



## Cirebon and Geertz's Trichotomy: Exploration of Anti-Structure Folklore in Javanese Culture

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### **Abstract**

#### **Purpose**

*Geertz's trichotomy serves as a guide for reading (1) how the priyayi, santri, and abangan categories are structured in the representations of the meanings of the folklore studied and (2) how these representations are connected to Sunan Gunung Jati and Sheikh Siti Jenar.*

#### **Method**

*This article used a qualitative descriptive method. Folklore data was obtained from interviews, documentation, observation, and literature reviews.*

#### **Results/findings**

*Cirebon batik is produced in the Syattariyah order tradition. This statement contradicted the description of Cirebon batik, which contained the meaning of Manunggaling Kawula Gusti (the union of a servant with his God) which embraces an anti-structural typology of structures originating from Sheikh Siti Jenar.*

#### **Conclusion**

*The anti-structural nature of Cirebon batik merges Geertz's trichotomy into a new category, namely kawula, before God. The doctrine of Manunggaling Kawula Gusti acts as the knowledge that directly forms batik patterns and is still connected to the Syattariyah order if we place Sheikh Datul Kahfi as the figure who brought this order to Cirebon. The elaboration of all these conclusions shows Cirebon's position as a mixed type in Geertz's trichotomy.*

#### **Keywords**

*Cirebon, folklore, batik, Sufism.*

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### Abstrak

#### Tujuan

Trikotomi Geertz menjadi panduan untuk membaca (1) bagaimana kategori priyayi, santri, dan abangan terstruktur dalam representasi makna folklor-folklor yang dikaji serta (2) bagaimana representasi tersebut terhubung dengan Sunan Gunung Jati dan Syekh Siti Jenar.

#### Metode

Artikel ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif. Data folklor diperoleh dari wawancara, dokumentasi, observasi, dan tinjauan literatur.

#### Hasil/temuan

Batik Cirebon diproduksi dalam lingkungan tarekat Syattariyah. Pernyataan ini bertolak belakang dengan deskripsi batik Cirebon yang mengandung makna Manunggaling Kawula Gusti yang menganut struktur yang anti-struktur yang bersumber dari Syekh Siti Jenar.

#### Kesimpulan

Sifat anti-struktur dari batik Cirebon meleburkan trikotomi Geertz dalam kategori baru, yaitu kawula di hadapan Tuhan. Ajaran Manunggaling Kawula Gusti berperan sebagai pengetahuan yang langsung menyusun motif batik Cirebon. Ajaran tersebut masih terhubung dengan tarekat Syattariyah bila kita menempatkan Syekh Datul Kahfi sebagai figur yang menghadirkan tarekat tersebut di Cirebon. Elaborasi semua simpulan ini menunjukkan posisi Cirebon sebagai tipe campuran dalam trikotomi Geertz.

#### Kata kunci

Cirebon, folklore, batik, tasawuf.

### المخلص

الهدف تمثيل في وأبانجان وسانترى بريابي الفئات تنظيم كيفية (1) لقراءة دليل هو الثلاثي جيرتز تقسيم إن وسيخ جاتي جونونج بسونان التمثيلات هذه ارتباط كيفية (2) ودرسته تمت الذي الفولكلور معنى جينار سيتي.

### الطريقة

والوثائق المقابلات من الفولكلور بيانات على الحصول تم. نوعية وصفية طريقة المقالة هذه تستخدم الأدبيات ومراجعات والملاحظة.

### النتائج

الذي سيريبون باتيك وصف مع البيان هذا يتناقض. سياتاريا جماعة داخل سيريبون باتيك إنتاج يتم سيتي الشيخ من نشأ للهيكل مضاد بهيكل يلتزم الذي "غوستي كولا مانونغالينغ" معنى على يحتوي جينار.

### الخلاصة

أمام الرعايا وهي، جديدة فئة في جيرتز ثلاثية تدمج سيريبون لباتيك للنبوية المناهضة الطبيعة إن باتيك زخارف مباشر بشكل تشكل التي المعرفة بمثابة "غوستي كولا مانونغالينغ" تعاليم تعمل الله باعتباره الكهفي داتول الشيخ وضعنا إذا السيتارية بالنظام مرتبطة التعاليم هذه تزال لا. تشربون تشربون موقع الاستنتاجات هذه كل تفصيل يُظهر و. سيريبون إلى الأمر هذا جلبت التي الشخصية لجيرتز الثلاثي الانقسام في مختلط كنوع.

### الرئيسية الكلمات

الصوفية، باتيك، الفولكلور، تشربون.

## INTRODUCTION

Javanese culture is often criticized for implementing rigid hierarchies and structures. This rigidity is also visible in the trichotomy of *priyayi*, *santri*, and *abangan* proposed by Geertz (2013). Further exploration of the structure of Javanese society makes us encounter structures that are anti-structural and confusing, for example, in the everyday expression *'ngono yo ngono, ning ojo ngono* (that is how it is, but do not be like that) (Laksono, 2023). The myth of the savior in Javanese leadership can be achieved when the boundaries of the *priyayi* and *santri* classifications become *satria pinandhita*. The *priyayi* is Java's governing upper class, which manages politics to achieve prosperity. The ability to manage politics can achieve goals only if it is supported by religious knowledge, a knowledge held by the *pandhita* or Brahmin class. In other words, the *priyayi* must also become a *santri* to achieve *satria pinandhita*.

