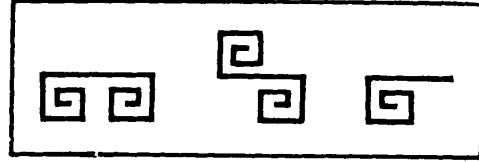


FIG. 12B

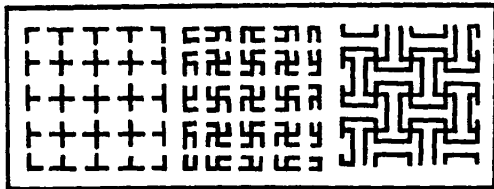


FIG. 12C

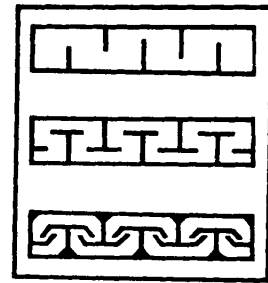


FIG. 12D

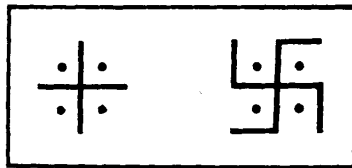


FIG. 12E

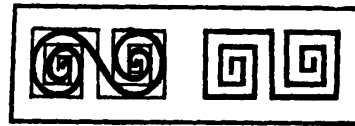


FIG. 12F

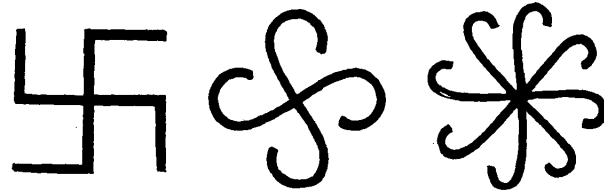


FIG. 12G

FIG. 12H

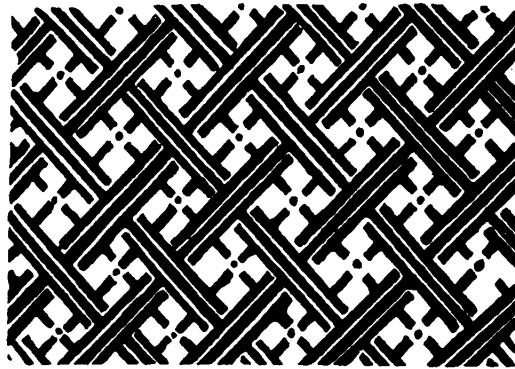


FIG. 13A

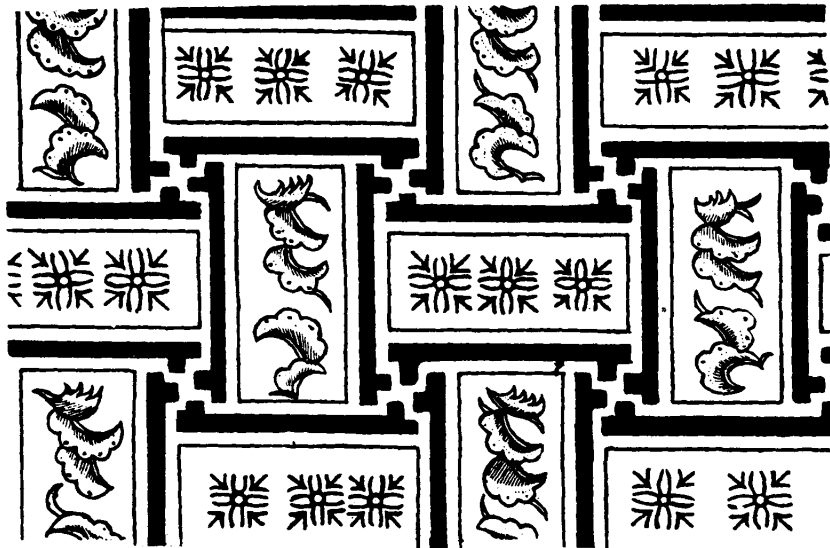


FIG. 13B



FIG. 14A

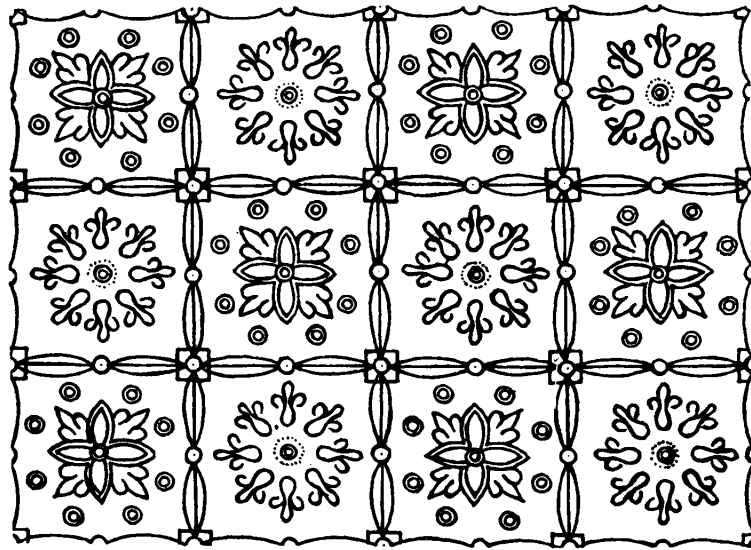


FIG. 14B

batik design derived from the little bud, which, now conventionalized, becomes the rays of a star-shaped ornament enclosed in a square.

Fig. 15a and 15b of the *manggis-tree*⁵² shows both the flower and the fruit used in the design. They appear in the first instance as a flat four-petaled flower, and in the second as a sixteen-kerneled fruit design, derived from a cross-section in medallion form. This is rather similar to the imperial chrysanthemum motive of Japan, which, however, is unfamiliar to the natives of Java.⁵³

Fig. 16a and 16b represent the *salak* fruit and its application to the batik design.

These three designs demonstrate clearly the way in which the Javanese batik workers symbolize natural designs. Almost all of the well known flowers and fruits are used for this purpose: *Gambir*, the fragrant little flower; *Mindi*, the East Indian lilac; *Djamboe*, the Indian pear; the blossom of the *lěmon-tree*; the flower of the potato; the castor oil and cotton plants; the lotos, the *kěmbang spatoe*, a beautiful native flower,⁵⁴ the *mělati* flower,⁵⁵ the sun-flower; the banana blossom; the coffee bean; the betel nut; the nutmeg; the coconut; the teakwood blossom; and many others.

The Animal World—Many batiks show beautifully conventionalized bird designs, including hens and chickens. A well-known motive, the *pěksi*, is a fantastic bird whose origin cannot be traced. The beautifully colored butterflies of Java are a favorite subject, although the colors cannot be reproduced in the batik process. Very interesting are the conventionalized water creatures: fish, shrimps, frogs, mussels, the claws of a lobster, the little water insect *bibis*, and other insects, like the cockroach and bees. Fig. 17 shows the claw of a lobster *soepit oerang*; Fig. 18, the butterfly *Koepon*; Fig. 19, mussels *Kějongan*; and Fig. 20, the water insect *Bibis Tjěplěk Bibis*.

Designs of Miscellaneous Origin—Under this title are grouped great numbers of unrelated subjects, natural phenomena such as moonlight,

⁵² *Garcinia magostana* L., a Guttifereae.

⁵³ These fruit-kernels form the basis of a gambling game widely practiced in all the islands of the Netherlands East Indies. The native lays his wager on the number of kernels, running from four to nine in number, contained inside the fruit. The result is determined when the fruit is cut open.

⁵⁴ *Hibiscus Rosa-sinensis* L., a Malvaceae.

⁵⁵ *Jasminum Sambac* Ait., a Oleaceae, widely used as perfume.

