

Research article

The Concept of Three and Visual Branding of Laweyan Surakarta Batik

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Abstract.

The 'Concept of Three' dominated the visual branding practices of Laweyan Surakarta batik prior to the 1970s. The concept can be interpreted from various aspects: scientifically, religiously, socially, culturally, and mathematically. This study aimed to reveal the meaning of the visual branding process of Laweyan Surakarta batik prior to the 1970s, especially regarding the Concept of Three. The data collection methods included document analysis, observations and in-depth interviews. This study employed a symbolic power approach based on Bourdieu's theory. The findings indicated that the Concept of Three used by Laweyan Surakarta batik-makers was influenced by the thinking of etiquette-makers. Their thoughts were based on their belief in the computations of meaning. Laweyan Surakarta batik-makers upheld the concept of Javanese aesthetics as the main consideration in creating etiquette in addition to taking into account the marketing concept. The cultural values of the community, which have been embedded in the individuals since childhood, have caused the Concept of Three to become rooted in the mentality of the batik community.

Keywords: Concept of Three, batik etiquette, Laweyan

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1. Introduction

Functions, meanings and symbols are 3 things contained in the value of Culture and in each culture has a cultural system. The cultural system contains a series of concepts that are abstract and cover a wide scope and live in people's minds, relating to what is considered important and what is valuable in life. The cultural value system has a function as a guideline for the orientation of all human actions in life, in other words the system of cultural values is a system of action systems that are higher than other systems of action, for example, rules, ethics, norms, moral rules, rules of manners, laws, customary laws and others. People's cultural values have been ingrained in the individual since childhood, so those concepts have been rooted in his mentality and are subsequently difficult to replace with others in a short period of time. As said by Koentjaraningrat that[1], [2]:

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Nilai budaya merupakan nilai yang terdiri atas konsepsi-konsepsi yang hidup dalam alam pikiran sebagian besar warga masyarakat dalam hal-hal yang mereka anggap amat mulia. Sistem nilai yang ada dalam suatu masyarakat menjadi orientasi dan rujukan dalam bertindak bagi mereka.

Cultural value is a value consisting of conceptions that live in the mind of most citizens in things that they consider very noble. The value system that exists in a society becomes an orientation and a reference in acting for them. Related to that, visual artifacts branding batik etiket is one form of culture, because etiket is not only to contain the brand of a product but also as a cultural marker that contains cultural value. The values contained include the value of functions, meanings and symbols.

2. Method

The type of data collected in this study is artifact data in the form of Visual branding etiket and verbal data. This research is qualitative research using qualitative data analysis interaction with Bourdieu theory approach. The use of this approach seeks to use scientific methods with careful working procedures to obtain significance, conformity between theory and observation, can be generalized, can be re-researched and proven to be true. The data is collected using several techniques, namely document studies, observations, and interviews.

3. Result and Discussion

Visual branding batik etiket when it has been shared to various visual communication media then visual branding has entered the public space. Public spaces are monopolized by form, representation and meaning. The arena of repentance in which there is economic community involvement allows the occurrence of symbolic violence, as Bourdieu said that the arena has the potential for symbolic violence. The arena referred to by Bourdieu is as a struggle, a struggle, or a fight. Arena is not the one that has the physical meaning but the symbolic that has it. The arena or domain can only be fully understood when it is treated as a domain contesting the monopoly of the use of symbolic legitim violence [3]. The term symbolic violence is used by Bourdieu to describe the process of social reproduction involving agents in a particular domain and each agent has different capital and habitus but is contested between agents with each other. Bourdieu defines symbolic power as:

“...power of constituting the given through utterances, of making people see and believe, of confirming or transforming the vision of the world and, thereby, action of the world and thus the world itself..”

