

Miracle From Allah” an Analysis on The Meaning of Tourist Attraction Batu Qur’an, Pandeglang-Banten

Ely Triasih Rahayu¹, Hartati², Idah Hamidah³, Annisa Daffa Nur Aliffia⁴, Salsabila Nadhifah Nur Hidayat⁵, Fani Ziaul Ikrimah⁶, Tesselonica Manuella Carceres⁷

ely.rahayu@unsoed.ac.id¹, hartati@unsoed.ac.id², idah.hamidah@unsoed.ac.id³,
annisadaffanuraliffia@gmail.com⁴,
salsabila.hidayat@mhs.unsoed.ac.id⁵,
fani.ikrimah@mhs.unsoed.ac.id⁶, tesselonica.carceres@mhs.unsoed.ac.id⁷

Japanese Literature Bachelor Study Program, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Jenderal Soedirman^{1,2,3,4,5,6,7}

Abstract. This research aimed to describe the meaning contained in Batu Qur’an denotatively, connotatively, and mythically using Roland Barthes’s semiotic theory. This research was conducted to give the community understanding of the meaning of Batu Qur’an since the community only understood myths and legends of Batu Qur’an, but did not understand the meaning. This qualitative descriptive research used interview as its method. The research data were items that could be given with denotative, connotative and mythical meanings, source of which was from the tourist attraction Batu Qur’an itself. Based on the research results, the meaning of Batu Qur’an was found, that is related to Islamic teaching. This way, we can conclude that tourist attraction Batu Qur’an bears some meaning.

Keywords: Batu Qur’an; Semiotics; Roland Barthes

1 Introduction

Semiotics is derived from Greek word *semeion* that means “sign”. The term *semeion* seems to be derived from Hippocratic or asclepiad medicine with attention to inferential symptomatology or diagnostics (Sobur, 2004:95). Semiotics is a linguistic discipline to learn about sign, legend, or symbol. Sign, legend, and symbol are often used in direct or written communication. Semiotics or semiology (term used by Saussure) is defined as a science to study signs in human life. This means that anything present in our life is viewed as sign, that is something that we need to give meaning to. Semiotics has some theories, one of which is the theory of meaning by Roland Barthes. Roland Barthes’s theory can be used to analyze and describe the meaning of a historical or religious site that is generally related to legend of folktale, and myth or something believed in by surrounding community. According to Roland Barthes, semiotics is part of linguistics since signs in the other field are viewed as language, that use ideas (that means they have meaning), are the elements formed from signifier-signified, and exists in a structure. Barthes later found the concept of denotation and connotation. Denotation is the first meaning system agreed on conventionally. Denotation

explains the relationship between signifier and signified in reality, resulting in explicit, direct, and certain meaning. Connotation is the second hidden meaning system. This stage describes the existing interaction when sign meets with feeling or emotion. Barthes also reveals that there is myth in the semiotic concept. Myth is a form of message or speech whose correctness needs to be believed in but cannot be proven. In myth, there is a delivered ideology.

Batu Qur'an is a religious tourist attraction in the form of a rock situated in the middle of a bathing pool in Cikoromoy Village, Cimanuk District, Pandeglang Regency, Banten Province. This is one of the places often visited by tourists, especially those with intention to seek blessing. Many visitors visit this place that is claimed by surrounding people a sacred bathing place. Although many people who visit it have relatively good understanding of the myth of Batu Qur'an that is believed to give blessing to visitors and the legend that Batu Qur'an was Al-Qur'an that turned to rock, but they do not know the meaning of Batu Qur'an and its correlation with Islam on which Batu Qur'an's sacredness is based on. That Batu Qur'an is considered sacred can be called a form of dynamism by the community. Dynamism is belief in items around humans that are believed to have supernatural power. In other words, dynamism is the belief in power existing in the matter of an item and believed to be capable of causing some benefit and harm (Hasan, 2012: 36). Therefore, this research aimed to analyze and describe the meaning of Batu Qur'an to give the community an understanding of the meaning of Batu Qur'an and its correlation with Islamic teaching. The results of previous studies on the tourist attraction Batu Qur'an, meanwhile, state that the tourist attraction Batu Qur'an has moral elements such as religious moral element, mutual aid moral element, humanity moral element, and social moral element. Previous research results also show that Batu Qur'an has historical and religious values and impact on surrounding community's social and economic life. However, there is no research that discusses the meaning of Batu Qur'an thoroughly.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Theory

a) Tourism

According to Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 10 year 2009 on tourism, tourism means traveling activity performed by an individual or a group of people by visiting certain place for recreational purpose, personal development, or learning the uniqueness of tourist attraction visited in a temporary period. Tourism in Indonesia has its own uniqueness that can attract tourists to come, as can be seen from the many types of tourism in Indonesia, such as:

1. Marine tourism, also known as sea tourism. This tourism is related to water activities, such as coast, lake, or bay. The activities include fishing, sailing, diving, and snorkeling.
2. Nature reserve tourism, also known as conservation tourism. This is carried out by visiting nature reserve, protected park, and area whose conservation is protected by the law. The activities include taking pictures of the flora and fauna therein.
3. The third is pilgrimage tourism. This tourism is related to history, customs, and belief or myth followed by local community. Tourists' objective is to visit sacred place, burial ground of a ruling or holy person, burial ground of a famous or big person, mount loaded with legend, and so on. Tourists' intention of such tour activity is usually to ask for blessing or direction, and even prosperity.

In Indonesia there are many places to for tourists to visit with certain intentions, like those mentioned above, including the graveyard of Wali Songo, Sumur Tujuh, and Batu Qur'an. Batu Qur'an has religious, historical and legend or mythical values, attracting outsiders to visit it.

b) Roland Barthes's Semiotic theory

According to Roland Barthes, semiotics is reading sign referring to the idea of two orders of significations, namely denotation and connotation. Denotation in Barthes's opinion is the first level with closed meaning. Denotative meaning is the descriptive level of meaning that is virtually closed and literal owned by all members of a culture. Connotation is a sign whose signifier has open or implicit, indirect, and uncertain meaning, open to possible new interpretation. Connotative meaning is formed by associating signifier with wider cultural aspects, such as belief, attitude, framework, and ideology of a social formation (Sobur, 2017:145). In Barthes's semiology, denotation is the first level of significance system, while connotation is the second level of significance system. Besides, Roland Barthes also finds in the method the existence of basic concept of myth. Myth is the method to disclose negative human culture. In Alex Sobur (2009:71), Budiman states in Barthes's frame, connotation is identical to ideological operation called myth and has function to justify dominant values applicable in a certain period. In addition, in myth there are three-dimension pattern, namely signifier, signified and sign.

2.2 Previous Research

A similar previous study was carried out by Pipin Pirmansyah, Citra Anjani, and Dida Pirmansyah with journal title *Analisis Semiotik dalam Puisi "Hatiku Selemba Daun" Karya Sapardi Djoko Darmono* [A Semiotic Analysis on the Poem "Hatiku Selemba Daun" by Sapardi Djoko Darmono]. The research results find that the poem "Hatiku Selemba Daun" by Sapardi Djoko is closely related to divine meaning. The poem's meaning was analyzed using Ferdinand de Saussure's semiotic theory to find divinity related signs. The difference between previous research and our research is on the meaning of myth. This research did not discuss the meaning of myth in the poem "Hatiku Selemba Daun", but only discussed the meaning of poetry itself. A similar previous study was carried out by Putu Krisdiana Nara Kusuma, Iis Kurnia Nurhayati with journal title *Analisis Semiotika Roland Barthes pada Ritual Otonan di Bali* [A Roland Barthes's Semiotic Analysis on Otonan Ritual in Bali]. The research results find that in Otonan ritual activity in Bali, there are semiotic signs with denotative and connotative meanings. The meanings form the concept of hierophany. The research results also show that in Otonan ritual there is religious ideology. The difference between the previous research and our research is the meaning of the myth. This research did not discuss the meaning of myth in Otonan ritual in Bali, but only discussed the denotative and connotative meanings.

