

# ORNAMENTS OF LAPO BATAKIN KUALA TANJUNG, BATUBARA REGENCY A SEMIOTICSINTERPRETATION

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## ABSTRACT

This article aims at clarifying the semiotic meaning in Lapo Batak ornaments in Kuala Tanjung, Batubara Regency. The data of this study were taken from the interpretation from Batak Toba people who live in Kuala Tanjung, Batubara Regency is located in North Sumatera Indonesia in interpreting their cultural symbols. In clarifying the data, the writing was conducted by using qualitative method. The result showed the semiotic meaning and how the cultural values were realized in Lapo Batak ornaments. The data were analyzed by using Roland Barthes' order of signification theory; denotation, connotation, and myth to emphasize the interaction between the sign with the personal cultural experience of the viewers, and the interaction between convention in the sign with the conventions experienced and expected by viewers. The writer found that the interpretations of the personal cultural experience from the viewers were still far from the Batak Toba convention (myth) in interpreting the ornaments.

**Keywords: Connotation, Denotation, Lapo Batak ornaments, Myth, Semiotic**

## ABSTRAK

*Artikel ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan makna semiotik pada ornament warung Batak yang berada di Kuala Tanjung, kabupaten Batu Bara. Data pada artikel ini diambil dari interpretasi dari orang suku Batak Toba yang tinggal di Kuala Tanjung, Kabupaten Batu Bara. Kabupaten Batu Bara berlokasi di Sumatera Utara, Indonesia, dalam menginterpretasikan symbol budaya mereka. Dalam menjelaskan data tersebut, penulis melakukannya dengan menggunakan metode *Qualitative*. Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa makna semiotik serta bagaimana nilai budaya itu ditampilkan pada ornament yang ada di warung batak. Data-data tersebut dianalisa dengan menerapkan teori Roland Barthes terhadap denotasi, konotasi, serta mitos untuk menekankan interaksi antara tanda-tanda pengalaman secara pribadi terhadap pandangannya dan interaksi antara konvensi tanda dengan konvensi pengalaman dan harapan pandangan. Penulis menemukan bahwa interpretasi pengalaman nilai budaya secara pribadi dari pandangan masih jauh dari konvensi (Mitos) dalam menginterpretasikan ornament-ornamen tersebut*

**Kata Kunci :Konotasi, Denotasi, Ornament WarungBatak, Mitos, Semiotik**

## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Language is a way to communicate one another. According to Wijana (2016: 195) from the language can be known from the circle or social class where the person is from or from the language, maybe it can

also be known from the region or what ethnicity the person came from. But, language is not only about words. According to DeMichele, language is symbolic in more ways than can be summarized in a sentence or paragraph,

but generally it talks about how symbols can stand for something else, how they can be used to communicate, and how they can be imbued with meaning. For example, of symbolic language: the word cat is symbolic of the idea of a cat, a dollar is a symbol of \$1 of economic value, the word yes or a nod is a symbol of confirmation, a grimace is a symbol of disapproval, and a smiley face emoji is a symbol of happiness.

(<http://factmyth.com/factoids/language-is-a-system-of-communication-that-uses-symbolism/>, June 1, 2020) According to Sebeok, words in general are symbolic signs. But any signifier - object, sound, figure, etc. - can be symbolic. A cross figure can stand for the concept 'Christianity' ; a V-sign made with the index and middle fingers can stand symbolically for the concept 'victory' ; white is a colour that can be symbolic of 'cleanliness', 'purity', or 'innocence', but dark of 'uncleanness, 'impurity', or 'corruption'; and the list could go on and on. These symbols are all established by social convention. (Sebeok, 2011: 11)

When we say “language is symbolic” we are not talking about “what we say” (what symbols we use), but “what we mean” (what the symbols we use mean; what we are trying to communicate). Language is symbolic in that the symbols we use have a deeper “symbolic and semantic” meaning beyond their literal meaning. The study of this can be called semiology (or semiotic, as it is known better in America).

According to Saussure, semiology (from the Greek Semeion “sign”) studies the life of sign within societies. This is general approach to the study of sign. In every

cultural life, or even of culture as a sort of language. He proposed dualistic notion of the sign, relating the signifier as the form of the word or phrase uttered, to the signified as the mental concept. And it's important to note that according to Saussure, the sign is completely arbitrary, there was no necessary connection between the sign and its meaning. Roland Barthes proposed another term to understand the sign by his theory's order of signification where the sign has three stages in meaning; denotation, connotation, and myth. To conclude, Chandler in his book, *Semiotics, The Basics*; wrote “To semioticians, a defining feature of signs is that they are treated by their users as ‘standing for’ or representing other things.” (Chandler, 2007: 60) In Batak Toba culture, there are so many symbols with its hidden meaning especially ornaments in Lapo Batak. Lapo, in *Kamus Bahasa Batak Toba* by Op. Faustin Panjaitan (2010: 130), means warung, kedai (food stall). Lapo Batak is not only about a restaurant that serves food, but it is also a place where Batak people gather. They will also get closer to their family members of the same clan.