Power is the power to change and create reality, which is to change and create it as something that is recognized, recognized, and also legitimate to make people see and believe, to strengthen or change the way the world sees and how to change the world itself. Visual branding of batik etiket is used by agents to fight or contest in the arena of repentance. The visual form of batik etiket branding contains symbols used to contest in gaining legitimacy. It means that there is an effort to gain recognition for the actions taken by the agents through the creation of visual branding of batik etiket. Legitimacy can be said to be the result of success in gaining symbolic power because it successfully dominates the arena. Bourdieu said symbolic power is seen as invisible and can only be recognized by its purpose in gaining legitimacy. Bourdieu sees that symbols work as an index of power for the dominating and dominated classes and symbolic violent practices are used to gain recognition or legitimacy.[4] Visual branding of batik etiket is used by agents to represent the positive image of a product or company. This is one of the practical actions taken by agents in an effort to gain legitimacy. It has been mentioned before that visual branding has an influence caused by a visual form to distinguish or differentiate the brand. Visual branding of batik etiket serves as a visual language to translate human thoughts and feelings into conventional signs and symbols that can be read by others, in which it contains a line arrangement, shape and color. The organization or organization of these elements has a meaningful meaning. Meaning is intersubjective because the meaning is developed individually but the meaning is internalized together, accepted, and approved by the community, therefore to interpret comprehensively a meaning needs to be done thoroughly (hermeneutic). Geertz suggests taking a two-way hermeneutic path that includes symbolic forms and contextualization of forms.

“paparan bentuk-bentuk simbolis tertentu.....sebagai ekspresi-ekspresi yang terdefiniskan; serta kontekstualisasi bentuk-bentuk tersebut dalam keseluruhan struktur pemaknaan (bentuk-bentuk simbolis) yang menjadi bagian di dalamnya, dan yang dalam pengertiannya mereka didefinisikan.”

Exposure to certain symbolic forms..... as defined expressions; and contextualization of these forms in the entire structure of the usage (symbolic forms) that form part therein, and which in their sense they are defined.

A system of usage becomes an integrated cultural setting for the phenomenon depicted. [5] Visual branding of batik etiket as one form of culture is a sensory phenomenon that contains implicit meaning. Visual use of branding etiket can not be

separated from the form of the symbol. C.K.Ogden and I.A. Richards talk about the taxonomy of meaning in his book entitled "The Meaning of Meaning", has identified as many as approximately 23 meanings of the word 'meaning'. According to them there are fundamental differences in the use of the concept of meaning or 'meaning' in various scientific fields, such as examples of meanings in aesthetic contexts different from meanings in symbolic contexts. Aesthetics are used to describe the level of emotion involved in a work. If understood hermeneutically then see meaning as the product of interpretation of a text, while symbolically related to the unique relationships between objects with 'world' and semiotics use the term meaning to describe the 'concept' (signified) behind a signifier or a sign[6]. According to Ogden and Richards, there are three patterns of meaning.[7] The three patterns of meaning include: 1) the meaning of inferential, i.e. the meaning of one word or symbol includes objects, thoughts, ideas, concepts referred to by the word. References process occurs when we connect between the symbol and the designated symbol (reference/ referent). Referents are everything, objects, facts, qualities, experiences, denominations, events, designatum, objects, etc.[8]; 2) the meaning of significance (meaning that indicates the meaning, i.e. a term to what extent the meaning is connected with other concepts. Concept is connotations, ideas, thoughts, responses, psychological, and so forth While symbols in the form of words or images that must be interpreted. When a symbol is revealed then meaning arises.; 3) the meaning of the intensional, which is the meaning referred to by the wearer of the symbol. When compared between symbols in pre-modern times with symbols of modern civilization in Indonesian culture, there are striking differences. Symbols in pre-modern Indonesian culture, not only refers to the concept, but something absolute, transcendent, the faith of God (something supreme) and the reference symbol is not the connotation of ideas (ratios), and human experience (taste), but the presence of power or energy adikodrati. Symbols are absolute/transcendent signs of presence. Symbols in the time of modern civilization, always refer to meaning, concept, and experience [8].

