



Identifying Semiotic Concepts in the Agung Mandala Giri Temple Building, Boalemo Regency

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Abstract. The temple is a sacred building for Hindus in performing their daily worship. The application of the concept of semiotics in temple buildings has actually been applied by designers before, this is because the ethical system is a science that studies predictions, or is something that is used as a meaning in worship. The purpose of this study is to identify and examine the meaning of a temple building that Hindus can respond to in the building and how the role of a sign is based on the semiotics of index symbols and icons at Pura Agung Mandala Giri. The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative by conducting detailed observations and surveys of the Pura Agung Mandala Giri building, and supported by interviews and similar research literature studies. The results of this study provide answers about symbols, indexes and icons that play an important role in semiotics in the Pura Agung Mandala Giri building as a building that applies the very deep principles of Architectural Semiotics.

Keywords: Semiotics, Temple, Symbol, Index, Icon.

1 Introduction

The word "*Pura*" actually comes from the Sanskrit suffix (*-pur*, *-puri*, *-pura*, *-puram*, *-pore*), which means gate, for example, *Angkasapura* means sky gate. In the development of its use on the island of Bali, the term "*Pura*" became specific to places of worship; while the term "*Puri*" became specific to the residence of kings and nobles. There are several types of temples, each serving a specific function of Balinese rituals throughout the Balinese calendar. Balinese temples are arranged according to the physical and spiritual world of the Balinese people, which corresponds to the sacred axis of *kaja-kelod*, from the mountain at the top of the world of the gods, *hyang* spirits, the central fertile plains in the world of humans and other creatures, to the coast and oceans, and lots of nature in Indonesia.

The concept of semiotics in temple buildings has actually been applied by designers for a long time. This is because the temple building has meaning and significance to the temple building. Semiotics has a close connection to the human life of every human being, this is because Semiotics is a science that studies indications. Everything that is present in human life is seen as an indication, that is, something that must be given meaning. The aim of Semiotics is to understand the thinking ability of every human

being in producing and indicating activities that can form knowledge about something that exists in every human being's life [1] [2]. Architectural semiotics brings every person to reflect on various things related to architectural form, which can be applied to the visualization of the facade of the building where the building is located. Architectural semiotics that must be studied is by exploring how forms (semantics), the relationships between forms are formed (syntax) and the meaning of existing forms in buildings (pragmatics). The language of signs in an architectural work is translated into a study of the visual relationship of signs in the work using architectural semiotics [1] [2] [3] [4] [5] [6] [7] [8].

The concept of semiotics is applied to religious buildings in Indonesia, especially temple buildings as places of worship for Hindus, so as an architect you must explore all the information, meanings and symbols in designing temple buildings. An architect in designing a temple building, apart from prioritizing beauty in the shape or appearance of the building at the temple, can convey elements of meaning or messages that can be understood by the public in general.

This study of the identification of Semiotic concepts in temple buildings aims to understand the classification according to Pierce and explore buildings in Indonesia, especially temple buildings in the Gorontalo Province region that apply the concept of Semiotic architecture.

2 Research Method

This research uses a qualitative descriptive qualitative method by making direct observations related to a phenomenon that exists in an object to be observed. In practice, research will be carried out structurally or according to stages, namely:

1. Data collection
2. Data collection
3. Data analysis
4. Drawing conclusions

The data needed in this temple building research is physical data that can be directly felt by researchers, namely:

1. Building plan pattern
2. Building facade
3. Pedestrian
4. Certain spatial elements in the building
5. The exterior and interior of the building have the characteristic ornamentation of the building

The material needed in this research is the application of Semiotic architecture in temple buildings so that researchers in studying this research will use Semiotic theory which influences the temple building.

3 Results and Discussions

Buildings as places of worship, such as temple buildings, are very sacred buildings for Hindus, so the buildings that function as places of worship apply many symbols, icons and indexes which are given with their own patterns and characteristics. Semiotic architecture provides a classification of signs on the Mandala Giri Temple building located in Tri Rukun Village, Wonosari District, Boalemo Regency, Gorontalo Province (see Fig. 1).

