

THE TAUHID FLAG: The Value, Meaning and Philosophy

Rahmat Jayadi

Universitas Islam Indonesia, Indonesia
tamuagung.amatjayadi@gmail.com

Submitted: 14th February 2023 | **Edited:** 06th April 2023 | **Issued:** 01st May 2023

Cited on: Jayadi, R. (2023). THE TAUHID FLAG: The Value, Meaning and Philosophy. *AKADEMIK: Jurnal Mahasiswa Humanis*, 3(2), 101-109.

ABSTRACT

More than 80 percent of Indonesia's population adheres to Islam, also known as Muslims. However, Indonesia is a republic with the principle of unity consisting of many tribes, religions and ethnicities, hence it is also known as Bhineka Tunggal Ika. Therefore, Islam in Indonesia has its own color, with various points of view. This research was conducted to find out the views of the Indonesian people towards Islamic symbols, in this case the Tauhid flag. Scientifically, this research uses a qualitative approach with literature review as its research method. Guidelines for discussing research refer to Pierce's views, regarding the study of symbols. The object of this research is the Tauhid flag with descriptive analysis techniques. The results of the study suggest that, philosophically, not all flags bearing the word Tauhid are said to be monotheistic flags. A flag is said to be a Tauhid flag, if the flag officially becomes a symbol of an Islamic government. In addition, the Tauhid flag has value and meaning as an effort to struggle for the Religion of Allah, not based on power.

Keywords: Tauhid Flag, Islamic Religion, Values, Philosophy, Symbols

INTRODUCTION

Indonesian society is a multi-ethnic society (Azis, et al., 2018). They lived hundreds of years with the culture of their ancestors and formed their own culture. Culture has symbols that differentiate one another. The symbol represents group or individual identity (Nur, 2020).

Not only in Indonesia, even in the world, every society cannot be separated from symbols. Often humans deal with symbols so that there are also a group of people who make it sacred so that it becomes a myth in society.

Many people defend their symbols so as not to be insulted by others. in areas that still have very high cultural values, symbols are very sacred. Even every belief has a sacred symbol that must be guarded.

The symbol is not only a sign to represent the community that owns it but also reflects the owner. Like flags for example. The flag is not just a cloth that is hoisted but has a philosophy of its formation. The colors and logos in the flag have historical and philosophical significance. Naturally, many flag owners struggle to keep the flag flying.

The author chose the title *Tauhid Flag in a Semiotic View* with the aim of providing a solution regarding the meaning and position of the Tauhid flag which has been viral in society. Commemoration of Santri Day on 22 October 2018 is commemorated by students and their clerics in various cities. However, the commemoration of Santri Day in Garut went viral when Banser burned a black flag with monotheism recitation. This event caused an uproar in cyberspace. Even large-scale demonstrations took place in various regions with the theme of defending monotheism. Banser considered that the flag was the HTI flag. An organization that the government dissolved through a ministerial decree in 2017. Meanwhile, supporters of the monotheism flag say that HTI does not have a special flag. This is of course an endless debate.

This article is important to write for several reasons. First, there are still many Indonesian people who are trapped in symbols. This is because culture and symbols cannot be separated. Second, symbols are still considered sacred and need to be maintained. Despite the fact that not all symbols have the same position. For example, traffic signs that cannot be equated with state flags. Third, there are frequent conflicts in society that are based on a symbol or carry certain symbols. This research is expected to be able to solve problems regarding symbols that often occur in Indonesian society, especially symbols regarding the monotheism flag so that it does not happen again in the future.

THEORY

Semiotics comes from the Greek, *Seme* which means sign interpreter (Hasbullah, 2020). However, in Greek, the word *Seme* has synonyms, namely *sema* and *semeion* (Pantouw, 2018). *Sema* means a meaningful sign (language) which then becomes the root of the semantic word. Meanwhile, *semeion* means sign in general which later becomes the word *semiotic* (Rahayu, 2020).

