

# THE ROLE OF MYTH IN SUSTAINAINING BASANG TAMIANG POTTERY IN KAPAL VILLAGE BADUNG REGENCY

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## ABSTRACT

Pottery craft products produced by craftsmen in Banjar Bangsatamiang, Kapal Village, Mengwi District, Badung Regency, their existence is still continuing until now, it is believed that there are myths that play a role in them. This study aims to discuss the role of myths in the sustainability of pottery craft products by craftsmen in Banjar Basangtamiang. Data were collected using observation, interview, and documentation techniques, determination of data sources with purposive sampling and data analysis with Roland Barthes' myth theory. The results of the study show that the beliefs of Banjar Basang Tamiang craftsmen discussed from Roland Barthes' semiotic theory can be called myths in the first level of denotative sign reading and connotative sign reading at the second level. These myths ideologically bind craftsmen to continue to pursue pottery crafts as a profession for a living. These myths play a positive role in the sustainability of Basang Tamiang pottery crafts in the future so that they can exist until now .

## KEYWORDS

Sustainability, myth, pottery, Basang Tamiang



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## Introduction

Pottery crafts in Banjar Basang Tamiang, Kapal Village, Mengwi District, Badung Regency are traditional crafts that have existed for a long time and have been passed down from generation to generation. I Ketut Sudarsana, a figure and cultural figure from Banjar Basang Tamiang, Kapal Village, who was interviewed on October 23, 2024, explained that the existence of traditional Basang Tamiang pottery is associated with the inscription of King Jaya Pangus in the year Caka 1103 (1181 AD). The inscription states that traditional Basang Tamiang ceramics began with Sri Baginda Jaya Pangus' journey to study culture in China. Jaya Pangus brought Chinese cultural influences to Bali, including the craft of making traditional ceramics in Basang Tamiang which has developed to this day. The Jaya Pangus inscription may only be opened and read on the day of *Buda Wage Wuku Langkir Tilem Sasih Kedasa (Elephant Buddha)* and may not be

reproduced. This belief is believed by residents to this day. Sudarsana further explained that King Jaya Pangus then gave an edict to the residents of Banjar Basang Tamiang to build a temple known today as Pura Dalem Bangun Sakti. It was in this temple that the residents' beliefs related to making pottery emerged.

Pottery products made by Basang Tamiang pottery craftsmen are dominated by pottery products for Hindu religious ceremonies in Bali such as *coblong*, *pasepan*, *jun pere*, *dulang*, *paso*, *pane*, *jun tandeg*, *caratan*, *jeding*, and other products. In addition to the need for objects for ceremonies, craftsmen also make pottery for household and tourism needs such as mortars, flower pots, statues, wall hangings, ashtrays, decorative lamp holders, piggy banks, and others. These pottery products are made from red clay with a relatively low firing temperature. The types of pottery produced are still made manually without the help of machines, but are made using a simple rotating tool called *pengenyunan* (Warmadewi, 2024) [1]. This traditional rotating tool is also called *pemubutan*. This simple tool-making technique has been carried out by craftsmen from generation to generation, even though the era is modern, it is still maintained by the craftsmen. Pottery craftsmen in Banjar Basang Tamiang are generally dominated by elderly women, while men provide materials from the beginning to the firing process. In 2022, it was stated that Banjar Basang Tamiang consisted of 190 families (Suyatra, 2022). Here are some pottery craft products from Banjar Basang Tamiang, Kapal Village.



Figure 1. Some pottery made by Basang Tamiang craftsmen for Ceremonial equipment such as: *coblong*, *caratan*, *pasepan*, and *bija* container .  
[Source: Mudra, 2016]

Pottery crafts in Basang Tamiang have been maintained to this day, although some craftsmen are concerned about the sustainability of these crafts in the future, due to the lack of interest of the younger generation in pursuing crafts [2]. The existence of pottery crafts in Basang Tamiang is often associated with the beliefs of craftsmen that are connected to their profession as craftsmen and if violated it is believed will cause the destruction of their lives. The beliefs of craftsmen that have existed for a long time are understood by the local community as myths, from preliminary studies it was found

that many young generations of potential successors to pottery craftsmen do not know about the existence of these myths. Therefore, this article attempts to discuss these myths, so that they can be used as references by the younger generation of Basang Tamiang pottery craftsmen in understanding the myths that develop in the craftsman environment. Myths are stories that have happened in the past and are conveyed continuously [3]. At the time of writing, many young generation of craftsmen do not work as pottery craftsmen but they prefer to work in more modern economic sectors that are considered to make money quickly. Positive studies of these myths must be carried out together, so that they continue to have a positive impact on the sustainability of Basang Tamiang pottery crafts.

