

# Representation of *Tenun Gringsing* in Indonesian and Japanese Cultural Diplomacy

Ni Luh Putu Cintya Devi<sup>1</sup>, Putu Ratih Kumala Dewi<sup>2</sup>, Ni Wayan Rainy Priadarsini<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1 2 3</sup>Departemen Hubungan Internasional, Universitas Udayana, Indonesia

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## ARTICLE INFO

Date received: 12 July 2024

Revision date: 02 September 2024

Date published: 01 November 2024

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### Keywords

*cultural diplomacy;*  
*Indonesia;*  
*intangible cultural heritage;*  
*Japan;*  
*representation*

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Correspondence

Email:

[cintyadevi1608@gmail.com](mailto:cintyadevi1608@gmail.com)

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## ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the use of *Tenun Gringsing* as a medium of Indonesian cultural diplomacy in Japan and to describe the representation of friendship between Indonesia and Japan through the use of *Tenun Gringsing*. *Tenun Gringsing* originating from Tenganan Village, Pegringsingan, Karangasem Regency, Bali is a woven fabric with double tie technique which is currently classified as rare and there are only three types of similar fabrics in the world, two of which come from Indonesia and Japan. *Tenun Gringsing* has received significant attention from general public and fashion designer who integrate apply *Gringsing* motifs in their designs as well as at international cultural exchange events. *Tenun Gringsing* involvement in cultural activities, one of which is carried out in Japan, the existence of *Tenun Gringsing* further strengthens its position as an effective instrument of cultural diplomacy in strengthening friendly relations between Indonesia and Japan. The result of the study shows that *Tenun Gringsing* not only functions as a traditional art product, but also as a symbolic of Indonesian cultural identity introduces through various cultural diplomacy activities, such as cultural festivals and workshops in Japan.

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## INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a country with cultural diversity which is marked by UNESCO's recognition of Indonesian's cultural heritage in 2003 which declared a number of Indonesian cultures as Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity (Nursita,2018), and UNESCO also gave Indonesia nickname as a super power country in cultural aspects (Lintangbanun, 2018). Regarding Indonesian's cultural richness, it leads Indonesia to establish diplomatic relations with Japan. Diplomatic relations between Indonesia and Japan have been established for decades, with a significant starting point marked by signing of the Peace Treaty on January 20, 1958, involving the Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Subandrio, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan, Fujiyama Aiichiro (Winardi,2023). Since then, the two countries have not only strengthened cooperation in the economic, political, and security sectors, but also in the social and cultural fields (Laman Khusus Peringatan 60 tahun Indonesia-Jepang,2023)

Indonesia-Japan cultural diplomacy is marked by the involvement of *Tenun Gringsing* as an instrument of cultural diplomacy. In the context of cultural diplomacy, *Tenun Gringsing* is used as a means to introduce and promote Indonesia's cultural richness, which in turn strengthens the relationship between the two countries. Japan is a country that has the same tradition in the form of double ikat weaving, making *Tenun Gringsing* can be used as a symbol of strengthening cultural cooperation. Through cultural exhibitions and diplomatic events, *Tenun Gringsing* not only introduces Indonesia's cultural identity, but also encourages mutually beneficial intercultural dialogue

for both countries (Nursita, 2018). As part of cultural diplomacy, *Tenun Gringsing* serves to strengthen the relationship between Indonesia and Japan within the framework of mutual respect and appreciation for their respective traditions (Antara, 2022).

Reflected in one of the activities carried out in Japan uploaded on an Instagram post @karacitra.id stated that in commemorating 65 years of friendship between Indonesia and Japan, the implementation of cultural exhibitions was chosen as a form of celebration of friendship between Indonesia and Japan. The exhibition, which took place at Wisma Ambassador of The Republic of Indonesia in Tokyo on April 2, 2023, showcased the fabric of the Indonesian archipelago known as *Tenun Gringsing* initiated by the Governor of Bali. With the involvement and history of *Tenun Gringsing*, the traditional art of *Tenun Gringsing* has an increasingly reckoned position in Japan, this is marked by the holding of workshops to show the similarities in the techniques of making *Tenun Gringsing* and Kurume Kasuri fabric. Available information states that art exhibitions, cultural festivals, and workshops featuring *Tenun Gringsing* from Indonesia have gained significant attention, in addition to Gringsing and Kurume Kasuri weaving collections that have been adopted by Japanese fashion designers who have integrated *Tenun Gringsing* motifs in their works into suits, dresses and other clothing (Rahayu, 2022). With the involvement of *Tenun Gringsing* in Japan signifies an increasingly strong and relevant position of *Tenun Gringsing* in Japan, this is also marked by a statement delivered by the educational and cultural attaché (Atdikbud) of the Republic of Indonesia in Tokyo stated that the use of *Tenun Gringsing* in cultural events can be an effective cultural diplomacy effort in Japan (Kemdikbud, 2022). This can strengthen the position of *Tenun Gringsing* as an instrument of cultural diplomacy.

