



SEMIOTICS ANALYSIS OF THE INDONESIAN HALAL LOGO
(STUDY OF ROLAND BARTHES ANALYSIS OF SEMIOTICS)

Yunita Indinabila¹, Dafina Fatana²

Hamzanwadi NW Islamic Institute of East Lombok

E-mail: yunitaindinabila@iainnw-lotim.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

The Presence of Law no. 33 of 2014 concerning Halal Product Assurance mandated by Badan Penyelenggara Jaminan Produk Halal (BPJPH) has an impact on changing the halal logo in Indonesia. Now the Indonesian halal logo consists of a logogram and logotype. Using semiotic analysis from Roland Barthes, researchers try to examine the signs, connotations, and myths on the Indonesian halal logo.

As a result, the shape of the logogram is in the form of a gunung motif and a surjan motif which represents that in human life, with increasing days and ages it is hoped that a person will be closer to Allah SWT by not forgetting the pillars of faith and suppressing lust in his soul. The use of kufi calligraphy in logotypes is inseparable from its history, that kufi khat has been used since the time of Rasulullah SAW. Furthermore, in its application, logogram and logotype cannot be separated.

The researcher analyzed the use of white as the background in the logo, representing that BPJPH wants to show a new beginning based on the values of purity, sincerity, simplicity, and independence. The purple color in the logogram and logotype is believed to represent faith, piety, and high imagination. Historically, purple has represented courage. Apart from purple, this logo also has turquoise as its secondary color. Toska is considered to represent wisdom, calm, and stability.

Keywords: Logo, Semiotics, Roland Barthes .

Introduction

A logo is a form of an image or just a sketch with a certain meaning, and represents a meaning from a company, region, association, product, country, and other things that are deemed to need other things that are short and easy to remember as a substitute for the real name. ¹The logo becomes an identity that has distinctive characteristics so that it can be used as a certain branding. Of course, a *branding* is said to be successful when a wide audience can understand the meaning and remember the logo.

The Presence of Law No. 33 of 2014 concerning Halal Product Assurance mandated by Badan Penyelenggara Jaminan Produk Halal (BPJPH) has an impact on changing the halal logo in Indonesia. As is known, the public is very familiar with the previous halal logo, which was issued by Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI). This logo is a circle in green, white, and black. However, since March 1 2022, the MUI halal logo has been replaced by a new halal label issued by the BPJPH Ministry of Religion. The latest halal logo has a shape resembling a puppet and is purple in color.

¹ Ferri Caniago, *Sophisticated Ways to Master Logo Design* (Jakarta: Niaga Swadaya, 2012), p.3.



Source: Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, kemenag.go.id

Semiotics is a science or analytical method for studying signs. Signs are tools that we use in an effort to find our way in this world, among humans and with humans.² Semiotics, or in Barthes' terms, *semiology*, basically wants to study how humanity *makes* sense of *things*. 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 wish to communicate, but also constitute a structured system of signs.³

Several figures in semiotics include Ferdinand De Saussure, Charles Sanders Peirce, Umberto Eco and Roland Barthes. Each of these figures has its own meaning regarding semiotics. Semiotics according to Roland Barthes, where he interprets the *order of significations*, and explains that signs are an element of culture or myth.

If observed, the halal logo issued by Badan Penyelenggara Jaminan Produk Halal (BPJPH) turns out to have cultural elements. Through semiotic analysis from Roland Barthes, we can identify signs or symbols on the halal logo. After being identified, then we can interpret the signs or symbols in the halal logo. Based on the interpretation results, we can interpret the halal logo as a new identity.

Literature Review

Logos

Logo comes from the ancient Greek "*logos*", which means word, thought, speech, and mind. In 1810-1840, the term logo was popularly known as a *logotype*, which meant writing the name of an entity that was specially formed using a *lettering technique* or the use of a certain interesting typeface. In its development, society makes it more unique or different.