Literally, semiotics is a science that examines signs in human life (Jailani & Rachman, 2020). Semiotics examines the signs and symptoms in the universe. Anything can be used as a sign or even a phenomenon in social life. The semiotic view states that if all social practices can be considered as language phenomena, then they can also be seen as signs (Tandianga, 2021).

Humans are sign creatures who cannot live without signs (Hakikiet al., 2023). From the moment they are born, humans need identification marks. That's why newborns are immediately given a name. Pierce refers to humans as *Homo semioticus* (Wulandari & Siregar 2020). The sign is transformed into a social cultural context. This is because humans often relate to signs. Thus the sign can be regarded as a basic human need.

Benny Hoedoro Hoed, once said that Semiotics is a science that examines the signs and symptoms in the universe. One of the famous semiotic figures is an American philosopher, Charles Sanders Pierce. As a logician, he divides three sign elements which are called sign triangles (Suryaningsih, et al., 2022). Pierce divides signs into three levels. The first level is the relationship between the sign and the representamen, the second level is the relationship between the sign and the object, and the third level is the relationship between the sign and the interpretant (Chairunnisa, 2021).

In relation to the relationship between signs and objects, Pierce divides signs into 3 categories, namely icons, indexes and symbols. Icon is a sign that has a resemblance to the object it represents. An index is a sign that has an affinity with the object it represents. Meanwhile, symbols are signs that occur because of an agreement by the wearer (Puspitasari, 2021).

One example of a symbol is the flag. As is the case with other symbols, flags do not have specific rules regarding the meaning of the object they represent. Why does group A have a red flag and group B has a green flag? They certainly have their own philosophy with the flag as their identity. However, the symbol is only owned by the group that owns the sign. Whichever meaning you like; like the owner.

Both mean grief, but in the Betawi tradition it is marked with a yellow flag, while in Java it is marked with a white flag. In the Minang tradition it is marked in black. That's why symbols can only be interpreted by looking at the social context of the owner of the sign. The yellow flag means mourning in the Betawi tradition, so it doesn't have the same meaning when it's installed in Banyumas. Because in Banyumas condolences wear a white flag, while the yellow flag symbolizes prosperity, synonymous with people celebrating. Side by side with janur kuning. Whereas in Minang the yellow flag does not even have a meaning like Java and Betawi. That is, in the use and meaning of symbols there are no standard rules. The rules are flexible ones created by the user of the sign.

METHOD

This study uses interpretive qualitative methods. This method is a method that focuses on signs and texts as objects of study, as well as how researchers interpret and understand the code behind these signs and texts (Muttaqin, et al., 2021). The primary data is in the form of flags that have monotheism inscriptions. Data were analyzed using C.S.'s semiotic theory. Pierce known as the sign trichotomy.

RESULTS

Forms of Tauhid Flags in Several Countries or Organizations

Referring to the online kbbs website, a flag is a rectangular or triangular piece of cloth or paper (hooked to the end of a stick, pole, etc.) used as a symbol of a country, association, body, etc. or as a sign, pennant, stump (Iskandar, 2021). The flag is an example of a symbol. Symbols are owned/used by a group of people and are interpreted by that group. Ownership of a flag is indicated by the frequent use of the flag in every activity. Including the black flag with the monotheism pronunciation that was burned by the banser is also part of the symbol.

The flag that Banser burned in Garut at the commemoration of National Santri Day is often used by HTI groups at every event. So it is legal if someone thinks that it is part of HTI. Do all flags pronounce monotheism all the same? Let's look at the following explanation.