In the context of bilateral relations between Indonesia and Japan, the two countries have made various efforts in deepening cooperation, including in cultural aspects. The involvement of *Tenun Gringsing* in Indonesian and Japanese cultural diplomacy illustrates the increasingly close link of friendship in promoting cultural understanding. The interesting thing is that the similarities between the process of making *Tenun Gringsing* and the traditional Japanese art of weaving, namely Kurume Kasuri from Fukuoka, were exhibited simultaneously at the activity “Indonesia Diversity Festival : A Million Colours” held in Yokohama on July 30, 2022, Heri Akhmad, the Indonesian Ambassador to Japan and Kanasugi Kenji, the Japanese Ambassador to Indonesia, firmly conveyed in the second meeting Kurume Kasuri cloth and *Tenun Gringsing* could strengthen relations between the two countries and it was also stated that art and culture are very important means of diplomacy (Rahayu, 2022).

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative method with a descriptive approach to describe the use of *Tenun Gringsing* in cultural diplomacy between Indonesia and Japan and represents the friendship between Indonesia and Japan. The descriptive approach helps explain Gringsing with his distinctive motives that can represent Indonesian cultural identity and a symbol of friendship between the two countries. In this study using primary data and secondary data. Primary data is collected through official data from the governments of Indonesia and Japan. In collecting data sourced from Indonesia, researchers collected data uses an interview technique with a purposive sampling method to select informants who are relevant to the research objectives (Sugiyono, 2022). In the implementation of interviews, they were conducted in a structured manner with online media through Google Meet with the Chairman of the Karacitra Indonesia Foundation, as well as offline at the Bali Regional Government Office, the Bali Provincial Department of Industry and Trade, and Tenganan Karangasem Village. While secondary data is obtained through literature studies in the form of

journals, previous research, books, news and social media accounts @KBRITOKYO From 2018 to 2023, other non-government sectors such as social media posts @ppiJepang and @karacita.id.

This research refers to the concept of Cultural Diplomacy put forward by Mark (2009) in a book entitled "A Greater Role for Cultural Diplomacy" in analyzing the involvement of *Tenun Gringsing* through the four elements of cultural diplomacy and the application of the three principles of diplomacy implemented in seeing the success in the use of *Tenun Gringsing* as a medium of Indonesian cultural diplomacy in Japan from the book entitled "Council on Promoting of Public Diplomacy" (2005). The Constructivist Approach by Hall (1997) in "Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices" in explaining that culture can be understood through a constructivist approach, where the symbolic meaning of a culture functions as a representation of the country. and the theory of Pitkin Symbol Representation (1972) was used to analyze the role of *Tenun Gringsing* as a symbol that strengthens diplomatic relations between Indonesia and Japan, reflecting the cultural closeness of the two countries. This shows that culture, through its symbolic meaning, plays a role as a representation of the state in building international cooperation.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the implementation of Indonesian cultural diplomacy in Japan, the representation of *Tenun Gringsing* as a cultural instrument is the main focus in this research. This research began in 2018 and lasts until 2023 to better understand the role of *Tenun Gringsing* in Indonesian cultural diplomacy in Japan. The activities carried out during this period aim to introduce the uniqueness of *Tenun Gringsing* as part of Indonesia's cultural heritage. *Tenun Gringsing* not only serves to strengthen local cultural identity, but also as a medium to build dialogue and cultural exchange between Indonesia and Japan. One of the important moments in this cultural diplomacy was the 60th anniversary of Indonesia-Japan diplomatic relations held on November 10, 2018 at the Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia's Guesthouse. In the event entitled "Afternoon Tea Kain Nusantara", *Tenun Gringsing* was exhibited by designer Anna Mariana, who displayed the beauty and deep meaning of traditional Indonesian fabrics (Sriyono, 2018). Continuing on July 30, 2022, the "Indonesian Diversity: A Million Colours" event was held in Yokohama, Japan, as part of a series of cultural festivals that introduced Indonesia's various cultural diversity. This event also invited speakers from Indonesia and Japan who discussed the similarities between *Tenun Gringsing* and Japanese double ikat weaving fabric, Kurume Kasuri. The two woven fabrics are a symbol of the cultural similarities that exist between the two countries (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2022). In 2023, precisely on April 2-3, *Tenun Gringsing* will again be promoted in the "Trade, Tourism, and Investment Bali 2023" event organized by the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Tokyo. This activity involved various groups, including foreign ambassadors, fashion activists, business actors, and the Indonesian diaspora in Japan. Thus, *Tenun Gringsing* continues to be maintained as an important instrument in Indonesian cultural diplomacy, as well as introducing Indonesia's cultural heritage to the international public.