A logo is a form of an image or just a sketch with a certain meaning, and represents a meaning from a company, region, association, product, country, and other things that are deemed to need other things that are short and easy to remember as a substitute for their real name.⁴

² Alex Sobur, *Semiotics of communication* (Bandung: Rosdakarya's Youth, 2003), p.15.

³ *Ibid*

⁴ Ferri Caniago, *Sophisticated Ways to Master Logo Design* (Jakarta: Niaga Swadaya, 2012), p.3.

The logo has a certain philosophy and a basic framework in the form of a concept. In addition, the logo also has certain characteristics such as shape and color to distinguish one logo from another. The logo has a function to describe the identity of an entity, ownership, quality assurance, to avoid imitation. In addition, the logo can also be used as branding, a form of identity for an entity to the general public. So that people will remember and recognize a logo that represents this entity.⁵

Semiotics

Semiotics is a science or analytical method for studying signs. The word semiotics is derived from English, namely *semiotics*. Another name for semiotics is *semiology*. Both have the same meaning, namely as the science of signs. Both semiotics and *semiology* come from the Greek, namely *semeion*, which means sign.

Signs are tools that we use in an effort to find our way in this world, among humans and with humans.⁶ Semiotics, as Lechte said, is a theory about signs and significations. More specifically, Segers explained that semiotics is a discipline that investigates all forms of communication that occur by means of *signs* and based on *sign codes*. (*code*) 'sign system'.⁷

Semiotics seeks to find the meaning of signs including things hidden behind a sign (text, advertisements, news). Because the sign system is very contextual and depends on the user of the sign. The thoughts of sign users are the result of the influence of various social constructions where the sign user is located.⁸ The interpreted meaning may differ from one interpretation to another. Semiotic logic is logic in which the results of the interpretation are not measured based on the truth or wrong interpretation, but from the logical number when interpreting the meaning of the sign.

Semiotics Roland Barthes

Semiotics, or in Barthes' terms, semiology, basically wants to study how humanity *makes sense of things*. Meaning (*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 wish to communicate, but also constitute a structured system of signs.⁹

Semiotics according to Roland Barthes, he interprets the *order of significations*. One of the important areas explored by Barthes in his study of signs is the role of *the readers*. Connotation, although it is the true nature of the sign, requires the activeness of the reader in

⁵ Canditra Sultanatta and Siti Maryam, "Semiotics Analysis of Logo Brodo Footwear on Social Media Twitter (Study of Semiotic Analysis Roland Barthes)," *Expression and Perception: Journal of Communication Studies* 1, no. 01 (8 January 2019), <https://doi.org/10.33822/jep.v1i01.448>.

⁶ Sobur, *Semiotics of communication*, p.15.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

⁸ Rachmat Kriyantono, *Communication research practical techniques: accompanied by practical examples of media research, public relations, advertising, organizational communication, marketing communications.*, Ed. 1, print. 2 (Jakarta: Kencana, 2007), p.262.

⁹ Sobur, *Semiotics of communication*, p.15.

order to function. Barthes also describes a second level of meaning system, which is built on other systems that have existed before.

1. Signifier (marker)	2. Signed (sign)
3. Denotative sign (denotative sign)	
4. Connotative signifier (connotative marker)	5. Connotative signified (connotative sign)
6. Connotative sign (connotative sign)	

Source: Sobur, Alex. *Semiotics of Communication*, (Bandung: PT Juvenile Rosdakarya, 2002), page 69.

In the picture above, it is explained that the denotative mark at number 3 consists of the marker at number 1 and the signified at number 2. But at the same time, the denotative mark is also the connotative marker at number 4.¹⁰

Barthes explains in his framework that connotations that are identical with ideology are called myths. In myth there are patterns of signifiers, signifieds, and signs. Myth is formed in a chain of meanings that previously existed, or a system of meanings at the second level. Not only that, in myth a signified has several signifiers. Barthes also condenses ideology with myth because there is a relationship between connotative signifiers and connotative signifieds that occur in a motivated manner.