For Bataknese, it is required the involvement of each family from each clan to discuss anything about the culture; marriage, births, and also funeral ceremonies. In Lapo Batak, there are a lot of symbols with differential meanings, such as; gorga, ulos, and a picture of goldenfish (ornaments). The writer is interested in analysing the ornaments in Lapo Batak in Kuala Tanjung, Batubara Regency since the ornaments are not just for decorations as advertising, but there are also some interesting meanings behind

it, and the writer would be able to do its social context on how Batak people see their cultural symbols. Based on the background of the study, the writer formulates the problems of this article as follows:

1. What semiotic meaning are in Lapo Batak ornaments culture?
2. How are the cultural values of Lapo Batak ornaments in Medan?

Based on the research question above, the writer has several objectives of the article as follow:

1. To identify the semiotic interpretation in Lapo Batak ornaments culture.
2. To elaborate the cultural values of Lapo Batak ornaments in Kuala Tanjung, Batubara Regency.

To avoid an overlapping and misleading discussion, this article was only focused on Batak Toba ornaments in 2 Lapo Batak in Kuala Tanjung Regency, namely; RM. Padoo Holso, and RM. Khas Batak Silindung with 8 ornaments in total. The study used Barthes's order of signification theory to analyse the data to get the semiotic meaning behind the ornaments. The analysis of this research is expected to be able to give significance for the reader, the results of the research are expected to give explanation on how signs portrayed on ornaments in Lapo Batak in Kuala Tanjung Batubara Regency. It is also expected to give explanation about how Barthes' order of signification theory can be implied in interpreting signs in Lapo Batak ornaments in Kuala Tanjung Batubara Regency. For practical significance, the results of the research are expected to promote Batak culture and their characteristics not only for Indonesian but

also for international. It is also expected to give knowledge about Batak ornaments to people especially Batak people so the cultural heritage will not be vanished.

## **CHAPTER II :THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Semiotic or semiology, as it better known in Europe) originate from the Greek semeion, which mean sign. Semiotics is a general study about the signs as an essential part of cultural life and communication. According to semiotics, we can only know culture and reality by means of the sign, through the process of signification. According to Danesi (2004, 3-4) on his book, Messages, Signs, and Meaning, he says that semiotics is the science that attempts to answer the following question: What does X mean? The X can be anything from a single word or gesture, to an entire musical composition or film. The "magnitude" of X may vary, but the basic nature of the inquiry does not. If we represent the meaning (or meanings) that X encodes with the letter Y, then the central task of semiotic analysis can be reduced, essentially, to determining the nature of the relation  $X = Y$ . Let's take, as a first case-in-point, the meaning of red. In this case, our X constitutes an English color term. As it turns out, there is hardly just one answer to the question of what it means. At a basic level, it refers of course to a primary color located at the lower end of the visible spectrum. However, that very color can have a host of other meanings. Here are few of them:

- If it appears as a traffic signal, it means "stop" to anyone facing the signal at an intersection

- If it is the armband color worn by someone at a political rally, then the wearer is perceived to be an individual who espouses a particular kind of political ideology, often labelled as “left-wing” or “radical.”
- If it is the colour of the flag used by someone at a construction site, then it is a signal of “danger.”
- If it is used in an expression such as “turning red,” then it is a figure of speech that allows people to refer to emotional states without naming them precisely.

In sum, red is an example of a sign. It is something, X (a color), that stands for something else, Y (a traffic signal, a political ideology and so on).

## 2. Some Theories of Semiotic

There are a lot of semioticians in the world. But, the writer only focuses on the theories from three famous experts of semiotics.

### 2.1 Ferdinand de Saussure

Saussure's definition of the sign laid down the course that semiotic inquiry was to take during the first half of the twentieth century. He defined it as a form made up (1) of something physical - sounds, letters, gestures, etc. - which he termed the signifier; and (2) of the image or concept to which the signifier refers which he called the signified. He then called the relation that holds between the two significations. Saussure considered the connection between the signifier and the signified an arbitrary one that human beings and/or societies have established at will.

For Saussure, both the signifier (the ‘sound pattern’) and the signified (the concept) were purely ‘psychological’.