The beliefs of the Basang Tamiang pottery craftsmen are discussed based on Roland Barthes' myth theory. Myth is a message or statement that is believed to be true, but is not supported by evidence. There is an ideology communicated in a myth. Sobur (in Abdurrasyid 2023) explains that according to Barthes, myth in semiotics is more of a mechanism for presenting meaning than an idea. Barthes' theoretical approach views meaning as not fixed or universal, but rather varies depending on the context and experience of a person in understanding the meanings that are constructed and perceived. This theory can produce deep insights into the meanings that are formed, communicated, and perceived by the recipient of the message [4].

In Roland Barthes' semiotic theory, there are denotation and connotation systems. The denotation system is a first-level sign system, consisting of a chain of signifiers and signifieds, while the connotation system is a second-level sign system, the chain of signifiers or signifieds in the denotation system becomes the signifier and so on in a higher sign chain. In Roland Barthes' framework, connotation is identical to the operation of ideology, which is called myth. In myth there are also three patterns, namely signifier, signified, and sign. Myth is a chain of meaning that already exists or myth is a second-level meaning. The following is Roland Barthes' sign map according to Sobur in Wibisono's writing, 2021 [5].

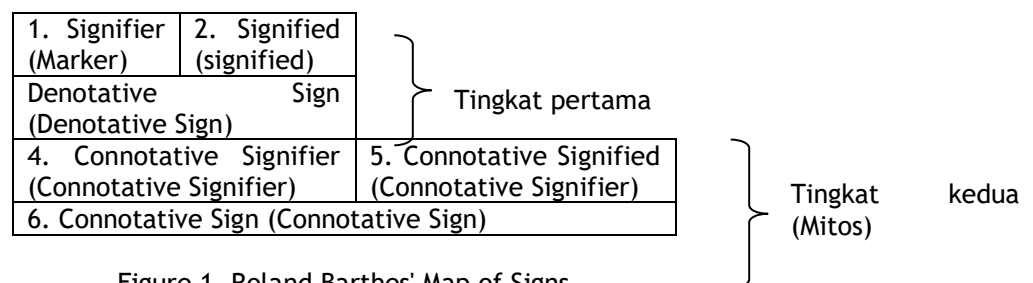


Figure 1. Roland Barthes' Map of Signs  
[Source: Wibisono, 2021]

## Method

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach and data collection is carried out using observation, interview, and documentation techniques. Determination of data sources is carried out by *purposive sampling*, namely sampling with certain considerations, namely adjusted to the objectives and formulation of the study [6]. The main data sources are pottery craftsmen, the younger generation, and community leaders of Banjar Basang Tamiang and researchers are research instruments. Data analysis uses Roland Barthes' myth theory.

## Discussion

Many people call Banjar Basang Tamiang pottery a unique craft compared to other types of pottery in Bali. The uniqueness is seen from the beliefs that accompany the existence of Basang Tamiang pottery, until it exists until now. The uniqueness in the form of this belief is a special phenomenon that occurs in Banjar Basang Tamiang which is not told in other pottery in Bali. This article reviews the beliefs of Banjar Basang Tamiang pottery craftsmen which have been referred to as myths analyzed using Roland Barthes' theory consisting of markers, signifieds, and signs. The following data and discussion of each data obtained from several sources.

Data 1 (one), obtained through an interview with I Ketut Sudarsana, a community leader and cultural figure from Banjar Basang Tamiang, October 23, 2024. Data 1 (one) is the belief of Banjar Basang Tamiang craftsmen that if there are new residents from outside the banjar who marry into Banjar Basang Tamiang, in order to be able to make pottery, they submit a pejati to ask for *taksu* to the Pura Dalem Bangun Sakti in the banjar area. They believe that after praying for a week, they can immediately make pottery just by watching the pottery making process. Craftsmen believe that Pura Dalem Bangun Sakti is a holy place to ask for *taksu* in order to master the skill of making pottery.

As a marker or physical form in the first data is a series of words in the form of a sentence containing a message that new residents who marry into Banjar Basang Tamiang ask for *taksu* at the local temple if they want to master the skill of making pottery. The sign is a belief about mastering the skill of making pottery just by seeing the process which is believed to be true by the craftsmen. The denotative reading is that mastering the skill of making pottery is obtained by asking for *taksu* at the Pura Dalem Bangun Sakti. Denotative here is the reading of the first level sign. The reading of the connotative marker of this belief is that *taksu* is a manifestation of the skill of making pottery just by seeing it, while the connotative signifier can be read as a belief about *taksu* as a manifestation of the skill of the craftsman who is able to make pottery just by seeing the process of making pottery without practicing it, but without proof. This connotative marker and connotative signified become connotative signs at the second level which are called myths according to Roland Barthes' myth theory.