Research methods

The research method used in this study is a qualitative research method. Qualitative research involves the use and collection of a variety of empirical materials, such as case studies, personal experience, introspection, life histories, interviews, observations, historical, interactional and visual texts that describe routine and problematic moments and their meaning in individual and collective life.¹¹

Through semiotic analysis, researchers try to interpret the symbols contained in the Indonesian halal logo which are taken from one of the cultures in Indonesia. In analyzing, the researcher carried out several stages, including:

1. Collect data from news coverage in the mass media, books and articles related to semiotics and the Indonesian halal logo.
2. Choosing the use of semiotic theory, namely semiotics from the perspective of Roland Barthes.
3. Analyzing the writing and shapes on the logo, the colors used on the logo background and the last is analyzing the colors on the logo.
4. Verify the results of the analysis using the data obtained.
5. Summarize the results of the analysis.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

¹¹ Sugeng Pujileksono, *Qualitative Communication Research Methods* (Malang: Intrans Publishing Group, 2015).

Results and Discussion

Semiotic Analysis of the Indonesian Halal Logo According to Roland Barthes' View



1. Text On Indonesian Halal Logo

Denotation	Connotation	Myth
Halal writing text	1. Meaning	1. Arabic letters and alphabet
	2. Sign explanation	2. Halal read
	3. Marking a sign	3. The shape of the gunungan is like in a puppet

The halal logo issued by BPJPH (Badan Penyelenggara Jaminan Produk Halal) points to the writing of Arabic letters and the alphabet. According to a calligraphy activist, Khudori Bagus argues that in calligraphy, there are several types of khat, khat is a way of writing or making calligraphy art. The types of khat include naskhi khat, riq'ah khat, diwani khat, tsulutsi khat, kufi khat and al farisy khat.

According to Khudori, if you look at the halal logo issued by BPJPH, it can be said that calligraphy is a type of kufi khat. Kufi khat is said to be the oldest khat commonly used in Arabic writing. History estimates that khat kuhfi has been used since the time of the Prophet Muhammad.

Khudori also explained, *"In the ha letter, there are additional straight lines soaring downwards which are irrelevant to the Kufi style of khat. If this is the Kufic type, then in the middle there is the letter la which the writing style can read the letter ra"*.¹²

Furthermore, that at the end there is the letter *lam* which is shaped like a circle. According to Khudori, the way of writing calligraphy is not in accordance with the rules of kufi khat. Because, it will be mistaken for the letter *mim*. This means that if read in its entirety, the new logo created by the Ministry of Religion will be read as haram. The argument is that at the front it reads *ha*, in the middle it's *ra* and at the end it reads *mi*.¹³

In accordance with the explanation given by the Head of BPJPH, Muhammad Aqil Irham, that the sign in the logo refers to Arabic script which reads *alif lam* and *lam* in a series of writings that form the sentence HALAL and the meaning of a sign in the logo is like the shape of a gunungan in tradition Javanese wayang, which is generally depicted as

¹² "Opinion of Calligraphy Expert, Ministry of Religion BPJPH's New Halal Logo Reads Haram," Rmol.id, accessed 18 September 2022, <https://politik.rmol.id/read/2022/03/14/526802/pendapat-ahli-kaligrafi-the-new-logo-halal-bpjph-kemenag-in-fact-reads-haram>.

¹³ *Ibid.*

symbolizing human life. The shape on the logo depicts: *The higher the knowledge and age of (a person). Then closer to the Creator (God).* The point is when someone has entered a more mature age and when that person already has sufficiently high knowledge, then it is better and should be closer to the creator.