This article explores further the anti-structural culture reflected in the folklore that developed in the Cirebon area. Cirebon grows as a boundary merger. Various characteristics of several ethnic groups characterize Cirebon's history as a gathering and meeting point. The most dominant thing discussed is Cirebon as the boundary between Javanese and Sundanese culture. One of them, Humaedi (2013), mentioned the formation of Cirebon's cultural hybridity, one of which was influenced by its position as a replica of Islamic Mataram. Further efforts are needed to trace the genealogy of the mutual influence between these two Javanese cultural subcultures to be able to produce periodic conclusions about the similarities between the two. The influence relationship between Cirebon and Islamic Mataram (Yogyakarta and Surakarta) will be discussed simultaneously to explain the role of oral traditions in the formation of Javanese Muslims, continuing what has been discussed in Ubaidillah (2022). Geertz's trichotomy is a guide for reading (1) how the categories of *priyayi*, *santri*, and *abangan* are structured in the representation of the meaning of the folklore studied and (2) how this representation is connected to two prominent ulama figures in the history of Islamization in Cirebon, namely Sunan Gunung Jati (SGJ) and Sheikh Siti Jenar (SSJ).

This article does not intend to trace the acceptability and continuity of the concepts contained in Geertz's trichotomy. This article relies on the understanding that the categories in this trichotomy can be geographical and Javanese subcultural (Sutherland, 1975; Burhani, 2017). To understand the extent to which batik, as a type of non-oral folklore, maintains Islamic art, it is necessary to examine the religious environment in which batik developed in the context of Islamic culture. According to Benneth (2019), the relationship between court aristocracy, batik making, and religious loyalty was found in Cirebon. This article is still on the same page as Hermawan and Pradito (2020), who present religious life in Cirebon in a discussion of theology using hermeneutical studies of folklore and the genealogy of its teachings.

The Cirebon batik discussed is only what is classified as a classic pattern. Several studies discuss the structure, history, and cultural meaning of this classic pattern, such as the *nagaseba* pattern (Muthiah, 2018; Larasati, 2021), the *mega mendung* pattern (Nababan & Hendriyana, 2012; Aryani, 2014), the *sawat penganten* pattern (Listiani et al., 2020). The discussion of these writings is dominated by acculturation, which manifests in visual form and the meaning of patterns and shapes the meaning of religious teachings, as well as Islamic religious teachings, especially in the field of monism. For example, the *nagaseba* pattern borrowed two cultural meanings about the dragon snake, namely from China and India, as conveyed by Larasati (2021). The dragon snake in Chinese tradition symbolizes the power of the emperor or king (the upper world). The dragon snake in India actually symbolizes the underworld. The image of the dragon snake in this pattern combines the *nagaraja* form from India and the typical Chinese dragon *liong*. The combination of dragon characteristics from these two cultures is an effort to connect the lower and upper worlds or the connection of *kawula* and *gusti*. Within the range of studies regarding Cirebon batik, this article offers novelty (1) in aspects of the method of symbolic analysis of

batik, which is networked with other cultural works, (2) the placement of Islamic history in Cirebon, especially the teachings of *Manunggaling Kawula Gusti (MKG)* (*the union of a servant with his God*) as the knowledge that forms the shape of batik patterns, so that the position of Islamic history is not only as a background; (3) the anti-structural nature of the structure of *MKG* is a marker of Cirebon as a mixed type capable of bridging the categories of *priyayi*, *santri*, dan *abangan* become subjects before God.

## METHOD

Folklore is divided into three types: oral, semi-oral, or non-oral folklore (Danandjaja, 1997). As an example of non-oral folklore, batik is the main data that sparked further discussion regarding how the structure used to systematize Javanese society finds points of conformity and inconsistency. Data regarding batik patterns was obtained from a series of in-depth interviews with Katura (71 years old), one of the senior batik makers in Cirebon, in March-April 2022. Katura's expertise in batik earned him an honorary master of arts award from the American University of Hawaii on January 15th, 2005, and in 2009 was awarded *Upakarti* by President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. The Cirebon batik pattern discussed in the article is classified as classic and is not a contemporary creation made by Katura. Other folklore data comes from interviews with traditional artists, Sufism practitioners, and Islamic boarding school circles who were interviewed in March-April 2023, as well as observations and documentation.

The interview with Katura was carried out in stages. During two months in 2022, interviews were conducted 7 times due to age and health condition considerations. The interview process cannot take place in an explanatory manner. Informants answer questions in fragments and then become unfocused in the interview process because their endurance in sitting in the interview process is often interrupted by toilet matters. Therefore, it is difficult for the author to present direct quotes from the interview transcription. However, the *MKG* batik was formulated in stages in a series of interview activities. The initial formulation is read aloud to the informant to obtain clarification, rebuttal, or approval of the construction of the arguments. This process continues until a formula is formed, as in the *MKG* batik section discussed in this article.



Figure1. Katura was explaining the *lokcan* pattern of batik that he is wearing.