The relationship between the signifier and the signified is referred to as ‘signification’, and this is represented in the Saussurean diagram by the arrows. The horizontal broken line marking the two elements of the sign is referred to as ‘the bar’. (as cited in Chandler, 2007, 14-15) If we take a linguistic example, the word ‘open’ (when it is invested with meaning by someone who encounters it on a shop doorway) is a sign consisting of:

- a signifier: the word ‘open’;
- a signified concept: that the shop is open for business.

### 2.2 Charles Sander Peirce

At around the same time as Saussure was formulating his model of the sign and of ‘semiology’ (and laying the foundations of structuralist methodology), was also in progress as the pragmatist philosopher and logician Charles Sanders Peirce formulated his own model of the sign, of ‘semeiotic [sic]’ and of the taxonomies of signs.

Signified

Signifier

In contrast to Saussure’s model of the sign in the form of a ‘self-contained dyad’, Peirce offered a triadic (three-part) model consisting of:

#### 1. The representamen:

The form which the sign takes (not necessarily material, though usually interpreted as such) – called by some theorists the ‘sign vehicle’.

#### 2. An interpretant:

It is not an interpreter but rather the sense made of the sign.

#### 3. An object:

It is something beyond the sign to which it refers (a referent).

In Peirce’s own words:

A sign . . . [in the form of a representamen] is something which stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity. It addresses somebody, that is, creates in the mind of that person an equivalent sign, or perhaps a more developed sign. That sign which it creates I call the interpretant of the first sign.

The sign stands for something, its object. It stands for that object, not in all respects, but in reference to a sort of idea, which I have sometimes called the ground of the representamen. (as cited in Danesi, 2007: 29).

To qualify as a sign, all three elements are essential. The sign is a unity of what is represented (the object), how it is represented (the representamen) and how it is interpreted (the interpretant).

The sign is more than just a sign vehicle. The term 'sign' is often used loosely, so that this distinction is not always preserved. In the Saussurean framework, some references to 'the sign' should be to the signifier, and similarly, Peirce himself frequently mentions 'the sign' when, strictly speaking, he is referring to the representamen. It is easy to be found guilty of such a slippage

perhaps because we are so used to 'looking beyond' the form which the sign happens to take. However, to reiterate: the signifier or representamen is the form in which the sign appears (such as the spoken or written form of a word) whereas the sign is the whole meaningful ensemble. The interaction between the representamen, the object and the interpretant is referred to by Peirce as 'semiosis'.

The three elements that make up a sign function like a label on an opaque box that contains an object. At first the mere fact that there is a box with a label on it suggests that it contains something, and then when we read the label we discover what that something is. The process of semiosis, or decoding the sign, is as follows. The first thing that is noticed (the representamen) is the box and label; this prompts the realization that something is inside the box (the object). This realization, as well as the knowledge of what the box contains, is provided by the interpretant.

Representamen Object

'Reading the label' is actually just a metaphor for the process of decoding the sign. The important point to be aware of here is that the object of a sign is always hidden. We cannot actually open the box and inspect it directly. The reason for this is simple: if the object could be known directly, there would be no need of a sign to represent it. We only know about the object from noticing the label and the box and then 'reading the label' and forming a mental picture of the object in our mind. Therefore the hidden object of a sign is only brought to realization through the interaction of the representamen, the object and the interpretant. The representamen is similar in meaning to Saussure's signifier while the interpretant is roughly analogous to the signified. However, the interpretant has a quality unlike that of the signified: it is itself a sign in the mind of the interpreter.

Peirce noted that 'a sign . . . addresses somebody, that is, creates in the mind of that person an equivalent sign, or perhaps a more developed sign.' Peirce also

identified 66 different types of signs, of which three are used commonly in all kinds of semiotic work today. They are called icons, indexes, and symbols. (as cited in Danesi, 2004: 27)

### **The Cosmology of Batak Toba**

According to Irawan and Lukuhay (2012: 3), there are two kinds of ideas about the origin or cosmology of Batak tribe. First idea was told by Ypes, said that Batak tribe was originally from Northern Asia, then moved to Formosa in Philippines, and continued to move toward South Sulawesi, who then finally became Toraja, Bugis, and Makassar. After that, they moved to Sumatera through Lampung, South Sumatera, downed the west coast to Barus and still moved on to Bukit Barisan Mountain in Pusuk Buhit, which is one of the areas near Lake Toba. The second idea said that Batak tribe was originated from India who then spread around Southeast Asia in Muang Thai Burma, then moved to Genting Keraland in North Malaysia and sailed from Malay peninsula toward the east coast of Sumatera, then moved to Batubara coast and downed the river toward Lake Toba.