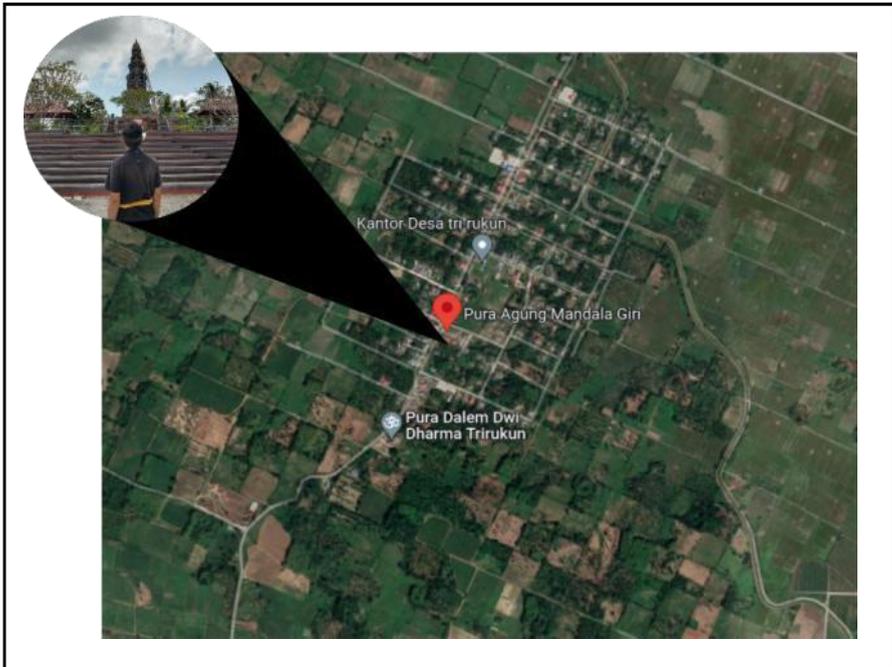


Fig. 1. Location of Mandala Giri Temple, Tri Rukun Village, Wonosari District, Boalemo Regency, Gorontalo Province. (Source: Authors, 2023)

Boalemo Regency, Gorontalo Province Architectural Semiotics brings connoisseurs and users of buildings, especially the Mandala Giri Temple building, to reflect on and understand various things related to architectural form and spatial arrangement. Based on Semiotics, Architecture can be considered as a 'text' which can be arranged as a 'grammar' (grammatical) as follows:

1. From a syntactic perspective, it can be seen as signs of spatial planning and cooperation between these signs
2. From a semantic perspective, it can be seen as the relationship between a sign and its denotatum or which concerns the meaning of architectural forms.
3. From a pragmatic perspective, we can see the influence (effect) of architectural texts on building users.

3.1 Result

Based on direct observation, results were obtained that focused on the index semiotic signs that appeared on the Mandala Giri Temple building in a tiered manner, the scope of which was as follows

Design forms and elements in buildings. Pura Agung Mandala Giri has a rectangular direction from east to west with a facade in the form of carvings of gods and goddesses or sacred creatures in Hindu beliefs. The condition of the space is more open which is deliberately designed to accommodate large religious activities and consists of several rooms that have philosophical purposes and values.

General form. Temples are not only places for worship or prayer, but also as holy places. The establishment of a temple must follow several requirements so that it becomes a holy place. The structure of the temple building follows the *Tri Mandala* concept (*tri* = three, *mandala* = region/region). The *Tri Mandala* is a symbol of the Tri Bhuwana, namely:

Nista Mandala (Jaba Pisan) – symbol of *bhur loka*. Nista Mandala is the outermost zone which is the entrance to the temple from outside the environment. This zone is usually a park or field, which can be used for dance performances or preparations for religious ceremonies. Before entering *Nista Mandala*, there is Candi Bentar, which functions as a general selection.

Madya Mandala (Central Java) – symbol of *bhuwah loka*. Madya Mandala is the middle zone where Hindus carry out their activities and as supporting facilities. In this zone there are *Bale Kul-kul*, *Bale Gong*, *Wantilan*, *Bale Pesandekan*, and *Perantenan*.

Utama Mandala (Jero) – symbol of *swah loka*. Utama Mandala is the deepest zone, and is the most sacred place of the temple. To enter this place, Hindus have to go through Kori Agung or Candi Kurung with 3 doors. The main door is located in the middle, while the other two doors flank the main door. In this zone there are *Padmasana*, *Pelinggih*, *Meru*, *Bale Piyasan*, *Bale Pepelik*, *Bale Panggungan*, *Bale Pawedan*, *Bale Murda*, dan *Gedong Penyimpanan* (see Fig. 2).



Fig. 2. Boundary area (Tri Mandala) in the Mandala Giri Temple

View of the building. The front view of the building is the entrance area to the temple and usually there is a gate with typical temple carvings. In this area there are also statues on the right and left as a balancing pattern for the building (see Fig. 3). The temple building can be seen from the right, left and back in the form of a fence dividing the temple area with a fence height of 2-3 meters.



Fig. 3. Gate of the Agung Mandala Giri Temple. (Source: Authors, 2023)

Ladder. The shape of the stairs has carvings on each step and the stair pattern is a central triangle when viewed from one side (see Fig. 4). The triangular pattern on the stairs provides a centralized icon of all the temple buildings towards the most sacred place (the main zone of the Mandala).



Fig. 4. The staircase area of the Agung Mandala Giri Temple. (Source: Authors, 2023)

Carved Ornament. The carvings on the temple have a deep meaning related to Hindu beliefs with several symbols of people or living creatures and some are in the form of flowers (see Fig. 5). In general, the ornaments on these carvings have a certain story and meaning, so there are depictions of the characters of the universe on the temple fence or in the areas dividing the temple.



Fig. 5. Flower carvings on the temple fence. (Source: Authors, 2023)

Statue. The depiction of a statue in Hindu belief is an image that symbolizes belief in the gods. The shape of the statue is usually made according to a certain type, because there are many types of flora which have their own functions. The statues usually take the form of gods, mythological creatures in Hinduism, vehicles of the gods, related animals in Hinduism, and flowers (see Fig. 6).



