Myths About Semarang City Through the Songs Semarang Ceria, Semarang Senja, and Semarang

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Abstract. Every space has meaning, including a city, which exists through a set of meanings people believe in. For example, Yogyakarta is interpreted as a space for *angkringan*, *rindu*, and *pulang* by Joko Pinurbo's poetry, and the public widely agrees. Similarly, Surabaya is also known by the motto *jancuk*, the word for our city. The motto was born as a soul that needs to be explored, recognized and believed in so that a myth that holds the meaning of a city is born. Concerning semiotic values, especially in tourism spaces, Semarang also has its myth. The myth is adjacent to the nuances built by the times through the songs *Semarang Ceria, Semarang Senja,* and *Semarang*. This research also makes the three songs a reference representation researched directly in the field, related to the nuances and conditions of semiotic spaces in the eyes of people living in Semarang. By looking at the meaning of building in the three songs, a correlation forms the myth of Semarang City, which is romantically related to heat, city streets, and buildings. These three things are also supported by symbols understood by the community and represented in the video clips of the songs in the object of this research.

Keywords: Myth, Romantic, Heat, City Streets, Buildings

1   Introduction

Semarang City is located in a coastal area, which is the beginning of a social and phenomenological situation. In this case, Barthes [1] allows for a condition that invites people *to understand on which side it is situated*. This understanding of the situation is based on significance. In this regard, Barthes [1] mentions that signs at last correspond to causes. The people of Semarang are aware of their existence, which marks why they remain in Semarang and romanticize it in this context. The romanticization of Semarang is a reflection of necessity, acceptance, and belief in the city.

Semarang interacts with many different cultures as one of the coastal cities on the North Coast of Java. The existence of Sam Poo Kong Temple, Lawang Sewu, Simpang Lima, and the Kauman area proves that Semarang has diasporically accepted the mythological context of various cultures. The existence of these cultures has allowed Semarang City to receive various symbolic forms of architecture from these cultures. Undoubtedly, multiple contexts will emerge due to architectural development. These contexts are then studied as myths that live in the city of Semarang. Barthes [1] said that myth is interpreted by how it utters this message. The object songs titled *Semarang Ceria, Semarang Senja,* and *Semarang are* studied in this research to find the myth.

2   Methods

This re This research uses a method that focuses on the process of significance to find a myth. This significance starts from interpreting the signs in the songs of the object of research to see how the people of Semarang City reflect it. In this case, the songs studied focus on the textual lyrics conveyed and how the audio-visual elements are discussed. Mukafi [13] said that the work that makes language its center can be said to be a literary work. Therefore, the songs in this study can be called literary works that can see the reflection of myths in the city of Semarang. By doing this process, myths are concretized through formal objects in literary works to the real conditions in society. This research also chose a descriptive-qualitative analysis method to explain the deep impression of songs related to the myth of Semarang City. By doing this process, myths are concretized through formal objects in literary works to the real conditions in society.

3   Result and Discussion

The results of this research are obtained from how myths are born in each song of the research object, namely Semarang *Ceria, Semarang Senja,* and *Semarang*. The myths born from the three songs lead to a mythological house that is also believed by the community in real terms. Songs, in this case, also provoke listeners to be motivated and excited, restore mood, calm the mind, inspire, control emotions, and foster creativity [2]. The understanding of songs also leads to the dynamics of the life of a society when the song was made [3].

3.1   Myth in Semarang Ceria Song

The song *Semarang Ceria is* built on a *folk* musical feel, which creates an impression that the song lives in a time further away than when it was aired. The orchestration produced through cello, ukulele, mono dram, and maracas confirms *the* choice of *a folk* composition. With these instruments, the musical style and tempo can influence and enhance the mood [4].