Visual branding of batik etiket as an artifact is a sensory phenomenon because in etiket contains implicit meanings, including physical meanings related to social functions, conceptual meanings, as well as the meaning of the form of objects (artifacts). This can be seen in the visual branding of batik etiket which is a cultural product and contains symbols that have a certain meaning. Symbols can be the center of attention, as a means of communication and a cornerstone of mutual understanding. Cassirer said that to instruct the human nature of symbols, it will always be related to the idea of symbols based on consideration of empirical principles to realize ideas in the form

of symbols, circle function symbols and symbol systems, in the system, containing various arrangements of symbolic webs. Symbols include not only physical dimensions but also symbols of metaphysical or transcendent dimensions. Symbol is a form of communication conducted indirectly. Communication contains messages implicitly so that the meaning of a symbol depends heavily on individual interpretation. Symbols not only serve as social guidelines but also symbols can serve as a tool to perform cultural hegemony.

Symbols in religious view, is a characteristic of religion, because the symbol was born from a belief that is present from various rituals and religious ethics. Symbols as a phenomenon in various religions, are cultivated and reflected in various forms of offerings and worship both individually and communally. The birth of symbols is caused by a variety of factors that are strongly bound or correlated with religion. Religious symbols are born from religious experience, such as wahab's opinion that symbols are interpreted as a sign that is cultivated in various forms according to the culture and beliefs of each religion. The culted sign then presents a system and symbol structure that can form a human being into homo simbolicus in his religious type or pattern. A sign that is articulated into a symbol that has implicit meaning and its meaning can be passed from literal meaning to sacred and profound meaning. As a structured system, symbols have a coherent or interconnected logic and can be universally interpreted. [7]

Visual branding of batik etiket contains meaning in the symbols displayed. The meaning contained in these symbols can be interpreted comprehensively by identifying etiket artifacts that developed during the period before the 1970s, after the 1970s to the 2000s based on the main visual illustrations of batik etiket branding. Some agents use certain symbols contained in the tag. Symbols that often appear on the visual branding of batik etiket one of which is the concept of three. The three concepts in the reality of social life are the most widely used concepts. The concept of three is often associated with things related to mathematical practice, human spiritual life and even magical things. Various religions and in Javanese culture, the concept of three tends to have a positive meaning, so in the reality of life the concept of three often appears on various visual forms including often used in visual branding of batik etiket, both in the form of numbers and in the form of numbers, as the following example.

Here are some explanations for why the number three is often used as a symbol in many ways.

3.1. Religious Significance



Figure 1: Visual branding of Laweyan batik etiket using the number symbol or number three.

3.1.1. Hinduism

The number three is familiar with various religions and beliefs, as among Hindus known as trimurti concept. Trimurti is the three powers of Brahman (Sang Hyang Widhi) in creating, maintaining, melting nature and its contents. Trimurti consists of three brahmins as the Creator God, Vishnu as the Guardian God, and Shiva as the God of Destruction. Hindus believe that the triangular relationship that has an angle is as large as the central burden in the middle representing the relationship between Brahma, Shiva, and Vishnu. These three gods have the same power but the roles that the three have are different in the same divine nature. Hinduism is known as Adwaita Wedanta which means second to none. Adwaita Wedanta is a philosophy that believes that God is one, God as all life in the universe and in Hindu God is called Brahman, which means something that does not begin and does not end, the creator and smelter of the universe and is in the entire universe. Hinduism believes that brahman greatness is manifested in various deities such as Vishnu, Shiva, Laksmi, Saraswati, Parwati, and others. Balinese people know the term Tri Hita Karana, Tri Kaya Parisudha, Tri Mandala, Tri Murti, to Tri Sandya which all contain the concept of three.[10]

3.1.2. Buddhism

Among Buddhists who have the concept of trisuci, in the form of three big days commemorated by Buddhists as vesak day. The three holy days were the birth of Prince Siddharta in Lumbini Park in 623 BC. In 588 BC, at the age of 35, Prince Siddharta achieved the Great Illumination and became a Buddha in Bodhgaya and in 543 BC, Gautama Parinibbana Buddha (died) in Kusinara at the age of 80. Related to the number three, the concept of Tri Dharma is widely known by the Chinese as the teaching of syncretism, namely the merger of morals with the philosophy of three beliefs consisting of Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism into new beliefs. Tridharma means "three teachings of truth", namely Sakyamuni Buddha, Khong Hu Cu, and Lo Cu.