Stated in the book "Pedoman Diplomasi Budaya" by Ministry of Education and Culture (2018), The objectives of cultural diplomacy conducted abroad include:

1. Increase Indonesia's positive reputation at the international level.
2. Increase international community awareness of Indonesia's cultural richness.
3. Increase the influence of Indonesian culture globally through dissemination on the world stage.

4. Increase understanding, cooperation, and good relations with other countries in the field of culture.
5. Gain strong support for Indonesia at international forums to address domestic issues.
6. Strengthen Indonesia's bargaining position in mediating international conflict resolution.
7. Increase opportunities to improve the quality of human resources, especially in the cultural sector.

In cultural cooperation between Indonesia and Japan, one form is through the involvement of *Tenun Gringsing* as Indonesia's cultural heritage promoted in Japan. *Tenun Gringsing* is a tool to convey Indonesian cultural values (Woelandari, 2024). The involvement of *Tenun Gringsing* in cultural diplomacy is not only as a cultural exchange, but also as a form of communication between countries driven by cultural similarities, such as manufacturing techniques and the use of natural dyes, which are similar to the Japanese double ikat weaving, Kurume Kasuri. It reflects the point of cultural similarity and becomes a cornerstone in cooperation and the preservation and promotion of cultural property between the two countries.

Between 2018 and 2023, the involvement of *Tenun Gringsing* in international events in Japan has marked a strong form of cultural diplomacy between Indonesia and Japan. This engagement not only reflects efforts to introduce the richness of Indonesian art and cultural heritage, but also illustrates friendly relations both in the form of cooperation between Indonesia and Japan in strengthening cross-cultural relations. In writing this study, researchers used Mark's theory (2009) in literature entitled "A Greater Role for Cultural Diplomacy". There are four elements of cultural diplomacy that can provide a deep understanding to analyze cultural diplomacy with *Tenun Gringsing* instruments, namely actors and government involvement, objectivities, activities, and audiences.

Starting with the involvement of actors, both government and non-government, in establishing cultural diplomacy between Indonesia and Japan using *Tenun Gringsing*. In 2018, Dharma Wanita Persatuan (DWP) of the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia and the Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia in Japan, Arifin Tasrif became an actor in the government sector who initiated cultural diplomacy activities involving *Tenun Gringsing* through collaboration with the non-government sector at the event "Afternoon Tea Kain Nusantara". In the continuity of the event is a form of collaboration of fashion designers from Indonesia as a speaker, namely Anna Mariana who introduced directly about *Tenun Gringsing* which were demonstrated directly with models from Indonesia and Japan (Manggala, 2018). In 2022, the role of *Tenun Gringsing* in cultural diplomacy deepens with various actors' involvement. The 2022 activity has the title "Indonesia Diversity Festival : A Million Colours" which was spearheaded by the Indonesian Students Association of Japan (PPIJ) with the support of the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Japan. In the event, PPIJ collaborated with the Karacitra Indonesia Foundation which is engaged in cultural resource management which in 2022 introduced *Tenun Gringsing* in Japan (Woelandari 2024). *Tenun Gringsing* was chosen as a result of consideration that Japan also has a cultural heritage of double ikat woven fabric known as Kurume Kasuri. In strengthening the collaboration, the participation of Shimogawa Kasuri Factory led by Kyozo Shimogawa who is a double ikat weaving activist from Japan.

