


Exploring the Meaning of Ichnography at the Cheng Ho Mosque

Endah Wulandari

Program Studi Film dan Televisi, Fakultas Seni Media Rekam, ISI Yogyakarta

Article Info	ABSTRACT
<p>Keywords: Cheng Hoo Mosque, Iconography, Architecture,</p>	<p>Cheng Hoo Mosque located on Jl. Raya Purbalingga, Selaganggeng Village, Mrebet District, Purbalingga is a mosque building that has a shape resembling a Chinese temple building with a Chinese architectural style. The architecture of the Cheng Hoo Mosque is present to color certain communities dynamically bringing different nuances, because this mosque is an interesting expression to review. Cheng Hoo Mosque in Purbalingga is an interesting research object to be studied related to the meanings contained in its architectural and interior forms. This research object, besides being unique and interesting, also contains aesthetic values displayed through symbols and icons in its architecture and interior. The results of research, analysis, and discussion of the Cheng Hoo Mosque in Purbalingga with an Iconography approach through three stages of analysis, namely pre-iconography, iconography, and iconological interpretation. This mosque shows the artistic motifs in it to represent the aesthetic form with a fantasy style. The theme in the basic concept of Chinese ethnic conflict. The symbolic value contained in the work is to inform that there is a collaboration between China and the archipelago</p>
<p>This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC license</p> 	<p>Corresponding Author: Endah Wulandari Program Studi Film dan Televisi, Fakultas Seni Media Rekam, ISI Yogyakarta endah.wulandari@isi.ac.id</p>

INTRODUCTION

The mosque is a place of worship for Muslims, but today the mosque is not merely a place of worship or a ritual place for prayer and ia'tikaf for Muslims, but more than that the mosque is a social container to form an Islamic social order based on brotherhood and a cultural container that forms a culture that is based on a solid moral foundation. In other words, the mosque is not only a center of worship, but also a center of culture. (Sofyan Syafri, 1996:10) .In general, the style and architecture of mosques in Indonesia are different from the original form, namely a distinctive pattern as a type of Arab mosque. This is adjusted to the development of culture, especially the development of architecture in Indonesia. (Abdul Rochym, 1983:54). The mosque is not a dead cultural work, because This building lives, grows , and develops dynamically, along with the life of the community itself. The essence of a mosque as a place of worship for Muslims is an important part, because the existence of a mosque is the pulse, in addition to the form of Islamic culture. The main function of the mosque is as a place of worship, both in the context of hablumminallah and hablumminannas. The existence of a mosque as a place of worship is stated in the holy books of the Qur'an and Al-Hadith. However, these two main sources do not provide a

physical construction procedure for the building, thus providing an opportunity for creativity in terms of the physical building, namely the architecture and interior of the mosque.

Cheng Hoo Mosque located on Jl. Raya Purbalingga, Selaganggeng Village, Mrebet District, Purbalingga is a mosque building that has a shape resembling a Chinese temple building with a Chinese architectural style. The architecture of the Cheng Hoo Mosque is present to color certain communities dynamically bringing nuances different, because this mosque is an interesting expression to review. The interesting side is from the forms of architectural elements that are arranged harmoniously using colors such as red, green and gold. The name of this mosque is a form of respect for Cheng Hoo, a Chinese admiral who was a Muslim. During his journey in Southeast Asia, Cheng Hoo not only traded and made friends, but also spread the religion of Islam. In the 15th century during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1643) Chinese people from Yunnan began to arrive to spread Islam, especially on the island of Java. Admiral Cheng Hoo (Admiral Zhang He) or better known as Sam Poo Kong or Pompu Awang began his travels in 1410. In 1416, the fleet he led landed at Simongan Beach, Semarang. In addition, he was also an envoy of Emperor Yung Lo to visit the King of Majapahit which also aimed to spread Islam. (<http://intisari-online.com/masjid-unik-2-masjid-cheng-ho-dan-nuansa-klenteng>, Tuesday, July 16, 2013.)

