SEMIOTICS OF BATIK GONGGONG THEME

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ABSTRACT

The rapid development of the times can lead to a lack of understanding of culture. A lack of understanding of a culture can lead to a lack of understanding of the message conveyed by a work of art. One of the cultures in Indonesia is batik. Batik is the result of a touch of art and technology. Likewise, the Riau Islands have batik, that is Gonggong batik. Therefore, the author conducts research on batik from a semiotic perspective based on Roland Barthe's point of view and the purpose this study was to find out the signifier, signified, denotative and connotative meanings of the five Gonggong “Laevistrombus Canarium” batik themes created by Mr Yuspiq. The data collect from Regional National Crafts Council (Dekranasda) Batam island. In this study using qualitative descriptive research methods. And the results of this study indicate that the denotative meaning of Gonggong is an icon of the Riau Islands. The connotative meaning is to describe Malay community leaders as having courage, religion, social spirit, harmony, sincerity, and humility in facing life.

Keywords: Semiotic, Batik, Batik Gonggong Theme, Roland Barthes

Introduction

Semiotic is the study of signs (Chandler, 2007). Some commentators adopt the Saussure definition semiotic as the science of sign. The basis of semiotic is sign. Sign here is conceptually as something that for something else and more technically, as a spoken or written word, a drawn figure, or material object unified in the mind. The word of semiotic is ‘seme’ it means interpretation, or also ‘semeion’ it is sign, (Sipahutar & Arianto, 2019). Semiotics, or the science of sign, provides a set of assumptions and concepts that permit systematic analysis of symbolic systems. Semiotic systems are models which explain the world in which we live (obviously, in explaining the world, they also construct it, and in this sense, even at this early stage.

Semiotics studies all cultural processes as ‘processes of communication’(Orr, 1980). It means the passage of a sign from the source through a transmitter to a goal. According to (Nurhasanah Purba & Khairunnisa Tambunan, 2021). In a semiotic study, Roland Barthes' theory is a development of Saussure semiotics by investigating the relationship between a signifier and a signified in a sign. The relationship between signifier and signifier is not similar but equivalent. Semiotics is the science of signs contained in social life, both human and animal, which contain meaning in them and there are rules that govern them. Therefore, semiotics aims to find out the meanings contained in a sign or the interpretation of that meaning so that it is known how the communicator constructs the message, by taking into account the signifier, signified, denotative and connotative of a sign.

Batik comes from the Javanese language, namely from the word 'amba' which means writing and 'titik', (Prayitno. T, 2019). And also based on (KBBI, 2016a) Batik is a pictorial cloth that is made specifically by writing or applying wax to the cloth, then processing it through a certain process. Batik is the ancestral heritage of the Indonesian nation which is the result of a combination of art and technology. Currently, Indonesian batik is developing very rapidly, so that it has a level in design/motif and the manufacturing process. (Nugroho, 2020). Several provinces in Indonesia have their own batik theme that are related to local culture. According to Taufiqoh, Nurdevi, and Khotimah
(2018) said batik has various theme and each theme has a different philosophy and meaning. One that influences the creation of a batik theme is the icon or nature around the area. Likewise, the Riau Island Province also has a batik theme, that is Gonggong Batik.