Rise in 2023, the involvement of actors and the government will still take center stage in continuing cultural diplomacy activities using *Tenun Gringsing*. There is a strong commitment from the government and various actors to promote *Tenun Gringsing* as part of Indonesia's cultural identity in Japan. Cultural diplomacy activities carried out in 2023 were initiated by the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Tokyo through an event "Business Forum on Trade, Tourism, and

Investment". The collaboration in the activity involved various parties including the Governor of Bali, the Bali Regional National Handicraft Council, the Bali Provincial Industry and Trade Office, the Tokyo Trade Attaché, ITPC Tokyo, and CSR sponsorship (Corporate Social Responsibility) such as BPD Bank Bali, Perumda Bali, Balimall.id, and Bank Indonesia Bali. There are also local Balinese designers, the Geographical Indication Protection Society, and several IKM representatives involved in it (Redaksi, 2023)

The implementation of cultural diplomacy activities by utilizing *Tenun Gringsing* has a variety of objectives that reflect efforts in promoting, preserving, and strengthening relations between Indonesia and international partners, especially Japan. In each of the activities involving *Tenun Gringsing* such as "Afternoon Tea Kain Nusantara" in 2018, "Diversity Festival of Indonesia: A Million Colours" tahun 2022, and Business Forum on Trade, Tourism, and Investment tahun 2023, has a similar purpose. These goals include providing an understanding to the Japanese people about the richness of Indonesian fabrics, especially *Tenun Gringsing*, as Indonesia's cultural heritage (Hestyarini, 2018). In addition, cultural diplomacy activities using *Tenun Gringsing* as a promotional event in attracting prospective tourists to visit Bali (Nova 2024). The last objective is that the activity also aims to attract Japanese investors to invest in Bali. There is also the purpose of choosing *Tenun Gringsing* as an instrument of cultural diplomacy also based on the fact that *Tenun Gringsing* is one of the superior products from Bali (Woelandari 2024).

Cultural diplomacy using *Tenun Gringsing* from 2018 to 2023 in Japan reflects continuous efforts to strengthen relations between Indonesia and Japan through traditional cultural arts. At the event "Afternoon Tea Kain Nusantara", *Tenun Gringsing* is promoted through fashion shows and in-depth introductions by Indonesian designers, namely Anna Mariana which highlights aspects of its history and manufacturing process. Move on to events "Diversity Festival of Indonesia : A Million Colours" 2022 with a focus on the comparative form of *Gringsing* and *Kasuri* fabrics (Woelandari 2024). In the event Business Forum on Trade, Tourism, and Investment Bali 2023, *Tenun Gringsing* was chosen as a representation of traditional art to attract the attention of Japanese investors and tourists. *Gringsing* cloth is not only exhibited or sold, but also becomes a narrative that reflects the richness of Indonesian culture. The selection of *Tenun Gringsing* is based on its superiority as a superior product from Bali, in accordance with the views of Mr. Gede Nova, Penyuluh Muda Perindag Ahli Muda Bidang Perindustrian DISPERINDAG (Nova,2024).

Every event that integrates *Tenun Gringsing* in Indonesian cultural diplomacy in Japan from 2018 to 2023 has a diverse audience, and achieving audience targets is important. For example, in 2018, "Afternoon Tea Kain Nusantara" attended by representatives from friendly countries, the art community, and other interested parties, with a total of 150 guests including Guatemalan Ambassador Angela Maria Chavez Bietti, Ambassador of the Republic of Costa Rica, Miss International 2017 Kevin Liliana, and several Japanese models (Hestyarini, 2018). Fashion shows were also conducted by Indonesian designers to showcase *Tenun Gringsing*. In 2022, "Diversity Festival of Indonesia: A Million Colours" targeting Indonesian students in Japan as well as Indonesians and Japanese communities in Yokohama, with hybrid events through social media platforms. The opening ceremony was attended by a number of important figures from Indonesia and Japan online and offline (Woelandari, 2024). At the event "Trade Tourism and Investment Bali 2023", The target audience includes Indonesians in Japan, Japanese people, ambassadors from friendly countries in Tokyo, business people, and other visitors. The event was also attended by representatives from 17 countries in commemoration of the 65th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Indonesia and Japan (Nova,2024). With the participation of actors and governments, activities from 2018 to 2023 successfully achieve the targeted goals and audiences. Through a comparison between Indonesian

*Tenun Gringsing* and Japanese Kurume Kasuri in 2022, a common culture is formed that strengthens bilateral relations(Nye, 2004). There was an interview response delivered by the chairman of the Karacitra Indonesia Foundation regarding the implementation of the activity with the audience present at the time of the activity.