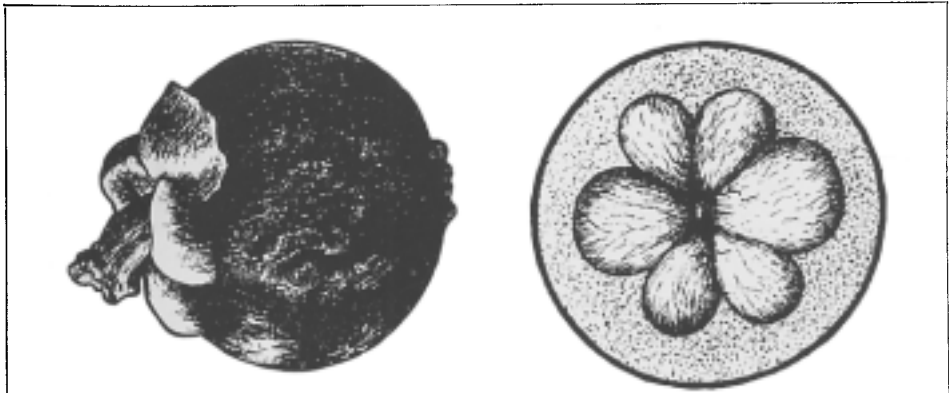


FIG. 15A

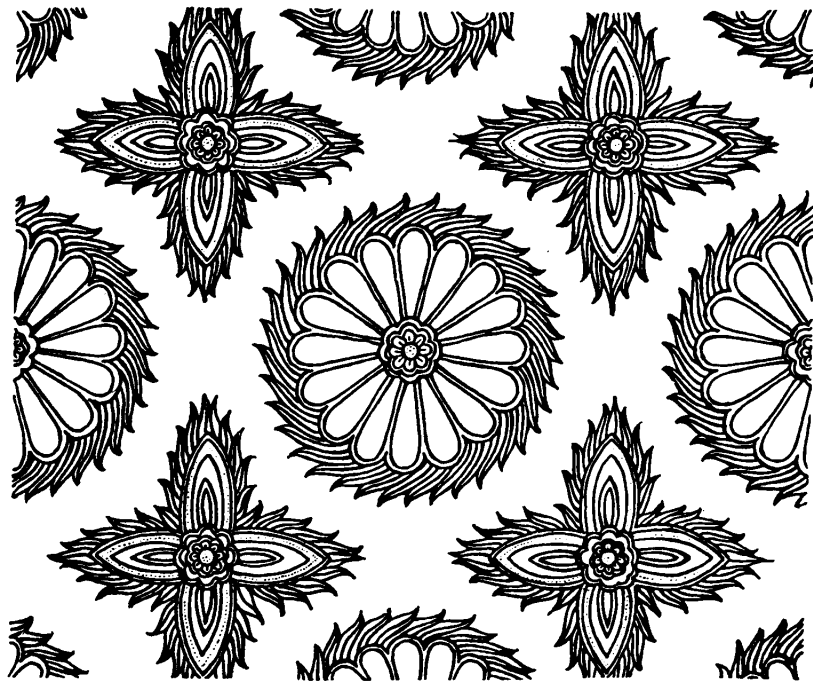


FIG. 15B

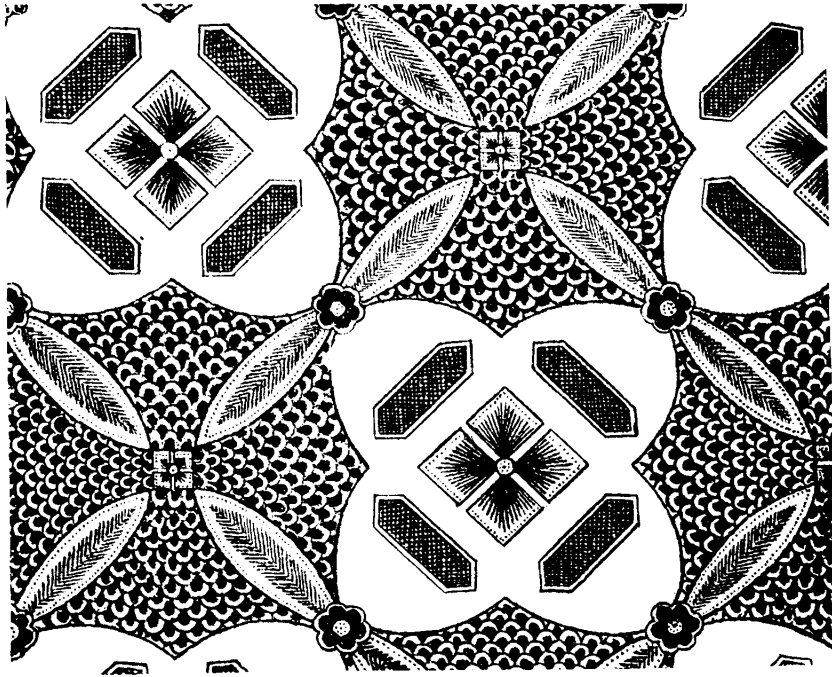


FIG. 16A

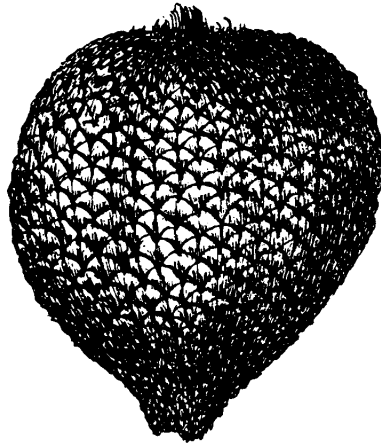


FIG. 16B



FIG. 17

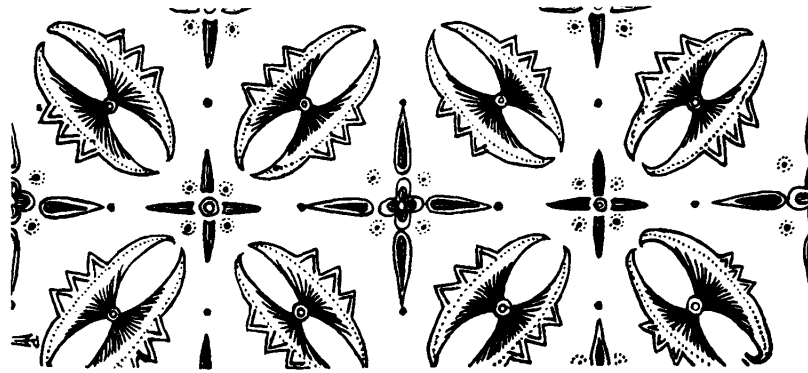


FIG. 18

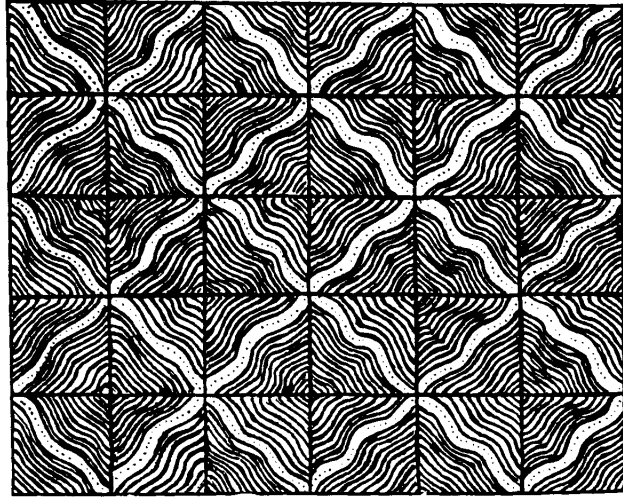


FIG. 19

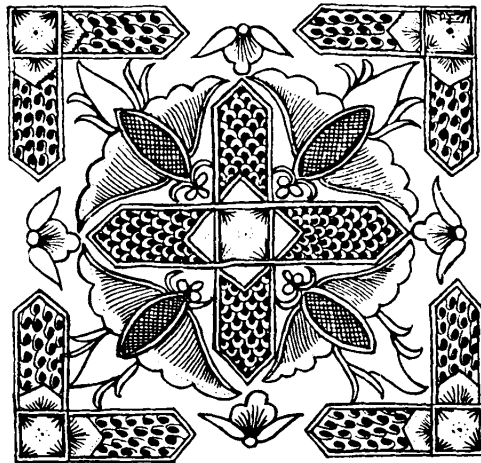


FIG. 20

stars, rain drops, foaming water, and common or ordinary subjects, like anchors, boats, chains.

Abstract Designs—These include symbolic patterns which do not lend any discernable clue of their meaning to the uninitiated. Such abstract subjects, certain specified characters, towns, proper names, are to the uninitiated as mystifying and unfit for translation as the great ritual dances, presented in the sultans' palaces, which to the casual spectator are nothing more than pageants. Fig. 21 is a very complicated medallion design of the proper name *Koesnia*: bird and flower motives are regularly placed in round and square medallions. Fig. 22a and 22b are geometrical patterns, but filled with strongly conventionalized designs of the *tamarind* flower (a) and a diadem (b). Fig. 23 is an interesting combination of squares and rectangles with a great variety of fillings. It looks like a beggar's blanket.⁵⁶

5. Conventionalized Native Plant Designs (from the *Ganggong Plant*).⁵⁷

The designs derived from this plant actually belong under the preceding subject; because of their importance as batik designs, however, they have been given a separate classification. Fig. 24 shows the plant; Fig. 25a, floor tiles, each one decorated with the conventionalized seed of the *ganggong*: crosses and flowers.⁵⁸ Fig. 25b uses the flower of a shrub belonging to the Nightshade family;⁵⁹ the typical conventionalized stampers and fabricaceous fibres of the *ganggong* flower point to a star in the center of the pattern. In the square fields are lozenge designs, flanked by Turkish designs, from which it has its name: *ganggong toerki*. Fig. 25c (see 25b), the *ganggong* design, runs diagonally in four directions of the square medallion. The native name of this design is: *Ganggong garoet*. Fig. 25d, a symbolic design: "love pains or ardor of love." Here are *ganggong* designs pointing in two directions from the four corners of the square pattern. In the center a cross design, the four rays of which have scales. Its name is *Ganggong Branta*.

⁵⁶ Native name: *Tambal*=rag, a rag fixed together.

⁵⁷ *Solanum Denticulatum* L., a Solanaceae.

⁵⁸ Native name: *ganggong d'jobin*.

⁵⁹ *Solanum Denticulatum* L., a Solanaceae.