The song begins with the lyrics "di sini kuberdiri '*here I stand'*," which denotatively shows a location where the Sultan Kaisar music group is singing the song in the city of Semarang. Furthermore, the concept of *standing* refers to the connotation that Sultan Kaisar represents the people who live their lives—those who live in the city of Semarang. The condition of *standing* in a city then leads to cultural symbols and images that are raised through the existence of the West Flood Canal, Lawang Sewu, and Sam Poo Kong Temple (in the lyric "Laksamana Cheng Ho pernah kemari '*Admiral Cheng Ho was here*'").

The various locations illustrated in the meaning of *standing* lead, begin, and disperse through Simpang Lima—are found in the song's early, middle, and late scene cuts. This indirectly shows that all the *standing locations are* centered on Simpang Lima. Based on the mythological concept, Simpang Lima becomes the center of meaning and designs how people perceive the city of Semarang.

This perspective shows that Semarang City's symbolic situation is at Simpang Lima. The video clip of *Semarang Ceria* shows that to signify the concept of *standing* in the cultural locations of Semarang City, one must pay attention to the city streets, the weather situation, and the tall buildings—which seem to be an introduction—to find the meaning of Semarang City.

As a coastal area, the weather here is visually marked by the presence of orange and hot sun due to its contact with the beach. This nuance births a *cheerful* myth within Semarang City that aligns with the weather.

3.2   Myth in Semarang Senja Song

Unlike the song *Semarang Ceria*, Banikata composes a popular style into his song *Semarang Senja*. The song tries to get closer to the musical culture that the public loves today, like when Aditya Sofyan or Kla Project sang a song with the nuances of the city of Yogyakarta.

A musical composition that focuses on using keyboards, drums, Cajon, and gita-Banikata intends to invite its audience into a short memory of Semarang. The brief memory starts from Tawang Station as a place to come and go. Connotatively, it shows that Tawang Station receives the symbolic expectations of everyone who wants to enter the city of Semarang while trying to store the memory so that they can reach it again when they come. The memory in question is a memory and a long story [5]. This interpretation aligns with Tawang Station as a long line that delivers and receives passengers (the public).

When the visual element shows Simpang Lima, Banikata also agrees with what is in the song *Semarang Ceria*—that to interpret the word *memory* in the lyrics of *Semarang Senja, it is* necessary to start from the center of all movements in Semarang City. The symbolic situation is further deepened by the lyrics "biarkan ku di sini '*leave it here*'," which intersect with the visual elements of Tugu Muda and Lawang Sewu in the heat of the day.

The weather element is again present to romanticize the city of Semarang before finally reaching twilight, which is close to *memory* deepening. When the weather element is

presented, the city streets are also shown as a *cause to* get the lyrics "Semarang Senja '*Semarang twilight*',"-which carries the accompanying meaning of "leave it here." Banikata tries to represent the people in Semarang who are heading towards *twilight*— a serene *nuance* that lives in the process of traveling and the city's buildings.

3.3   Myths in *Semarang* Songs

Ishan Sharga's *Semarang* also has a different musical genre, Keroncong. It is built by ukulele, koplo drums, keyboards, and contemporary situations, creating a complex Keroncong feel. Ishan Sharga weaves the lyrics "Semarang pancen kuto tenan/Saiki wes dadi kuto tujuan '*Semarang is really a city / now it has become a destination city*',," referring to Semarang as a city that always accepts migrants. This acceptance is a reality that is shaped and constructed [6].

With the arrival of migrants, symbolic expectations will be desired. Ishan Sharga raises these expectations in the lyrics "saiki rono-rene akeh dalan/ kendaraane sliweran '*now to and fro many roads / vehicles pass by*'" —which creates a myth of discovery and the realization of all the hopes that migrants heading to Semarang Cit will obtain.

As with the previous two, the mythological conditions in the song *Semarang* begin at Simpang Lima, which refers to the city streets and historical buildings such as Lawang Sewu and Tugu Muda. The city's presence is also built upon by the weather, which is hot to emphasize the ambient conditions of Semarang. This is also called langgam, a style that combines European elements with rules adapted to tropical climate conditions [7].