“... is indeed the target as present. So because if we are at the Karacitra Indonesia Foundation it is actually because of its focus on cultural resource management and we want to convey things about that culture from the earliest possible age. So when PPI asked us to go there, we welcomed it because the age is definitely 30 and below according to the target market, introducing culture to young people and young people who may have gone to school from Japan. So as to enrich their cultural knowledge, that in their country there is a culture like this. That is still Karacitra Indonesia's main target for young people or for example those young people living outside it would be even better. Then the next target audience is Japanese people who live around the place where we hold seminars, the third is Indonesians who may have lived there for a long time. It was indeed within the target of our audience" (Rere Woelandari, interview January 4, 2024).

### **Principles of Cultural Diplomacy in the Sustainability of Cultural Promotion Activities in Japan**

In the implementation of cultural diplomacy through various cultural activities, it is important to pay attention to each stage of the process that takes place in the destination country. In looking at the principles of diplomacy applied, researchers use references to books “Council on Promoting of Public Diplomacy” (Japan. Urban Renaissance Headquarters, 2005), The first principle of cultural diplomacy, transmissions, shows how a country uses its cultural actors and products to represent its identity abroad. Through various activities involving Indonesian *Tenun Gringsing* in Japan between 2018 to 2023. Cultural diplomacy through cultural activities in Japan from 2018 to 2023 displays various aspects of the principle of dissemination. These include talk shows involving expert speakers on the history and techniques of *Tenun Gringsing*, fashion shows to showcase fashion with *Tenun Gringsing*, cultural performances, tourism and art promotion, comparative fabric workshops between Indonesia and Japan, event documentation and publication, business forums, and Tokyo city tours. Through these activities, Indonesia's cultural message is spread consistently and sustainably, reflecting its commitment to promoting and preserving Indonesia's cultural heritage at the international level.

The principle of acceptance in cultural diplomacy is seen in a series of activities introducing *Tenun Gringsing* in Japan from 2018 to 2023. In 2018, the presence of invited guests, including the Guatemalan Ambassador and other important figures, reflected the positive response to the promotion of Gringsing fabric. Activities such as talk shows, fashion shows, cultural performances, and fabric comparative workshops strengthen Japanese people's understanding of the uniqueness of *Tenun Gringsing*. The positive response from various circles, such as designers and art activists, shows wide acceptance of the fabric. In 2022, the "Indonesia Diversity Festival: A Million Colours" continues to spread culture successfully. Japanese woven fabric activists welcomed the cooperation between Indonesia and Japan in promoting double tie weaving. Similarly, in 2023, Trade Tourism Investment Bali 2023 in Tokyo attracted attention by showing a positive response from the audience. The good acceptance of *Gringsing* cloth reflects the success of cultural diplomacy in building harmonious relations between the two countries. In 2022, Indonesia managed to gain a positive image in Japan through the tourism, social, and cultural sectors. The graph of Indonesia's positive image in 2022 shows an increase in tourist visits, cooperation, cultural cooperation, and an increase in understanding

and appreciation of Indonesia's cultural richness. In the positive image survey, it was found that the tourism, social and cultural sectors play a role in promoting various natural beauty, the uniqueness of Indonesian art and traditions in which there is *Tenun Gringsing* which is used as an art instrument in the event of Indonesian cultural diplomacy in Japan. Thus, there is a survey of Indonesia's image in Japan obtained from the Performance Sheet of the Indonesian Embassy in Tokyo in 2022, stating the form of Indonesia's positive image as follows:

Figure 1. Indonesia Image Survey Graph 2022 (KBRI Tokyo)

Source: Performance Sheet of the Indonesian Embassy in Tokyo in 2022



Based on the graph of the 2022 Indonesian image survey in Tokyo, it is attached that the role of the tourism and socio-cultural sectors from 2020 to 2022 continues to increase in the implementation of Indonesian diplomacy in Japan through a series of activities with cultural titles in it. In 2020, tourism and socio-cultural aspects were at 3.78 points and increased the following year, namely 2021 with a total of 4.12 points, and in 2022 also increased to 4.53 points (KBRI Tokyo, 2022). Based on the survey results obtained, it indicates that the form of acceptance of the Japanese people in the implementation of cultural diplomacy is declared well received in accordance with the survey results which have increased every year starting from 2020 to 2022. Through the results of the Indonesian image survey in Japan from 2020 to 2022, it shows an increase in Japanese people's awareness about Indonesia, especially Bali. The Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia (KBRI) of Japan actively promotes cultures such as Balinese culture including promoting *Gringsing* cloth.