FIG. 21

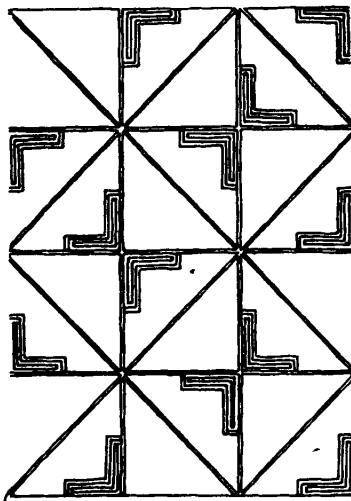


FIG. 22A

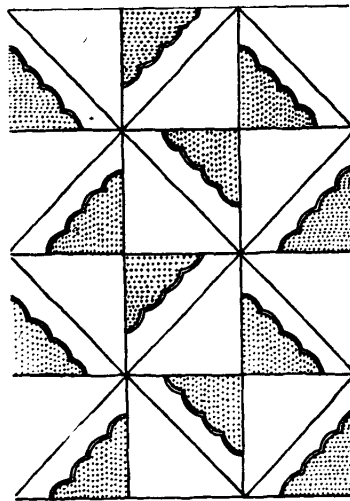


FIG. 22B

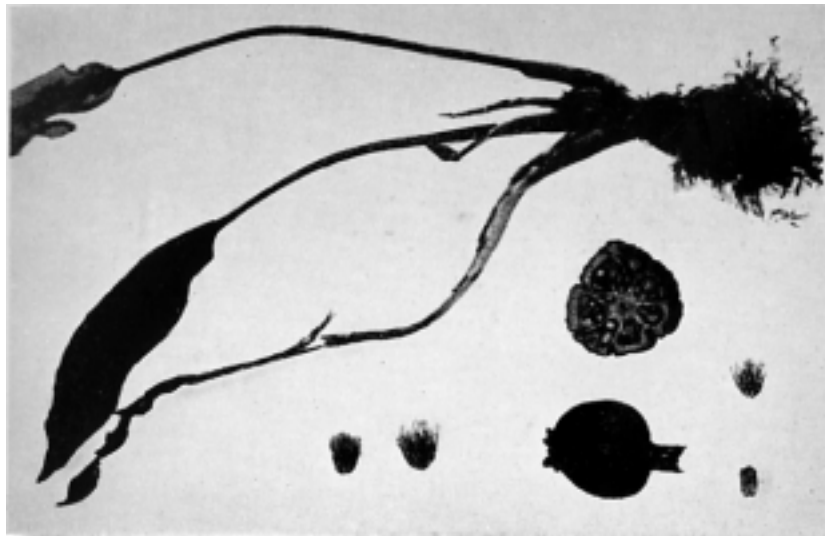


FIG. 24

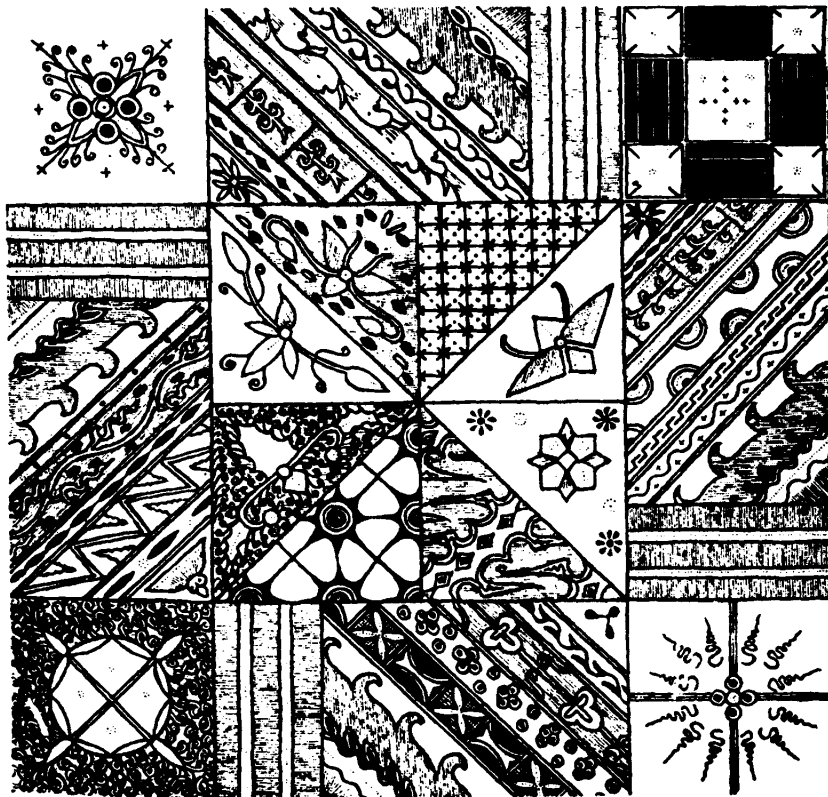


FIG. 23

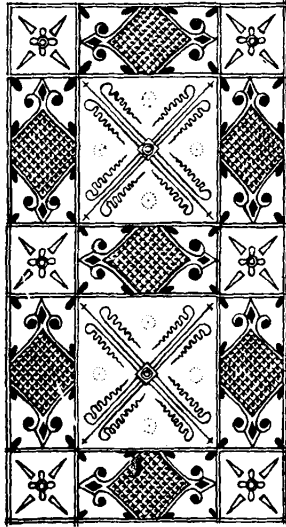


FIG. 25A

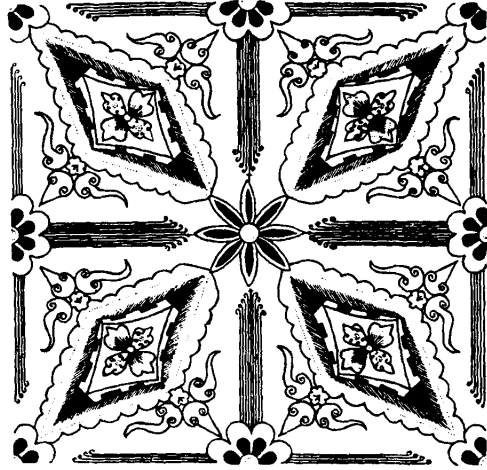


FIG. 25B

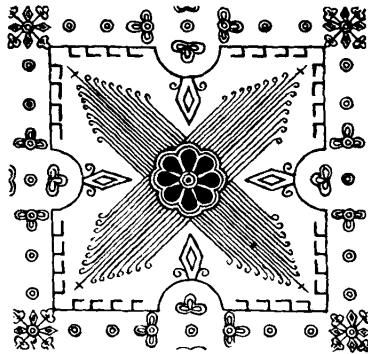


FIG. 25C

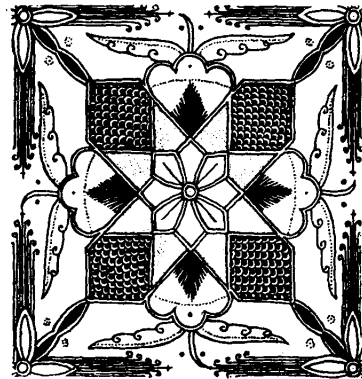


FIG. 25D

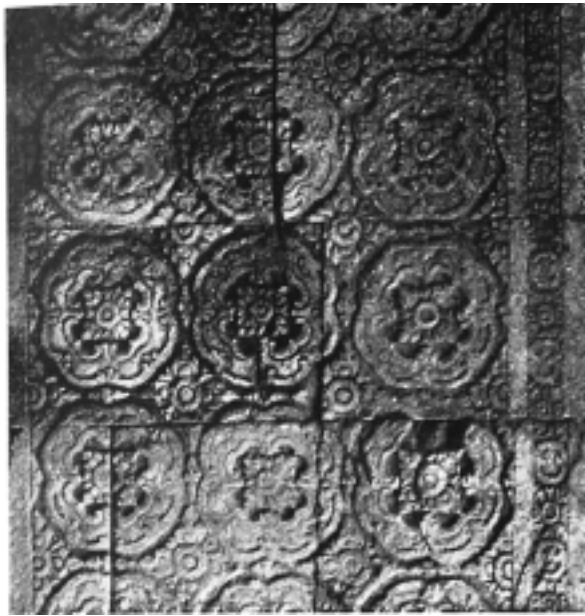


FIG. 26A

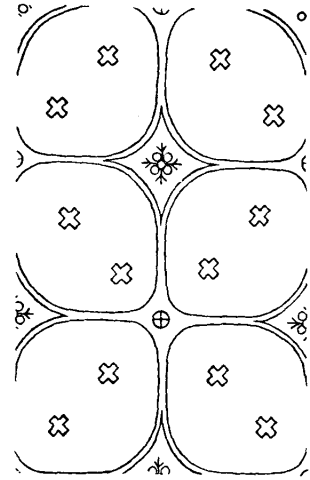


FIG. 26B

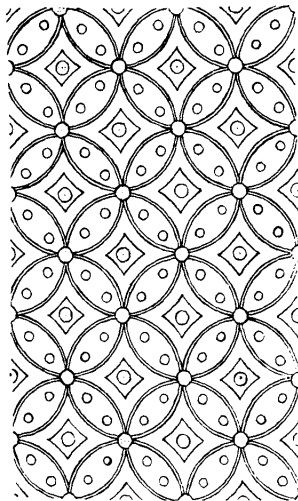


FIG. 26C

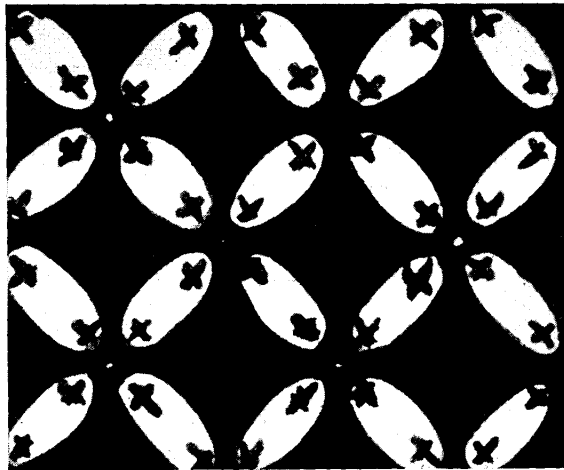


FIG. 26D

6. A Medallion Design (*Karwoeng*).

The origin of the word *karwoeng* is not yet definitely traced; probably it derived from the name of an insect called *kowang*, or the sugar palm *karwoeng*. This pattern is very old and already used for relief decoration of the Prambanan temples near Jokjakarta (Fig. 26a). Fig. 26b shows the simplest design of this group, the conventionalized *karwoeng*. Fig. 26c has its name *karwoeng pitjis* after the small circles between the cross rays.⁶⁰ Fig. 26d is a conventionalized flower with the ellipse-shaped *karwoeng* design. The little crosses in the ellipses indicate the pollen of the flower. Native name: *karwoeng sari*.⁶¹

7. Diagonal Designs with Conventionalized Lotus-leaf Fillings (*the Parangs*).

A special section must be devoted to these very important and interesting designs.

The name *parang*, in Java, has undergone many different translations.⁶² These *parang* designs are composed of diagonally arranged parallel lines with undulating edges forming continuous areas to be filled with *parangs*. Between each pair of these lines, in regular distances, lozenge patterns are placed, so-called *malindjos*.⁶³ From the angles of the undulating edges, from both sides of the design, radiate line ornaments, running against each other in stagger fashion (see Fig. 27d). The end of each of the ornaments is curled up, probably conventionalizing the leaf of the lotus-flower (see Fig. 27b). In Javanese art this particular motive has been developed as the motive of young life. Fig. 27a and Fig. 27d show schematically the development of the *parang* design; Fig. 27b and 27c, particularly that of the "filling" of the *parangs*.

Fig. 27c is the so-called *parang-roesak*, the most important member of this group, which we shall discuss more in detail in the section on "Proscribed Designs."

Fig. 28a shows the lines of the lozenges *malindjo* alternating with those

⁶⁰ *Pitjis* is a small silver coin (ten cents) like the American dime.

⁶¹ *sari*—flower, but also pollen of the flower.

⁶² *parang*—war (*pèrang*); field—*padang*.

⁶³ *malindjos*—see No. 32 of the "fillings" (Fig. 5b).