In fact, there was another route they took, that was from Malacca to the west coast of Aceh and moving forward to Singkil, Barus, or Sibolga and finally stayed in Pusuk Buhit.

### **Cultural Awareness**

According to Collins Dictionary (collinsdictionary.com), someone's cultural awareness is their understanding of the differences between themselves and people from other countries or other backgrounds, especially differences in attitudes and values. Cultural Awareness is the foundation of communication and it

involves the ability of standing back from ourselves and becoming aware of our cultural values, beliefs and perceptions.

### **Batak Toba Cultural Awareness in Attitudes**

The attitudes of Batak Toba people is based on their three philosophies; *Dalihan Na Tolu*, *Suhi Ni Ampang Na Opat*, and *Umpama, Umpasa*, and Philosophy. Those philosophies are the guidelines in behavior manners customary in the interactions to kinship groups.

#### ***Dalihan Na Tolu***

"Dalihan" means a stove made of a stone, while "Dalihan Natolu" is a cooking stove placed on three stones. The three stones are made as a place for the cooking stove on it. The dalihan that is made must be the same size and placed or must be planted on the ground, and the spacing and height should be balanced with each other, so that the dalihan will not tilted. Usually, cooking with dalihan natolu

is sometimes uneven because the support stones are not aligned. To be aligned, other objects are used to prop up. In everyday language, most Toba Batak people add the objects to block. They are called *sihal-sihal*. Dalihan Na Tolu effected the presence of kinship social crisis on the third generation after Si Raja Batak, as impact of marriage with the same clan between Tuan Sariburaja with his sister (iboto) named Boru Pareme. Both are the son and daughter of Tatea Bulan as the second generation. As the consequence of what Sariburaja was doing, he ran into the forest while Boru Pareme also expelled from Sianjur Mula Mula Village. Then the classification began to members of the society with the categories of *the Somba Marhula-hula, Manat Mar dongan*

*Tubu (friend of one clan), and Elek Marboru.*

(<http://www.gobatak.com/filsafah-orang-batak-tobadalam-dalihan-natolu/>, June 1, 2020)

### **SombaMarhulahula**

Hula-hula in the Batak tradition are the male family of the wife or mother, commonly called *tunggane* by the husband and *tulang* by the child. In the Batak tradition which is paternalistic, the one who proposes is the male, so if women often come to the house of men who are not their relatives, it is called *bagottumandangisige* (violating the rules). There is an aphorism in Batak language, "Nasosombamarhula-hula, siraraon ma gadongna". *Gadong* for Batak people is considered one of the staple foods as a substitute for rice, especially for breakfast or lunch. *Siraraon* is a condition of sweet potato (*gadong*) that tastes bland as if it is rotten and runny. The statement implies that those who do not respect the hula hula will have a difficulty making a living.

### **Manat Mardongan Tubu**

The picture of *Dongan Tubu* is the figure of siblings. Psychologically in daily life, the relationship between siblings is very close. But one time the relationship will be tenuous, it can even cause a fight. "Angka naso manat mardongan tubu, natajom ma adopanna". The phrase is reminiscent, people with one clan must have experienced disputes, disputes that often ended with physical fighting. In Batak custom, there is a term *panombol* or *parhata* which defines the representative *suhut* (host) in the custom that is applied. That is why, to plan a habit (friend's party or death),

*namardongantubu* (siblings) always talk about it first. It is useful for avoiding mistakes in implementing customs. In general, *panombol* or *parhata* are taken one level below and / or one level above each clan.

### **ElekMarboru**

*Boru* is a group of people from sister, and the clan of her husband or the family of a woman from a clan. In everyday life we often hear the term *elek marboru* which means to love one another so that they can get blessings. The term *Boru* in Batak culture does not look at status, position, and wealth.

### **Suhi Ni Ampang Na Opat**

In the Batak culture, there is a very thick piece of equipment seen in its role, namely *ampang* or basket. It is thick because in terms of its use, the tool is very useful to be a place or container. But it also has another meaning as a symbol that focuses on the meaning of the four angles in the *ampang* or basket. The values contained in *Suhi Ni Ampang Na Opat* / four angles of a basket are defined as four angles of the same size and the same function and must also exist at the same time. The values in *Suhi Ni Ampang Na Opat* show the noble values in the human's heart; *holong* (love), *dame* (peace), *lasniroha* (joy), and *harapan* (hope)

(<https://www.tobatabo.com/416+apa-arti-suhi-ni-ampang-na-opat-dalam-adat-batak.htm>, June 1 2020).

