

# Concentric Circle Patterns in The Visual Etiket Of Surakarta Laweyan Batik Before 1970

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## Abstract

The Surakarta Laweyan batik *etiket* was born as an effort to gain legitimacy in the community. The actions of these Laweyan batik agents began to appear around the 1930s on the background of social, political, economic and cultural dynamics. Laweyan batik *etiket* emerged with the tendency of concentric circle visual patterns. This pattern is seen in the visual structure of most of the batik *etiket* of Surakarta Laweyan. The concentric circle pattern is a characteristic pattern that is unique to Laweyan batik *etiket*, this is related to the views and thoughts of Javanese society in general. Batik *etiket* is interpreted as a form of actualization of batik producers in their respective regions. Batik *etiket* as a cultural product is not only a personal expression but also a representation of social order. In a broader scope, cultural products become cultural markers in a particular society. The research focused on the tendency of the visual pattern of Laweyan batik *etiket*. The research object is limited to batik *etiket* before the 1970s. The objective of this research is to reveal the meaning of the concentric circle pattern in the visual arrangement of Laweyan batik *etiket* in the pre-1970s. This research is a qualitative research using a cultural approach, referring to the theory (philosophy) of Javanese culture. Data collection techniques used are documentation, in-depth interviews and sampling techniques. The analysis technique used is a qualitative data analysis interaction model using a Javanese cultural approach. The result of this research is a pattern of concentric circles reminiscent of the spatial pattern of the Mataram era. This pattern is similar in shape to the Mandala concept in the Hindu cosmological system.

**Keywords:** concentric circles, batik *etiket*, Surakarta Laweyan

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## INTRODUCTION

This research is focused on the research of the tendency of concentric circle patterns in the visual arrangement of Laweyan batik *etiket*. The tendency of concentric circle patterns in the visual arrangement of Surakarta Laweyan batik *etiket* is evident in its visual structure. An *etiket* is a form of visual branding which is commonly known as a product stamp. Initially, batik *etiket* was used as a differentiator for similar products, but in later developments, batik *etiket* also played a role as a means of contestation in the arena of batik to gain legitimacy. Based on the artefacts found, the Surakarta Laweyan batik *etiket* has existed since the 19th century, but the use of *etiket* began to be prevalent in the early 20th century. Batik products in the Surakarta Laweyan area began to be mass-produced after the widespread use of chemical dyes and stamp techniques in the post-independence era. that is, around the 1950s to the 1970s.

The discussion on the tendency of concentric circle patterns in the visual arrangement of Laweyan batik *etiket* in the period before 1970 is interesting to do, considering that during that time there was a change in the orientation of the batik industry map in Surakarta. Researchers are interested in conducting this research because they want to reveal the other side of *etiket* which is influenced by socio-cultural backgrounds. Previous researches only described visual structures in terms of design. This research is important because *etiket* is not only a function of product identity for marketing purposes but also as a cultural product as well as a cultural marker in a certain area.

Various indigenous batik *etiket* (Laweyan) emerged, triggered by several things including

1) the disappearance of the Chinese license. The dominance of Chinese descendants (Tionghoa) began to weaken in the post-1940s as a result of the arrival of Japan to Indonesia. So that there arose the desire of the natives to take over the batik sector, which resulted in the rise of batik *etiket* with local characters; 2) the abundance of batik products with stamp techniques and the use of chemical dyes. Laweyan grew up in the batik culture of women because it was driven by *mbok mase* as the main driver in batik business management. During the 1970s there was a massive decline in turnover due to the abundance of Chinese batik printing products whose selling prices were much cheaper because the production costs were also very cheap. This has an impact on decreasing the productivity of batik *etiket*.

The trend of forms that occurred in the visual arrangement of Laweyan batik *etiket* before the 1970s was strongly influenced by printing technology. Other influences that come along are economic, social, cultural influences as well as special considerations from the *etiket* designer about the beauty of form. In general, batik *etiket* is produced using a hand press machine, but *etiket* artefacts are cultural products that are deliberately created for identity needs and their relationship with obtaining economic capital. *Etiket* is designed based on the wishes of the business owner. In this case, the agent with the habitus that exists in himself seeks to create a product identity. In the design process, it is sometimes carried out through contemplation. This means that in the process of creation, it is not just creating meaningless, even though visually it is very simple. As said by Gunawan Setyawan (batik entrepreneur) that batik *etiket* is designed from generation to generation by the business owner (agent) him/herself, but some of those who cannot design *etiket*, both the design and mass production of *etiket* are handed over to the printing company even though they are conceptual is still done by business owners. Meanwhile, matters related to trademark registration or what is known as *gedeponeerd* (saved) are often handled by printers (Setyawan, interview, 19 January 2020).