Architecturally, the Cheng Hoo Mosque has an architectural style that combines Chinese and Islamic cultures. The mosque, which was inaugurated in 2011, is not dome-shaped like most mosques. But its uniqueness is that its dome has a resemblance to the top of a pagoda. The increasing number of mosques with Chinese architecture is following in the footsteps of the establishment of the Cheng Hoo Mosque in Surabaya, the Cheng Hoo Sriwijaya Mosque in Palembang and the Cheng Hoo Mosque in Pandaan-Pasuruan. The Cheng Hoo Mosque in Purbalingga has a typical Chinese building resembling a temple or place of worship for Tri Dharma followers which has a strong Chinese feel. The entrance to this mosque resembles the shape of a pagoda which has a relief of a dragon and a lion statue made of wax with the pronunciation of Allah in Arabic at the top of the pagoda. On the left side there is a drum as a complement to the mosque building. The unique characteristic of this mosque is the acculturation of Chinese and Javanese Islam which resembles a Chinese temple with carved decorations and ornaments in the form of red lanterns.

The architectural expression of the Cheng Hoo Mosque is an expression of the spirit of tolerance that is always able to adapt to its new environment. The application of Chinese cultural diversity in a building where Muslims worship makes the Cheng Hoo Mosque in Purbalingga an interesting object to be studied further regarding the meanings of its architectural and interior forms. by conducting a study based on the iconographic approach method. This study aims to find meanings influenced by Chinese culture and Islamic culture. The architecture of the Cheng Hoo Mosque is a building that reflects the spirit of tolerance of Chinese cultural diversity located in Purbalingga, Central Java. This mosque has a distinctive shape that is different from mosques in general in Indonesia. The Cheng Hoo Mosque in Purbalingga has a different location when compared to other Cheng Hoo mosques, because the location of the mosque is not in a coastal area or near the sea. This is different from several Cheng Hoo Mosques in Indonesia such as the Cheng Hoo Mosque in

Palembang, the Cheng Hoo Mosque in Surabaya, and the Cheng Hoo Mosque in Pandaan-Pasuruan.

Cheng Hoo Mosque in Purbalingga is an interesting research object to study, associated with the meanings contained in the architectural and interior forms. The object of this research, besides being unique and interesting, also contains aesthetic values displayed through symbols and icons in the architecture and interior. The existence of the Cheng Hoo Mosque in Purbalingga has an important role in the development of aesthetic values and spiritual culture that are still not understood by the community, so researchers need to study it in more depth. The researcher sees that the literature review in the field has not been found that specifically discusses research on the architecture of the Cheng Hoo Mosque in Purbalingga. In this study, the researcher uses the iconography approach method because it aims to find meanings influenced by Chinese culture and Islamic culture.

METHOD

Research Design

The research method uses a qualitative method. In his book, Moleong explains that a researcher who conducts qualitative research is usually oriented towards existing theories. In qualitative research, theory is limited to understanding. A systematic statement related to a set of proportions derived from data and retested empirically (Moleong, 2007: 14).

Data collection technique

Literature review

The research process is supported by selected library sources. This means that researchers will selectively choose library materials that are used as references as a basis for research.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis using Panofsky's iconography study. This study was chosen because it is concerned with the interpretation of meaning, besides its closeness to culture is very relevant to the meaning. The core of Panofsky's study is stating that iconography is part of art history that is concerned with the interpretation of meaning behind the form in a work of art. This analysis consists of three stages, namely the pre-iconography stage, iconography analysis and iconological interpretation (Panofsky, 1955: 26). The data from this study obtained will be analyzed through three stages of iconography, namely 1) the stage of identifying factual data that produces textual meaning and expressional meaning about the architecture and interior of the Cheng Hoo Mosque in Purbalingga through pre-iconography, 2) the stage of iconography analysis to find conventional meaning, and 3) the stage of iconological interpretation which is the stage to reveal the symbolic value or meaning contained in the object being studied.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of research, analysis, and discussion on the Cheng Hoo Mosque in Purbalingga with an Iconography approach through three stages of analysis, namely pre-iconography, iconography, and iconological interpretation. The three stages of analysis can be described as follows:

- a. Pre-iconographic analysis, namely analysis of the architectural and interior aspects of the Cheng Hoo Mosque in Purbalingga
- b. Iconographic analysis, namely analysis of interior concepts, interior themes and influencing factors at the Cheng Hoo Mosque, Purbalingga.
- c. Iconological interpretation analysis, namely the analysis of meanings and symbols in the Cheng Hoo Mosque, Purbalingga.