In Batak custom event, the symbolic of *Suhi Ni Ampang Na Opat* is kinship in a Batak traditional party. One of the representatives of the four family elements must take a part, if not, the *naopatsuhi* will not functioned as it should. But, that rarely happens because the family-relatives must

fulfill it in order to make a customary event happens. The four family-relatives are (<https://www.hitabatak.com/arti-suhini-ampang-na-opat/>, June 1, 2020);

1. *Suhut Sihabolonan*: the family who will carry out the custom event.
2. *Namarhahamaranggi*: the siblings of those who will carry out the custom event.
3. *Sabol tok*: the siblings from the level of the father or grandfather who will carry out the custom event.
4. *Boru*: the clans who take the women who will carry out the custom of Boru.

### **Umpama, Umpasa, and Philosophy**

*Umpasa* is a kind of rhyme (first sentence explains the last sentence), but actually it is tantamount to a prayer of blessing to be blessed by God. All those who have rhymes must confess in their hearts that God is the One who gives blessings.

*Umpama* is a sentence of equality that is almost similar to the philosophy of old men. If you say a proverb, don't say the sentence (contents) of a poem, and vice versa, if you rhyme, don't say a proverb. The philosophy of parents is like the equation but most of the experiences of old-time parents can be advice especially to young people. (<http://sianporsea.blogspot.com/2011/09/pengertian-umpasa-umpama-dan-falsafah.html>, June 1, 2020)

### **Batak Toba Cultural Awareness in Values**

As stated by Basyral Hamidy Harahap and Hotman M. Siahaan, the value of Batak culture includes all aspects of Batak people's lives. In this context, there are at least nine main Batak cultural values, namely: (1) Kinship, (2) Religion, (3) Hagabeon, (4) Hasangapon, (5)

Hamoraon, (6) Hamajuon, (7) Patikdohotuhum, (8) Shelter and (9) Conflict. (as cited in Ritonga 2012: 250-251)

### **Kinship**

Kinship, which includes tribal primordial relations, affection on the basis of blood relations, harmony of the elements of Dalihan Na Tolu (Hula-hula, Dongan Tubu, Boru), Pisang Raut (Anak Boru from Anak Boru), Hatobangon (Intellectual) and all related relations kinship due to marriage, clan solidarity and others.

### **Religious**

Religious, includes religious life, both traditional religions and later religions that regulate its relationship with the Creator and its relationship with humans and their environment.

### **Hagabeon**

Batak people hope to have many descendants and long life. There is a famous Batak traditional expression conveyed at a wedding ceremony. It is a hope expression that the newlyweds will be given 17 sons and 16 daughters. Human

## **CHAPTER III: DATA AND DATA ANALYSIS**

### **A. Data**

As the writer explained in the previous chapter, this study dealt with semiotic interpretation on ornaments in Lapo Batak in Kuala Tanjung by Bataknese who live in Kuala Tanjung Regency. The data of this study were ornaments in Lapo Batak. There were gorga, ulos, and a picture of golden fish found in Lapo Batak in Kuala Tanjung Regency.

## B. Data Analysis

In this section, the data and data analysis of the ornaments in LapoBatakin Kuala Tanjung were given to solve the research problems, which were: what semiotic meanings are in LapoBatak ornaments culture and how are the semiotic meaning realized in Batak cultural values. The data were analysed by using Barthes' semiotic theory; denotation, connotation, and myth to identify the semiotic meanings of Lapo Batak ornaments culture. In this data analysis, the amount of the ornaments (data)

### 1. Roland Barthes Semiotic Analysis for Gorga Boraspati

Denotation meaning in Gorga Boraspati was a lizard-shaped with two branches. Lizards were usually located above the house and are located on the wall of the traditional house on the right and left side of the front house and beside Gorga Adop Adop. (Rayking, 2013: 39)

In connotation meaning based on Bataknese people interpretations, Gorga Boraspati was interpreted as a symbol of eternity life since lizards was never sleep, a symbol of easy adaptation since lizards are in every human's houses, a symbol of strict people with hard tone since lizards could make a loud sound, a symbol of Lapo owner's hope to have a lot of customers come to the lapo since the appearance of lizard's voice might be a sign to tell that there was someone's coming, a symbol of respect for Muslim to warn Muslim that the lapo is a non-halal place that serves forbidden dishes since there was a history which led lizards as forbidden animals, a symbol of loyalty since a lizard can stick to a wall without falling, a symbol of survivor since lizards can sever their tails

to fool its enemy, a symbol of wealth according to viewer's belief, a symbol of worth since the respondent saw the ornament as a gecko which was expensive and has benefits, a

symbol of peace since lizard likes to live indoors, and a symbol of honesty since lizard can look forward and backward might be a sign that Bataknese was not hypocritical. These interpretations fit to Harahap & Siahaan's theory of Batak Tobacultural values; Hagabeon (hope to have many descendants and long life), Hamajuon (encouraging Batak people to migrate), Hamoraon (wealth), and shelter. In myth meaning, Gorga Boraspati or lizard often gave certain sign through behavior and sound that could help humans avoid danger. Boraspati was rarely seen or appears. When it was often seen, it indicated that the plants were fertile which led to wealth.