The construction of *MKG*, which is reflected in Cirebon batik, guides the literature review process and follow-up interviews with other informants as an effort to triangulate. A literature review regarding folklore, art, culture, and Islamic studies in Cirebon was also carried out to check the acceptability of the construction. Offline and online observations through documentation of traditional art performances and *slametan* rituals were also carried out to see elements of Sufism conveyed in narratives during the performances.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Batik of Manunggaling Kawula Gusti

Generally, batik is divided into two categories following Javanese sub-cultural patterns in each region. Coastal batik was born from areas that were not in the center of palace power. This category of batik is typical in areas such as Pekalongan. Regarding coloring, coastal batik is more vibrant and happy, depicting the hustle and bustle of coastal community life. The coastal batik pattern is more literal and takes the form of objects close to the community, such as flora and fauna in the sea or beaches. This is different from the palace category of batik. This batik was created by palace officials, either created directly by the sultan or the scholars who served him. Dark and shady colors, known as *sogan*, are a main characteristic. In terms of patterns, it is more symbolic than it appears to the eye. Each pattern has a subliminal message that follows the rules for wearing batik. Popular examples include the *parang* pattern created by the Yogya Palace or the *sidomukti* from the Solo Palace.

The division of batik categories finds overlapping challenges when defining Cirebon batik. The two categories were created following the asymmetrical division between subjects and rulers in the expression *adoh saka Ratu cedhak soko Watu*, 'far from the throne, close to the stone'. The Cirebon region is geographically a coastal area with a long history as a nation-meeting port. Cirebon was also a palace territory supported by Islam's development in Java. In Cirebon's batik repertoire, many coastal motifs are found that have harmonious characteristics with coastal batik from other regions. However, Cirebon also has batik that comes from the palace. Dark, monochrome, and elegant colors still characterize this batik. Many pattern objects are also taken from objects originating from palace life, such as the Paksi Naga Liman carriage.



Figure 2. Cirebon batik with *lokcan* pattern made by Katura

This statement is still half true because batik patterns originating from the Cirebon palace also take the form of objects that live in society. The *patran* batik pattern in Figure 3 is formed from the water spinach plant (*kangkung*), which resembles a *keris* blade. The asymmetrical image of *kangkung* that can live wild and make it a common food for the community forms an object that symbolizes the governing class for the palace (Ubaidillah, 2022). The *keris* and *kangkung* in the *patran* pattern have the same line of

thought as the syncretism of the cultural meaning of dragons in China and India, which is adopted in the *nagaseba* pattern. The authority is not depicted in the wings of the Garuda (*lar gurda*) as is common in Solo and Yogyakarta batik. The *lokcan* motif in Figure 2 as one of Cirebon's coastal batik adds to the contradiction in this classification. Even though it is a coastal type, this pattern is colored *sogan*. This coloring is as strange as the typical coastal or *non-sogan* blue color in the *mega mendung* pattern, but the latter pattern is classified as palace batik.



Figure 3. Cirebon batik with *patran* pattern from Ubaidillah's collections

The meaning of ruler or *Gusti* here is lithe and can be understood interchangeably between the spiritual dimension, meaning God or as the ruler of the palace in the political-administrative dimension, as the use of the word Pangeran is not only intended to refer to royal status but also to refer to God. Looking back at the status of the *lokcan* pattern as coastal batik, which grows from and is worn by people, can lead us to further discussion. The *sogan* that colors the shape of the chopped bird in parts that make it abstract is a symbol of humans seeking the nature of caliphate form to be able to fly (back) into the sky (*Gusti*). The *lokcan* pattern describes the nature of humans as creatures who have the potential and responsibility of the caliphate. Reading *lokcan* from the perspective of the palace rulers provides an operational orientation of the palace structure and infrastructure to serve the people. The people are the *gusti* for the governance of the palace. The palace's rulers are nothing more than a servant for their people. The order of life is described as cyclical. The palace authority is formed from the elements of service.

The shape of the pandanus (*pandan*) marks this palace service cycle in three palace batik patterns: the *ayam alas gunung jati* (Figure 4), the *taman arum sunyaragi* (Figure 5), and the *nagaseba* (Figure 6). In Cirebon tradition, *pandan* leaf is used as part of *slametan* during the seventh month of pregnancy, in burying the baby's placenta, bridal decoration, and at death ritual. *Pandan leaf* is a sign of the life cycle in Cirebon culture.



Figure 4. Cirebon batik with *ayam alas gunung jati* pattern made by Katura

Palace services must be present in three phases of the people's lives. The formation and orientation of this service are formed from the rows of *pandan* shapes in those three patterns. The *pandan* shape in the *ayam alas gunung jati* in Figure 4 symbolizes birth. The birth of enlightenment always originates from the mountain when referring to the prophetic phase if we refer to Muhammad's Prophethood, it started from the cave of Hira. Likewise, the birth of the Cirebon civilization was at Gunung Jati. Gunung Jati is a place for forging and gilding Cirebon courtiers spiritually and constitutionally led by Sheikh Datul Kahfi (SDK). The *ayam alas gunung jati* is a symbol of awareness of working for others because the chicken digs around the ground, looking for food for itself and the children it shelters.