Preiconographic Description

The pre-iconographic description stage is the initial stage that refers to the textual aspect of the artwork. This stage consists of identifying factual and expressional meanings to find out the artistic motif of the work, which is called primary meaning. Factual meaning is a way of identifying the form that appears on an object that comes from the configuration of the visual elements presented by the object. While expressional meaning comes from empathy in interpreting the atmosphere or expression and the observed object based on a sense of familiarity with the object and event. Primary meaning is a pure form or reading that appears on the object, including lines, colors, shapes, and techniques and materials used in representing natural objects such as humans, animals, plants, equipment, and so on (Panofsky, 1955:33). The overall pre-iconographic description stage will be corrected through the corrective principle of varying art history conditions. This is called the history of style or style that is synchronous with the object (Panofsky, 1955:40). The pre-iconographic description stage in the iconography study of the Chen Ho mosque traces the analysis of visual textual aspects by describing the physical identity that can be observed factually in the painting. Data analysis at this stage requires an analysis of the structure of art including visual elements and the organization of visual elements in observation. For this, a theory of art structure is needed. One of them was put forward by Edmund Burke Feldman. According to Feldman, an art structure can be identified by focusing attention on lines, shapes, colors, textures, and light and dark which are part of the form of the object/image (Feldman, 1991: 164). Related to formal analysis, namely the visual grammatical elements in A. Arifin's paintings, the visual elements of fine art analyzed are in the form of lines, shapes, colors, and textures that can be observed in real terms. The pre-iconographic description stage also requires a confirmation framework with corrective principles in the form of style history. Panofsky stated that this stage requires correction and testing of style history by identifying works from a historical perspective, where, and under what historical conditions objects and events are expressed in visual form (Panofsky, 1955: 35). History will not be separated from the construction of time (temporal) and space (spatial) (Kartodirdjo, 1993: 18-19).

Iconographic Analysis

The next stage is iconographic analysis. This analysis stage interprets conventional secondary meanings based on images, stories or literature studies, and allegories/symbols so that the theme and concept of the work can be identified (Panifosky, 1955: 35). This stage is a stage to identify the reading of textual aspects (artistic motifs) by looking at the relationship between the motif of a work of art with the theme and concept manifested in the form of images, literature, allegories or symbols in the work. This analysis stage also requires a sense of familiarity with the objects and events visualized in the work based on

practical experience so that the implied themes and concepts can be analyzed. This can be obtained from literal sources. Furthermore, this stage will be corrected with the principle of corrective history of type. This analysis stage uses Roland Barthes' semiotic theory so that the signs that emerge from the painting can be explored as myths that can reveal the symbols/allegories behind the work. Furthermore, the myths behind the presence of the signified in the work can be connected to the implied themes and concepts. Myths in Barthes' semiotic sense are not the same as the general understanding of myths believed by previous communities regarding a story or event. Roland Barthes discusses myths more seriously in his book entitled *Mythologies* in the Myth Today section in 1972. In the context of the old understanding of mythology, myths are related to history and the formation of society at that time, but Barthes views them as a form of mass communication message or speech in the modern world that is veiled behind superficial meaning.

For Barthes, mythological narratives are not only in the form of oral speech but can also be in the form of writing, photography, film, scientific reports, sports, performances, even advertisements and paintings that explain the hidden meaning of developing communication. It should be noted that myth is a communication system, namely a message. However, myth is not defined by the object of the message but by the way the message is told. Anything can be said to be a myth as long as it is told in the form of discourse. The definition of myth in this context is not old mythology - mythology has the meaning of a formation of society that is oriented towards the past or from a static, eternal historical formation. But rather a mass communication phenomenon that is told in the form of discourse that implies a hidden meaning in the context of phenomena that occur in the scope of the modern world. The form of discourse speech in this case is studied in the form of a work of art, namely a sign that is present in the representation of a painting. The sharpness of iconographic analysis can be done by confirming the corrective principle of historical interpretation of type. Type history is a historical condition that influences the conventions of a theme and concept expressed in specific objects and events in a time and region (Panofsky, 1995: 40).