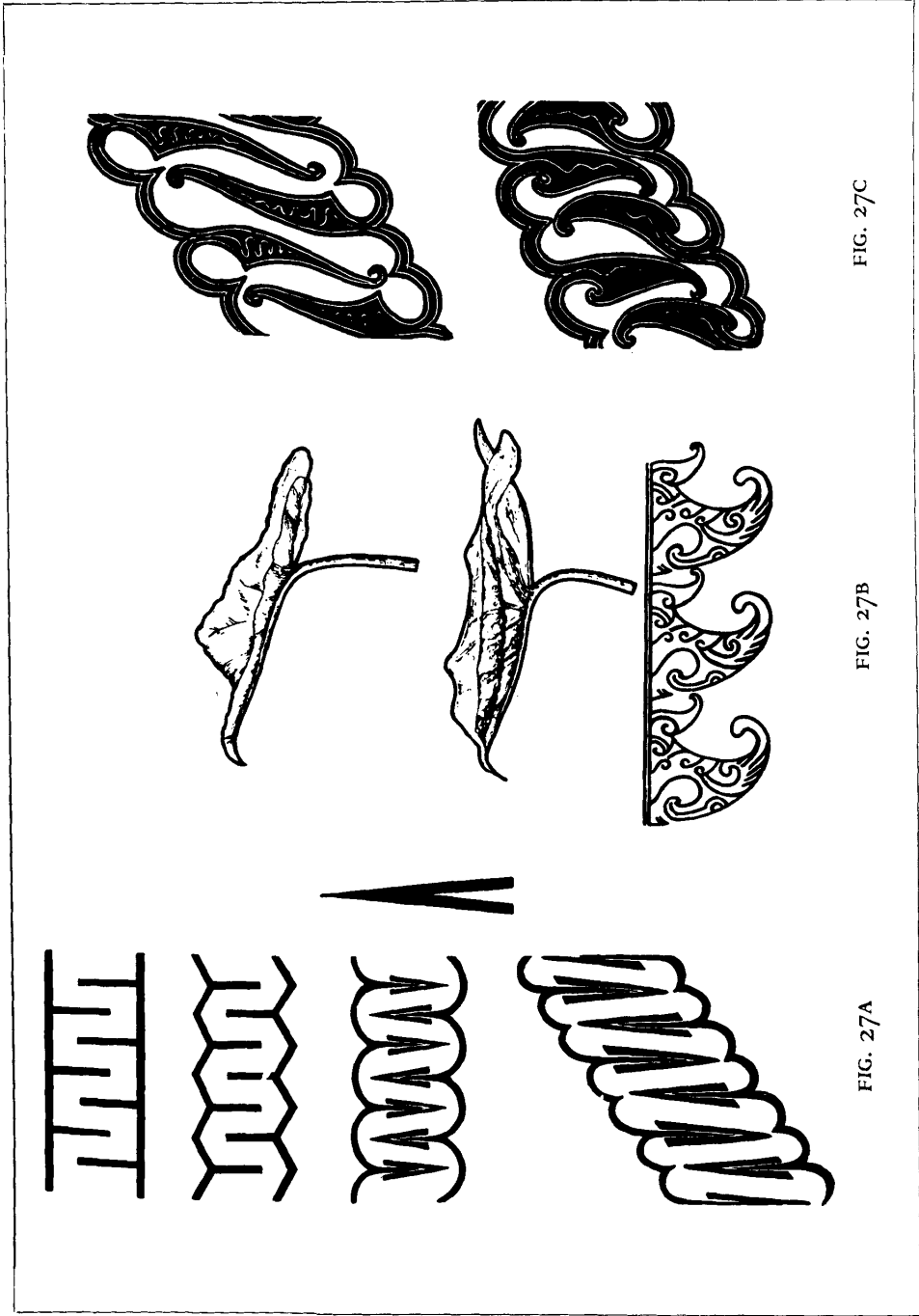


FIG. 27C

FIG. 27B

FIG. 27A

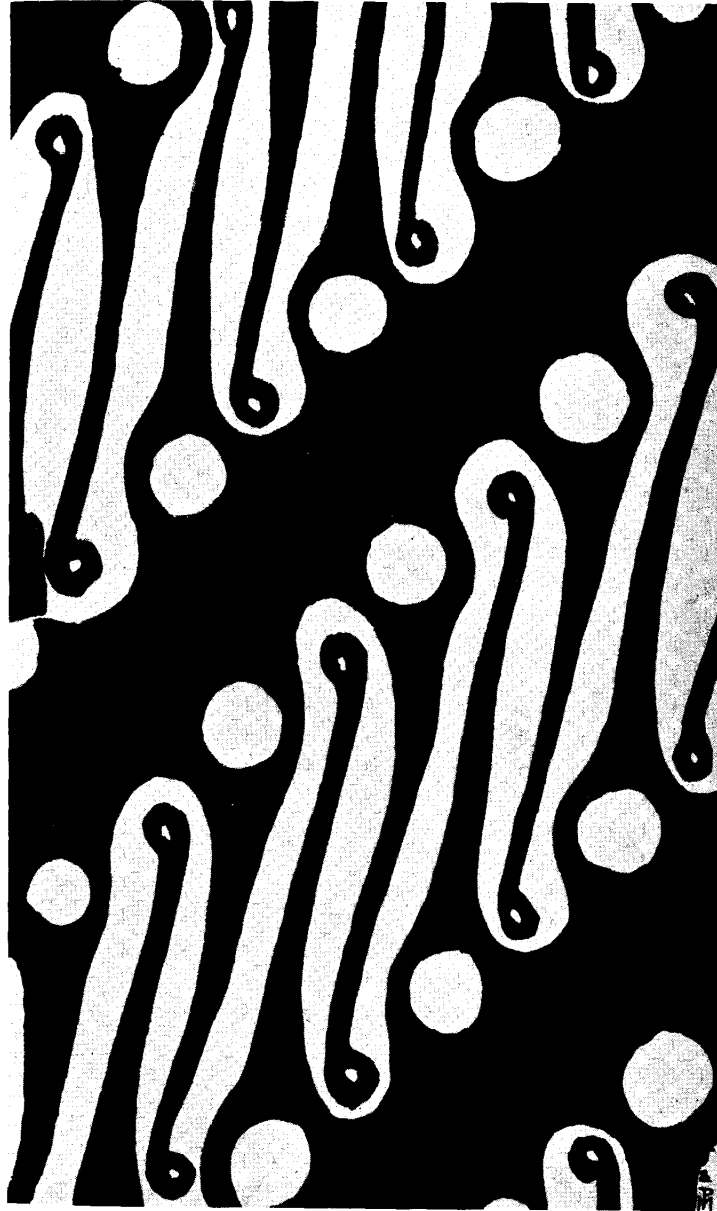


FIG. 27E

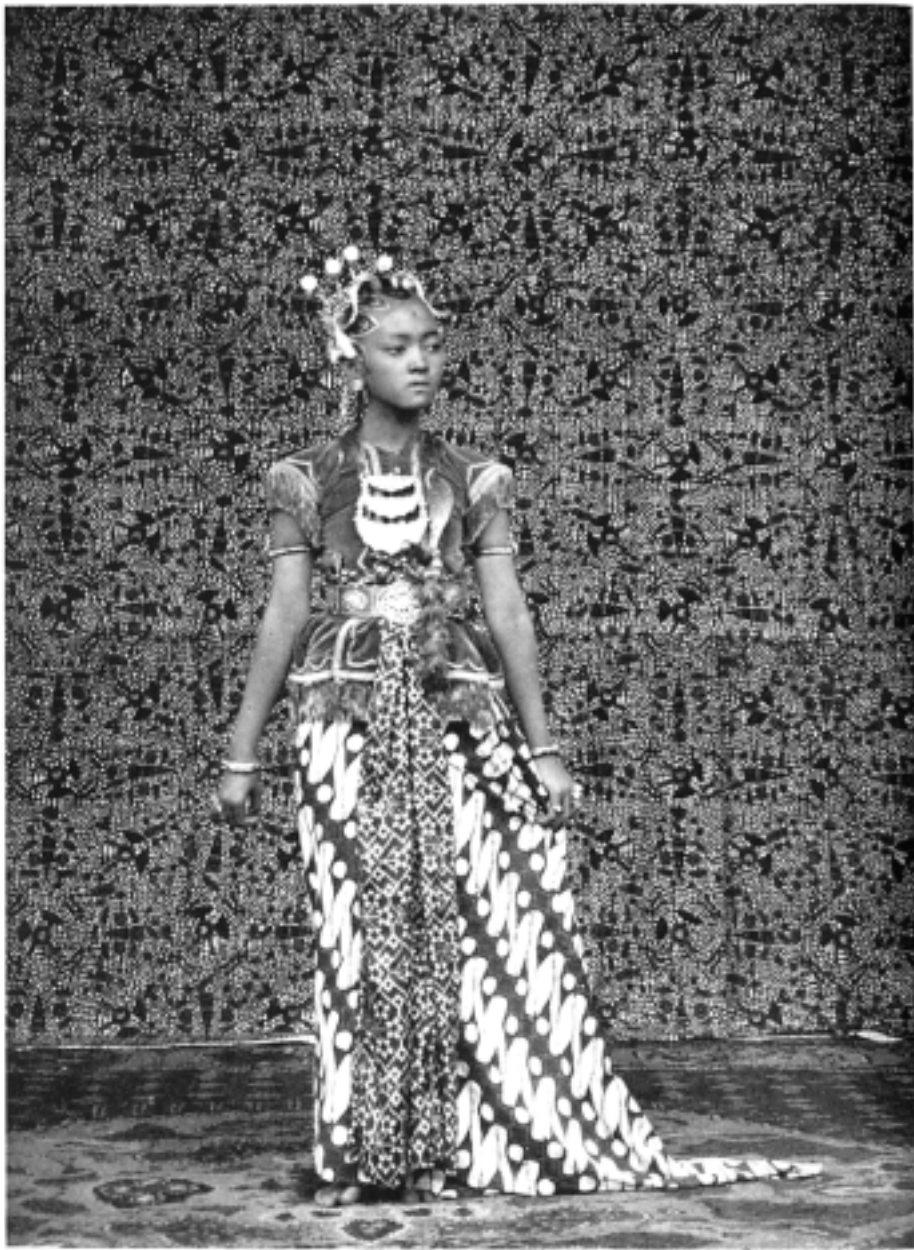


FIG. 27F

SERIMPI, DANCING GIRL OF SULTAN OF JOKJAKARTA

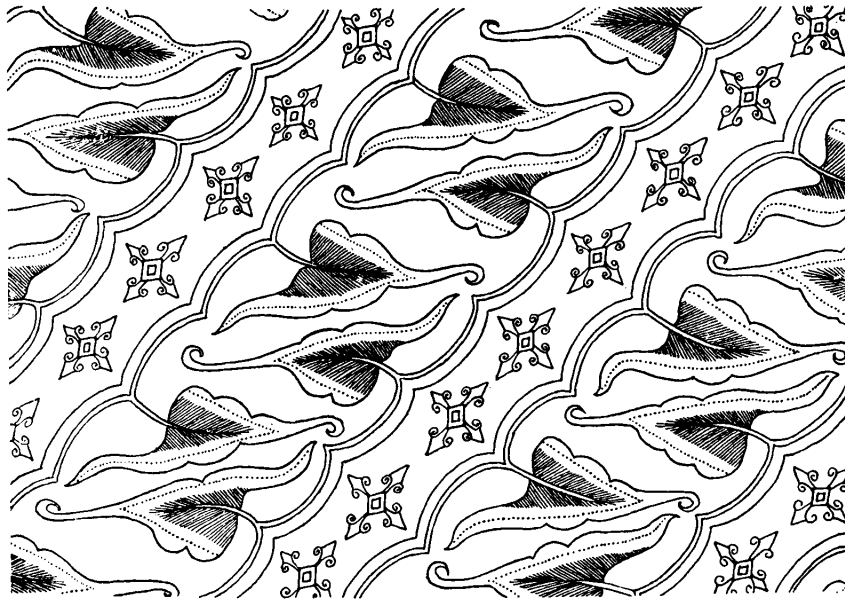


FIG. 28A

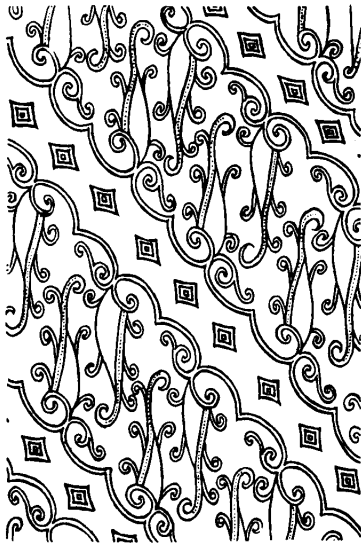


FIG. 28B

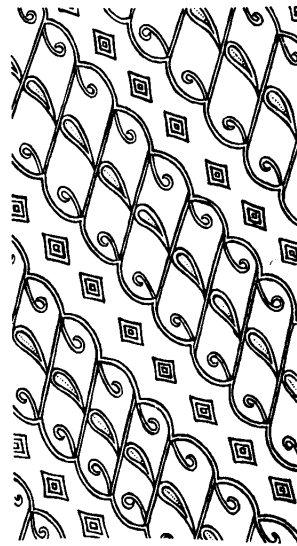


FIG. 28C

of the *parangs*, supposedly representing a beard with a curl at the point: *parang djènggot* (beard).

Fig. 28b means “something hanging down,” like hanging hair.⁶⁴

Fig. 28c is supposed to be a fish-hook.⁶⁵

Other interesting designs of this group are:⁶⁶

“Hair-curls” (on the temples): *parang tjéntong*.

“The leaves of the fern”: *parang pakis*.

“Flowers of the *Hedychium*”⁶⁷: *parang gondasoeli*.

“Flower”⁶⁸: *parang koesoema*.

“Star”: *parang bintang*.

“Cage” (medallions with *parangs* fenced in): *koerang*.

“Pilgrim” (*kaos*; *hadji*; Mohammedan): *parang kaos*.

8. Diagonally Running Designs Other Than *Parangs*.

To this group belong all the diagonally running designs which are not classified under the preceding chapter. Fig. 6a and 6b, the *oedan liris*⁶⁹—so-called “light rain”—design is the most interesting one in this group. It is composed of a great number of “filling” designs set in diagonal arrangement.

Other interesting designs in this class are called:

“Lightning and clouds”: *imâ-imâ tatit*.⁷⁰

“A proper name”: *Doerdjânâ*, (prominent in the theater).

Fig. 29a. “A river mussel”: *Kidjing miring*.⁷¹

Fig. 29b. “Roof tiles”: *Sirappan*.⁷²

“The floating snake”: *oelër-kambang*.⁷³

“Like a young crocodile”: *krété dédé*.⁷⁴

“Sun-flower”: *kanigârâ*.⁷⁵

“A small river-fish going up the river”: *oetjèng moedik*.⁷⁶

⁶⁴ This motive is called *parang sobrah*—hanging like hair.

⁶⁵ *parang pandjing*—catching by means of fish-hooks.

⁶⁶ Jasper in his book gives short descriptions of forty designs.

⁶⁷ *Hedychium coronarium* Koen, a Seitaminaceae.

⁶⁸ *Koesoema*—Javanese: flower.

⁶⁹ *Oedan*—rain; *liris*—light.

⁷⁰ *Imâ-imâ*—thin, fine cloud; *tatit*—lightning.

⁷¹ *kidjing*—name of a river mussel; *miring*—oblique.

⁷² See also Fig. 5a No. 28.

⁷³ *oelër*—snake; *kambang*—floating.

⁷⁴ *Krété*—a young crocodile; *dédé*—to be different (like a young crocodile).

⁷⁵ *kanigârâ*—*Cochlosperum Balicum* Boerl, a Biximeae.

⁷⁶ *oetjèng*—a small river fish; *moedik*—going up.