Fig. 6. Flower carvings on the temple fence. (Source: Authors, 2023)

3.2 Discussion

In this case, the work of art is a sign that is linked to Architectural Semiotics and is a communication medium as a result of preparing observation reports which are narrated

in detail in the form of descriptions. The *Triadic* concept (triangle of meaning) was developed by Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914) as a development of Semiotics involving three structures, namely signifier (sign), representation/signified (signified) and interpretant (thinking). Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914) formulated that this concept is a science of 'Semeiotics' (Semiotics) which specifically studies the real signs that exist in a work of art in a logical manner.

Peirce's Triadic concept is used in this discussion to trace architectural works of art by simulating the concept of signifier or semiosis which can be described with the following theoretical framework:

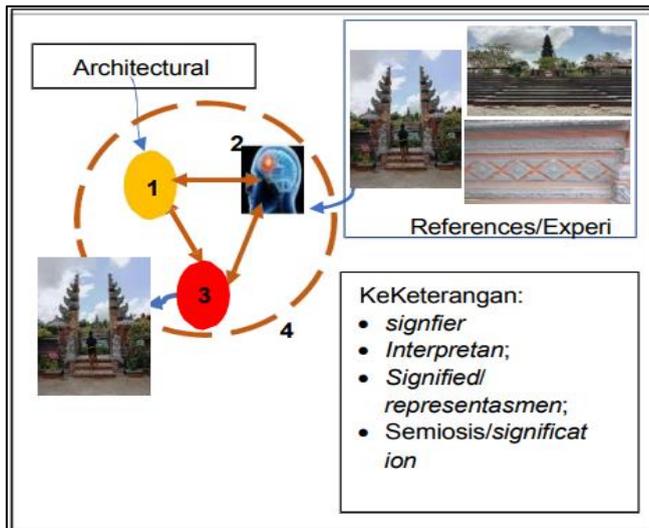


Fig. 7. Triadic concept as a semiosis simulation. (Source: Ersyad, 2021) [9]

Fig. 7 shows the use of the Triadic theory concept of marking as an expression of a sign which has a meaningful meaning if it has elements of complete sign completeness. The sign (signifier) "work of architectural art" in the form of a gate at the Agung Mandala Giri Temple, the arrangement of the outer space of the temple which is logical both verbally and in writing so that it can be interpreted correctly by the general public and the Hindu community requires knowledge in interpreting a sign so that Anyone who interprets a sign that has meaning has first gained experience or information about the sign. The reference results obtained from experience are then thought through by humans, the results of which are marked (signified) in the form of barriers between areas outside the temple in creating sacredness or majesty of the gods in the temple for the Hindu community.

The very important thing about creating architecture in a building is an ornament, so an ornament on a building is the first part in forming architecture. The formation of ornaments in ancient times was marked by paintings or sculptures found on the walls of natural caves and temples which were transformed into architectural works. The ornaments on the walls of caves or temples had initial meanings decades ago, but with

the history breaking event, these meanings have been forgotten or unknown, so new meanings are needed through a semiotic approach.

Architectural works in the form of ornaments are the most important part of a building according to Vitruvius (1960) in his book "The Ten Book of Architecture" that ornaments cannot be separated from architectural forms [10]. The ornaments on the walls of Pura Agung Mandala Giri have the meaning of the universe which is closely related to the creator, namely the gods embraced by Hindus (see Fig. 8). If the ornaments on the temple walls are moved to another object, there will be a change in meaning so that a new meaning is needed for a different object. According to Vitruvius (1960), ornaments are something that can improve the aesthetic quality of architecture and provide psychological character (peaceful, cool, beautiful, calm and so on) in the form of understanding the meaning that refers to the character of the ornament [10].



Fig. 8. Ornaments as architectural forms at the Agung Mandala Giri Temple (Source: Authors, 2023)

Something that can be understood from these ornaments is to decorate the Agung Mandala Giri Temple with various forms of architectural work so that they have meaningful aesthetic value. Ornaments as architectural works in everyday life are physical signs or symbols in two-dimensional or three-dimensional form that have certain shapes and motifs, certain locations so that they contain certain meanings according to the location of the ornaments on the building.

4. Conclusions and Sugestions

The aesthetic beauty of the architecture found in buildings lies in the various shapes and motifs found in the ornaments. Apart from that, ornaments on buildings can provide signs that function to convey messages or information that has a meaning. The process of marking or semiosis in the form of a triadic concept is an approach to the science of signs (Semiotics) to inform the meaning or understanding of signs in an architectural

work. The success of semiosis or meaning of decoration will be greatly influenced by the completeness of the sign structure, including the signifier or signified and interpretant.

The success of reading the meaning of signs is influenced by the sharpness of the interpreter's memory and background considerations. The incompleteness of the signifier is not a barrier to meaning for experienced interpreters, so they will be able to produce the signified logically. An architectural work that can produce success in reading architectural signs correctly can be seen in the correct placement of architectural works in the form of ornaments so that they become meaningful and meaningful. The meaning given to ornaments: new creation; historical discontinuities; context switching; Meaning correction is part of the science of semiotics/signs in making a work of architecture meaningful.

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