Figure 5. Cirebon batik with *taman arum sunyaragi* pattern made by Katura

The child grows up with food intake and moves on to build a life from marriage. This phase of life is in the *taman arum sunyaragi* pattern. The Sunyaragi Park in question is a marine park that is a place for meditation. Therefore, this park has a dark cave section. Sunyaragi Park is also actually a contradiction. The sea and coast are synonymous with the hustle and bustle of human gatherings or commerce and are used as places to meditate. A contradiction that can only be understood in the expression *tapa ing rame* or meditation amidst a crowd. After completing meditation in a quiet place like a mountain, the *priyayi* has the ability to remain in meditation while carrying out his obligations of service to the people. The *taman arum sunyaragi* describes the ability to transcend material things.



Figure 6. Cirebon batik with *nagaseba* pattern made by Katura

The *pandan* shape in the *nagaseba* pattern in Figure 6 indicates the death phase. The word *seba* in the pattern's name originates from the *paseban*, a place to wait when facing God. The image of two dragon snakes facing a pandan plant is a graphic figuration of a leader facing death. Death is a place to face God. The obligation to serve the subjects of

these *gusti* will be accountable to the true *Gusti*. The shape of the *pandan* in the three batik patterns has a similar meaning *inna lillahi wa inna lillahi raji'un* which is an excerpt from Surah Al-Baqarah verse 156, which means 'To Allah we belong and to Him we shall return'. A snippet of verse that is usually said when receiving news of someone's death. Javanese people have a cultural expression whose meaning is close to this verse, namely *sangkan paraning dumadi*. God is *Sangkan* (origin) and *Paran* (goal) in human life. The series of *pandan* shapes in the *ayam alas gunung jati*, *taman arum sunyaragi*, and *nagaseba*, which are classified as palace patterns, can be explained in this way.

Batik is not just a craft but a teaching tool. The teachings that hide in the splendor of form and the brilliance of color require awareness to peel them off slowly and patiently, as batik is a penance depicted in the manuscript of *ngantih* (Zoetmulder, 1991). The teachings in Cirebon batik are universal. Therefore, restrictions on using Cirebon batik are limited to the principle of always being for goodness. Batik, which is called a palace pattern, can also be worn by people outside the palace. This is different when compared to the Yogyakarta Palace batik. Several patterns have been designated prohibited batik, such as *parang rusak barong*, *parang rusak gendreh*, or *parang klithik*. The decision to ban batik falls under the authority of the ruling sultan (kratonjogja.id, 2018). This prohibition regulates who has the right to wear certain patterns and on what occasions. In palace governance, Cirebon batik promotes blending the *kawula* and *gusti* categories.

### Structural Ambiguity

The principle of assimilation has its origins in the nameless process of creation. Cirebon batik does not have a creative ownership index. Batik patterns are considered collective property and cannot be claimed as belonging to anyone. In contrast to Yogyakarta batik, which developed from the palace, for example, the *parang rusak* batik is said to have been made by Panembahan Senopati, and its symbolism contains political elements, so there are rules for using it to produce prohibited batik. Because of this history, Katura refused to register the copyright for his motif creations. He invited anyone to copy these patterns. He realized that when he made batik with palace or coastal patterns, he just copied things that had been around for a long time. So, he allowed this pattern to continue. He felt he had only inherited batik and was responsible for passing it on to anyone.

Katura believes that anonymity in property rights anchors the cultural teachings circulating in the Cirebon region. Katura's belief can be explained by the expression *umpetan sajeroning pepadhang* 'hiding in the light'. This expression refers to intellectual rights and dwelling under the auspices of the *Supreme Light* (An-Nur). The source of enlightenment and awareness is the will of Allah Himself. The intellectual work carried out in producing knowledge is not aimed at humans in providing certain information. These efforts were made in order to unite with the *Supreme Light*. For example, the knowledge in batik is no other light than God's. Intellectual relations become triangular. Humans return knowledge to God, who transmits that light to other humans. The phrase cursing *sajeroning pepadhang* expresses the nature of human agency in transmitting knowledge. That one day knowledge spreads because a work has been produced does not mean that the creator receives the right to respect that distribution. All intellectual work that occurs is God's will. Discussion of batik containing the teachings of monism is not surprising in Cirebon. Muhaimin (1995) placed the results of his interviews with batik workers as an important part of explaining *Martabat Tujuh*, or the mythology of the creation of the universe. This presentation actually shows how the logic of Sufism also works in ordinary people. The tarekat's teachings spread beyond the walls of palaces and Islamic boarding schools. Cirebon batik expresses the same thing as the teachings of pantheism and monism in *Siti Jenar* manuscript, as reviewed by Zoetmulder (1991). The part of *ngantih* in the *Sujinah* manuscript quoted by Zoetmulder tells the story of this teaching through which the process of spinning and making batik can be understood more clearly. The influence of the teachings of *Martabat Tujuh* in Cirebon culture makes *suluk* difficult



to classify into orthodox and heterodox structures, or *suluk* pesantren and *suluk* coastal (El Mawa, 2016).