The *etiket* of the period before the 1970s experienced a tendency towards similarity of form. One of the influencing factors was the development of technology at that time. In general, the form of batik *etiket* before the 1970s only revolved around geometric shapes such as wavy circles, circles without waves, wavy ellipses, ellipses, ellipses without waves, rectangles, squares, triangles and non-geometric shapes (variants of ellipse shape). The form of batik *etiket* is important to ponder and think about because the form is also closely related to the *etiket* maker's vision and mission. The form and elements in *etiket* constitute a unity that has a function and meaning. As stated by Irawanto, the Javanese can make something abstract clear and easy to understand, namely through symbols that are often represented through certain media. While the vision and mission of the *etiket* maker are manifested in the form of images or symbols (Irawanto, interview, 1 August 2020).

## OBJECTIVE

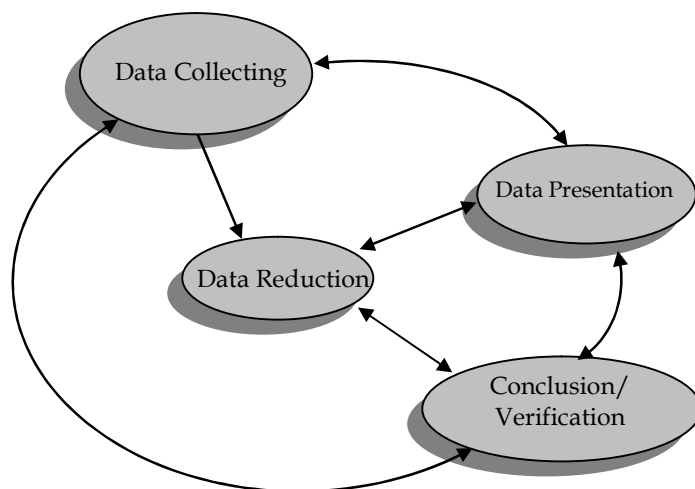
This reserach aims to reveal the meaning of the concentric circle pattern in the visual arrangement of Laweyan batik *etiket* in the pre-1970s. Of the various artefacts of Laweyan batik *etiket* in the form of circles, ellipses and variant forms of ellipses, there is a tendency for the pattern to be similar, namely concentric circles. Concentric circles in the Javanese concept have certain meanings that need to be researched more deeply because batik *etiket* is one of the cultural products that have regional characteristics.

## METHOD

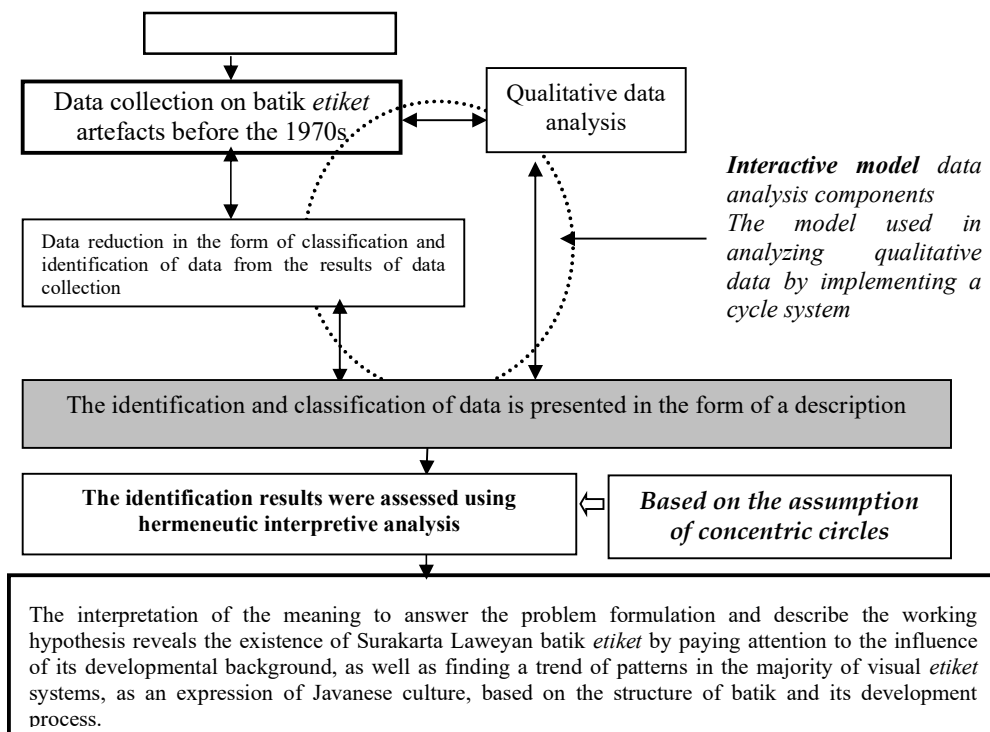
This research was conducted through qualitative research using a cultural approach, referring to the theory (philosophy) of Javanese culture. This approach emphasizes the interpretation of data in case specifics (Denzin & Lincoln, 2009: 525). The research scope is limited to the problem of the tendency of the visual pattern of batik *etiket*. The object of research was limited to batik *etiket* before the 1970s, because the batik *etiket* that appeared in that year was no longer fully Chinese (1930), but was a production of indigenous batik artists assisted by the existence of GKBI Cooperative of Surakarta (after the independence era in 1950). The research area is focused on Laweyan because before 1970 Laweyan was a centre for batik making.