There are many flags that use monotheistic pronunciations in them. The author observes that there are many flags/logos that use the pronunciation of monotheism in them. These flags include the flags of Saudi Arabia, MILF, Lashkar e Taiba in Pakistan, Ansharus Syariah in Libya, the Afghanistan flag before 2002, Hizbut Tahrir, ISIS, Al-Qaeda Iraq led by Abu Mushab Azzarqawy, Jamaah Attauhid wal Jihad in Iraq the Al-Qaeda fraction , Emirate of Afghanistan, Tahrik Taliban in Pakistan, Asy-shabab the military wing of ISIS in Somalia, Ahrar As-Syam one of the rebels in Syria, the Afghan flag before the leadership of Hamid Karzai, etc. Each monotheistic flag is different. Like the Saudi Arabian Flag has a sword image, while Hizb ut Tahrir does not have a sword and the basic color is black or white. Not green like the flag of Saudi Arabia.

Following are some countries/organizations in the world that use the form of the Tauhid flag, including:

1. State flag of Saudi Arabia

The State Flag of Saudi Arabia has a green background color. There is a tauhid pronunciation using white hijaiyah letters in the middle. Below the text is a white sword. The flag is officially recognized by the people of Saudi Arabia. On various occasions, the flag represents Saudi Arabia so that the flag can be said to be a symbol of the State of Saudi Arabia.

2. Al-Qaeda organization flag

The al-Qaeda flag has a black background. There is a tauhid pronunciation in the middle of the top. While in the middle of the flag there is a yellow circle. The flag is claimed to be the flag of al-Qaeda Iraq led by Abu Mushab Azzarqawy so that the flag can be said to be a symbol of al-Qaeda Iraq led by Abu Mushab Azzarqawy.

3. Flag of the Pakistani Taliban Organization

The flag has a white background color. There is writing using hijaiyah letters in the form of a black Tauhid pronunciation in the middle of the top. Beneath the monotheistic pronunciation is written the name of the organization that owns the flag, namely Tahrik Taliban Fakistan, which also uses black hijaiyah letters. Right below the writing is a picture of a black sword. The flag can be said to be a symbol of the Taliban Group in Pakistan.

4. Hizbut Tahrir Organization logo

This logo is the logo of Hizb ut-Tahrir. The logo is an image of a black crescent moon facing upwards. In the middle of the crescent moon is written Hizbut Tahrir in white using Latin script. Above the crescent moon is a white map of the world. In the middle of the world map there are 2 white and black flags each tied to a pole. The black flag is written with the pronunciation of monotheism in white, while the white flag is written with the pronunciation of monotheism in black. The black flag is called Ar-Rayah and Al-Liwa for the white flag. The Hizbut Tahrir logo is claimed to belong to Hizbut Tahrir so it is legal to say that the logo belongs to Hizbut Tahrir. Meanwhile, the Ar-Rayah and Al-Liwa flags are often hoisted and carried at every moment by Hizbut Tahrir members so that it is legal if these flags are considered to belong to Hizb ut Tahrir.

5. Flag of Jamaah Attauhid wal Jihad Organization

The flag has a black background color. There is a Tauhid pronunciation using white hijaiyah letters in the top center. Underneath the monotheism pronunciation there is yellow writing using hijaiyah letters, namely jamaah. Right below the inscription there is a white circle. On the right side of the circle there is yellow writing using hijaiyah letters, namely attauhid. While on the left side is written waljihad using yellow hijaiyah letters. The flag is used by the Jamaah Attauhida wal Jihad group in Iraq, which is a splinter group of al-Qaeda. So it is legal if the flag is said to belong to the Jamaah Attauhida wal Jihad group.

6. Afghanistan Country Flag

The flag has 3 background colors namely green, white and black. On the green background there is an inscription Allahuakbar colored using hijaiyah letters. While on the white background there is a writing of tauhid pronunciation in black using hijaiyah letters. There is no writing on the black background. The flag is the official flag of Afghanistan which was used from 1992 to 2001. So it is valid if the flag is considered as a symbol of Afghanistan at that time.