Riau Island is one of 37 Provinces in Indonesia. The Riau Island Province (KEPRI) has the motto "Planting trust, anchoring marwah" which has the meaning of maintaining and maintaining customs based on syara' which is useful for managing a better future towards noble ideals to educate and prosper the community. KEPRI Province is synonymous with its marine resources. For this reason, the Riau Islands Provincial Government has implemented various strategies to realize this motto. One of the efforts is by storing existing cultural values. The government made a special policy in the form of implementing a cultural village policy in an effort to preserve local culture (Triwardani & Rochayanti, n.d.). For example, to preserve KEPRI culture by restoring the existence of Batik combined with KEPRI's uniqueness in the form of marine biota wealth, that is gonggong. Gonggong has a scientific name, namely "Laevistrombus Canarium" (Wikipedia, 2022). That the shape of the barking shell is used as a motif of batik. Gonggong batik is a blend of 2 elements, namely batik as a typical Indonesian cloth and Gonggong is a type of snail that has a unique shape and lives in the sea. These gonggong can be found in shallow water or muddy sand (Utami et al., 2012) and Gonggong is one of the typical seafood dishes in the Riau Islands, (Arman, 2016). The creator of the Gonggong batik theme is Efianar M Amin. Gonggong batik craftsmen continue to emerge by bringing out the craftsmen's own distinctive theme. These batiks are sold in sheets with a price range of Rp. 150,000-350,000.

Even though it has been pioneered as the typical Riau Islands batik, many people do not know about the existence of this Gonggong batik. This is because many people have the perspective that wearing batik is something old-fashioned and not fashionable. therefore The meaning of the Gonggong Batik theme from a semiotic point of view is not yet known.

The term semiotics itself comes from the Greek word "semeion" which means sign. Semiotics has its roots in classical and scholastic studies of the arts of logic, rhetoric and poetry. According to (Isfandiyary, 2017) semiotic is the study of sign and their functions. Semiotics is a science or analytical method for studying signs. Semiotics, or in Barthes' terms, semiology, basically wants to study how humanity makes sense of things (thinks), that theory is a continuation of Sasussure semiotic theory (Riza & Faishal, n.d.). Making sense (to signify) in this case cannot be confused with communicating (to communicate). Meaning means that objects do not only carry information, in which case the objects want to communicate, but also constitute a structured system of signs. A sign (sign) is a basic unit of language which is undoubtedly composed of two inseparable realities, namely sound-image (Coustic Image) as a signifier and concept as a signified. Barthes stated that semiotics basically wants to study how humanity makes sense of things, which means that objects not only carry information but also constitute systems structure of signs.

A sign is the combination of a material signifier (sound or written sign) and signified (concept) that is definition by Allen, (Nadira, 2018). The relationship between the signifier and the signified is represented in the Saussurean diagram by the arrows. The horizontal line marking the two elements of the sign is referred to as 'the bar'. According to (Nurhasanah Purba & Khairunnisa Tambunan, 2021). In a semiotic study, Roland Barthes' theory is a development of Saussure semiotics by investigating the relationship between a signifier and a signified in a sign. The relationship between signifier and signifier is not similar but equivalent. And that theory has three concepts: denotation, connotation and myth.

Batik comes from the word "amba" and "tick". Batik has the meaning of writing and dots, these activities are related to a work that is smooth, soft, and small in the form of dots that are combined in such a way and contain an element of beauty. Batik is an island creation that must be preserved as a reflection of Indonesian culture which has its own uniqueness and history (Suharson et al., n.d.)
Several regions in Indonesia have their own characteristics of batik theme, from these of motif have names in the region of origin. For example batik from jambi, lampung and others. Batik theme have their own philosophy. These differences in batik theme are influenced by ethnicity, race, and cultural values. So, batik is a cloth that has special patterns and motifs with a certain way of making. And usually the theme of batik is a public belief from which these theme originate.

One of the batik theme in indonesia is the ‘Batik Gonggong’, this batik from the Riau Island. Batik Gonggong is a blend of 2 elements, namely Batik as a typical cloth from Indonesia and Gonggong which is a unique type of shelled snail that lives in the sea. Gonggong “Laevistrombus Canarium” is one of the sea slugs found around coastal areas in the Riau Island, and can be used as culinary seafood (Leonarno, 2018). The unique form of Gonggong Batik creations is combined as a motif on the fabric, which makes Gonggong Batik attractive and is the hallmark of the Riau Island Batik Theme. The unique shape of the Gonggong shell is combined as a motif on the cloth, which makes Gonggong Batik attractive and a characteristic of the Riau Island Batik Motif.