The principle of coexistence in cultural diplomacy is demonstrated through a series of activities aimed at promoting peace through the use of cultural instruments. In 2018, the "Afternoon Tea: Kain Nusantara" event became part of the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Indonesia and Japan, affirming mutual respect for the long history and cooperation between countries. Meanwhile, in 2022, the "Indonesia Diversity: A Million Colors" activity related to the Indonesia-Japan Forestry Investment Dialogues emphasizes the value of Bhinneka Tunggal Ika, illustrating the unity resulting from two countries despite differences in culture. The Trade Tourism and Investment Bali 2023 activity in Tokyo in early 2023 also reflects the principle of coexistence by introducing Bali's superior products to the Japanese people, including *Tenun Gringsing*, as an effort to promote culture without coercion from any party.

### Representation of Friendship between Indonesia and Japan

The meaning of Indonesian and Japanese double ikat weaving reflects the interpretation that has developed in the societies of both countries. *Tenun Gringsing*, as an instrument of Indonesian cultural diplomacy, is seen by the Indonesian people as a symbol of local cultural wealth that contains

deep values. As a cultural representation, *Tenun Gringsing* not only serves to strengthen local identity, but also has an influence in shaping international perceptions of Indonesia. This meaning shows the importance of the role of *Tenun Gringsing* in cultural diplomacy, especially in the context of international relations.

According to Hall (1997), culture has a representation that involves a complex process in conveying the meanings and values contained in it. Cultural representation refers to the way in which culture is represented and interpreted through language or signs. Hall emphasized that any form of representation is not neutral, but rather related to a particular social position and power interests. In this context, culture as a representation forms understanding. The process of cultural representation reflects the interaction between producers and consumers that creates the identities, norms, and values that build the frame of mind. Hall (1997) in the theory of Representation through a constructivist approach states that cultural meaning is an active process that involves interaction between individuals and cultural symbols. According to him, meaning is not attached to objects or symbols, but is formed in social interaction. Cultural meaning is dynamic and develops according to time and social context. This approach places individuals as actors who are actively involved in giving meaning to culture.

In the following description, *Tenun Gringsing* is a form of double ikat weaving that originated in Indonesia, is one of the cultural heritages that carries the meaning of Indonesian representation. The meaning of the representation of *Tenun Gringsing* cannot be separated from the forms of interaction of the actors in it. One form of the meaning of *Tenun Gringsing* that is represented in the international arena is in Japan. The advantages of *Tenun Gringsing* lie in its symbolic function, manufacturing method, and is a rare cultural heritage. The representation picture shows that a media is a form of practice that describes the meaning of an object that creates a certain meaning or meaning. In the context of *Tenun Gringsing*, the focus of representation is not on the quality of the material but on the symbolic function produced. The meaning contained in *Tenun Gringsing* fabric is also as a national identity which is a rare fabric in Indonesia. In the meaning of Indonesian state identity, it can also be a form of representation of the Indonesian state in the international arena. Through the cultural meaning contained in it.

According to one of the sources, namely the chairman of the Tenganan Village Geographical Indication Protection Society, *Tenun Gringsing* can be used as the identity of the Indonesian nation because it has uniqueness and distinctiveness that only exists in Indonesia, even in the world there are only three types. He equated *Gringsing* with the language and flag of the country which is a symbol of the nation's identity. Thus, *Tenun Gringsing* can reflect Bali and Indonesia, as well as the Indonesian language and flag that only the country owns. This identity, according to him, can be used to strengthen Indonesia's cultural image in the international arena.

The results of the interview with the chairman of the Tenganan Village Geographical Indication Protection Society said that exhibitions initiated by MPIG are often held in Japan, which is the country that is most often the location of exhibitions. Cultural diplomacy involving *Tenun Gringsing* is often carried out in Japan, through art exhibitions, workshops, and cultural festivals. From 2018 to 2023, *Tenun Gringsing* has become an important element in various cultural activities representing Indonesia. Exhibition activities involving *Tenun Gringsing* are well documented through photos, mass media publications, and event reports from ministries and news stations. This documentation reflects the meaning of *Tenun Gringsing* through Hall's (1997) representation theory with a constructivist approach.