Based on the description above, it can be concluded that there is not only one flag with the pronunciation of monotheism. In addition, each flag has special characteristics and cannot be confused with one another. For example, the flags of the countries/organizations above are almost the same. Both of them have monotheism sentences and circles below them. However, the two data actually have differences. The difference lies in the shape and color of the writing. The al-Qaeda flag is written in yellow while Jamaah Attauhida wal Jihad is white.

The Semiotic Theory View of the Tauhid Flag

The tauhid flag that is burned by a banner is a symbol commonly used by the Hizb ut-Tahrir group. According to Zaimar (2013) symbols in semiotic studies are divided into 3 types, namely individual symbols, cultural symbols, and universal symbols. A sign is categorized as an individual symbol if it is a person's characteristic (Malik, et al., 2021), for example the Seto Mulyadi hairstyle or better known as Kak Seto. He has a consistent hairstyle so that it can be said that Kak Seto's symbol is his hairstyle. A sign is said to be a cultural symbol if it becomes a marker of a certain culture/region, for example a keris in Javanese culture. Although both have the same name as a keris and are shaped like a keris, the Malay keris is different from the Javanese keris. Furthermore, a sign is said to

be a universal symbol if it is owned in general, for example a dove which symbolizes peace. The whole world recognizes it. The flags mentioned above are universal symbols.

The flag with the pronunciation of monotheism that Banser burned in arrowroot is different from the Saudi Arabian flag because the Saudi Arabian flag has a green background. While the flag that was burned had a black background which is commonly called Ar-Rayah. Even though the ISIS and al-Qaeda flags also have a black background, they have differences in the boldness of the letters and the typeface used. In addition, al-Qaeda has other accessories. Thus the flag that is burned is the HTI flag. In addition, the meaning of monotheism will also be different when compared to the pronunciation of monotheism engraved on mosques and the Quran.

Same with other types of signs. The symbol belongs to the group that uses the sign. Even though both of them pronounce monotheism, ISIS certainly doesn't want to claim the Hisbut Tahrir flag as its flag, or be claimed by the people of Saudi Arabia as their country's flag. It's the same with the Garuda bird symbol. Even though they are both Garuda birds, of course people do not want to recognize the Garuda bird image on the Garuda Nut logo as the symbol of the Indonesian state. Or the Garuda bird, the symbol of Prabowo's 2014 campaign, as the symbol of the Indonesian state. The Garuda peanut logo is owned by Garudafood, and the red Garuda logo belongs to the Prabowo team. Thus, burning the flag with the pronunciation of monotheism in Garut on Santri Day 2018 does not mean burning the meaning of monotheism itself. Instead, it burned the symbol of HTI, which is indeed a banned organization in Indonesia. It's the same with the hammer and sickle logo which is usually burned by the masses during demonstrations. Not burning the farmers' hammer and sickle, but burning the communist symbol which is a banned organization in Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study can be concluded that each flag has its own philosophical and historical value. There are many flags that are inscribed with monotheism but all of them cannot be said to be monotheistic flags. Even though they both include the pronunciation of monotheism, the owner of each flag cannot assume that all monotheism flags are the same. The flag is a form of universal symbol which has different meanings depending on the wearer. As a form of universal symbol, the existence of flags must go

through a process of recognition from interpreters, makers and owners. The flag is made and recognized by the owner of the flag. Then other people acknowledge the existence of the flag, so it is valid to say that the flag exists.

The monotheistic flag is a flag used by Muslims as a symbol of faith and acknowledgment of the oneness of Allah SWT. This flag has a very important meaning for Muslims, namely faith in Allah SWT as the only God who has the right to be worshipped, recognition that Muhammad SAW is the messenger of Allah SWT and the last Messenger sent to bring the teachings of Islam, obedience and obedience to the teachings of Islam as the right way of life, the unity and unity of Muslims in facing various challenges and problems faced and the pride and passion to fight for the religion of Islam and the interests of Muslims. The monotheistic flag is also a symbol of the struggle and courage of Muslims in defending their religion and beliefs. This flag is often used in various religious events, such as commemorating the Prophet's birthday, Isra' Mi'raj commemoration, and so on.