Buddhism is known as Trikaya ("3 bodies" buddha), Tripitaka ("3 Baskets" of teachings) and Tridharma (3 paths of truth) [10].

3.1.3. Christianity

Christians believe in the concept of the trinity that one One God is present in the Three Persons, namely God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, just as the essence of the three is equal in position, equal in power, and equal in glory. The term trinity has the meaning of three persons in one unity of the essence of God. the term "personal" in Greek has the same sense as hypostasis, in Latin means persona [10].

3.1.4. Islam

The concept of three is also widely used in Islam because the number three in Islamic teachings is identical to the term Sunnah Rasul. The concept of three is often found in the prophet's suggestions. For example, sunnah in wudoo' is to do a series of wudoo' with three times each. In adab eating is also sunnah eating with three fingers (hadith narrated Ka'b bin Malik). The concept of three is also found in the command to glorify the mother repeated three times (hadith narrated by Bukhori and Muslim) and the maximum limit does not greet also three days (hadith narrated by Bukhori and Muslim).

The perspective of the privilege of the number three in Islamic teachings also has an impact on the cultures of the archipelago in daily life, such as the example that occurs in certain areas in Indonesia that restrict pets to three types or three [11]. The specialty of the number three in Islamic teachings is believed to be a miracle, it is expressed by H Ramli Abdul Hamid Lc.MEI, Head of Pondok Pesantren Al – Uswah that: "Semua bisa dibagi tiga. Jus 30 juga bisa dibagi 3, kemudian huruf dalam Alqur-an, sudah saya hitung ternyata juga bisa dibagi 3, demikian pula dengan jumlah ayatnya" [12].

The same was also conveyed by H. Ramli Abdul Hamid (Chairman of DPW PBB Riau who said that the number three has many miracles, as the following example:

1. Number 3 comes from the calculation of the implementation of the day of 'Arafah, namely the 9th, and the month (12) with the calculation of dzulhijjah = $9 + 1 + 2 = 12 \rightarrow 1+2 = 3$. Date number = $9 : 3 = 3$. The number of months = $12 : 3 = 4$ so that if summed then $3+4$ is 7. The number 7 is the number of performed in hajj, such as tawaf around the Kaaba 7 times, sa'i 7 times, and throwing stones 7 times, so that the total = $21 \rightarrow 2+1 = 3$.
2. In Islamic teachings Allah is One (one) in 3 things namely: 1) His Dzat. He is the

All-mighty, the All-wise. 2) His nature, which means that no creature has a trait similar to His; 3) His deeds. It is God who created all that He has created.

2. The number three is also often used in terms of 3 religious joints (Tawhid, Fiqh, Sufism), then (Science, Faith and Charity), 3 lives (worldly world, grave, akherat), 3 Laws (Halal, haram, Makruh), 3 Souls (souls that encourage evil, destrehring souls and calm souls). The letter of Allah in Arabic without alif reads Lillah (like the number three that is flipped upwards).

3. The pillars of religion in Islam consist of three, among others Islam, faith, and ihsan. The three are interconnected, for example can be analogous as a house. Faith as the foundation, Islam as the wall and ihsan as the roof, therefore if one does not exist then it will not be perfect. If any of the three are missing, then the house will not be perfect. It means that in a human life if there are some aspects missing in a person, then the person will not feel three things in his heart, namely: 1) Muslims who always keep the pillars of faith by always keeping their belief in their God; 2) Muslims who keep the pillars of Islam will always be close to their God; and 3) Muslims who always give up will always maintain good relations with the environment [13].