Likewise, in the activities organized in the Indonesian and Japanese cultural diplomacy event, it provides various information related to Indonesian culture represented in Japan. Indonesian cultural diplomacy activities in Japan basically use the languages that are initiated so that they are easy to understand. There are three languages used from the implementation of each of these activities, namely Indonesian, Japanese and English which were delivered by resource persons from the Bali Provincial Trade and Industry Office. In the implementation of Indonesian cultural diplomacy in Japan, in addition to the use of language, the selection of resource persons is also important to ensure that the audience receives information well. The resource persons involved in cultural promotion activities from 2018 to 2023 varied, such as Anna Mariana in 2018, Chairperson of the Karacitra Indonesia Foundation in 2022, and the collaboration between the Bali Provincial Department of Industry and Trade and the Bali Regional National Crafts Council in 2023. The involvement of actors who understand the culture is very important to convey cultural ideas appropriately. The presence of competent speakers helps provide understanding to the Japanese people and the audience who attend each activity. In the delivery of information about *Tenun Gringsing* in Japan, there was also a statement conveyed on @KBRITokyo Instagram upload through a typed caption, stating that Indonesian and Japanese cultures turned out to have many similarities. There is a similarity in the manufacturing method of one of the Indonesian and Japanese cultures, namely double ikat weaving.

Departing from the cultural similarity of two double-ikat woven fabrics both from Indonesia and Japan, *Tenun Gringsing* is interpreted as a liaison of friendship between Indonesia and Japan at cultural exhibitions held in Japan. A statement by the Indonesian Embassy in Tokyo, Mr. Yusli Wardiatno, at the implementation of one of the cultural exhibition activities in 2022 which said that Indonesian wastra, especially Gringsing, has similarities with traditional Japanese wastra which was discovered about 200 years ago (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2022). In the statement, it is said that the cultural similarity is the double-ikat weaving of Indonesian and Japanese. Through cultural diplomacy activities using *Tenun Gringsing* in Japan, Indonesia can show the cultural similarities between the two countries. In the motifs and designs of *Tenun Gringsing* fabrics, there is a common thread that is considered a connecting rope between Indonesian and Japanese fabrics (Rahayu, 2022). A statement was also conveyed by the Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia to Japan, Mr. Heri Akhmad on the Antaranews news page that the uniqueness reflected in the traditional Indonesian fabric, namely *Tenun Gringsing*, can bridge good friendships between citizens in learning more deeply through their respective experiences because a country's strong relationship comes from the relationships formed between its citizens.

“...in my view, the use of the *Gringsing* double ikat weaving is not only as a symbol of friendship but also as an introduction to the international world that Balinese fabric has uniqueness and distinctiveness, by involving *Gringsing* cloth abroad is also a sign of closer bilateral relations between Indonesia and foreign parties” (Ni Putu Susi Lestari, interview on January 29, 2024).

Based on the interpretation conveyed by the Young Expert Policy Analyst and the Head of the Foreign Cooperation Team at the Government Bureau, Bali Provincial Secretariat, in the interpretation conveyed, it can be seen that *Tenun Gringsing* is a medium that connects two unique cultures originating from Indonesia and Japan in creating a space for dialogue and deepening the understanding of the Japanese people towards the beauty and cultural meaning of Indonesia.

Indonesia and Japan with their cultural wealth make the two countries have a close relationship not only in the scope of the country but also between the people of Indonesia and Japan. This is stated in the meaning of double ikat weaving which is both owned by Indonesia and Japan. This meaning can be seen through the lens of symbolic representation theorized by Pitkin (1967). Both countries apply double ikat weaving as a medium of cultural representation attached to the symbols on the double ikat woven fabric. Each motif and color embedded in the fabric not only produces visual art, but also becomes a symbolic representation of people's values, identity, and beliefs. As in Hanna Pitkin's theory (1967), symbolic representation becomes a form of meaning symbolically influencing the way Indonesian and Japanese people understand the meaning of double-ikat woven fabrics owned by each country.