REFERENCES

- Azis, A., Nurashia, N., & Munira, W. (2018). Korelasi antara: Kesadaran Sejarah, Religious Values dan Pemahaman Multi-Etnis terhadap Sikap Toleransi siswa SMA N Banda Aceh. *Titian Ilmu: Jurnal Ilmiah Multi Sciences*, 10(2), 57-63.
- Chairunnisa, T. (2021). KAJIAN SEMIOTIKA TIPOLOGI TANDA PADA TEPAK SIRIH DAN BALE DI MEDAN DELI. *Melayu Arts and Performance Journal*, 4(1), 55-67.
- Hakiki, D. R., Desmilianti, H., & Mulawarman, W. G. (2023). Problematika Kekayaan Sumber Daya Alam Kalimantan dalam Puisi Di Sini Karya Dahri Dahlan (Kajian Semantik-Semiotik). *Diglosia: Jurnal Kajian Bahasa, Sastra, dan Pengajarannya*, 6(2), 319-328.
- Hasbullah, M. (2020). Hubungan Bahasa, Semiotika dan Pikiran dalam Berkomunikasi. *Al-Irfan: Journal of Arabic Literature and Islamic Studies*, 3(1), 106-124.
- Iskandar, I. (2021). Nilai-Nilai pada Bendera Alam Peudeung di Aceh. *Urban: Jurnal Seni Urban dan Industri Budaya*, 5(2), 139-152.
- Jailani, A. K., & Rachman, R. F. (2020). Kajian Semiotik Budaya Masyarakat: Nilai Keislaman dalam Tradisi Ter-ater di Lumajang. *MUHARRIK: Jurnal Dakwah dan Sosial*, 3(02), 125-137.
- Malik, A., Bagja, B. R., & Istianah, R. (2021). Analisis Semiotika Charles Sanders Peirce Tentang Makna Logo Pariwisata Kabupaten Sukabumi. *Journal of Computer Science and Visual Communication Design*, 6(1), 40-49.
- Muttaqin, M. Z., Idris, U., & Ilham, I. (2021). Tantangan Implementasi Netralitas PNS (Kajian Kekerasan Simbolik dalam Pilkada). *JWP (Jurnal Wacana Politik)*, 6(1), 1-14.

- Nur, M. (2020). Kearifan Lokal Sintuwu Maroso Sebagai Simbol Moderasi Beragama. *Pusaka*, 8(2), 241-252.
- Pantouw, L. A. A. (2018). Sinonim Nomina Bahasa Melayu Manado. *Kajian Linguistik*, 6(1).
- Puspitasari, D. R. (2021). Nilai Sosial Budaya Dalam Film Tilik (Kajian Semiotika Charles Sanders Pierce). *SEMIOTIKA: Jurnal Komunikasi*, 15(1).
- Rahayu, N. K. I. (2020). Makna simbolik umat hindu dalam persembahyangan bulan purnama di Kecamatan Basidondo Kabupaten Tolitoli. *Bahasa dan Sastra*, 5(1).
- Suryaningsih, I., Kasmawati, K., & Nasrullah, I. (2022). Analisis Semiotika Charles S. Peirce dalam Wartegg. *Jurnal KIBASP (Kajian Bahasa, Sastra dan Pengajaran)*, 5(2), 208-220.
- Tandiangga, P. (2021). Simbolisme, Realitas, dan Pikiran dalam Semiotika Charles W. Morris. *Jurnal Syntax Transformation*, 2(05), 650-661.
- Wulandari, S., & Siregar, E. D. (2020). Kajian Semiotika Charles Sanders Pierce: Relasi Trikotomi (Ikon, Indeks dan Simbol) dalam Cerpen Anak Mercusuar Karya Mashdar Zainal. *Titian: Jurnal Ilmu Humaniora*, 4(1), 29-41.