This research utilizes data sources in the form of 1) literature study, to obtain data on ethical risert results; 2) documents in the form of Laweyan batik *etiket* artefacts; 3) resource persons consisting of (1) batik observers, (2) cultural observers, (3) historians. By the form of research and the type of data source used, the data collection techniques used are documentation, in-depth interviews, sampling techniques, namely data collection techniques carried out selectively on resource persons by using considerations based on the theoretical concepts used. The sampling

technique used in this research is more purposive (snowball). The analysis technique used is a qualitative data analysis interaction model using a Javanese cultural approach because it is related to the concept of concentric circles. Interaction analysis is carried out to analyze qualitative data from empirical data collection to obtain accurate results from sorting by classification and identification.



**Diagram 1.:** Interactive analysis of qualitative data. The model used in analyzing qualitative data by applying a cycle system, meaning that researchers are always moving and exploring their objects during the process (Rohidi 1992: 19-20).



**Diagram 2.:** The analysis steps from the results of data analysis are the results of data collection (data validity with the triangulation model), then studied with hermeneutic

### interpretive analysis.

The interactive results of the analysis were then studied with hermeneutic interpretive analysis. Hermeneutics leads to the interpretation of expressions that are meaningful and carried out deliberately by humans. Interpreting the interpretations that have been made by individuals or groups of humans to their situations. Every event or artwork has a meaning from the interpretation of the actors or creators. The artwork which is the result of the interpretation then faces the reader or observer and is captured by interpretation as well. The interpretation of hermeneutic analysis will be faced with various works which are the result of visualization of the artist's or artworker's interpretation. In hermeneutic analysis, the researcher interprets the artwork as if the artwork was recreated as a new meaning, by the cultural theory used (Sutopo 1996: 29). Hermeneutics raises the problem of how to arrive at what is expressed. Therefore, hermeneutics is formulated as a theory of understanding operations concerning the interpretation of culture as a text. Interpretation is affirmed as the distinction of something meaning hidden in the visible meaning. The task of hermeneutics is to recognize the text or the world of the text or the reality which is spoken by the text and not the spirit of the creator (Poespoprodjo 1991: 117-118).

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Mutaqqin (2011), in his thesis entitled "*Dinamika Etiket Batik di Kauman Surakarta tahun 1950 - 1970* (The Dynamics of Batik *Etiket* in Surakarta Kauman, 1950 - 1970)", highlights three main problems related to batik *etiket*. Batik *etiket* is the initial form in the *etiket* concept in the advertising and promotion system, namely about the existence of Kauman Batik, the dynamics of batik *etiket* in Kauman and the visualization of batik *etiket* in Kauman. In its findings, Mutaqqin concluded that the emergence of batik business in Kauman Surakarta was due to the increasing need for fabric as raw material for *batik tulis* (drawn batik), as a result of which fostered an entrepreneurial climate among the wives of the *Pamethakan* servants. The growth of this climate has an impact on increasing the standard of living of the community's economy, which in turn increases the number of batik entrepreneurs in Kauman. The existence of new innovations in the field of batiks such as the stamp technique affected the development of Kauman village as one of the batik centres in Surakarta and Kauman became the oldest batik centre in the city.

The next finding is explained that there was a dynamic of batik *etiket* in Kauman starting from the 1950s to - 1970s. At that time, the initial appearance of *etiket* was allegedly adopted from imported cambric fabric, which is the raw material for *batik tulis*. From the various *etiket* of the cambric fabric, Kauman batik tags were adopted as the batik labels on their products. However, Mutaqqin said that not all batik uses *etiket*, but only printed batik uses *etiket* as product identity. As for *batik tulis*, the batik community in Kauman uses *seret* (drag). During that time, there was often an imitation of *etiket* forms and designs among the surrounding community, both among their closest family, relatives and neighbours. Meanwhile, the printing centre that is used as the centre for the printing of Kauman batik etiquette is the Lie Kam Hong printing company.