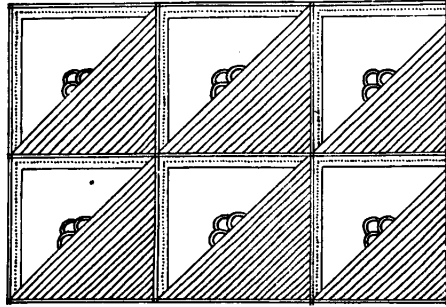


FIG. 29A

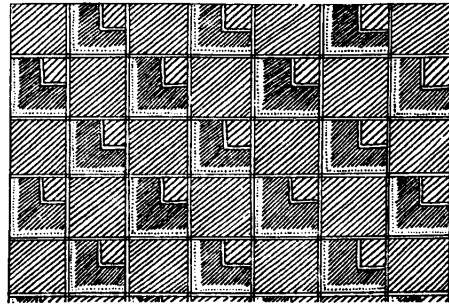


FIG. 29B

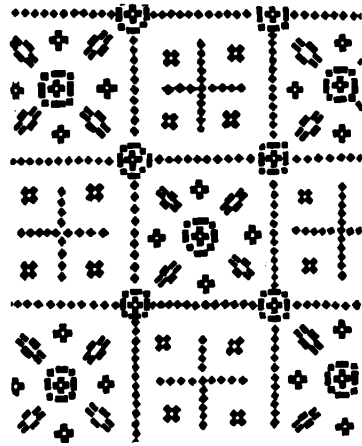


FIG. 30A

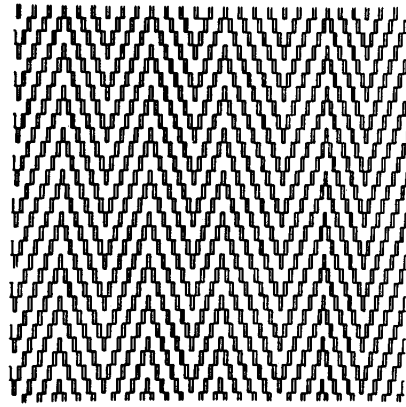


FIG. 30B

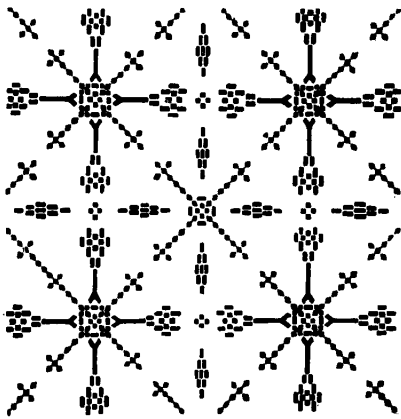


FIG. 30C

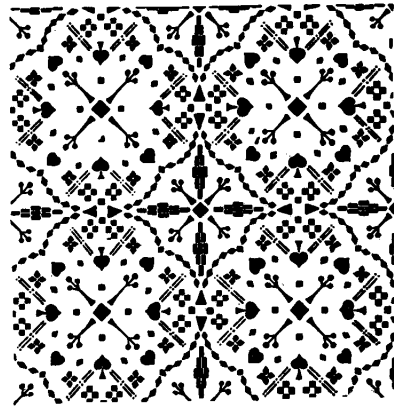


FIG. 30D

9. Weaving Designs (*Nitik*).⁷⁷

These patterns are undoubtedly the oldest of all the designs used in the batik industry. They imitate weaves in an interesting way.

The designs: stars, squares, circles, crosses, etc., resemble the patterns found in American handwoven coverlets to a marked degree. They include in a conventionalized form not only floral motives and such unrelated subjects as weaves, baskets, cat tracks, tiger claws, and others taken from the field of zoology but also abstract designs as victory, unification, petty theft, and joy of meeting.

Fig. 30a. Alternating weaving designs: cross in one square, flower designs in another: *soelamman*.

Fig. 30b. "Bright waters": *tirtoredjo*.⁷⁸

Fig. 30c. "Joy of seeing again": *oeněngan*; star-shaped figure, the eight rays of which point to corresponding ones of the surrounding figures.

Fig. 30d. "A paw with claws" (like those of a tiger) and a beard: *tjakar wok*, which means intricate beard-hair.

Furthermore: the proper name of an angel of the Korân: *Rěngganis*.

"Victory of the King": *Djâjäsěntânâ*.⁷⁹

"Victory of constellation": *Djâjâkartikâ*.⁸⁰

B. FREE-HAND DESIGNS.

I. Floral Designs Sometimes Combined with Animal Motives (*Sěmèn Designs*).

The word *sěmèn* is derived from *sěmi*, meaning the budding or opening of a leaf. The *sěmèn* design is a flower or leaf ornament characterized by the presence of curled tendrils. The designs of this class may be subdivided into three groups:

- (a) Flower and leaf motives;
- (b) Flower and leaf motives combined with scenes of the animal world;
- (c) Flower and leaf motives combined with animal life and wings.

⁷⁷ *tik*, as in *ba-tik*, refers to the early *tik*—or drop—technique.

⁷⁸ *tirto*—water; *redjo*—bright, glossy.

⁷⁹ *Djâjâ*—victory; *Sěntânâ*—family of the ruler; also a proper name.

⁸⁰ *Djâjâ*—victory; *kartikâ*—constellation, also military power.

(a) Flower and Leaf Designs.

The group has its special name: *Loeng*⁸¹. To this group belong a great number of designs extremely interesting since they show the great talent of the Javanese women for conventionalizing motives taken from nature.

Fig. 31a. Shows a complicated pattern combining flowers, fruit and plant-tendrils;⁸² the bulbs of this plant have a stunning power. The Javanese name of this pattern is: *Loeng Gadoeng*.

Fig. 31b. A very fine design; flowers, fruit, shoots, and tendrils of a tree⁸³: *kěmbang Gěmpol*.

Fig. 31c. This very elaborate pattern is called *fan* which means flowers used as a fan. The scales of the center-figures are supposed to be the feathers: *sěmèn kipas*.⁸⁴

Fig. 31d. A complicated and beautiful design showing conventionalized banana leaves and fruit: *pisang bali*.⁸⁵

Fig. 32a. Long leaves and tendrils of a plant; the fine clusters of fruits are supposed to be "cat-tails," from another native plant; this design by the natives is termed "the sick fruit-tree"—*kirna monda*.⁸⁶

Fig. 32b. A conventionalized flower and fruit design, the leaves much like the Indian palmetto motive, the *kalgha buta*; native name: *sěmbagèn* (Fig. 43).

(b) Flower and Leaf Motives Combined with Scenes
of the Animal World.

Among the patterns of this class we find a great variety of beautiful floral designs combined with conventionalized animal life motives, most of them birds (chickens, pigeons, the Indian peacock, cuckoos, and the legendary bird *garuda*). Very interesting, too, are designs of butterflies, beetles, and like insects. Other patterns show mussels, frogs, shrimps, lobsters, snakes, and even tigers and elephants.

A peculiarity of this group is the classification of the name, for though

⁸¹ *Loeng*—shoot, sapling, tendrils of vines or other climbers. In Javanese batik art, any design derived from a plant, may be called *loeng*.

⁸² *Dioscorea hirsuta* Bl., a *Dioscoraceae*. *Loeng* is the name of the floral designs, *gadoeng*, the above-mentioned plant.

⁸³ *Gěmpol*: *Sarcocephalus cordatus* Miq. a *Rubiaceae*.

⁸⁴ *Sěmèn*: name of this class of designs; *kipas*=fan.

⁸⁵ *Pisang*: banana; *bali*: is the name of a special kind.

⁸⁶ *Kirna*: fruit; *monda*: sick.



FIG. 31A

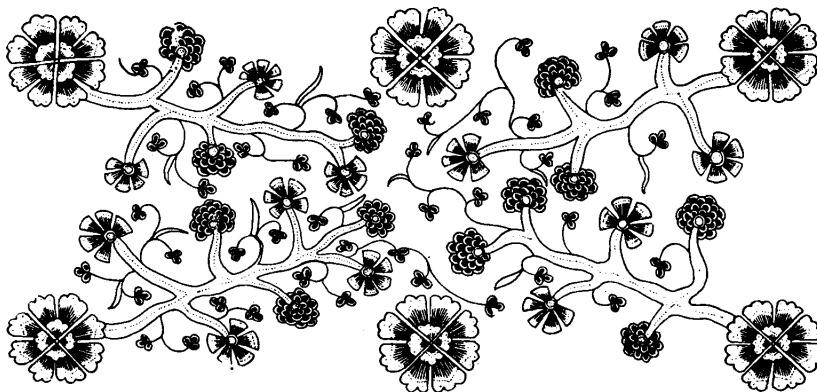


FIG. 31B



FIG. 31C

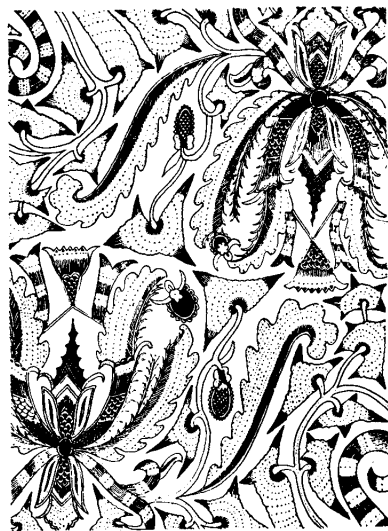


FIG. 31D



FIG. 32A

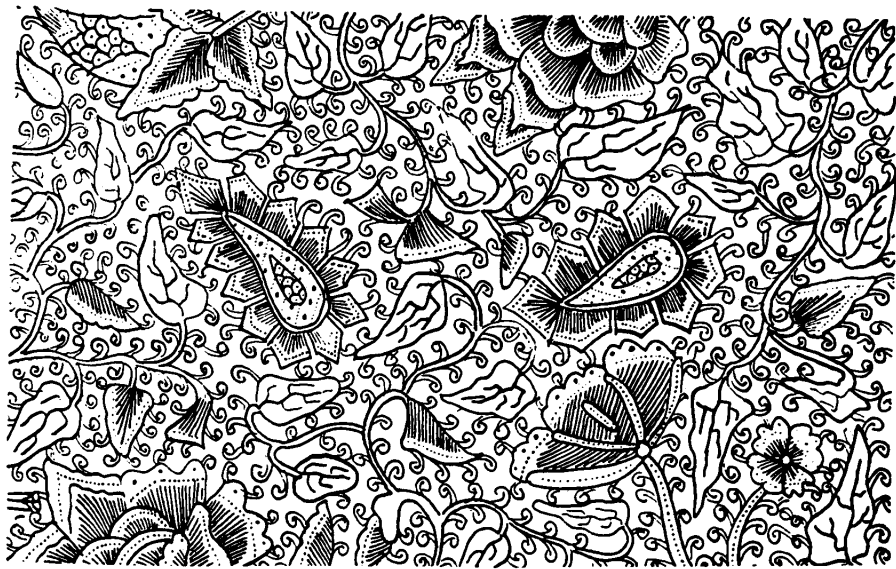


FIG. 32B



FIG. 33A



FIG. 33B

the chief feature of the design may be some form of animal life, nevertheless it may take its name from some flower of minor importance. Thus Fig. 34b, featuring conspicuously a bird surrounded by beetles, is termed the *Wedelia* flower. On the other hand there are instances where the batik, patterned chiefly with flowers, derives its name from an animal life motive which is included in the design.

Fig. 33a. Highly conventionalized birds and lobsters encircled in medallions; the background of this batik shows a very complicated flower and leaf design. The native name of the design indicates the diver-bird: *Pěksi oerang-oerang*.⁸⁷

Fig. 33b. An intricate design of flowers, leaves, and tendrils among which are cockatoos: *Pěksi koewon*.⁸⁸

Fig. 33c. The holy bird *Garuda* among insects, flowers, and vines: *Pěksi Garoeda*.⁸⁹

Fig. 34a. A large conventionalized butterfly, surrounded by flower and leaf motives, "the amorous butterfly": *Koepoe Gandroeng*.