The part of *Prawan Mbatik*, which is also part of the *Sujinah* manuscript, shows the position of batik in the face of Javanese Sufism spirituality as one path to connect with God. The *Sujinah* manuscript is written in Javanese script and language, but it is not stated who composed it or is anonymous. This translation of *Sujinah* is quoted from Galba, Mintosih, and Astuti (1992):

<p><i>Anuju dina utama, Sang ayu lekas ambhatik, pegawanganing ajembar, sanjaning semuning kambil, malamira sejati, maningkem lelancengipun, canthinge kalamulah, dhasaring alusing budi, polanira kang aran akyan sabitah. Kinarya kancing Sirullah,</i></p>	<p>On a good day, The beauty started making batik, the crossbar for batik is wide enough, the pan is yellowish, like ivory coconut, the wax is pure without mixture, that wax it was placed in a closed basket, the small dipper is the words of God, the foundation is good moral sense, the patterns are called <i>akyan sabitah</i> (eternity), God's secrets as a guide,</p>
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## Two Figures Who Transcend the Trichotomy

The meaning of folklore in the Cirebon region using Geertz's trichotomy can be an introduction to understanding Javanese social and political structure. However, this meaning has not yet reached the spiritual realm of Javanese culture. Structural oddities actually emerge when using this framework to read the spiritual orientation of Javanese society. If we look more closely, structural confusion in Javanese culture and society occurs when there is an intersection between power and spirituality. Spirituality is used as the basis for a leader to have power, which is marked by revelation in the form of white light called *pulung* (Anderson, 1972). Political power operates with the motor of religious power. Placing the spirituality reflected in folklore in Cirebon within the image of power in Javanese culture actually creates new confusion. What Anderson describes can be imagined in the figure of SGJ as told in *Hikayat Hasannudin*. Besides that, Cirebon also provides a spiritual critique of political power. *Gusti* (governing ruler) becomes a subordinate again in the presence of the true *Gusti* (God), as in the *nagaseba* pattern.

This bend is visible in the strange language patterns of Semar in the *wayang* story. As a servant of the Pandavas, Semar always used high and polite language (*krama*) when talking to the *priyayi*. However, he never used this variety of language and always spoke low language (*ngoko*) towards Batara Guru (king of gods). This power in Semar's use of language at least challenges the precise nature of quantity and can be extracted to one person completely and without being bound by context as imagined by Anderson (1972). Semar, in front of the Pandavas, is a Javanese man who is bound by role and social status at the same time. Semar, in front of Batara Guru, experiences transcendence and becomes Batara Ismaya, the older brother of the king of gods. What can be subjected to power, such as Semar, can become a source of criticism for power itself. The logic embedded in the character Semar also operates in the *patran* pattern. The *keris* created from *kangkung* can be understood from a democratic political approach.

Zoetmulder (1991) calls SSJ's doctrines a radical *Ingsun* philosophy. This radicalness is manifested in the transformation of Allah from a third party marked by the pronouns 'He, His, *Pangeran*, or *Gusti*' and a second party marked by the words 'You, *Panjenengan*, and *Gusti*' to becoming the first party in a communicative event or becoming I or *Ingsun* as in Siti Jenar manuscript quoted by Zoetmulder (1991: 358) below.

... | *aja na kakeyan semu* | *Iya ingsun iku Allah*  
*Nyata ingsun kang sajati* | *jujuluk Prabu Samapta* | *tan ana liyan jatine* | *ingkang*  
*aran bangsa Allah* | *Molana Maghrib mujar* | *iku jisim aranipun* | *Seh Lemah Abang*  
*angandika.*  
*Kaula amedar ngelmi* | *angraosi katunggalan* | *dede jisim sadangune* | *mapan jisim*  
*nora nana*  
| *dene kang kawicara* | *mapan sajati ning ngelmu* | *sami aminyak warana*

Let's talk frankly. I am God.

I am actually called *Prabu Satmata* (The All-Knowing), there is no one else called Divine. "*Maulana Magrib* said, "But (what you show) is called the body. Sheikh *Lemah Abang* said I convey the (highest) knowledge that discusses singleness. This is not a non-existent body. We are talking about true knowledge, and for everyone, we open the veil (meaning reveal the most hidden secrets).

This change in position indicates the process of *Ingsun's* transcendence into nothingness to reach *Ingsun's* authenticity, which is none other than Allah. God is the sole subject in this life. Misrecognition of subjectivity as contained in the physical body makes it seem as if the subject is being broken up into parts. The singleness and completeness of God's subjectivity are absolute. In this configuration of meaning, what Nurish (2019) calls SSJ, free from hierarchical elements, needs to be placed. Humans transform themselves or become spiritual. To clarify the process and selection of oneself as an outer and inner entity, explain Sanali, a shadow puppet master in the Cirebon area. An explanation of this sorting can be found in the dialogue between *Cungkring* (*Petruk*) and *Begawan Sabdajati* when discussing the creed.

*Cungkring* : *Lamun kita dadi saksi kudu bener-bener kenal lan yakin kelawan sing disakseni. Lah supaya yakin kelawan disakseni niku pripun* (If I ask, to be a witness, you must know and be sure of what you are witnessing. In order to be sure of what you witness, what should you do?)