Iconological Interpretation

The last stage is the iconological interpretation stage (intrinsic meaning or content). This stage is the most essential stage, namely related to the intrinsic meaning or content of a work of art. This stage requires synthetic intuition skills to understand symbols. Synthesis intuition concerns the essential tendencies of personal psychological thinking and the artist's *weltanschauung* (outlook on life). This stage requires corrective principles of historical cultural interpretation that form symbols in works of art. to achieve sharpness of interpretation. This is done through the symptoms that exist around the object or the artist by referring to the perspective of the supporting community (Panofsky, 1955: 41). The iconology stage requires the principle of historical corrective cultural symptoms under varying historical conditions, general and essential tendencies of the human mind expressed through themes and concepts (Panofsky, 1995: 41). Therefore, it is necessary to review the various symptoms that exist around the object or its creation, which refer to the psychology and perspective of the supporting community. Based on this confirmation framework, the

Malin Deman II painting is Arifin's expression in reflecting cultural values that are starting to fade and his ideological views on various phenomena that are felt.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion based on the study of Panofsky's iconography and iconology is first, at the iconography description stage, there is a factual meaning in the work and an expressional meaning. The artistic motif obtained is the creator's fantasy that he wants to deconstruct with a pattern of gestural representation depicted with an artistic and balanced composition. Second, the theme and concept reveal a symbolic theme. Thus, it is known that the concept of the visual work is that the symbolic values expressed in the work are a metaphor for the artist's appreciation of reality and empathy for the social conditions of society including the essence of custom for the third meaning. Through this iconographic iconology study, it is found that artists in expressing their concepts of thought in works of art are indeed inseparable from the context of the current era in their time. However, different things still exist in some artists who actually oppose the current of the current era in the midst of the existence of the originality of their work, thus creating a distinctive and specifically different symbolic content. In addition, iconographic and iconological studies can reveal the tendency of hidden meanings behind the presence of components of the form of an artwork can also show the historical context of the type and history of style that influence the creative process of an artist in creating a work. Overall, the iconographic study of this mosque is appropriate, from beginning to end. Cheng Hoo Mosque located on Jl. Raya Purbalingga, Selaganggeng Village, Mrebet District, Purbalingga is a mosque building that has a shape resembling a Chinese-style temple building. The architecture of the Cheng Hoo Mosque is present to dynamically color certain communities bringing different nuances, because this mosque is an interesting expression to review. The interesting side is found in the forms of architectural elements that are arranged harmoniously using colors such as red, green and gold.

REFERENCE

- Barthes, Roland. 2004. *Mythology*, translated by Nurhadi & Sihabul Millah, creation of discourse, Yogyakarta
- Budiman, Amen. (1979), *Chinese Islamic Society in Indonesia*. Semarang: Tanjungsari
- Cassier, Ernest. (1996), *The Philosophy of Symbolics*, . Vol. 3: *The Phenomenology of Knowledge*, New Haven: Yale UP.
- Ching Francis, DK (1999), *Architecture : Spatial Form and Its Arrangement*, Seventh edition, Erlangga, Jakarta.
- Feldmand, Edmund Burke. (1967), *Art As Image And Idea*, Prentice-Hall Inc. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey.
- Holt, Claire. (1967), *Art in Indonesia: Continuities and Change or Tracing the Development of Art in Indonesia*, Translated by RM Soedarsono, Arti. Line, Bandung, 2000.
- K h ol, David. (1984), *Chinese Architecture in The Stars Settlements and Western Malaya: Temples, Kongsis, and Houses*. Archipelago.
- Knapp, Ronald G. (199 0), *Chinese House*. New York: Oxford University Press, Inc.

- Liu, Laurance G. (198 9) , *Chinese Architecture* . London: Academy Edition.
- Moleong, M. (2007) , *Qualitative Research Methodology* . Bandung: PT Remaja Rosda Karya
- Panofsky, Erwin . (1955) , *Meaning In The Visual Arts*. in the New York : Doubleday Anchoor Books, Doubleday & Company, Inc. Garden City.
- Rochym, Abdul. (1993) , *History of Islamic Architecture* , Banjarmasin: Fa. "Adil" Bookstore
- Sayyed Hossein Nasr. (1994), *Spirituality and Islamic Art* , Bandung: Mizan publisher.
- Sofyan Safitri Harahap. (1996) , *Mosque Management* , Yogyakarta: PT.