The third finding is related to the problem of the visual form of batik *etiket* in Surakarta Kauman, Mutaqqin uses the basic principles of design to perform the analysis. In his research, Mutaqqin concluded that the visual form of batik *etiket* in Surakarta Kauman has fulfilled several design principles. Among other things, Kauman batik *etiket* generally uses geometric and non-geometric *etiket* strips, but Kauman batik *etiket* is dominated by non-geometric strips. The colours used in the *etiket* are a maximum of 3 colours consisting of primary colours, secondary colours and tertiary colours. The value in the *etiket* consists of two, namely the value tone (medium) and the value shade (dark) and for colour intensity, namely chromatic colour and bright colour (brightness). The texture of the majority of batik *etiket* is coarse mechanical pseudo-texture. The fonts used are generally serif and sans-serif types. Not all *etiket* include a brand. Some of them only display logos or illustrations. In Kauman batik *etiket*, not all Kauman batik *etiket* use rhythm as an effort to display the visual dynamism of the design, achieving majority balance is dominated by centre-average symmetrical balance and reversed looping. Emphasis on the centre of attention is placed on the centre of *etiket* (centre). Unity is obtained through harmony (harmonization) on the elements of colour and proportion is achieved through a comparison of the use of space.

The research that Mutaqqin has carried out has not studied in depth the *etiket* of Kauman batik, because it only describes it from the historical and visual aspects without concerning the meaning and function, and the role of *etiket* in the cultural process. Mutaqqin does not sharply reveal the existence of *etiket*, which its appearance is very much influenced by socio-cultural and

political conditions. These researches also have not linked the tendency of the visual structure of batik *etiket* with the socio-cultural and political influences behind its appearance.

Winarko and Bajraghosa (2014), in their book entitled "*Etiket Batik dan Tenun 1930 – 1990 (Yogyakarta, Solo, Pekalongan dan Cirebon)* (Batik *Etiket* and Weaving 1930 - 1990 (Yogyakarta, Solo, Pekalongan and Cirebon))". They highlighted batik *etiket* and weaving both in terms of form and function. Based on their findings, Winarko and Bajraghosa concluded that batik *etiket* in the years 1930 - 1990 had a tendency that *etiket* not only functioned as a label but also contained elements of a brand and logo. In terms of form, *etiket* generally contains elements such as brand names, visualized images of brand names, information on types of fabrics, other information such as type of business, factory location, name of business owner. Other elements include persuasive slogans or taglines and images that often appear are photos of the owner, factory photos, frames, motifs and ornaments. There is an attempt to appear a slogan or tagline, allegedly due to strong competition among batik producers. Thus, *etiket* not only serves as an identity but also serves as an advertisement.

Visual structure Batik etiquette is generally composed of visual elements such as format, text, illustrations, colours and layout. The most common basic forms of formatting include squares, circles and ellipses. Furthermore, Winarko and Bajraghosa explained that the illustrations in *Etiket* are generally in the form of a single image, which is a visualization of an iconic brand. The image shown is a representation of the brand name and serves to convey information. The image displayed is the same as the brand name to make it easier to identify the brand and make it easier for people who are not literate. Illustrations depicting brand names dominate more than illustrations that have a symbolic relationship with their brand.

The next finding explained that the colours used in the *etiket* generally use cold to hot colours, while the *etiket* that use only one colour are often maintained to form the configuration. In *etiket* that use more than one colour, the use is attempted to achieve harmony. The *etiket* composition generally chooses a centre-aligned symmetrical composition. The main image is placed centrally, flanked by text.

This book, written by Winarko and Bajraghosa, tends to only emphasize visual structure. However, from the results of their research, they have presented many examples of *etiket* and have shown that there is a tendency for firms to add information needed for related research.

## DISCUSSION

### A. Background to the emergence of Batik *Etiket*

Batik *etiket* is a form of visual branding. Visual branding is all activities related to the importance of identity and promotion of a brand by using visual elements such as images, visual elements or visual arrangements (McQuarrie and Phillips, 2016: 6). In the arena of batik, the use of batik *etiket* began to be known by indigenous entrepreneurs when the influence of Chinese traders began to diminish in the 1930s. In the previous era, indigenous batik products were sold without *etiket* to Chinese<sup>1</sup> entrepreneurs.