A similar previous research was carried out by Robiatul Munajah with journal title *Nilai Moral Dalam Folklor Legenda Batu Qur'an* [Moral Values in Folklore the Legend of Batu Qur'an]. The research results show that in the oral prose of the Legend of Batu Qur'an there are moral elements such as religious moral element, mutual aid moral element, humanity moral element, and social moral element, and the story was chosen as the teaching material for SD literature appreciation since it met the criteria for the teaching material. The difference between the previous research and our research is on the meaning of the myth. This research did not discuss the meaning of myth in the tourist attraction Batu Quran, but only discussed

the moral elements only, such as religious moral element, humanity moral element, and social moral element. A similar previous research was carried out by Herdin Muhtarom and Jumardi with journal title *Objek Wisata Religi: Menelisik Sejarah and Dampak Sosial-Ekonomi Bagi Masyarakat Lokal (Studi Kasus Pada Objek Wisata Batu Qur'an, Pandeglang)* [Religious Tourist Attraction: To Investigate the History and Social-Economic Impact on Local Community (A Case Study on Tourist Attraction Batu Qur'an, Pandeglang)]. The research results show that the tourist attraction Batu Qur'an has historical and religious values and has impact on the social and economic life of the community living around the tourist attraction. The difference between the previous research and our research is on the meaning of the myth. This research did not discuss the meaning of myth in the tourist attraction Batu Quran, but only discussed its historical and religious values and its social-economic impact on the surrounding communities.

A similar previous research was carried out by Ikbal Rivaldi with thesis title *Identifikasi Pola Peran serta Masyarakat untuk Pengembangan Objek Wisata Religi Batu Qur'an Studi Kasus Kabupaten Tangerang* [Identification of Community's Participation in Developing Religious Tourist Attraction Batu Qur'an: A Case Study in Tangerang Regency]. The research results show that the development of tourism in Batu Qur'an area is influenced by local community's participation from the perspective of tourism potential that can still be developed, local community's characteristics, visitors' (tourists) perception, and community's perception and participatory pattern in developing tourist attraction Batu Qur'an. The difference between the previous research and our research is the meaning of the myth. This research did not discuss the meaning of myth in tourist attraction Batu Quran, but only discussed local community's role in tourist attraction Batu Quran, and the community's perception of the tourist attraction. Similar previous research was carried out by Achmad Fauzy with final project title *Komodifikasi Wisata Religi Batu Qur'an* [Commodification of Religious Tourist Attraction Batu Qur'an]. The research results show that there is commodification in the tourist attraction Batu Qur'an. The commodification has good social-economic impact on surrounding community. The difference between the previous research and our research is the meaning of the myth. This research did not discuss the meaning of the myth in the tourist attraction Batu Quran, but only discussed the commodification in Batu Quran and its social-economic impact on surrounding community.

3 Research Method

This qualitative research used qualitative descriptive method to obtain the data extensively and systematically in describing the meanings of Batu Qur'an. The data used were items that can be given with denotative, connotative, and mythical meaning. The source of data was the tourist attraction Batu Qur'an itself. The research data were collected through observation and interview. Observation is a data collection technique through observation, equipped with notes on target object's condition or behavior. Interview, meanwhile, is a data collection technique carried out through oral one-way questions and answers, in this case questions are asked by interviewer and answers are given by interviewee. The research informant was Bapak Tubagus Muhammad Saefullah who was the son of caretaker or the 8th generation of Syekh Sultan Maulana Mansyur. The research stages started from arranging written questions to be asked to the informant orally, and was followed with recording informant's answers. Observation was then performed on the location and the data obtained were recorded. After data collection, the next measure was analyzing the data. The data were analyzed by categorizing them into index,

symbol, denotative meaning, connotative meaning, and mythical meaning. The next measure was making discussion based on the existing data, and the last measure was concluding the data analysis results.

4 Result and Discussion

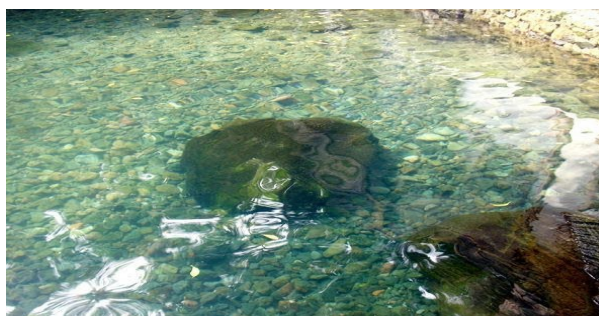


Fig. 1. Batu Qur'an

4.1 Data 1

1. Icon: Batu Qur'an
2. Index: A Rock in a size of river stone believed to be Al-Qur'an transforming into a rock.
3. Symbol: Batu Qur'an is a symbol of miracle from Allah Ta'ala for Syekh Sultan Maulana Mansyur.