3.4   The Reality of Myths in Society's View

Based on the findings of the three myths, one form is always consistently presented, namely Simpang Lima. Through Simpang Lima, people understand the existence of city streets and buildings that lead to the cultural nuances of Semarang City. The cultural nuance in question is the implementation of Semarang City tourism, such as the West Flood Canal, Sam Poo Kong Temple, Tugu Muda, and Lawang Sewu.

> "This is the only place in Central Java! The field that is turned on the road only exists in Semarang."
>
> (Jo; 4.13-5.12)

The expression conveyed by Jo refers to the physical identity of Simpang Lima—a geographical cross-section that then creates a symbolic image in her mind. Traveling from Solo to Semarang to take her son to the test, Simpang Lima becomes a stop for her. This description is complemented by why he chooses to spend the morning before

noon at Simpang Lima, where, although it is hot, the wind blows through the leaves, keeping it cool.

> "The heart of the city is here (Simpang Lima), although people know it as Tugu Muda-we just follow this road west. Even though it's hot, people who come to Semarang wait for the night time, the lights are sparkling."
>
> (Agus Surolo; 6.45-7.15)

Simpang Lima is a city-scale square like Alun-alun that plays a vital role in a city's image [8]. Surolo, besides discussing Simpang Lima as a center (heart) of Semarang, also marks the heat of the day as a time to wait for the glitter of the night. The hot afternoon is likened to an imaginary space to romanticize the whole time in Semarang because, at night, the sparkling city of Semarang creates its aesthetic nuance.

> "(Weekend) at Sam Poo Kong is always crowded; people also visit the Flood Canal when (Sam Poo Kong) is closed. Some migrants and residents sell here."
>
> (Fatimah; 00.30-1.21)

What Fatimah said above shows how Semarang City, as a Coastal City, creates a space that can accommodate many cultures. Sam Poo Kong Temple is open to the public as a place of learning, cultural tourism [9]. The existence of Paguyuban in Sam Poo Kong Temple, which is a place of worship for the Chinese community, proves the openness of Semarang City. The Paguyuban is also a form of invitation for people to feel more ownership of Semarang City [10].

The West Flood Canal, which is adjacent to the Sam Poo Kong Temple, is also a form of modern cultural encounter and past cultural interaction. The survival of a religious space, which then transforms into a public space, intersects with the everyday life of the people in Semarang City (through the form of the West Flood Canal).

In this regard, the three interviewees representing the general public around the tourism sites agreed on Simpang Lima as an introduction to the various cultural entertainment locations above. The introduction here is real and symbolic, showing how Simpang Lima becomes the beginning of a physical journey and an emotional experience while traveling. In this way, tourism is conveyed as a valuable aspect of a region [11].

To reach these locations, the bustling city atmosphere, sunny weather often romanticized as hot, and Simpag Lima are intertwined as myths in Semarang City. This leads to the function of Simpang Lima as tourism that aims to enjoy the journey [12]. People who have lived in the city for a long time and/or those who have come to live side by side believe that Simpang Lima is a city center that leads to various other

cultural existences. This belief is reinforced by the city's streets and weather, which regard the heat of the day as a symbolic identity of Semarang. Thus, the myth of Semarang City is formulated as *Simpang Lima, city streets*, *historical buildings,* and *hot sunny weather.* The myth will be truly realized and conveyed as Semarang City brings tourists and attracts satisfaction [13].

4   Conclusion

The city of Semarang is mythologized in various forms. The emergence of the video clips *Semarang Ceria, Semarang Senja,* and *Semarang* responds to Semarang's romanticism. The video clips were disseminated through social media, *such as YouTube* while showing the openness of symbolic interpretation. The public's approval of the musical structure of the songs reinforces the myth of Semarang City. The myths are *Simpang Lima, city streets, buildings,* and *sunny weather*.

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