3.2. Mathematical Significance

Concept 3 mathematically also has a uniqueness, namely forming a pattern of number 369 derived from the first, second and third calculations and so on, as the following calculations [14]:

TABLE 1

$3 \times 1 = 3$	$3 \times 2 = 6$	$3 \times 3 = 9$	$3 \times 4 = 12$	$1 + 2 = 3$	$3 \times 7 = 21$	$2 + 1 = 3$	$3 \times 8 = 24$	$2 + 4 = 6$
$3 \times 5 = 15$	$1 + 5 = 6$	$3 \times 6 = 18$	$1 + 8 = 9$		$3 \times 9 = 27$	$2 + 7 = 9$	$3 \times 10 = 30$	$3 + 0 = 3$
					$3 \times 11 = 33$	$3 + 3 = 6$	$3 \times 12 = 36$	$3 + 6 = 9$

Its uniqueness is to form pattern 369 from the first, second and third calculations, so on.

3.2.1. Social Significance

The concept of three can be traced in social life, if traced there are 3 things related to, such as example: 1) Three things that will never return or can not be repeated namely: Time, Words, Opportunity; 2) Three things that can destroy a person’s life: anger, hubris, vengeance; 3) Three things that should not be lost from one’s self: hope, sincerity, honesty; 4) Three most precious things in human life: compassion, love, kindness;

5) Three things in human life that are never certain: wealth, glory, dreams; 6) Three things that shape one's character: commitment, sincerity, hard work; 7) Three things that make us successful: determination, willpower, focus; 8) Three things we never knew: sustenance, age/death of a soul mate; 9) Three things in life that are certain, namely: old, sick, death [14].

3.3. Cultural Significance

The number three in Javanese society is believed to be a number that has good meaning. According to Javanese calculations (neptu), numbers are usually used to determine the good and bad of names based on javanese script (hanacaraka). The value 3 is occupied by the letters ca, sa, ja, ba, then the number is used to calculate the name of the total value of a person's name. For example, in the name Susanto, Su (sa = 3) + san (sa=3) + to (ta = 2) = 8. is then projected on five elements to indicate whether or not a person's name matches. The number 3 means "Gedhong", while the number 1 means "Sri", the number 2 "Lungguh", four "lara" and five mean "starch". A person's name is calculated in order starting from the number one (Sri), thus the name Susanto occupies the position of "Gedhong" which means that one day the owner of the name will have wealth in his life. "Gedong has a positive meaning that is both in position and economy or property" [15].

The number three or number three (*telu* or *tiga*) in the Javanese concept also has the meaning of life during the womb, the world or the hereafter. While in Yogyakarta Palace, the number of three is also used in the dress procedure abdi dalem, namely the provision of the number of three pairs of lurik lines. The number of striated in three has the meaning of "kewelu minangka perpat" which means to be captured as a brother, in this case abdi dalem is considered as a close brother of the king or sultan. When viewed from feng shui, the number three has the meaning of birth". Chinese tradition is called the moon frog (having three legs) which means rebirth in the affairs of luck, wealth and prosperity [16]. Another source also said that the number 3 (it sounds san) is believed to be hockey because it has a similar word meaning birth. The number three also describes three stages of human life which include birth, marriage and death and it reinforces the role of number three in Chinese culture. The number three is also believed to bring bad luck depending on the situation and condition and the use of the number, such as giving gifts to friends or spouses very rarely contain the element of the number three, because the number three if pronounced 'san' then has the same sound meaning with the word means to separate. The number three is also touted as a gigantical star,

which is a star that carries conflicts such as fights, altercations or accidents so that the star is considered to bring disharmony in the feng shui of flying stars [17]. The number three although considered to be a negative side but the Chinese strongly believe that the number three has hockey (luck) in some Zodiacs including the Mouse Zodiac, Tiger Zodiac, Rabbit Zodiac, Horse Zodiac, and Dog Zodiac. The numbers believed to be unlucky numbers are three on the Dragon Zodiac and the Chicken Zodiac [18].