Methodology

The research method used by researchers is descriptive with a qualitative approach. According to (Winarni. E. W, 2018) Qualitative is research that seeks meaning, understanding, sense of an event or phenomenon in human life directly or indirectly in the setting under study, contextual and comprehensive.

This method is used to describe the data needed in this study, that is about the Gonggong theme batik. And this qualitative descriptive methods to describe the object of research in accordance with what is observed and captured from the data obtained. (Yusuf, 2016) suggests the characteristics of descriptive qualitative research methods that: "Qualitative research is an inquiry strategy that emphasizes the search for meaning, understanding, concepts, characteristics, symptoms, symbols and descriptions of a phenomenon; prioritizing quality, using several methods, and presented in a narrative .”

Qualitative research is research that uses a natural setting, with the intention of interpreting phenomena that occur and is carried out by involving various existing methods, (Nur, 2017). In addition, the purpose of this method is to assist the research process by providing a more accurate picture. The data source taken from this study is the "Gonggong Batik Theme" which are this batik produced in Batam.

The research location is in the city of Batam, more precisely in the "Dekranasda Batam" (Crafts Council of the City of Batam). In this study, the primary data was obtained from Dekranasda Batam City and the secondary data, the researcher uses additional source of information from literature, example: books, dictionary, the internet, and journal, this is for get information about semiotic analysis.

The data collection techniques were carried out by observing the types of batik produced, conducting interviews with several sources. After the data has been obtained, the selected data is then presented descriptively and analyzed qualitatively. The data were analyzed using Roland Barthes' theory of semiotics.

After the data collect, then researcher classified subsequently The data batik theme obtained already have patents, there is “Bunga Semayang”, “Gonggong Kuntum Berendam”, “Gonggong Terjaring”, “Gonggong Bersanding” And “Kuntum Beradu” with theme data obtained as many as 5 gonggong theme designed by Mr. Yuspiq. After the data has collected, the data obtained were then analyzed using Roland Barthes' semiotic theory.

Result and Discussion

This semiotic study analyzed the data Batik Gonggong from “Dekranasda Batam” by using Roland Barthes' theory which links elements in the form of sign as signifier and signified. Then the tagging analysis technique used will contain denotation and connotation. The study (Bouzida, 2014) of Roland Barthes’ about signifier and signified said signifiers are material nature, whereas signified is mental representation or psychological. it mean is signifier something which can be seen, heard, touched, smelled or tasted. Signifiers are seen as physical forms. analyzes form Saussure theory. then signified is a concept, concept here is a sound pattern or can be called material element in the representation
of our sensory impressions, impression connected to psychology. That element is concept.

According to (Popov & Bol’shak, 2014) Denotation is the first order of signification which is the interpretation of meaning based on visual sign. refers to the simple or literal relationship of a sign to the references; signifier and signified.(Nurimba & Muhiddin, 2021). The denotative sign consists of the signifier and the signified, where the denotative sign is the true meaning of what the sign describes to the object. Denotation meaning is accepted and approved of a sign. Connotation is the level of signification that explains the relationship between the signifier and the signified, in which the meaning operates which is not explicit, indirect and uncertain (meaning it is open to various possibilities). It creates a second layer of meaning which is formed when the signifier is associated with various psychological aspects, such as feelings, emotions or beliefs. Connotation can produce a second layer of meaning that is implicit, hidden, which is called connotative meaning.

**Gonggong Batik as an Icon from the Riau Island**

Batik as a cultural icon or regional icon can be a medium for conveying messages about the culture and wealth of an area which is applied through the theme. Like wise with the “Gonggong Batik” which is taken from regional icons and describes the characteristics of the Riau Islands. Gonggong is a type of snail that lives in the sea. Adult Gonggong snails have a yellowish brown or golden shell.(Arman, 2016). Uniquely, the barking snail has a shell that resembles a top and the surface of the shell is smooth, in Latin bark is known as “Laevistrombus Canarium” .Every batik theme has some poem, based on (KBBI, 2016b) pantun is a form of Indonesian (Malay) poetry, each stanza (couplet) usually consists of four rhyming lines (a-b-a-b), each array usually consists of four words, the first line and second line are usually for pedestals (sampiran) only and the third line and fourth is content.