Fig. 34b. A design of the *Wedelia* flower.⁹⁰ A bird surrounded by beetles, running around in the same direction: native name of this motive is *Sroeni Landak*.⁹¹

Fig. 34c. Among flowers, vines, tendrils are mysteriously looking animal heads and also little beetles irregularly placed. The name of this pattern means "rolling head": *Sirah Gloendoengan*.⁹²

(c) Flower and Leaf Motives Combined with Animal Life and Wing Patterns (*Sěmèn*).

In the eyes of the natives the designs of this class—the *Sěmèn* designs—are considered the finest and most important patterns of Javanese batiks. The "wing" or *lar* motive is highly venerated because of its derivation from the holy bird *garuda*, symbol of the Hindu-god *Vishnu*.⁹³

As to the wings, the single and double wings without any tails are

⁸⁷ *Pěksi* is a bird (in general); *oerang-oerang*, the diver-bird.

⁸⁸ *Koewon*—cockatoo.

⁸⁹ See both sections: "Designs of Foreign Origin and Influence" and "The Proscribed Designs."

⁹⁰ The *Wedelia* flower is a *Compositae*.

⁹¹ Name of the *Wedelia* is *Sroeni Landak* (*landak* means porcupine).

⁹² *Sirah*—head; *gloendoengan*—rolling.

⁹³ Fig. 33c. *Garuda* is the symbol of the Hindu god *Vishnu*. This mythological bird is more venerated in Java and Bali than in India.



FIG. 33C

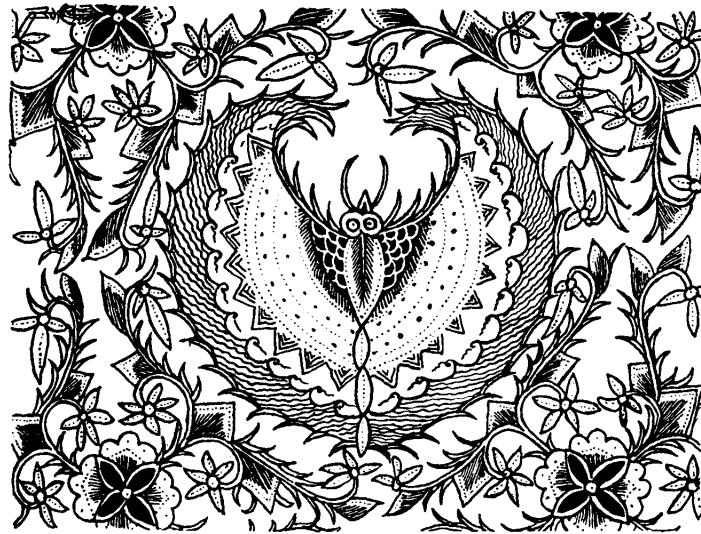


FIG. 34A



FIG. 34B

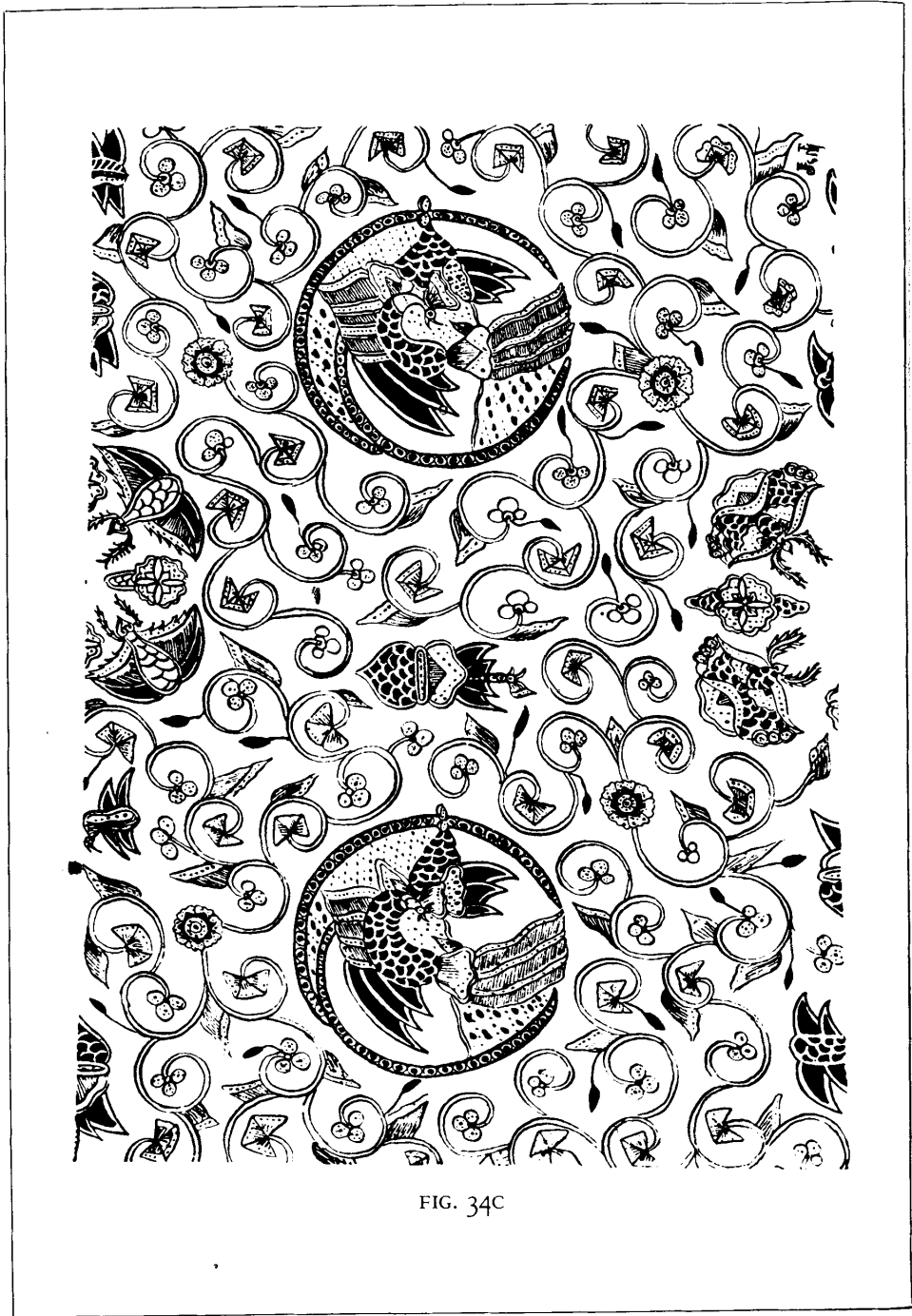


FIG. 34C

called *mirongs*, whereas the double wings with a widespread tail—the symbol of “the peacock without a head”—are called *sawat*.

As a further division, these *mirongs* fall into two different classes: the *lar-idoep* or *living wings* with feathers represented by fillings in the design and *lar-mati* or *dead wings* represented by an outline drawing only. Fig. 35a.

These patterns, like those of Class B, also take their names from minor pictures. To analyze these designs often is very difficult; in many cases only the batik worker herself could give the full explanation. Unfortunately the creators of the finest batiks belong to generations of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and no efforts were made at that time to preserve the history of batik designs.

Fig. 35b. Between flowers and tendrils are various bird designs and single wings. This design is drawn after a fantastic flower (*pěrnis*) which appears in the pattern. Native name of design: *loeng pěrnis*.

Fig. 35c. A fern (*pakis*) pattern with complicated arrangements of various bird and insect ornaments, corner motives and single wings: *loeng pakis*.

Fig. 36a. This is an excellent example of the double wing motive with a tail design. To elaborate this *sawat* pattern, an encircling or necklace (*kaloeng*) is added. The design is named *Sěmèn kaloeng*.

Fig. 36b. As the name of the pattern, *Pěrsi*, means Persian, it may have originated in Persia. Various birds, insects, snakes (the black curves) are skilfully placed among the wings and tendrils. In the left hand corner is an interesting design: a conventionalized peacock, which probably gave the name to the pattern: *Sěmèn Pěrsi*.

Fig. 37. “The crowned bird.” A symmetrically drawn pattern with many single and double wings (*sawats*): *Pěksi makoeta*.^{94 95}

2. Designs of Foreign Origin and Influence.

As before stated, the art of batik was developed through foreign influence, especially that of India. The first invasion of Java by Hindus took place in the third century A.D., and in the tenth century Java and many other islands of the Malay Archipelago were under Hindu rulers.

⁹⁴ *Makoeta*—crown.

⁹⁵ It is a matter of regret that neither Jasper nor Juinboll give detailed examinations of the symbolism of those interesting designs.

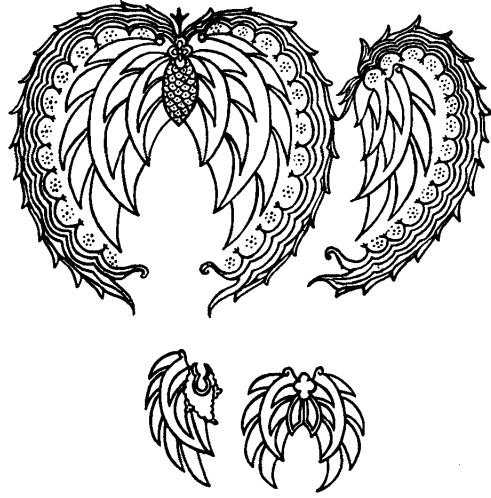


FIG. 35A



FIG. 35B



FIG. 35C



FIG. 36A

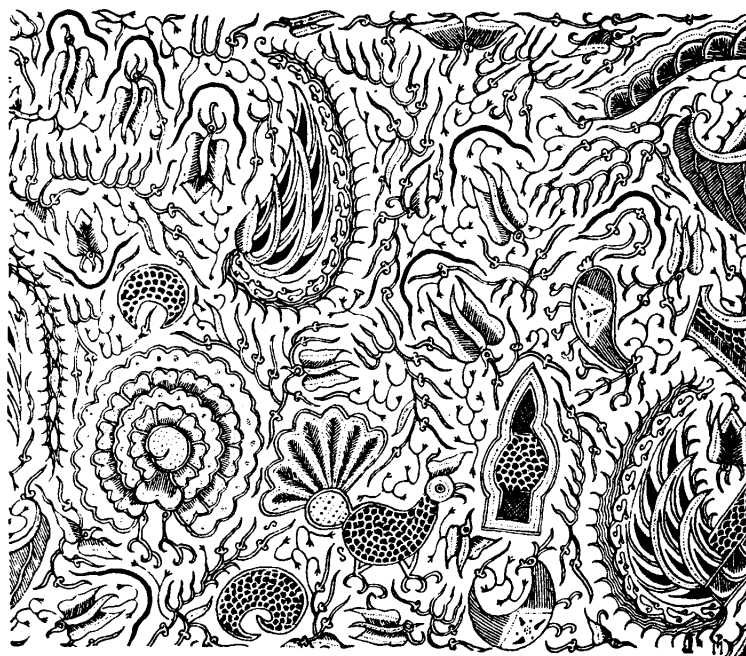


FIG. 36B



FIG. 37

It is not strange, therefore, that Hinduism, at that time at its height, strongly influenced the native art of Java. Although certain motives from India were adopted by the batik workers, the Javanese selected only certain subjects to conventionalize and symbolize. The ugly vase motives, for instance, never found their way from India to Java, and the few medallion patterns obviously derived from the Hindu temples⁹⁶ in Java.

Among the floral designs taken over from Persia and India are the palmetto,⁹⁷ (the British-Indian *Kalgha buta*) and the carnation, in Java named *tloeki*;⁹⁸ among other imported subjects are the holy bird *Garuda*, the peacock—not a native of Java—the dragon or snake—the Indian *Naga*⁹⁹—and the black Indian cuckoo, in Java named *Kokila*;¹⁰⁰ elephants and tigers, deer and bears, recalling the hunting carpets of Persia and India; these, however, are rarely used in batik designs.