In addition, in the Indonesian halal logo there are 2 components, namely the *logogram* and also the *logotype*. The *logogram* is in the form of a gunung and surjan motif, while the *logotype* is a form of Indonesian Halal writing which is under the *logogram*. Furthermore, in the statement of the BPJPH secretary, Arfi Hatim, that in its application the *logogram* and *logotype* may not be separated.¹⁴

2. The shape of the Indonesian Halal Logo

Denotation	Connotation	Myth
Puppet motif	1. Mountain motive	1. Symbolizes human life
	2. Shape taper up	2. Human life is subject to the creator.
	3. Surjan motive	3. Gives a sense of comfort, security, safety

Head of BPJPH, Muhammad Aqil Irham explained that the logo motif is a representation that refers to the adaptation of Indonesian values, the shape and style of the new halal logo using cultural artifacts that have unique characteristics. The logo also depicts a strong character and represents the Indonesian version of halal.¹⁵

This gunung motif is a pyramid shape that is usually found in Indonesian shadow puppet performances. This motif represents human life, in which the older a person is and the higher his knowledge, the better his relationship with God is expected to be. Not only that, the sharp shape at the end of the pyramid can also represent the unifying spirit, taste, creativity, and work in human life.

The Gunung motif originates from Central Java and Yogyakarta which is often used during shadow puppet performances. It is called a gunung because it is in the shape of a pentagon, which is cupped at the top. Gunung symbolizes the life of the universe and its contents, such as jungles, soil, roads, even fire and wind. Inside the wayang gunung there are pictures of reasons (oxen), monkeys, snakes, apes, houses, and others. Images of plants are interpreted as human life that has been given protection by God. And images of animals are interpreted by the nature, behavior, and character of each person.

Wayang is one of the cultural heritages that tells about human life. Wayang has also been used by the Wali as a medium for preaching. It's no wonder that this gunung motif has also become a symbol of the G20 event. In addition, this motif once appeared on a Rp. 100.00 coin issued in 1978. This proves that the gunung motif has a deep meaning in human life.

¹⁴ Ministry of Religion, "Determined, Indonesian Halal Label Applies Nationally," accessed 18 September 2022, <https://kemenag.go.id/read/ditetap-label-halal-indonesia-berlaku-nasional-8nja7>.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

Meanwhile, the surjan motif in the Indonesian halal logo is adapted from traditional Javanese clothing models. Surjan's clothing is referred to as taqwa clothing because it contains the philosophy of the pillars of faith on the neck buttons, which are 3 pairs or 6 buttons. Not only that, the surjan motif also has two buttons on the left and right chest as a symbol of the two shahada sentences.

In addition, the surjan has three buttons inside (the chest near the stomach) which are closed (not visible) from the outside, which depicts three kinds of human desires that must be suppressed or controlled or closed. These passions are bahiman (animal) lust, lauwamah lust (appetite to eat and drink), and syaitoniah lust (devil's lust). ¹⁶So that this surjan motive is felt by BPJPH in line with the aim of implementing halal product guarantees in Indonesia, to provide comfort, security, safety, and certainty of the availability of halal products for the public in consuming and using products.

3. Indonesian Halal Logo Background Color

Denotation	Connotation	Myth
White color background	The color white is purity, purity, sincerity, impartiality or neutral, simplicity, neat, independent, pure, open, and new beginnings.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Holy 2. Pure 3. Sincere 4. Neutral 5. Simple 6. Neat 7. Independent 8. Pure 9. Open 10. The new beginning

The white color on the background in the Indonesian halal logo issued by BPJPH, depicts many meanings. White is the color that is holy, pure and sincere. Someone who likes white is considered as a neutral figure or does not take sides with anything. In addition, white fans are seen as simple, neat, and independent.

The color philosophy of each culture is of course different, similarly in western culture, white is often associated with weddings, hospitals and angels. Whereas in eastern culture, the color white often has a philosophy of sadness and death. However, some regions believe that white conveys a sense of purity, cleanliness and peace.

In Indonesia, some groups will wear white on religious holidays because these groups see white as a new beginning in their lives and are also interpreted as being more open to this life. With the presence of the newest Indonesian halal logo using white as a background, the researcher analyzed that BPJPH wanted to show a new beginning based on the values of purity, sincerity, simplicity, and independence.