Based on existing artefacts, since the 1930s Laweyan batik has been using *etiket*. *Etiket* comes from the Dutch language, derived from the word *etiquette* (French) which means a piece of paper that is attached or affixed to a batik fabric that contains graphic elements including name, image, text, colour and so on about the product. *Etiket* is more commonly known by the term "label", emblem or sticker. The age of *etiket* for batik product brands is shorter than that of weaving (Hermanu, 2014: 15-16). From the structure of the shape, the *etiket* is in the form of a small piece of paper with a variety of shapes, sizes, colours, pictures, writing as a trademark (brand) of the batik or woven product that is affixed. *Etiket* is usually attached or affixed to the top of the fold of the batik fabric as a representative of the batik motif as a whole. The *etiket* or label functions as a temporary identity marker. Because the *etiket* attached to the batik fabric will be released when the batik fabric will be used. The following is an example of Laweyan batik *etiket* that was created in

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<sup>1</sup> The influence of Chinese entrepreneurs on Surakarta batik in the early 20th century was driven by the policy of the Dutch colonial government which prioritized Chinese entrepreneurs over the natives. The factors that encourage Chinese entrepreneurs to be more successful compared to indigenous entrepreneurs are the ability to connect with local rulers and Chinese entrepreneurs master the raw materials and batik chemicals as well as the batik trade outside Surakarta and Central Java and have strong capital with credit networks, distribution of goods for middlemen and retailers, and able to enter the capital in the batik production process (Sariyatun. 2001. *Usaha batik masyarakat Cina di Surakarta tahun 1900-1930* (Chinese community batik business in Surakarta 1900-1930). Thesis: UGM)



the 1930s:



**Picture 1.:** Laweyan Batik *Etiket*  
(Photo: Sayekti, the 1930s).

Batik *etiket* has developed in Laweyan since the 1930s. In the past, Laweyan batik products were clothing commodities controlled by Chinese merchants, while the natives were only craftsmen or production labourers who were not involved in access to the sales system. Traders of Chinese descent have controlled the batik trade sector in Laweyan since the early 20th century<sup>1</sup>. In subsequent developments, Laweyan became a batik centre in Surakarta, where previously Laweyan was only a village providing *lawe* and fabric for batik makers. *Lawe* is a term used to describe yarn as the basic material for making batik fabric<sup>2</sup>.

The existence of indigenous batik makers began to dare to participate in the batik arena after the establishment of an organization that overshadowed the indigenous batik. This organization is in the form of a batik cooperative owned by the indigenous people and consists mostly of indigenous batik entrepreneurs. One of the goals of the formation of this organization is as a media union to fight against foreign domination. The organization is called the *Serikat Dagang Islam* (Islamic Trade Union) which was founded in 1911. The *Serikat Dagang Islam* is one of the first trading organizations with Islamic nuances. The members of the *Serikat Dagang Islam* were dominated by batik traders from Surakarta Laweyan. The founder of *Serikat Dagang Islam* is Kyai Haji Samanhudi. He got the ideas of enlightenment and the awakening of Islam while living in the Middle East<sup>3</sup>. Non-structural ideas of resistance can be carried out by weakening the economic domination controlled by the colonialists and Chinese traders. Indigenous merchants were taught the concept of faith. In the teachings given by the *Serikat Dagang Islam*, it is manifested in 2 forms of action, namely: 1) eliminating weakness; 2) eliminating inferiority complex.

## **B. Aspects of Laweyan Batik *Etiket* Forms**

The forms adopted by Laweyan batik *etiket* before the 1970s are geometric and non-geometric shapes. The geometric shapes adopted include circles, ellipses, rectangles, squares and triangles, while the majority of non-geometric shapes are stylized from elliptical

<sup>1</sup> The dominance of Chinese ethnicity began when the Solo City underwent a modernization phase during the reign of Pakubuwono X (1893-1939). The modernization of the city encouraged data immigrants to Surakarta. Chinese ethnic groups occupied the central area of the city. (Benny Juwono. 1999. *Etnis Cina Di Surakarta 1890-1927* (Ethnic Chinese in Surakarta 1890 -1927): *Tinjauan Sosial Ekonomi. Jurnal: Lembaran Sejarah* (Socio-Economic Review. Journal: Historical Gazette), pp. 59-60

<sup>2</sup> Laweyan Village grew as a model for a village against the domination of *priyayi pria* (noble man). In its development, Laweyan Village is dominated by women entrepreneurs, known as *mbok Mase*. (Tri Wahyono's task. 2014. *Perempuan Laweyan Dalam Industri Batik Di Surakarta*. Yogyakarta: Balai Pelestarian Nilai Budaya Yogyakarta (Laweyan Women in the Batik Industry in Surakarta. Yogyakarta: Yogyakarta Cultural Values Conservation Center)). P. 43

<sup>3</sup> KH Samanhudi is a prominent Surakarta batik trader, who in his movement used his trade network to develop the *Sarikat Dagang Islam* organization. KH Samanhudi's enlightenment ideas were obtained when he stayed in Mecca. The Islamic reform movement in the Middle East, led by Muh Abduh, Syeh Rasyid Ridha and also the Syalafiah movement influenced KH Samanhudi's view to oppose the economic domination of colonialists and foreigners (Mulyono, Sutrisno Kuntoyo. 1979. Haji Samanhudi. Jakarta: Ministry of Education and Culture, Center for Historical and Cultural Research, National Historical Documentation and Inventory Project)

geometric shapes. At that time, the form of Laweyan batik *etiket* was dominated by circles, ellipses, rectangles and non-geometric shapes that were stylized from ellipses. The tendency of batik *etiket* creators to choose forms is due to a growing trend among batik producers during that period (Priyatmono, interview, 17 December 2020).