### 2. Roland Barthes Semiotic Analysis for Gorga Simeoleol

Gorga Simeoleol in denotation meaning was a form of tendrils that are intertwined with the impression of waddle that produces beauty and is located on each side of the traditional Batak Toba house board. Simeoleol means to waddle. (Rayking, 2013: 69) In connotation meaning, Gorga Simeoleol was interpreted by Bataknese as a symbol of seriousness since every round of the ornament had something to tell that if the rotation was wrong, it could bring death, a symbol of wealth since the ornament looks like a living plant form which usually symbolized wealth, a symbol of courage since there is a red color on the ornament, a symbol of harmony based on the respondent's beliefs, a symbol of shelter since those colors of the

ornaments were made from the blood of the Batak warriors during the war, a symbol of values and regularities of life based on respondent's beliefs, a symbol of justice since the two ornaments coincided and were facing each other, a symbol of survivor since it was a picture of sea waves that reminding Batak people even though there were many waves of obstacles, Batak people were able to survive, a symbol of kinship since each colors of the ornament were unbroken and mutually interlocking, a symbol of danger repellent since it was respondent's beliefs, and a symbol of unity since it was illustrated with opposite ends but remained a unified whole so as to provide a mutually binding rhythm of motion. These interpretations fit to Harahap & Siahaan's theory of Batak Toba cultural values; *hamoraon* (wealth), shelter, *patik dohot uhum* (the value of truth in the world of law), kinship, and Batak Toba cultural attitudes; *dalihannatolu* (which should have 3 stones with the same size so that the *dalihan* will not tilted /harmonizing). In myth meaning, *Gorga Simeoleol* was as an attitude and behavior about love for Toba Batak art, such as dancing (*manortor*, *martumba*). *Gorga Simeoleol* symbolized joy.

### 3. Roland Barthes Semiotic Analysis for *Gorga Simataniari*

*Gorga Simataniari* in denotation meaning was in the shape of the sun. The sun in daily life was usually above the sky which gave blazing (heat) to humans. It was placed in the middle of the Toba Batak traditional house and next to it was *Gong*. (Rayking, 2013: 48) In connotation meaning, *Gorga Simataniari* based on the interpretation of Bataknese was a symbol of hope to make the lives of Batak people

brighter, as a symbol of light for the life of the Batak people, a symbol of wealth since the ornament was like an eye and its position was placed in front of the *lapo* which signifying it was a vision to look for fortune, a symbol of power with the light given by the sun, a symbol of seriousness since it was not just any *gorga* must be united with *Gorga Ipon Ipon*, *Iran Iran*, *Simataniari*, and *Ulu Paung* or if not it would bring death, a symbol of adaptation since it was a picture of eight points of compass which encouraged Batak people to scatter in all directions, a symbol of leader since it had a black dot and was placed in the middle which meant there was only one leader in a home, a symbol of wholeness since it was a picture of a drum that has a circle which symbolizes a relationship between people must be intact, a symbol of courage since it was respondent's beliefs, and a symbol of unity since it was a picture of a motorcycle wheel motif that it was used to coat motorcycle tires and united with tires. These interpretations fit to Harahap & Siahaan's theory of Batak Toba cultural values; *hamoraon* (wealth), *hasangapon* (power), and *hamajuon* (encouraging Batak people to migrate). In myth meaning, *Gorga Simataniari* means a source of life force and determinant of the way of life in the world, so that everyone can work to fulfil their daily lives, and will alleviate all problems if they want to work diligently.

### 4. Roland Barthes Semiotic Analysis for *Gorga Ipon Ipon*

*Gorga Ipon Ipon* in denotation meaning looks like teeth. Humans without teeth cannot eat. Likewise, without *Gorga Ipon Ipon*, the Toba Batak traditional

house would not be beautiful. It was located on the edge of the Toba Batak traditional house, with its wide between two to three centimeters on the edge of the board. (Rayking, 2013: 44)