*Begawan Sabdajati* : *Gampange isun arep ngupai contoh ning Cungkring ya. Sebab penyaksian mau iku dudu penyaksian cangkem lair Cungkring, utawa mata lair, kelawan badan wadhag. Dudu. Mampane ning kono dinyataaken ucapane iku mengkenen 'Ingsun anakseni'. Sebab aran ingsun karo isun kuh beda, beda ucapane, ya beda artie. Baka isun minangka pitudu e ning badan wadhag. Baka Ingsun, badan e alus sing ana ning jero Cungkring. Dadi ning kono contoh e Cungkring ya sebab penyaksian iku kelawan ingsun ya kelawan dat kelawan rasa kang nyata* (It is easy, I want to give an example to *Cungkring*. Because the witness above was not a witness to *Cungkring's* mouth or eyes but rather to the physical body. No. Therefore, there it is stated that his words were '*Ingsun* (I) testify'. Because the names *ingsun* and *isun* are different. Different pronunciation, yes, different meaning. Suppose the issue is directed at the physical body. If it is *ingsun*, it is the spiritual body inside *Cungkring*. So, there is an example of *Cungkring*, because witnessing is against feelings of God, against real feelings.

Sanali's explanation above at least emphasizes the existence of a process of oneness that occurs beyond physical boundaries. The material existence marked by the word *isun*

is actually pseudo-nature, which limits itself from authenticity. He must be able to walk the path to the *ingsun* or spiritual entity of himself. In this context, it is interesting to observe the pattern of Zoetmulder's (1991) discussion regarding pantheism and monism in Javanese culture, which is popularly symbolized in the expression *MKG*. In the initial part of the discussion, Javanese literature such as *Centhini* manuscript (1814-1823), *Niti Mani* manuscript (1887), and *Wirid Hidayat Jati* manuscript (1903) were influenced by the doctrine of *MKG*. *Wirid Hidayat Jati* manuscript, which later influenced the thinking of the contemporary Javanese philosopher Damarjati Supadjar (1940-2014), was characterized by the translation of *mati sajeroning urip*, one aspect of *MKG*, into 'leaving life before death' (Setyabudi, 2015). Returning to Zoetmulder, the discussion he was having was ebbing and flowing. The teaching of the oneness of *kawula* and *gusti* in Javanese culture in Zoetmulder's research stems from the teachings of SSJ, who was born, grew up, and studied in Cirebon. SSJ is the cousin and student of SDK, who was also the teacher of SGJ. According to Zoetmulder, SSJ is the most popular guardian of the people because of his independent character and free mind, which does not pay attention to kings or rulers. Within the limits of Zoetmulder's dissertation research, the wind blows from west to east carrying spiritual teachings, such as *MKG*.

Discussion of the figure of SSJ in Geertz's trichotomy blurring the boundaries of religiosity on which the classification is based. That *abangan* is influenced by belief in spirits and prioritization of feelings in actions has an Islamic basis when the influence of SSJ is placed. For example, the line of religiosity between *abangan* and *santri* has little intersection. Muhaimin (1995) calls the followers of SSJ's Sufism teachings as *abangan*. The etymology of *abangan* comes from another name for SSJ, which is also known as Sheikh *Lemah Abang* (Ricklefs, 2012). *Lemah Abang* is the name of the area in Cirebon where SSJ preached. This issue of SSJ and *abangan* is one of the bases for Burhani (2017), who calls the trichotomy, which has also been widely criticized, to a certain extent significant for understanding contemporary Javanese society, but the meaning of this trichotomy depends on context and geography.

Continuing Burhani's conclusion, considering SGJ as an important marker in Javanese culture, it is enough to give a distinctive color to Geertz's (2013) trichotomy in the Cirebon region. This figure occupied the top of royal authority in the Cirebon Sultanate and strongly influenced the politics of the Banten Sultanate and religious authority as one of the Wali Sanga. SGJ played a direct role in the political practices of the Sultanate. The *priyayi* in Cirebon (and Banten) show a different pattern of values and beliefs with their genealogy originating from SGJ (king and ulama). More broadly, the *priyayi* on the north coast of Java were still guided by the spiritual authority of Wali Sanga, such as Sunan Kalijaga and Sunan Giri who were 'the ulama of kings' (Sutherland, 1975). These characteristics are different from those of *priyayi* in central Java which show separation and even discord with Islamization, as described by Geertz (2013). The fragmentation of the two authorities became increasingly pronounced in Indonesia after independence. The state embodies a single and formal political authority. Religious authority is becoming increasingly cultural and divided into different actors (Alatas, 2021).

### The Syncretism of Geertz's Trichotomy

Batik in the Javanese subculture of the Yogyakarta Palace becomes an expression of power that indexes authority and hierarchy. Cirebon batik has actually become a source of criticism for power. In other words, spirituality, which is a source of legitimacy for power, also becomes a source of criticism of that power. At this point, the figure of SSJ is considered, whose teachings, according to Zoetmulder (1991), are critical of political and social power and emphasize spirituality itself without disposing it into otherworldly forms. Spirituality is a structure that is suspicious of and transcends social structures.