In batiks from Soerabaya and the eastern part of Java, a number of designs show Chinese influence, such as dragons, clouds, and certain floral designs.

The famous batik center, Pekalongan on the north shore of central Java, has long been strongly influenced by European patterns and commercial ideas. Besides floral designs, motives can be found entirely foreign to the fine and artistic taste of the Javanese: steamers, locomotives, cannon, soldiers, government officials, etc. Such patterns, of course, are not for the painstaking free-hand wax-painter but exclusively for commercialized block printing.

C. THE PROSCRIBED DESIGNS.

The extremely strong feeling of the natives toward etiquette, the many ranks of the sultans' officials, and the various titles of the many members of the royal family, automatically required the creation of certain uniforms and dresses, easy to distinguish.

In the archives of the Sultan of Soerakarta, in the second part of the nineteenth century, are still preserved the documents regarding patterns

⁹⁶ The *Borobudur* monument in central Java was finished in 865 A.D. The *Prambanan* temples near Jokjakarta in 960 A.D.

⁹⁷ See Fig. 31c and Fig. 32b.

⁹⁸ See Jasper, Fig. 268.

⁹⁹ See Jasper, Fig. 279 and Fig. 299.

¹⁰⁰ See Jasper, Fig. 283.

and designs, issued by Susuhunan Paku Buwono III in the years 1769 and 1784, and Susuhunan Paku Buwono IV, 1796, the use of which are subject to the decision of His Highness himself.

Such designs are called *Larangan*, a Javanese word, which best is translated by "hands off;" in other words proscribed for ordinary use to the village worker.

These patterns were defined in the above ordinances of the court, to be worn only by members of the royal family or certain officials.

These proscribed designs are:

1. All the *parang* designs as mentioned on page 42; the design called *Sěmbagèn*¹⁰¹ "Hook" (Fig. 43) and the holy bird *Garuda*.¹⁰² These three types of designs are dedicated to the crown prince and his consort.

2. All the *Sěmèn* designs with *Mirong* and *Sawat* motives¹⁰³ and the design called *Light Rain*,¹⁰⁴ which contains a *Parang Roesak*, too. This group of patterns is dedicated to the sons of the ruler—the *Poetras*, his daughters, and the brothers and uncles of the sultans, the *Pangèran's*.¹⁰⁵

3. All the *Sěmèn* designs without double wing and tail¹⁰⁶ motives, further the medallion patterns called *Karwoeng*¹⁰⁷ and the diagonal running motive called *Roedjak Sèntè*.¹⁰⁸

All these designs were permitted to be worn by the *Raden Mas* and the *Radens*.¹⁰⁹

At the courts of the sultans, these rules are still carefully obeyed. To anyone who has ever had the opportunity of attending some of the great festivals in the palaces of *Jokjakarta* and *Solo*, the harmony of color and design of the dresses of the native aristocracy must have made a deep impression.

¹⁰¹ See Fig. 27f, the beautiful batik, hanging on the wall. This is one of the three *Sěmbagèn Dodots* of Sultan Mataram III (about 1780), and was presented to the writer by Sultan Hamangkoe Boewono VIII.

¹⁰² Fig. 33c. *Garuda* is the symbol of the Hindu god *Vishnu*. This mythological bird is more venerated in Java and Bali than in India.

¹⁰³ See last paragraph of page 55 and first paragraph on page 58.

¹⁰⁴ The design *Oedan Liris*, Fig. 6a and 6b, which includes also a *parang roesak* design.

¹⁰⁵ *Pangèran's* are the sons of the sultan born by a chief wife of the sultan (a *Ratoe*).

¹⁰⁶ See section B1c, pages 55 and 58. The *Sěmèn* designs.

¹⁰⁷ See section A6, page 42.

¹⁰⁸ See Jasper, J. E., page 168; description of pattern 16.

¹⁰⁹ *Raden Mas* are the sons of a sultan by a co-wife. *Raden* is the daughter of a co-wife.

JAVANESE BATIK DRESSES.

Originally batik was used for native dresses only. Even today at the great festivals in the palaces of the sultans of Jokjakarta and Solo, one can observe that natives, who are neither of royal blood nor in any official rank, are strictly following a proscribed dress rule: the men wear only a skirt of batik, the so-called *Běběd* and a batik headcloth, the women appear with a *tapih* and a breast-cloth, the so-called *Kěmběn*, but no head cover. Not only the cut of the dress is determined by the etiquette of the palaces, but the designs of the batiks also follow a certain rule.¹¹⁰

Tradition is not yet broken in the palaces; the original and official dress of the Javanese is the batik on cotton.

A certain system is employed measuring the various batiks used for dresses. As mentioned before, the natives use imported cotton for batiks as manufactured in Europe and India.¹¹¹ Such blocks of cotton are about thirteen yards long and forty-four inches wide. The measurements of such *kayoo*s define the sizes of the various batiks.

A. *The Headcloth*—The native name *Ikět* (tie) correctly pictures the manner in which it is worn: it is tied over the head. There are square-shaped headcloths and diagonally cut, half-sized *ikěts*. Most of the square-shaped headcloths have a plain colored square field in the center. This is called *iěngahan* and it is constructed in two different ways (Fig. 39a. and 39b). There are many different ways to tie headcloths, depending on the official rank of the man and also on the district in which he is living. Men from Jokjakarta and Solo can be identified immediately according to the manner in which they wear their headcloth (Fig. 38).

B. *The Saroeng*—A skirt-like garment, it is twice as long as wide. The short ends are sewn together. The *saroeng* is simply folded and tied around the hips. The pattern of a *saroeng* is broken (Fig. 40) by the so-called *kěpala* (literal head), consisting of a double row of triangular designs, the so-called *toempal*, which are filled with floral motives. This design is much like a backgammon board and undoubtedly imported from British India. The *saroeng* originally was worn only by women, but at present it is used also by men. It is the daily wear of the villager who

¹¹⁰ See the preceding section.

¹¹¹ The imported cotton is usually wound on a piece of wood and consequently the native name for such a piece is *kayoo* (wood).

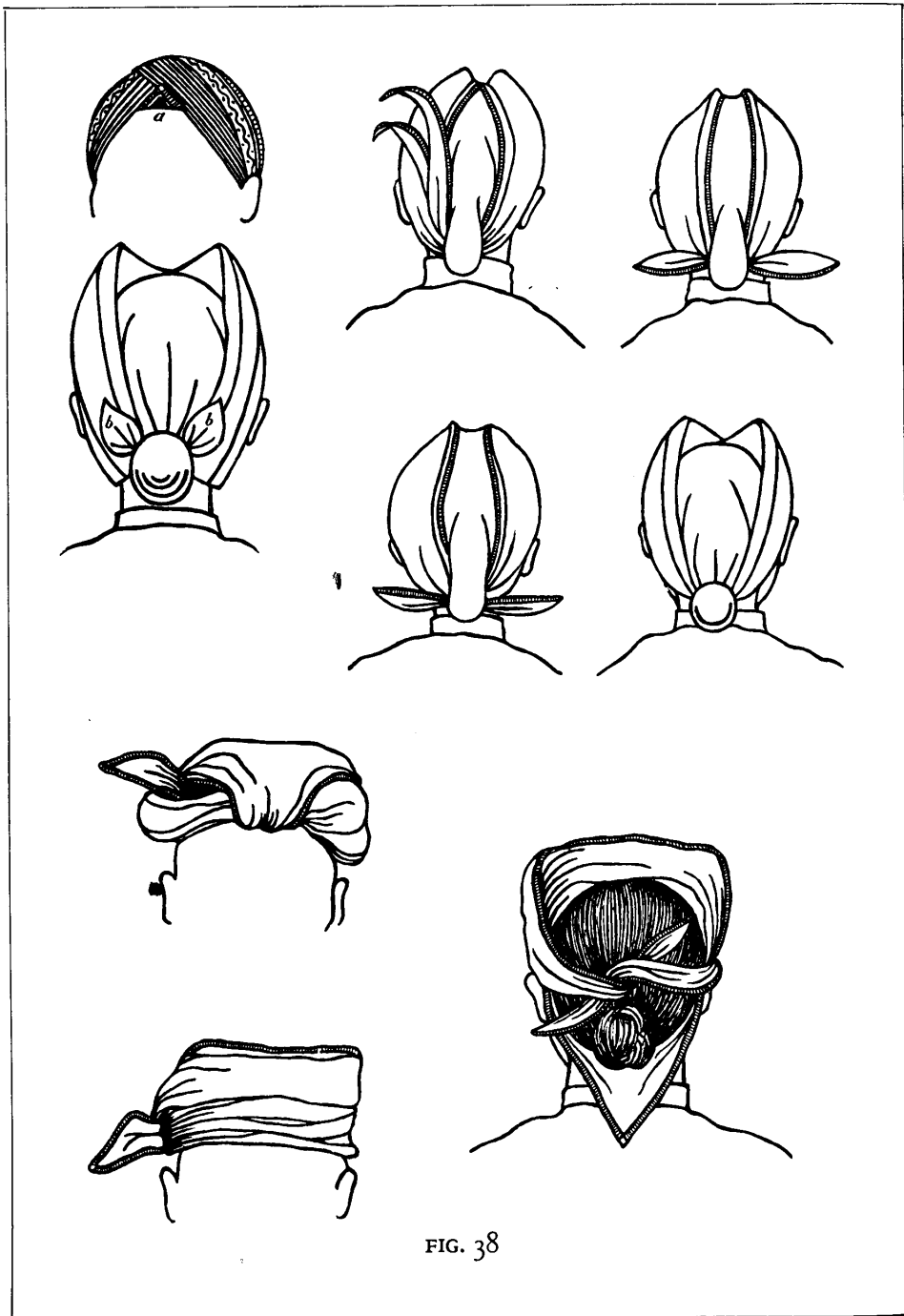


FIG. 38

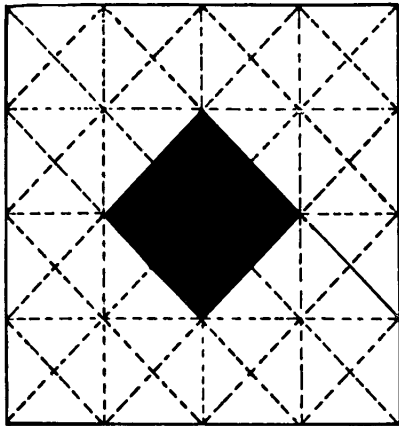


FIG. 39A

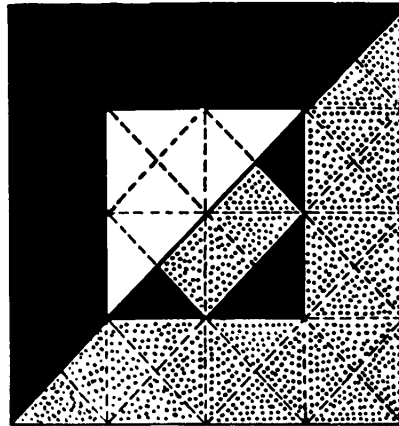


FIG. 39B

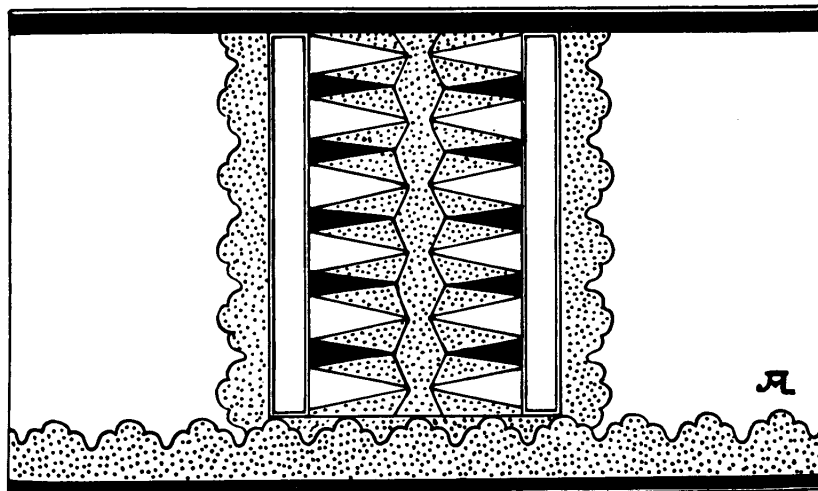


FIG. 40

is not allowed, however, to use it while visiting an official or entering the palace of the sultan. In the latter case he has to be dressed with a:

C. *Běběd* or *Kain Pandjang*¹¹²—This is a saroeng-shaped batik, not sewn together—it has not the *toempal* design but a free-hand batik pattern. It is two and a half times as wide as it is long.