Therefore this poem to helps and makes easier to find its explain the purpose, or meaning of the batik theme. From that poem, we can see the meaning of batik signs and theme based on research using Roland Barthes’ theory with signifier, signified, denotative and connotative levels. The batik theme and poem as bellows:

**A. Gonggong (Laevistrombus Canarium)**  
**Bunga Semayang Theme**

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**Picture 1. Gonggong Bunga Semayang Theme**

**a. Signifier**: Three gonggong, bird nest fern (big and small size)

**b. Signified**: The most precious, Linking

**c. Denotative**: Gonggong is one of the typical seafood dishes of the Riau Islands, then gonggong is made into a batik motif as a sign that this batik originates from the Riau Islands. bird nest fern as a sign that the basic motifs of typical Malay ornaments are combined so that they look harmonious and complement each other.

**d. Connotative**: Three Gonggong about protecting the 3 most valuable things, namely compassion, love and kindness. fern represents a wise and calm attitude in facing a challenge. Batik theme also have a poem to help find out the meaning of these theme, the poem of Gonggong “Laevistrombus Canarium” Bunga Semayang Theme as follows:

“Mak inang latah berkain baik”

“Memakai batik bunga semayang”

“Seiya sekata berbuat baik”

“Tanda berpadu kasih dan sayang”

The purpose of the poem is a struggle that is carried out by doing sincere deeds, positive words must be related to results that have been mixed with love and affection. “Malayu” people
are bound to each other in living life with the principles of the three most valuable things, namely compassion, love and kindness. Therefore, when facing a problem the community will try to deal with it wisely and calmly.

B. Gonggong (*Laevistrombus Canarium*) Kuntum Berendam Theme

![Picture 2. Gonggong Kuntum Berendam Theme](image)

**a. Signifier**: Single gonggong (big size), three gonggong, bird nest fern.

**b. Signified**: Big gonggong as a leader, three gonggong as a society, fern flower as a linking.

**c. Denotative**: Gonggong is one of the typical seafood dishes of the Riau Islands, then gonggong is made into a batik theme as a sign that this batik originates from the Riau Islands. Bird nest fern as a sign that the basic theme of typical Malay ornaments are combined so that they look harmonious and complement each other.

**d. Connotative**: The great gonggong sign as a leader can direct the community, group, family wisely and calmly. Then the three barks as a community, group or family that obeys the leader's decision without revenge. Batik theme also have a poem to help find out the meaning of these theme, the poem of Gonggong (*Laevistrombus Canarium*) Kuntum Berendam Theme as follows:

"Memakai batik kuntum berendam"

C. Gonggong (*Laevistrombus Canarium*) Terjaring Theme

![Picture 3. Gonggong Terjaring Theme](image)

**a. Signifier**: Four gonggong, trawl, trawler, gold.

**b. Signified**: Four gonggong as a kid, trawl and trawler as treasure trove, and gold is the result.

**c. Denotative**: Gonggong is one of the typical seafood dishes of the Riau Islands, then gonggong is made into a batik theme as a sign that this batik originates from the Riau Islands. In the Riau Islands, many people are looking for a source of life in the sea.