*Etiket* that has a concentric circle pattern is found in various artefacts of Surakarta Laweyan batik *etiket* before the 1970s, such as the following example;



Picture 2.: The pattern of concentric circles in Laweyan batik *etiket* (Photo: Sayekti, 2020).

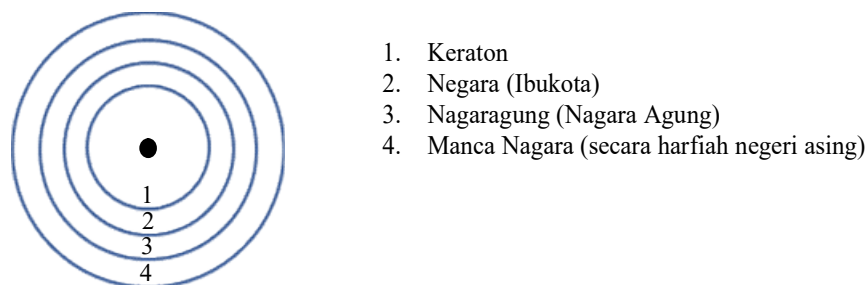
### C. Concentric Circle Pattern

The circle shape is closely related to the Javanese concept. The Javanese have beliefs based on the Javanese world view, namely the overall Javanese descriptive belief about the reality of a unity in humans that provides a meaningful structure to their experiences<sup>1</sup>. In this case, Magnis Suseno divided the Javanese world view related to Divine or *Adikodrati* into four elements. The four views include: 1) The unity of the numinous and divine. Numinous comes from the word *numen* which means divine light or *Adikodrati* (supernatural light). The meaning of Numinous unity is a state of mind which can connect reality with supernatural symptoms experienced with feelings of mystery, admiration, fear and love. The first element is the numinous unity between nature, society and the supernatural. This can be exemplified by the life of farmers, where farmers work with alternating natural rhythms such as the change of day and night, the alternation between the rainy season and the dry season which largely determines their agricultural output. Besides the existence of a real natural circulation, some Javanese also believe in a supernatural power capable of controlling nature, this power appears when a disaster occurs; 2) The element of numinous unity with power. This element of unity in Javanese understanding, power is an expression of divine energy that is formless, that is, a power that is everywhere, and the centre of that power is in the king. It is known that the concept of the Javanese kingdom was a concentric circle surrounding the Sultan as its centre. Where in this circle, the closest environment to the sultan is the palace. Whereas in the second circle that surrounds the palace is the state capital, and the third neighbourhood is occupied by *Negaragung* which means big capital. Furthermore, the last circle is foreign or foreign countries<sup>2</sup>; 3) The basic element of numinous ego. The human ego is one with a divine basis is where he comes from, therefore the Javanese throughout their life will try to find the divine basis, namely the effort to find their reality. This is implied in the term *manunggaling kawulo lan gusti* or in other terms looking for *sangkan paraning dumadi*. This means that a human experience among the Javanese people in searching for the divine basis of their ego is then formed into a sense, namely an understanding of the origin and purpose of life of all living things. In Javanese society, for the peasants the sense of feeling is a state of mind that is calm, free from threats or chaos; 4) The element of belief or awareness of destiny, namely the awareness that human life has been determined and cannot be avoided. Human fate regarding life or death, bad or good luck, health or having a disease is a fate that cannot be fought. Opposing fate will only disrupt the harmony of the cosmos. For Javanese people, each individual has their special place with their predestined life. The place has been determined through the incidence of birth, position and geographical environment. In his life, humans must fulfil these special life obligations according to their respective places, this will prevent conflicts. Humans who

<sup>1</sup> Suseno, M.F. 1984. *Etika Jawa Sebuah Analisa Falsafi tentang Kebijakan Hidup Orang Jawa (Javanese Ethics, A Philosophical Analysis of Javanese Life Wisdom)*. Jakarta: PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama.