D. *The Breast-cloth for Women, Kěmběň*—Is a long, small cloth of batik. Some of these textiles have a large, one color lozenge in the center, like the centerfield of the *ikět* (see A) called *Těngahan*.

E. *The Tapih*—Is the same garment for women that the name *Běběd* (C) signifies for men. It is also the same size: two and a half times as long as wide.

F. *The Dodot*—Exclusively worn by the sultans, their family members, the high officials and their wives, court dancers, and the bride and bridegroom.¹¹³ Sometimes, *dodots* too have a large centerfield, *Těngahan*.¹¹⁴ The *Dodot* is worn in an entirely different manner than the *saroeng*, the *běběd*, or the *tapih*. It is tied around the hips, in a complicated way, while trousers of *tjindi*—the beautiful, double tie-died silk weavings, imported from British India—are worn under it. Women wear the *tapih* under the *dodot*. There are many different ways of tying a *dodot*, depending on the traditional rules of court etiquette. (Fig. 41.)¹¹⁵

G. *The Shawl or Scarf, Slěndang*—It has the size of a *Kěmběň*, but is used either to carry a baby on the back or as a shawl, over the shoulders.

The long scarf of silk used by the court dancers—tied around the hips and hanging down to the floor on both sides—is called *sondèr*, while the scarf used by a street dancer is called *sampoer*.

BLOCK-PRINTED BATIKS.

From the preceding paragraphs we learned that the original wax painting process—the batik—requires much patience and time from

¹¹² *Kain*—cloth; *pandjang*—long.

¹¹³ At wedding ceremonies, bride and bridegroom—even if not of aristocratic blood—have the right to wear the famous *dodot*.

¹¹⁴ In the writer's private collection is a beautiful large batik, so-called *dodot*, with a green, lozenge-shaped centerfield with *tjěmockirrans*.

¹¹⁵ When the chancellor of Soerakarta died in 1925, his son-in-law presented to the writer the beautiful state costume worn by the chancellor.



FIG. 41
PANGIRAN ADIPATI ARIO DANOEREDJO VIII, CHANCELLOR OF JOKJAKARTA.

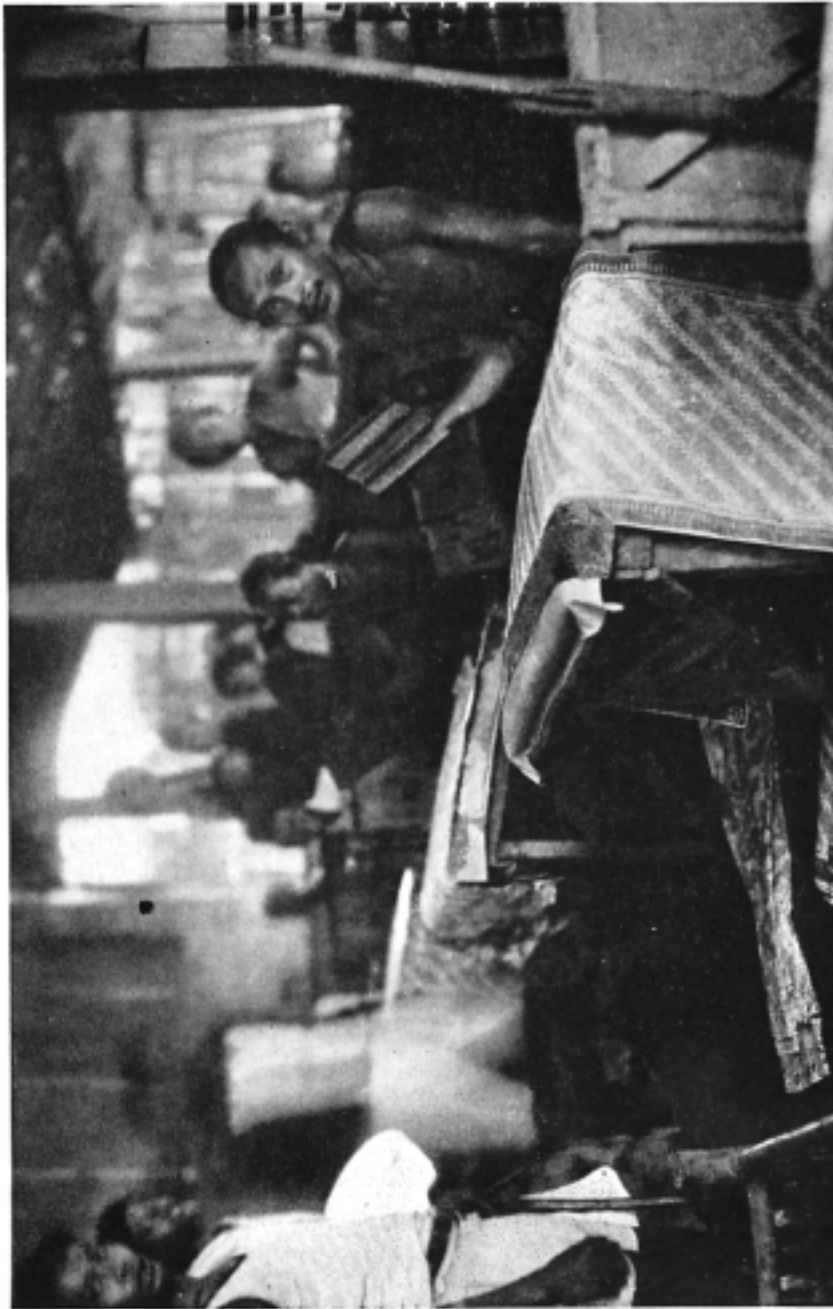


FIG. 42
BATIK BLOCK PRINTING.

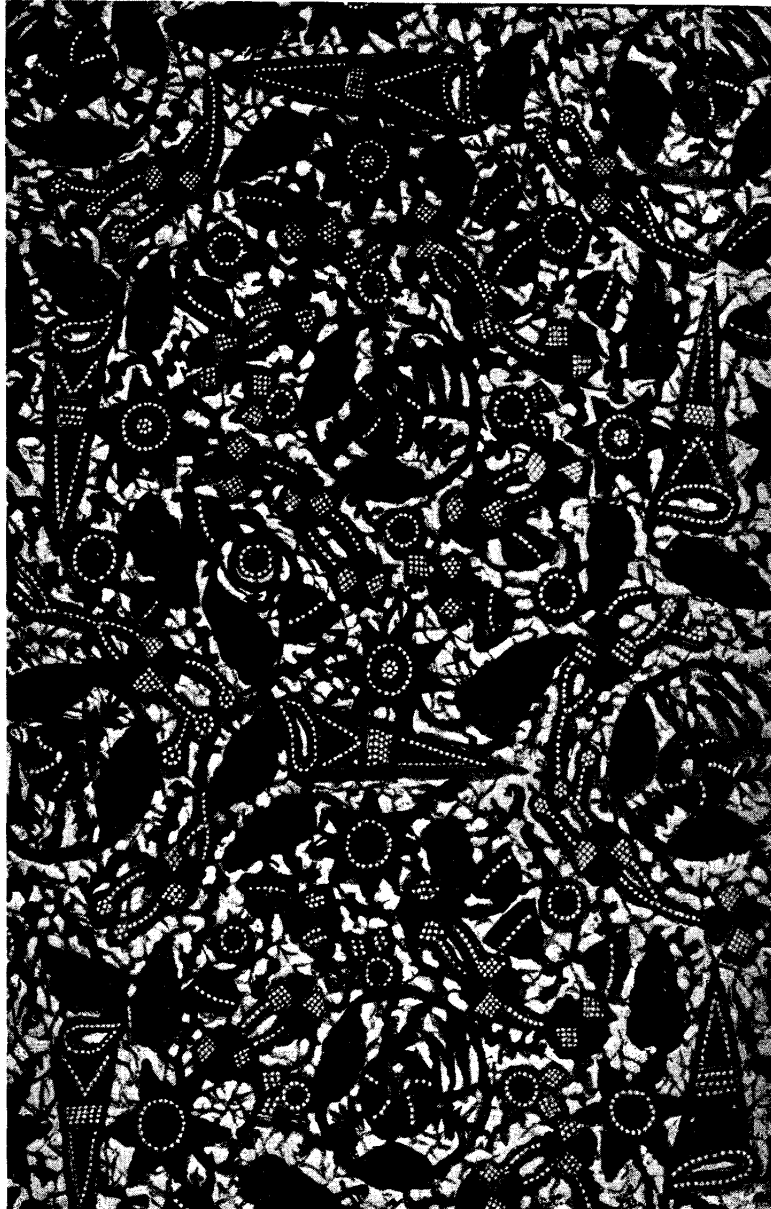


FIG. 43

diligent workmen. No wonder that the natives of Java highly welcomed the block printing introduced there in 1860 or so.

Stencil work was known in British India long before that date. Printing on cotton by means of blocks was highly developed during the fifteenth century in the northwestern district of Gutjarath and Konkan, and a little later in Surat, north of Bombay.

A stenciled batik can scarcely be compared with a genuine hand-painted one. In the first place, the thorough preparation of the cotton, as usually observed with genuine batiks, would not pay for such a quick process of block printing. Secondly, the artistic appearance of a stenciled textile is far inferior to that of a genuine batik, for neither its design nor the dyeing can be executed with as much accuracy as is given to a hand batik.

In the section assigned to the patterns of the batiks, we have seen that certain designs are reserved for the royal family and officials of high rank. Such designs are called *larangans*, the forbidden ones; in other words the people of the lower classes are forbidden to wear batiks of such designs. Most of these *larangans* are too complicated for block printing. On the other hand, a member of the sultan's family or a high official would never wear a so-called *tjap*, a stenciled batik. They would call it an insult to tradition.

Like the original batiks, the *tjaps* have to be printed on both sides. Since cotton is sufficiently transparent, locating of the outlines of the design on the reverse side is not very difficult. The pattern, attached to the wooden block in red copper, cannot be of complicated nature. Mostly *tjaps* are symmetrical and repeating designs. To match the blocks in a way that the textile would not be recognized as a *tjap* is practically impossible. Broken lines, badly keyed blocks, irregularity of the thickness of the lines, dots, and spots, are the striking symptoms of a block printed batik.

Block printing, *i.e.*, manufacture of the *tjaps*, is nowadays a great industry in Java. Centers of batik, like Kotta Gedeh—the ancient sultans, city of the empire Mataram—near Jokjakarta, are changed into markets of *tjaps*.

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* Original photographs, T. Adam.

** Illustrations from J. A. Loebèr: “Das Batikken.” All other illustrations from Jasper J. E., en Mas Pirngadie: “De Batik Kunst.”