The figure of SGJ as a syncretism of spirituality and political skill is still remembered and celebrated in folk stories circulated in prayer rooms or *wayang* performances. The

historical relationship between Banten and Cirebon, which stems from the figure of SGJ, is treated with the story about the dome of the Sang Cipta Rasa Mosque in Cirebon which bounced and piled up in the Great Mosque of Banten. This story attempts to explain why the Sang Cipta Rasa mosque does not have a dome, while the Great Banten Mosque has two domes. The genealogy of the glory of the Sultanate of Banten cannot be separated from Cirebon. The liberation of Batavia by the Sultanate of Banten is said to have included Sunan Gunung Jati in this process. The implementation of political work was handed over to Banten. The handover of the Sang Cipta Rasa dome can be interpreted as handing over political authority to Banten. Cirebon itself is more of a center of transcendent spirituality. The expression *Endas Cirebon, gulu Banten* 'Head is Cirebon, neck is Banten' refers to such a figuration. The political neck supports the head as the center of spirituality.

If SGJ is a fusion of the *santri* and *priyayi* categories, then SSJ can be described as a fusion of *santri* and *abangan*. The practice of *abangan* life in Cirebon has an Islamic basis (Muhaimin, 1995). This discussion, sparked by an analysis of classic Cirebon batik, seeks to reach conclusions that view Cirebon culture as one unit. Therefore, this article seeks to elaborate on the symbolic correspondence between types of folklore, especially from Cirebon batik, with two prominent ulama figures in Cirebon, namely SGJ and SSJ. This effort was made to see Cirebon's position in the Geertz trichotomy configuration. The *santri* whose social role is based on religious education are the filling elements of the *priyayi* category in the figure of SGJ, and the *santri* who are based on the *abangan* category, who are called Muhaimin (1995) are followers of SSJ. Most *abangan* groups are surrounded by lower-class people, both farmers and fishermen. The science of perfection can be achieved by understanding these two figures together. That *santri* or religious knowledge connects *gusti* in the sense of *priyayi* and *kawula* in the sense of *abangan*.

Borrowing the term duumvirate which is usually used to describe Soekarno-Hatta, this term can also be used to describe SGJ and SSJ to achieve perfection in life. The *priyayi* characteristic of the governing class shows a person's social role in the lives of many people or *hablum minannas*. The *abangan*, who are lower-class people, live by developing an understanding of nature because their livelihood comes from nature such as fishermen and farmers. In other words, the *abangan* category indicates *hablum minal alam* 'relationship with nature'. Perfection of the relationship with God '*hablum minallah*' is not only based on the practice of rituals, such as prayer and fasting but also requires developing a triangular relationship with nature and humans. A fulfilled triangular relationship also means achieving the level of *alamul insanul kamil* or the seventh level of the *Martabat Tujuh* teachings. This triangular relationship is depicted in the illustration of *iwak telu sirah sanunggal*, an illustration produced by the *Syattariyah* order (El-Mawa, 2016). This order grew rapidly during the SGJ era and became institutionalized in the palace. However, the teachings of this tarekat have existed since SDK, a figure who was the teacher of SGJ and SSJ.

The elaboration of these two figures of the Islamization of Cirebon is quite strange because many literatures with sharply different attributions attribute both. The collocation of the figure of SGJ is filled with the words of '*members of the formal organization Wali Sanga*' (Sutherland, 1975), '*Sufism order*' (Bruineseen, 1998), '*ulama or preacher*' (Wessing, 1997), '*sultan, and sultan maker*' (Manguin, 1975). These collocations form an environment of orthodox meaning or the existence of rules or authority that is upheld. Meanwhile, SSJ is mentioned in the context of heterodox and subversive word meanings, such as *mystical* (Zoetmulder, 1991; Houben, 2003), *syncretic* (Muhaimin, 1995), and *antimonian* (Acridi, 2019). A double effort is needed to answer this foreignness by reviewing the early development of the *Syattariyah* order and batik teachings in Cirebon. In many studies, these two entities are in a relationship where the first produces the second. In the batik production chain, the contingency of the source of the *Syattariyah* teachings emerges, whether it originates from SGJ or SDK, which gives the possibility that the teachings materialized in batik are modified by SSJ differently from the *Syattariyah* teachings.

The level of discussion inevitably brought SSJ into contact with the Akmaliyah order. The spiritual orientation of this congregation is a return to God. In short, this tarekat is inspired by the concept of *inna lillahi wa inna lillahi raji'un* (Mustofa, 2022). To reach the level of 'return', humans do not need a link in the form of a human body (Guyanie, 2021). At this point, it is unsurprising that the doctrine of *mati sajeroning urip* is popular. The concept of *inna lillahi wa inna lillahi* is also commonplace in the language traditions of Cirebon when reporting or talking about people who have died with the expression *wis balik* 'have already gone home'. This intermediary matter is what makes the Akmaliyah order carry out its religious actions in the patronage relationship of pupil-master as is normal in the Sufism order. The main disciple in this congregation is Nur Muhammad (Guyanie, 2021). This teaching only applies in the private realm, meaning it is not taught on a mass scale. In such a context, the oral tradition of *ngaji awak* 'studying oneself', which is common in the Cirebon area, can be placed. *Ngaji awak* tradition is manifested in the meditation behavior identified by Zoetmulder (1991) as inspired by the Tantric tradition, but according to Bruinenseen (1994), this practice is part of the influence of the *Kubrawiyah* order in Indonesia carried out by the Akmaliyah order. The intimate and personal nature of Akmaliyah makes SSJ continue to teach Syattariyah teachings to the public following the teachings of his teacher, SDK (Mustofa, 2022).