In connotation meaning, Gorga Ipon Ipon based on the interpretations of Bataknese was a symbol of obedience to God since the ornament was placed under Gorga Tunggal Pangaduan (which the viewer meant Gorga Ulu Paung), a symbol of openness since the ornament has several holes on each side that make the wind can penetrate the ornament, a symbol of togetherness since every picture in this gorga was the same picture and coincided, a symbol of beauty since this ornament had some triangles that arranged neatly and produced beauty, a symbol of kinship since this ornament had straight lines and coincided, a symbol of courage (red color), purity (white color), and sadness (black color), a symbol of strength since the ornament was made of strong woods, and a symbol of authority since it was a stick that symbolized authority according to the respondent. These interpretations fit to Harahap & Siahaan's theory of Batak Tobo cultural values; religious, kinship, and, hasangapon (power/authority). In myth meaning, Gorga Ipon Ipon means harmony, meaning every family that occupies the house is a harmonious family and if there are problems in the family it will be resolved peacefully and deliberately. As the nature and behavior of the Toba Batak community in overcoming a problem, the Toba Batak community has a philosophy of Dalihan Na Tolu; sombamarhula-hula, manat mardongan tubu, and elek marboru. So, the problem is solved by deliberation.

##### 5. Roland Barthes Semiotic Analysis for Gorga Iran Iran

Gorga Iran Iran in denotation meaning was a kind of human face makeup material to make it look more beautiful. The gorga was usually located on the left and right sides of the Batak Toba traditional house. (Rayking, 2013: 60)

In connotation meaning, Gorga Iran Iran was interpreted by Bataknese as a symbol of light since the shape of the gorga looks like a star; a symbol of advice since the ornament looked like a Batak letter which was usually contained of some advice; a symbol of protector since it was like a safety for another gorga because it was placed under another gorga; a symbol of harmony since the ornament has two same carvings and is placed side by side which signified Batak people liked to live side by side; a symbol of beauty since the ornament has curved lines which produced beauty; a symbol of wealth since the ornament is a symbol of the Kingdom of Bataknese which represented prosperity; a symbol of openness since the ornament is a fence that can be opened and closed; a symbol of shelter since it was a picture of scorpion which its poison was released to fight the enemy; a symbol of simplicity since the placement of the ornament in the front lapo represented a fundamental life, and at the bottom of the roof represented a low profile; a symbol of beauty since the ornament resembles flower petals; and a symbol of wisdom and affection since the ornament was a combination of Gorga Boraspati and Gorga Adop Adop. These interpretations fit to Harahap & Siahaan's theory of Batak Tobo cultural values; kinship, and hamoraon (wealth). In myth meaning, Gorga Iran Iran means a symbol

of beauty. So, every person who occupies the house is a person who is beautiful from the face and behavior in their daily lives.

#### 6. Roland Barthes Semiotic Analysis for Gorga Ulu Paung

Gorga Ulu Paung in denotation meaning was a giant decoration in the form of half human and half animal, often found in the form of a buffalo horned human head. It was at the top end of the Batak Toba traditional house. (Rayking, 2013: 57) Connotation meaning of Gorga Ulu Paung was interpreted by Bataknese as a symbol of shelter since it was a buffalo head that has sharp horns and nose which was considered as an icon to scare bad people, a symbol of power since the ornament was placed upon any other gorga in one carving which represented the position of a king, a symbol of strength since the ornament looks like a giant face that has a big and strong body posture, a symbol of hope to have a son since the ornament looks like a shape of human's head wearing a crown which usually pinned on male, and a symbol of braveness since the ornament looks like a sword's hilt was usually used by warriors who were brave and tough. These interpretations fit to Harahap & Siahaan's theory of Batak Toba cultural values; shelter, hasangapon (power), and the cultural attitudes theory; suhiniampangnaopat which its values showed love, peace, joy, and hope. In myth meaning, Gorga Ulu Palung symbolized power. So, everyone who occupied the house was a person who was alert and quick to face all the trials and distress. In addition, this gorga was also a sign to fight begu (ghosts) coming from outside the village. So, if Gorga Ulu Paung was on a house, then the people who occupied the

house would get along in a family and produced a harmonious relationship.

7. Roland Barthes Semiotic Analysis for Goldfish picture In denotation meaning, the ornament is a picture of goldfish. Goldfish is a Batak typical food that was served in Batak custom. In connotation meaning, it was interpreted by Bataknese as a symbol of wealth since the oils in the goldfish that entered the stomach were believed to be a fortune; a symbol of blessing and prayer, a symbol of harmony because just like goldfishes who like to go hand in hand, the Batak people also want their culture, customs, and religion to go hand in hand; a symbol of freshness since goldfishes live in the fresh water; a symbol of gratitude since the ornament was believed to be an icon to show gratitude as something desired has been achieved; a symbol of persistence in pursuing their goals like goldfish that swim against the flow; and a symbol of kinship since goldfish always go together and support one another. These interpretations fit to Harahap & Siahaan's theory of Batak Toba cultural values; kinship, and hamoraon (wealth). In myth meaning, dengke (goldfish) is a symbol of fertility / many offspring, a symbol of blessing from the bride's parents, good livelihood and a symbol of affection from the bride's parents.