**d. Connotative**: Most people find their source of life by

"Elok pula yang memakainya"
"Rukun sekampung tiada dendam"
"Tuah bertambah negeri sentausa"

The purpose from poem is to create a good group without differences from one another, each individual should maintain verbal speech, behavior. In a group, choose a wise leader so that fellow brothers and sisters respect one another. It means, the leader that the “Malayu” community expects is a wise and calm leader in carrying out his duties, a leader who creates the group he leads into a safe, peaceful and prosperous country without any grudges against one another.
becoming a fisherman. when young, be careful to take action so that in old age you can live in respect. Batik theme also have a poem to help find out the meaning of these theme, the poem of Gonggong (Laevistrombus Canarium) Terjaring Theme as follows:

“Anak nelayan memasang pukat”
“Mendapat ikan anak sembilang”
“Berimbun harta pandai berhemat”
“Di masa tua hidup terpandang”

The purpose of the poem is that if we are already wealthy people or already have excess wealth, we must be good at saving our money by saving, investing, there are many ways to save that money. It must be done because one day, there is something urgent we can use it. Therefore, we can cover and help people who are in need of help. and the results that we have done can be reaped in the old days later. Based on poem and batik theme it has a semiotic meaning, that is be careful young people in behave, if you take the wrong action it will become poison for you, but when you are careful in seeking sustenance in a lawful way and young people are smart manage what has been obtained so that when you are old you can live a respected life.

D. Gonggong (Laevistrombus Canarium) Kuntum Bersanding Theme

The purpose of the poem is that in living life we should take care of each other, remind each other that we are brothers, neighbors, etc. so that we get the goal of a balanced, harmonious life in this world and in the hereafter. Every human being has their own way and each needs one another, wherever we are, every human being needs one another. In living life we must maintain balance, communicate, and be positive to create good goals so as to prevent things that create divisions between relatives, neighbors, or a group. This balance can be created and produce a harmonious and balanced life.

E. Gonggong (Laevistrombus Canarium) Kuntum Beradu Theme
Picture 5. Gonggong Kuntum Beradu Theme

a. **Signifier**: Gonggong, eight stars, love shape, staghorn fern.

b. **Signified**: Gonggong as human, eight star is a symbol of muslims, love shape as limiting fence, staghorn fern like the cycle of life

c. **Denotative**: Gonggong is one of the typical seafood dishes of the Riau Islands, then gonggong is made into a batik theme as a sign that this batik originates from the Riau Islands. Most of the people in the Riau Islands are Muslims, which can be marked with an eight star.

d. **Connotative**: As a human being who is undergoing a cycle of life in need of peace, therefore it is necessary to limit ourselves to something that is self-defeating. Batik theme also have a poem to help find out the meaning of these theme, the poem of Gonggong (*Laevistrombus Canarium*) Kuntum Beradu Theme as follows:

“Batik berhias kuntum beradu”
“Disebut juga bunga setaman”
“Kasih bertambah sayang terpadu”
“Bahagia hingga akhir zaman”

The purpose of the poem is in living the life of fellow individuals, you should pay attention to each other and also pay attention to that way a feeling of affection for each other is created, that is the treatment that is carried out to people around you, so that the enjoyment will be maintained in the hereafter. In a life that is against or undergoing a cycle, events that have a negative effect on oneself should every human being make restrictions on himself in a way to maintain behavior, look after each other, all positive activities in order to become a peaceful person, (Muntazori, 2013) and triumph in the world and to the afterlife.

**CONCLUSION**

Based on the result discussion we can conclusion that every batik theme has a meaning sign of communication linked with character or behavior will delivered on the batik theme. In generally, the 5 batik motifs created by Mr. Yuspiq describes signs that have a resemblance to the object, namely the gonggong shape, which is a typical food from the Riau Islands and also an icon.

On each motif there is also a fern flower, from the author's point of view that the creator of the object being analyzed likes fern flowers. The fern flower also has a meaning as a symbol of fertility and prosperity for one's life. In general and based on the signs of the gonggong batik motif, it has the meaning of how a person lives life while maintaining a calm, obedient, courageous, religious, social spirit, harmony, sincerity, and humility as well as being careful in acting and trying to survive, in the face of an obstacle.

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