The influence of SSJ's doctrine should be considered in forming art in Cirebon in general. Cirebon's *wayang* and mask dance are two traditional arts that are influenced by a mystical orientation connected to SSJ which *Sunan Panggung* moderates. Magical performances and education of these arts must obtain permission from *Sunan Panggung* (Suanda, 1981). *Sunan Panggung*, who came from the Demak Sultanate, was sentenced to death because of his heterodox teachings, like his teacher, SSJ (Acri, 2019).

Previous research on Cirebon batik (Nababan & Hendriyana, 2012; Aryani, 2014; Muhiyah, 2018; Larasati, 2020; Listiani et al., 2020; and Larasati, 2021) states that this art was produced in the Syattariyah tradition. Initially, this statement contradicted the description of the *MKG* batik which originates from SSJ. By expanding the understanding of the Syattariyah order which was originally limited to the Cirebon Palace, which eventually led to SGJ and included Amparan Jati as the epicenter of the Syattariyah order led by SDK, SGJ and SSJ were elaborated in Cirebon batik. The process of creating batik, which is part of the integration of studying oneself to return to God, is carried out in the palace environment. Such depictions have implications for the spiritual and power relations imagined by Anderson (1972). Spirituality as a postulate of political power in Javanese culture is transcendent and does not run in one direction. Spirituality does not only give legitimacy, which is usually symbolized by *pulung*, to power. Spirituality guides the course of this power. The spirituality that produces Cirebon batik in the palace environment is a critical resource for power in the palace.

The *kawula-Gusti* chain which has a double meaning, sociological and spiritual, becomes the benchmark for power performance. Sociologically, the performance of the palace can be seen from its impact on society because the doctrine of oneness assumes that the palace and society are one unit. The *Gusti* in the spiritual dimension make the *gusti* in the palace the subordinate in front of the God who will also be judged for their deeds of power. The extraction of *kawula-gusti* in the spiritual-sociological dimension is in line with the work guidelines of the palace-Islamic boarding school or the *priyayi-santri* in the expression *Ingsun titip tajug lan fakir miskin* 'I entrust the mosque and the poor'. *Tajug* is a symbol of the continuity of religious knowledge and the poor is the sociological impact of political-religious authority on weak social groups. This last expression is called the will of SGJ as seen in figures 7 and 8.



Figure 7. The words of *Ingsun titip tajug and fakir miskin* at the Sunan Gunung Jati burial complex.



Figure 8. Running text of *Ingsun titip tajug lan fakir miskin* at the Al Ahlak mosque, Kebonturi Village, Cirebon Regency.

## CONCLUSION

This article offers an alternative analysis of folklore by connecting symbolism in folklore with various forms of other cultural works produced by the communities studied. This offer is based on the argument that knowledge circulating in society has a network to form similarities in symbolism and clues to understanding. The position of clothing (part of *Ngantih*) and batik (part of *Prawan Mbatik*) in Javanese Sufism is explained in the literary work *Sujinah* manuscript. The meaning of batik patterns can also be explained in more depth when we get help from the language traditions of the people themselves.

Previous articles discussing Cirebon batik generally provide illustrations of Muslim life in Cirebon, which resulted in the palace institution as the background for the history of Cirebon batik (see, Nababan and Hendriyana, 2012; Aryani, 2014; Muthiah, 2018; Larasati, 2020; Listiani et al., 2020, and Larasati, 2021). However, the analysis of the structure of batik patterns has not been deepened to clarify the role of history in the batik creation process. This article, at some stage, continues this study to the point of explaining the specific role of history. Discussion of Cirebon batik as *MKG* batik can provide a framework for analysis of the pattern structure, such as the findings of Larasati (2021), who stated that the *nagaseba* pattern was formed from borrowing dragon characters from China and India. Dragons, in the tradition of Chinese symbolism, represent the world of the emperor or the upper world. Meanwhile, dragons in Indian tradition represent the underworld. Therefore, the *nagaseba* pattern depicts *MKG's* meaning or the connectedness of the upper and lower worlds.

The structuring of social categories in the *santri*, *priyayi*, and *abangan* trichotomy is rigid and closed. Therefore, according to Geertz (2013), the integration of the three categories occurs in economic momentum. Integration occurs in a secular situation. Aspects of religiosity can only be bridged if there are mixed types. In this sense, Cirebon can be classified as a mixed type. The anti-structural typology reflected in folklore is needed to span the three original categories. This anti-structural nature at the spiritual level is increasingly strengthened because such structurization can merge the three categories into a new category, namely *kawula*, before God.

This article places the teachings of *MKG* conveyed by SSJ as the knowledge that shapes Cirebon batik. These teachings are still connected to the Syattariyah order if we place SDK as the figure who brought this order to Cirebon. The teachings of SSJ moderate the knowledge of the Syattariyah order with the process of creating Cirebon batik. With this conclusion, the relationship between the history of Islam in Cirebon and the various Cirebon batik patterns becomes clearer. This degree of knowledge increases from mere historical descriptions of the setting.

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