#### 8. Roland Barthes Semiotic Analysis for Ulos Sadum

Ulos Sadum in denotation meaning was an ulos that will be given to namboru (sister of the father) of the bride and groom that will be worn by hula-hula (sister or brother of the mother) during the Batak customary marriage. (Agustina, 2016: 3) In connotation meaning, Ulos Sadum was

interpreted by Batakese as a symbol of marriage since it was an icon to give blessing at a wedding; a symbol of blessing; a symbol of advice; a symbol of shelter since ulos is believed to protect Batak people from evils; a symbol of prayer; a symbol of hope since this ulos was given to people who were expecting something to happen; a symbol of simplicity

since the ulos has its cultural meaning that Batakese should live in simplicity and care for others; a symbol of wealth since ulos was intended that Batak people who received ulos would get a prosperous life; a symbol of warmth since Batak people used to live in highlands which has cold temperatures and used ulos to warm them; a symbol of kinship since ulos could be used at the same time to more than one person which meant to bind to each other in a family relationship; a symbol of power since the ornament was Ulos Bintang Maratur (Maratur Star) which was expensive as seen from its name "star" that usually associated with people who have high positions such as generals; a symbol of strength since it was believed give strength or power to women. These interpretations fit to Harahap & Siahaan's theory of Batak Tobacultural values; shelter, religious, hamoraon (wealth), kinship, hasangapon (power), and the cultural attitudes theory; suhiniampangnaopat which its values showed love, peace, joy, and hope. Ulos Sadum in myth meaning was a proof of love from a hula-hula to their children.

### **C. Research Findings**

Ornament is functioned to decorate or beautify a place. but, such ornament might

have a hidden meaning. The meaning is caused from certain community or cultural perspectives or an ideology of a group. For an individual interpretation, people interpret a sign using their own knowledge and experience. Based on Barthes's order of signification theory, Lapo Batak ornaments gave certain information to the respondents related to the ornament's characteristic, their own knowledge, beliefs, experiences, and Batak cultural ceremonies. To conclude, there were a lot of respondents who did not know the real meaning of the Lapo Batak ornaments.

### **D. Discussion**

Based on Saussure, the linguistic sign was defined as two side entity. One side of the sign was what he called the signifier, a material aspect of a sign. Inseparably from the signifier in any sign, engendered by the signifier was what Saussure called the signified as the mental concept. More specific to Saussure's model of the sign in the form of a 'self-contained dyad', Peirce offered a triadic (three-part) model consisting of representamen, interpretant, and object. The representamen was similar in meaning to Saussure's signifier while the interpretant was roughly analogous to the signified. However, the interpretant has a quality unlike that of the signified: it was itself a sign in the mind of the interpreter. Meanwhile, Barthes' order of signification theory continued the thought of Saussure by emphasizing the interaction between the sign with the personal and cultural experience of its users, and the interaction between convention in the sign and the conventions experienced and expected by its users. In a research about "Gorga Sopo Godang Pada Masyarakat Batak

TobaKajianSemiotik” which was conducted by Rayking (2013) there was also a similar method in doing a semiotic analysis of gorga. In his research, the method was depth interview with the people who were in Simanindo Village while this study used the same method but with Bataknese who lived in Medan. The researcher used his results to conclude the data by using Roland Barthes’ semiotic theory; denotation, connotation, and myth.

### Conclusion

Having identified and analysed all the data, the findings of this research could be concluded as follows:

1. The semiotic meaning in the LapoBatak ornaments are realized using Barthes’ order of signification theory which are denotation, connotation, and myth. LapoBatak ornaments gave certain informations to the respondents related to the ornament’s characteristic, their own knowledge, beliefs, experiences, and Batak cultural ceremonies. But, most respondents did not know the real meaning of the ornaments.

2. The cultural values which realized in the semiotic meaning of LapoBatak ornaments were; kinship, religious, hagabeon, hasangapon, hamoraon, hamajuon, patikdohotuhum, and shelter.

### Suggestion

Considering the conclusions that had been drawn above, several suggestions regarding the topic of this study were served and listed as follows:

1. To increase the appreciation of Batak ornament in its development either as an appreciator nor a creator. It is expected to be able to develop and apply a semiotic approach in understanding the existence of the BatakToba ornaments

2. The findings of this study were expected to give knowledge of the semiotic meaning of LapoBatak ornaments to Bataknese since it is their cultural ornaments. The findings also could be used as a comparison to the other researches.

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