a) Denotative Meaning

Batu Qur'an is a rock with a diameter of ± 1 meter or of equal size to river stone, submerged in a pool. Although there are many rocks around it inside the pool, but there is only one rock called as Batu Qur'an situated on the right corner of the pool.

b) Connotative Meaning

In Islamic teaching, miracle is something extraordinary shown by Allah Ta'ala through his Prophets and Messengers, as evidence of their truth and prophecy. Miracle can be an event or item that is difficult for humans to understand. For example, in Prophet Moses era, since at that time there were many sorcerers, Allah gave Prophet Moses miracle to transform his cane to be a gigantic snake capable of defeating other snakes of the sorcerers in his time. This event was a justification for Prophet Moses that he was a Prophet or Messenger of Allah that he received revelation or miracle from Allah Ta'ala through his cane (Yanggo, 2016: 1). Similarly to Prophet Moses's miracle, we can say that Batu Qur'an is a miracle from Allah Ta'ala for Syekh Sultan Maulana Mansyur. This is the case since according to the legend, Batu Qur'an was initially an Al-Qur'an that transformed into a rock, that was later used to close the hole believed to be the spot where Syekh Sultan Maulana Mansyur appeared after he performed hajj in the holy Mecca City. The people in Banten province believe that Syekh Sultan Maulana Mansyur (originally Sultan Abdul Qohar) was a *wali* Allah who received

supernatural power or miracle from Him, thus he was capable of doing something that other humans could not do, one of which was closing the hole with Al-Qur'an.

According to the legend, before closing the hole, Syekh Sultan Maulana Mansyur performed prayer 2 *rakaat* and prayed to Allah Ta'ala for a revelation of how to close the hole and stop the water flow, and he finally received the answer for closing the hole using Al-Qur'an that he brought from Mecca as souvenir. After placing the Al-Qur'an onto the hole, a rock suddenly appeared covering the hole.

4.2 Data 2

1. Icon : Pool water
2. Index: Water derived from Mount Karang
3. Symbol: Water pool as a symbol of continuously and eternally flowing water, just like *zam-zam* water in Mecca.

a) Denotative Meaning

The pool water is actually derived from Mount Karang located ±300 meters away from the pool. The water was pooled in 2 different pools, currently serving respectively as pool for men and for women. The pool where Batu Qur'an exists is one for men.

b) Connotative Meaning

In the history of Islam, *zam-zam* water is the water coming out from the earth after Prophet Ismail who was at that time still a toddler cried because of thirst. Hajar, his mother, tried to seek for water that at that time they were in a barren land and her breast milk was exhausted. She repeatedly sought for water from Safa hill to Marwa hill. By Allah Ta'ala's permission through Angel Gabriel, appeared a hole where water spurted from (Mahmud and Arafah, 2020: 2). The water kept spurting until now and was named *zam-zam* water, bearing the meaning of spurting. Similarly to *zam-zam* water in Mecca, the pool water where Batu Qur'an is situated in initially kept spurting from the hole and overflowed. Therefore, Syekh Sultan Maulana Mansyur tried to close the hole and finally he received revelation to close the hole using Al-Qur'an. The Al-Qur'an then turned into a rock. Although the hole has been closed, but the water in the pool has never been exhausted even in dry season. The pool water has even been transmitted to its 10 surrounding villages.

Based on the analysis results above, we can conclude that the two data were derived from one legend, which later had meanings that were closely related to the philosophy and history of Islam, especially regarding miracle from Allah Ta'ala. Pursuant to Roland Barthes's theory related to the meaning of myth, the two data were the form of dynamism mixed with Islamic teaching. This is the case since the community, especially people who pray in this place, believes that the Batu Qur'an has supernatural power capable of delivering their pray to Allah Ta'ala. In addition, they also believe that the Batu Qur'an and the pool water can bring *syafaat* or blessing in the form of improving their fortune or giving health and curing illness.

5 Conclusion

Based on the research results, we can conclude that the tourist attraction Batu Quran has denotative, connotative, and mythical meanings. The meanings were obtained based on the analysis carried out using Roland Barthes's semiotic theory. The religious values and legend of the Batu Quran are believed by the community to play important role in forming the denotative, connotative and mythical meanings.

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