Data 2 (second) was obtained from budayabali.com which was published on December 12, 2023, namely that craftsmen believe that every family in Basang Tamiang must have a pottery craftsman. If there is no pottery craftsman in every family, it is believed that it can damage family harmony to the point of contracting an incurable disease. As a marker (physical form) in this second data is a sentence " craftsmen believe that every family in Basang Tamiang must have a pottery craftsman, if there is no pottery craftsman in every family, it is believed that it can damage family harmony to the point of contracting an incurable disease". As a sign (concept) of data 2 (second) this is a sign that conveys the message that the belief in every family in Basang Tamiang must have a pottery craftsman, if there is no pottery craftsman, family harmony will be damaged and can even be contracted with an incurable disease. Meanwhile, as a denotative sign according to Roland Barthes' myth theory above, the belief of craftsmen so that families are harmonious and free from disease, the requirement is that every family must have a craftsman. The obligation as a craftsman is a denotative sign at the first level of reading. The reading of the connotative marker in the second data above is the obligation as a craftsman for harmony and to avoid family disasters from disease. While the connotative signifier is a belief as a craftsman that must be carried out for harmony and family health, although this still has to be proven true. Then the obligation as a craftsman is a connotative sign as a myth at the second level of sign reading.

Data 3 (second) was obtained from budayabali.com (2023) namely the belief " if someone from Basang Tamiang marries out, their ability to make pottery will be completely lost even though that person has sufficient ability in making pottery" . The marker on this sign is a sentence that reads " if someone from Basang Tamiang marries out, their ability to make pottery will be completely lost even though that person has sufficient ability in making pottery" . The sign or concept that can be understood from this sign is that if someone from Banjar Basang Tamiang who marries out, their ability to make pottery will be lost, and that is the belief that exists in the craftsmen. As a denotative sign in the reading of this first level sign, it is believed that residents who marry out will lose their ability.

The reading of the third data connotative marker is that residents of Banjar Basang Tamiang who marry out, their ability to make pottery will be lost, and that is the belief of the craftsmen. The connotative marker is that residents of Banjar Basang Tamiang who marry out, their ability to make pottery will be lost, and that is the belief of the craftsmen. This belief, although not yet accompanied by proof, can have a positive impact on the sustainability of Basang Tamiang pottery crafts in the future. As a connotative sign for Basang Tamiang pottery craftsmen, the belief of residents who marry out that their ability to make pottery will be lost and has been going on for a long time and is believed until now. The reading of this second level sign is a myth and has become an ideology for local craftsmen.



The discussion of the craftsmen's beliefs from Roland Barthes' myth theory above provides an illustration that beliefs in reading as a signifier are a form of abstract belief that is strongly believed to be true. Belief read as a signifier is a real form that exists in craftsmen and its existence is recognized by the Banjar Basang Tamiang community. While in the reading of the signifier, it has an interpretation that is not singular, depending on the experience of the reader, but is still based on its logic. The signifier can be read as the belief that its existence is an effort to preserve Basang Tamiang pottery crafts, so that it is not abandoned by the craftsmen. The relationship between the signifier and the signified in the beliefs of Basang Tamiang pottery craftsmen has become a social convention. This social convention relationship is called signification [7].

This belief has been going on for a long time and is also considered a truth even though in reality it still needs to be proven, so this belief can be called a myth. This myth binds craftsmen in pursuing pottery crafts so that it plays a role in maintaining the continuity of the pottery crafts until now and the myth is believed to be true by craftsmen, even though the era has entered the modern era. In modern times, human thoughts are dominated by logos, humans seek absolute truths, namely single, general and universal truths [7]. However, Banjar Basang Tamiang pottery craftsmen still believe in the truth of the myth.

## Conclusion

The conclusion of this study is that several beliefs of Banjar Basang Tamiang craftsmen were found related to the existence of the pottery craft in the future. The beliefs of the craftsmen have been going on for a long time and are strongly believed to be true by the craftsmen. The beliefs of the craftsmen are discussed from Roland Barthes' semiotic theory which can be called myths at the first level of denotative sign reading and the second level of connotative sign reading. The researcher assesses that these myths bind the craftsmen to continue to pursue pottery crafts as a profession for their livelihood. These myths play a positive role in the sustainability of Basang Tamiang pottery crafts in the future. If there are no myths that remind us like this, the sustainability of this pottery craft in the future will likely decrease in enthusiasts.

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