The concept of three is also used by C.A. Van Peursen (sociologist) in his book "Cultural Strategy" to explain the three concepts of human cultural development that the human mind goes through three stages of development, among others mystical, ontological, and functional stages. The mystical stage of man believes in supernatural powers. The ontological stage of man has kept his distance from nature. It means that humans are in a position as if aligned with nature so that the two have a dialogue and open themselves to each other. The functional stage is the stage that humans consider everything in the world to be scientifically studied. The concept of three is also used in the constitutional system, as the French philosopher Montesqueu created trias poltica which is the three basic elements of state life consisting of legislative power, executive power, and judicial power with the aim of strengthening the concept of democracy [10]. The concept of three by society is considered to have a privilege in the life of mankind. The privileges that people believe can be understood by using scientific and religious analysis, but in some ways, between scientific approaches and religious approaches can influence each other. Surahmat in his article entitled "Semiotics of Three" (2020) says that to uncover the privilege of the number three can be analyzed from the mathematical field, language and field of Fine Arts, for example: 1) Triangle symbolizes tawhid. The concept of triangle meaning presented by Ferdinand de Saussure indicates a triangular relationship (interconnected with each other) between symbols, referents, and thought or reference; 2) Three is a balance formula. The concept of three also meets the aesthetic rules of form in the form of balance. Similarly, in various moral teachings that balance is the ideal point where two things meet conflicting. Binary (paired) natures that are conflicting can be combined in a negotiating point, for example: there is a morning there is night, in the middle of both there is day, as well as in the legal world, the concept of justice that is at the midpoint is usually represented in the form of scales as a depiction of justice even symbolically represented in the figure of the Goddess of Justice who is holding the scales.; 3) Three produces a contrast effect. Three things connected linearly will produce a contrast effect if one differs from the other two things. Three is the minimum number to bring up the contrast effect but if only two are different without anything else then the contrast effect will not appear but bring up binaryity.[10]

The phenomenon that occurs in society, the number three is considered as a lucky number. Many things that happen in the community trying to have a number that brings hockey does not even hesitate to buy a special number at a high price, such as example mobile number, landline number, vehicle license plate, bank account number, home number and so on. The numbers in feng shui are classified into 3 major parts namely: 1) Ming Shu (birth rate); 2) Yun Shu (timescale number); 3) Xing Shu (flying star number). The number three in Chinese life is associated with a new beginning [19]. The number three in the Chinese feng shui concept is also associated with the sanctity of life, descent and childbirth, but contradictorily the number three is also related to the tip (in the chinese sense). Three is a number to create diversity and complexity. Tao says that the Great Triad (Heaven – Man – Earth) can be interpreted as a path from obscurity to a manifestation. China believes that it is better to walk the three. The number three is the first ripple in metamorphosis. The number three is in the tiger zodiac and the East or Northeast is the direction of feng shui indicated by the number three [20]. While in Primbon Java the number three symbolizes the nature of Venus, love, artistic, romantic and understanding. The number 3 is also included in the group of artistic talents. The number 3 represents Jupiter and Thursday is the luckiest day for those with the number three. Primbon Jawa is also written that people who have the number three tend to have energetic, disciplined and talented traits. People who have the number three are believed to often experience success in their chosen field. They feel dissatisfied if they are not successful because they basically have a great self-awareness, are very proud and independent and happy to be in control, tend to like to rule people, but have many good qualities and like to impersonate spiritually, because three are trinity numbers [21].

4. Conclusion

Concept three is the most widely used concept in the reality of social life. The concept of three is often associated with various mathematical practices, human spiritual life to magical things. All religions and cultures of Java consider that the concept of three has a positive meaning, so this concept is often often used in human life including visual branding of batik etiket, both in the form of numbers and in the form of numbers.

The reason why the majority of visual branding batik etiket uses the concept of three as a symbol in the brand, this is because the thinking of the etiket maker is based on the belief they have in the calculations of meaning. The number three is interpreted by various aspects both scientifically, religiously, socially and culturally positively although the various aspects have different beliefs and points of view.

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