4. Indonesian Halal Logo Text Color

Denotation	Connotation	Myth
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¹⁶ Wuri Septiningsih, "Surjan Jogja Philosophy Visual Communication Design Using Design Thinking Method," *Invention 2*, no. 1 (December 19, 2017): 51–76, <https://doi.org/10.24821/invensi.v2i1.1807>.

Purple text	The purple color is faith, inner and outer unity, high imagination, loyalty. In several eras, the color purple symbolized nobility, power, and luxury.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Faith 2. Inner and outer unity 3. Imagination power 4. Loyalty 5. glory 6. Strength 7. Luxury
	The color turquoise is wisdom and serenity. In psychology, it has the meaning of emotional balance, stability, calm, and patience	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wisdom 2. Calm 3. Stability

Purple is a color combination of blue and red. The color purple was first recorded in 975 AD. At that time, the color purple became a symbol of royalty and political authority because only the nobility and the rich could have this color. In the kingdoms of the ancient world, purple was considered a bold color and was a color typical for people of high social status.¹⁷

According to Muhammad Aqil Irham, the Indonesian halal logo uses purple as the main color because it represents the meaning of faith, inner and outer unity, spiritualism and imagination. The purple color in the Indonesian halal logo has the pantone color code #670075 2612C.¹⁸In general, purple looks attractive and luxurious, people who like purple tend to have high empathy and put the interests of others first.

In psychology, the color purple is considered to have a very high spiritual value because it is able to attract attention, radiate strength and is even inseparable from the impression of being ambitious and especially synonymous with luxury. What is unique, the color purple is able to connect humans with deeper minds, between spiritual and human spiritual energy.

The Indonesian halal logo issued by BPJPH also has a secondary color, namely *turquoise* or commonly called *toska*. The turquoise color in the Indonesian halal logo has the color code #3DC3A3 Pantone 15-5718 TPX.¹⁹In history, the color *turquoise* was first recorded in English in 1573. The name *turquoise* comes from the French, namely *Turkish* , because Europeans used to import pine via the Turkish route.

The color turquoise is believed to have the meaning of wisdom and serenity. In psychology, the color turquoise has a good uplifting value to help concentration and calm the nervous system so that it creates self-confidence. In addition, this color is also believed to have the meaning of emotional balance, stability, calm, and patience.

Closing

Starting March 1, 2022, the Indonesian halal logo uses the logo issued by Badan Penyelenggara Jaminan Produk Halal (BPJPH). This logo consists of a purple *logogram* and

¹⁷ Dedih Nur Fajar Paksi, "Colors in the Visual World," *IMAJI: Film, Photography, Television, & New Media* 12, no. 2 (July 31, 2021): 90–97, <https://doi.org/10.52290/i.v12i2.49>.

¹⁸ "Determined, Indonesian Halal Label Applies Nationally."

¹⁹ *Ibid*

logotype with a secondary color of turquoise and a white background. Using semiotic analysis from Roland Barthes, researchers try to examine the signs, connotations, and myths on the Indonesian halal logo.

logogram in the shape of a gunung and with a surjan motif represents that in human life, with increasing days and ages it is hoped that a person will be closer to Allah SWT by not forgetting the pillars of faith and suppressing the passions in his soul. The use of kufi calligraphy in the *logotype* in this logo is due to its history, that kufi khat has been used since the time of Rasulullah SAW. Furthermore, in its application, *logogram* and *logotype* cannot be separated.

With the presence of the newest Indonesian halal logo using white as a background, the researcher analyzed that BPJPH wanted to show a new beginning based on the values of purity, sincerity, simplicity, and independence. The choice of purple in the *logogram* and *logotype* is believed to represent faith, piety, and high imagination. Historically, purple has also represented courage. Apart from purple, this logo also has turquoise as its secondary color. Toska is considered to represent wisdom, calm, and stability.

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