<sup>2</sup> Selosumarjan. 1962. *Social changes in Yogyakarta*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

have occupied their respective places, have their destinies and carry out their respective obligations will also achieve inner peace and balance of life in society and the cosmos. The concept of harmony, balance and tranquillity is an illustration as a concept that reflects the Javanese attitude towards the world. Therefore, humans are obliged to beautify the world to maintain harmony in their lives<sup>1</sup>; In terms of visual structure, it appears the tendency of Surakarta Laweyan's batik *etiket*, the majority to use a concentric circle pattern. The tendencies and customs in choosing the shape of a concentrated circle form a pattern similar to that of the concentric circles in the Javanese royal system and the sultan being the centre. This is known from the various artefacts found in Laweyan batik *etiket* before the 1970s. The shape patterns used in the visualization of Laweyan batik *etiket* tend to be concentrated. If it is related to the concept of the concentric circle of the Javanese kingdom, there is a similarity in the pattern of batik *etiket*. An illustration is the centre or core of the *etiket* visualization that contains form, function and meaning, while on the outside the centre is sequentially surrounded by-product information and decorations or frames. The tendency of forms that contain local characters in batik *etiket* is closely related to the views and thoughts of the people at that time. Concentric circle shapes are represented in the visual patterns and *etiket* of Surakarta Laweyan's batik. Like a concentric circle that describes the symbolism of an arrangement of the Mahameru mountains (universe) which is the centre of the universe as well as strength and power. The arrangement in concentric circles depicts that the Sultan is the centre, while on the outside it is surrounded sequentially by the *Keraton*, *Negara*, *Negara Agung*, *Manca Negara* and *Samudra Raya*, as illustrated below.



**Picture 3.:** Diagram of four concentric circles of the Javanese kingdom according to Selo Sumarjan, 1962 in Lukito Kartono, 2005: 1.

Judging from its shape, the appearance of Surakarta Laweyan batik *etiket* has several distinctive visual patterns. It appears that the visual pattern that dominates the appearance of batik *etiket* is a centred pattern, like the concentric circle pattern of the Javanese kingdom, this pattern places the head of the image in the middle of the composition. The centred pattern is reminiscent of the mandala pattern in concentric circles of Javanese kingdoms<sup>2</sup>.

Concentric circles form a pattern, namely a central arrangement. This pattern has a core that is located in the middle as the centre. In this case, the concentric pattern is a pattern that divides the territorial zones based on the consideration of the composition of spirituality. Thus, in its composition, it puts the core in a central or centre position and is surrounded by balancing elements that are around it. The balancing element is an important aspect but its position is outside the core.

The concentric circle pattern can be seen in the spatial pattern around the Mataram palace. Judging from the spatial and architectural patterns of the Mataram palace, it shows a tendency to have a concentric circle pattern. In its arrangement, the core pattern is placed at the centre because it is the determining part and is the main part in a visual arrangement. This kind of middle pattern is always offset by a border pattern that surrounds the middle pattern where the edge pattern serves as a counterweight. This concept of concentric circles is the basis for visual arrangements in Java. The concept of concentric circles is also found in the majority of batik *etiket* visual arrangements that use geometric circles or ellipses.

<sup>1</sup> Selo Sumarjan. 1962. *Social changes in Yogyakarta*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

<sup>2</sup> Lombard, Denys. 2005. *Nusa Jawa: Warisan kerajaan-kerajaan konsentris*. Jakarta: Gramedia



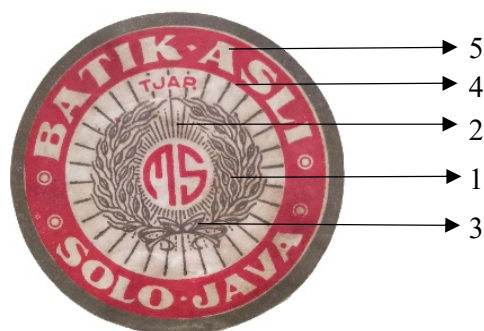
Concentric circles in terms of visual structure, composed of a circle that connects the centre and its surroundings in a constellation of power. In other words, concentric circles represent a structure of the level of importance of the central power to the surrounding areas. In this pattern, it is illustrated that the power spreads centrifugally and places the core at the centre or in the middle of the circle, this shows that it is the centre of power while the area around the core of the power is subordinative.

The structure of the Mataram palace shows a concentric circle concept that places foreign regions as the outermost region and nagara (capital city) as the deepest region. Thus, the concept of concentric circles in Javanese power places power in a stratified structure. Therefore, this level of power shows a pattern of distribution of power based on the level of closeness to the centre of power. As with the concentric theory of Burgess' analysis, cities develop themselves by starting from the centre which then gradually spreads to the periphery areas leading outward. Or it can be said that the city develops from the centre then develops into a concentric zone gradually<sup>1</sup>. In the concept of concentric circles, the area outside the core functions as a balancing region, this is intended to maintain core stabilization. In Java, the concept of concentric circles can be found not only in urban planning structures, house buildings and batik decorations but also in the structural arrangements in batik *etiket*. This was possible because the Javanese custom always placed the nucleus in the middle of the structure, while the complementary elements were around the centre. As is the composition found in the majority of batik *etiket* structures that place the main illustration at the core of the structure and are surrounded by accompanying elements around it. As the following form of *etiket*:



**Picture 4.:** Laweyan batik etiquette in the form of circles and ellipses showing concentric circle patterns. (Photo: Sayekti, 2020)

<sup>1</sup> Burges in Juhadi, et al. 2018. *The Jabodetabek Urban Sprawl Phenomenon*. Semarang: Fastindo. P. 5



1. The initials "MS" (main illustration) as the brand is at the centre or core
2. Decoration as an accompaniment element occupies the first outer position
3. Decoration as an accompaniment element occupies a second outer position
4. Decorations in the form of geometric shapes (lines) as accompaniment elements occupy the third outer position
5. Text as an accompaniment and complementary element occupies the fourth outer position

**Picture 5.:** Visual Laweyan batik *etiket* branding in the form of a circle showing a concentric circle pattern (Photo: Sayekti, 2020).

The artefact of Laweyan batik *etiket* above shows a concentric circle pattern that resembles a constellation of power structures in Java. The concentric circle patterns in batik *etiket* are related to the socio-cultural background of the batik community in Surakarta Laweyan. The Laweyan people live around the palace, not far from the influence of the Surakarta palace's power so that they influence the patterns that are formed in society. Like the Mataram Kingdom which has a concentric circle concept, in the Mataram royal buildings, there is a spatial division pattern<sup>1</sup>. This pattern divided the sphere of the kingdom in circular patterns that were tiered or stratified. It can be said that this pattern can be likened to the pattern of division of regions in the *mancapat* system. Where the *mancapat* system is a zoning system that places the axis in the middle and is surrounded by other parts that follow the cardinal pattern. This *mancapat* system can also be found in rural areas. One village is the centre and is surrounded by four other villages<sup>2</sup>.

The concept of *mancapat* is one of the concentric circle patterns associated with the concept of mandalas in Hinduism. The concept of Mandala refers to personal expression and spiritual transformation. The term mandala in Sanskrit can be interpreted as a circle that represents a diagram of the cosmos in Tibetan beliefs, a form of ritual in ancient American beliefs, as well as a labyrinth in a cathedral church that functions as a meditation hall<sup>3</sup>. The concept of the mandala in its development is more widely used in Buddhist and Hindu religious symbols and always has a centred pattern.

The same pattern can also be found in temple building structures such as the example of the Borobudur temple. The structure of the temple building has a centred pattern, which places the main temple in the centre or the middle of the building. While the supporting temple buildings are around the main temple. The main stupa is placed in the middle of the

<sup>1</sup> According to the Javanese view of life, the palace acts as a centre for the universe and a source of culture with cosmic, concentric and circular concepts, as well as being the centre of orientation for the life of the Javanese people (Yosodipuro, 1994).

<sup>2</sup> Lutfi, Ahmad Nashih and Mohamad Shohibuddin. 2009. *Local Land Reform a la Ngandagan: Innovation of Customary Tenure Systems in a Javanese Village, 1947-1964*. Jakarta: Sajogyo Institute, National Land College

<sup>3</sup> Cunningham, Bailey. 2003. *Mandala: Journey to the Center (Whole Way Library)* Paperback

temple building. A centred pattern such as the Borobudur temple building is closely related to the concept of the mandala in Hinduism. Concentric patterns are also found in the architectural layout of the Plaosan and Sewu temples. Plaosan Temple is the main building and the accompanying temple buildings are located around the main temple in a surrounding position.

## CONCLUSION

Batik *etiket* is a manifestation of the existence of a certain product. *Etiket* is designed as a medium that instils a positive image and positions the product in its supporting society. Batik *etiket* in Surakarta Laweyan shows distinctive patterns, namely, there is a tendency for concentric circle patterns. The concentric circle pattern is centred in one composition. The central or core part is placed in the middle position and the supporting part is in a position around the core. The concentric circle pattern is reminiscent of the spatial pattern of the Mataram era. This pattern is similar in shape to the Mandala concept in the Hindu cosmological system.

This research is the starting point for uncovering the concentric circle pattern in the visual arrangement of Surakarta Laweyan batik *etiket*. The research that has been conducted has found patterns reminiscent of the spatial patterns of the Mataram era. This pattern is similar in shape to the Mandala concept in the Hindu cosmological system. These findings are intended to increase literacy in the design of cultural products with regional characteristics. The findings of this research are very interesting; therefore it is necessary to research a wider scope. Regarding the potential of the Laweyan area regarding socio-cultural aspects, research on the development of the batik area based on historical traces is interesting to do, but this research is not the area of the researcher. For this reason, the authors recommend that further research be carried out.

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