The meaning of double ikat weaving from Indonesia, especially *Tenun Gringsing*, is an interesting subject of study when analyzed through the lens of the theory of symbolic representation by Pitkin (1967). *Tenun Gringsing* as an Indonesian cultural heritage, encompasses a symbolic dimension that is complex and full of meaning. In Pitkin's (1967) theory of symbolic representation, the analysis will focus on the symbols represented by *Gringsing* carrying meanings based on values, beliefs, and cultural identities. The meaning of *Tenun Gringsing* can be explored through the meaning contained in every pattern or motif of double ikat weaving from Indonesia which is interpreted as a symbolic meaning for Indonesian society and culture. The meaning of *Tenun Gringsing* by the community is a form of strong cultural identity and becomes the country's representation in the international arena in the context of cultural diplomacy. Through the involvement of *Tenun Gringsing* as an instrument of cultural diplomacy, the state can strengthen Indonesia's cultural identity internationally. Cultural representation through *Tenun Gringsing* as a tool of cultural diplomacy not only reflects the richness of local culture, beauty, and expertise, but also becomes an attraction in international relations. The public's positive understanding of representation has the potential to influence the perception of the outside world towards Indonesia. If the community gives a positive meaning to *Tenun Gringsing*, it can improve the country's image as a protector of culture and tradition preservation, as well as strengthen Indonesia's position in the international arena.

The meaning of *Tenun Gringsing* by the community as a form of strong cultural identity and a representation of the state on the international scene in the context of cultural diplomacy. Through the involvement of *Tenun Gringsing* as an instrument of cultural diplomacy, the country can strengthen Indonesia's cultural identity internationally. Cultural representation through *Tenun Gringsing* as a tool of cultural diplomacy not only reflects cultural richness, beauty, and local craftsmanship, but also becomes an attraction in international relations. People's positive understanding of representation has the potential to influence the outside world's perception of Indonesia. If the community gives a positive meaning to *Gringsing* weaving, it can improve the country's image as a protector of culture and preservation of traditions, as well as strengthen Indonesia's position on the international stage. Through the symbolic meaning of *Gringsing* weaving, both Indonesia and Japan strengthen their cultural identities and build strong friendships. Cultural diplomacy, by using *Tenun Gringsing* as a tool, not only strengthens bilateral relations, but also creates a positive image of Indonesia in the eyes of the international community, in line with the concept of diplomacy as a tool to build friendship (Nye, 2004)

## CONCLUSION

The author finds that the *Gringsing* weaving instrument has been used as a medium in Indonesian cultural diplomacy in Japan. The involvement of *Gringsing* weaving in the form of cultural diplomacy is reflected in three activities that took place from 2018 to 2023 in the form of

activities in the form of exhibitions, talk shows, and cultural exchanges held in Japan. The conclusion of this study shows that the involvement of government and non-government actors in Indonesia-Japan cultural diplomacy through *Gringsing* weaving reflects a strong commitment to maintaining the sustainability of Indonesia's cultural heritage. This cultural diplomacy aims to convey cultural messages, exchange knowledge, and strengthen relations between the two countries. Careful socialization of these activities allows the Japanese audience to understand the purpose of the event and appreciate Indonesian culture, which in turn creates cultural coexistence between Indonesia and Japan.

With a constructivist approach, this study found that *Gringsing* weaving has a complex meaning. As an instrument of cultural diplomacy, *Gringsing* weaving serves to strengthen Indonesia's cultural identity and bilateral relations with Japan. *Gringsing* weaving is seen as a symbol of friendship between the two countries, as well as a representation of cultural heritage of high value. In addition, *Gringsing* weaving is also seen as an integral part of Indonesia's cultural identity, which is infused with people's appreciation and pride in the heritage. In this context, *Gringsing* weaving is not only a symbol of identity, but also a means to introduce Indonesia's cultural richness to the outside world. The comparison with Kurume Kasuri, a double-ikat woven fabric from Japan, highlights the similarities and differences in the symbolic value of the two fabrics, and shows the closeness of the cultural relationship between Indonesia and Japan through the preservation of traditional cultural heritage. *Gringsing* weaving is not only a medium in cultural diplomacy, but also a representation of friendship between Indonesia and Japan where both countries have woven fabrics with a double tie technique. *Gringsing* weaving is not only a symbol of national identity, but also a concrete form of cultural heritage, engagement with the community can strengthen bilateral relations and promote cultural wealth on an international scale.

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**First publication right:**

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