

The Role and Function of Myths for Religion in Everyday Life

Aulia Diana Devi, Roibin

Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia

Corresponding E-mail: auliadianadevi15@gmail.com

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to explain the role and function of itos for religion in everyday life. Research methods used with a literature study approach through literature sources from various literature sources about the role and function of myths. Then analyzed and presented the results of the data findings objectively. The results showed that myth is a sacred saying believed by adherents of the myth. A myth usually tells the story of the creation of the universe, the gods, demigods and so on. The values contained in mythical stories are used as guidelines by the community of adherents. There are several types of mythical forms, namely cosmogony myths, origin myths, myths of gods, androgynous myths, and myths of the end of the world. In relation to religion, myths have a very important role. A myth is a story told to establish a particular belief, act as a novice event in a ceremony or rite, or as a fixed model of social or religious behavior. The main and essential functions of the myth are to justify magical acts, as a practical guide in dealing with and relating to the supernatural. In religious life, man will always use a myth to strengthen his belief in the Most High.

Keywords: Myths, Religion, Life

Introduction

Religious and cultural dialectics in the eyes of the Muslim community in general give birth to many subjective-pejerrotif. Some are eager to sterilize religion and the possibility of acculturation of local cultures, while others are busy and focused on establishing a dialectic pattern between the two. Regardless of the state of belief of each understanding. In fact, the portrait of diversity increasingly shows the fertile pattern of acculturation, even syncretization across religions (Roibin, 2010).

People who adhere to a religion basically have the instinct to believe in God, giving rise to the desire to worship Him. Due to the different human backgrounds from place to place and from time to time, various religions emerged even though the root of rejection was the same, namely the instinct to believe in God. This diversity of religions is made more evident by man's own efforts to make his religion more functional in everyday life, by attributing it to the phenomena that are clearly around them. Thus, legends and myths emerged, all of which were a support for man's natural belief in the God he believed in and the functionalization of the beliefs applied in society.

Belief according to the Great Dictionary Indonesian is the assumption or belief that something believed is true or real (Pusat Bahasa Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, 2008). Beliefs are created from, for, and by man himself. In addition, legends and myths are needed by humans as a support for the value system of life in society. All of this provides clarity about human existence in relation to the surrounding nature, as well as about how to form the best relationship between fellow humans themselves and between humans and the surrounding nature, as well as

with the form of the Most High. The man in his life cannot be kept away from mythology so that no group of humans is completely free from mythology. Therefore, a myth that has been simply believed by the community, will give birth to a belief system.

The mythology of a tribe is usually about the creation of nature, the creation and spread of humans by gods in the original religion of the ethnic group concerned. Such mythologies are usually full of wonders that are far from historical facts. Mythology and folklore that can indicate the historical facts of a tribe, some are passed down from generation to generation orally, and for tribes who have known writing (traditional writing), can also be passed down in writing. If mythology and stories were obtained through interviews, then the material they obtained from the public figures was recorded (Koentjaraningrat, 2005).

So it can be concluded that the purpose of myth is as a glue of society that can explain the reality and culture that exists. Myths provide guidance as to what is real and important to the life of a group of people. Related to myths and legends, symbols and metaphors play a key role in transformation, whether at the individual, group, organizational, or social level. This is because symbols and metaphors have an interest in the non-rational and emotional side of human beings, and have a profound impact on human consciousness (Movva, 2004).

Thus, the integrity of a mythology in society will produce the integrity of the belief system. Furthermore, the integrity of the belief system will result in the integrity of the value system. Then the value system itself, which gives man clarity about what is good and bad (ethics), underlies his entire activity in creating civilization. Through the teachings of mythology, humans can see a picture of a history which in turn can be applied in today's life. Although the era has entered the modern era, a mythology is still developing in society and affects the beliefs of religious people. This proves that the values contained in mythological teachings are still relevant to human life today.

Method

The method analysis in this journal uses library research using a philosophical approach, examining the role and function of myths in religion in everyday life (Imam Gunawan, 2014). The data collection technique used in the article is a documentation technique, namely collecting data materials in the form of sources of books in the library, articles related to writings related to research, and collected and taken and digested and associated with the object of study (Joko Subagyo, 1991), Data analysis is carried out by examining various literature from documentation data against various data from research results related to the object of article research. The first understanding is done by analyzing and identifying what kind of problem is studied. The second stage examines as sources and documentation that need to find solutions to the problem. The third stage is to draw conclusions on the study of the problem that has been written (Endang Widi Winarni, 2018).

Result and Discussion

The Concept Of Myth

The word myth in English myth comes from the Latin *mythus* or from the ancient Greek *mythos* or *muthos* which means story or fable (Humaeni, 2013). In English, the word mythology refers to the sense of either the study of myths or the content of myths, or certain parts of a myth, which are different from legends and fairy tales (Adeng Muchtar Ghazali, 2011). Myth in the context of old mythology has the meaning of a formation of a society oriented from the past or from historical formations that are static and eternal (Iswidayanti 2007).

According to J. van Baal, myth is defined as a story within the framework of a system of religious things that in the past or present have been or are acting as religious truth. Myths are a series of imaginary stories related to nature, gods, or humans that are believed and become

traditions. Usually myths tell about the occurrence of the universe, the world, the distinctive shape of animals, the form of topography, the adventures of the gods, and so on. (Siswanto dan Kusairi 2019) Myth, according to Harjoso, is the belief system of a human group that stands on a foundation that explains sacred stories related to the past (Nasrimi 2021).

From the explanation of the theory above, researchers can conclude that myths are a form of stories that are beyond human reason, can be stories of gods, powerful objects or humans, and so on. Myths are also very strong beliefs and it is strictly forbidden to violate something that has been formed from a particular society. Myth with literature is closely related because the nature of myth becomes a means of stories with meaning, this is one of the supporters for the research of literary anthropology. The myths that exist and are believed by the people of Kajen Village are so rich and have an interesting background story.

Myths are often associated with certain legends, stories, or stories that have mystical or mysterious nuances. Myths and legends contain wisdom, experience, and cultural value. The method of teaching culture through stories that have moral messages has been carried out since thousands of years ago, the same story is passed on from generation to generation and has been distorted in its delivery so that the truth can no longer be known. Rodriguez says some of the goals of myths, legends, and fairy tales in cultural development are: Fairy tales are not only considered the best watchdogs of language and cultural heritage, but also great helpers in the socialization process, they teach children sometimes difficult lessons about how to interact with others and what happens when good is pitted against evil.

So it can be concluded that the purpose of myth is as a glue of society that can explain the reality and culture that exists. Myths provide guidance as to what is real and important to the life of a group of people. Related to myths and legends, symbols and metaphors play a key role in transformation, whether at the individual, group, organizational, or social level. This is because symbols and metaphors have an interest in the non-rational and emotional side of human beings, and have a profound impact on human consciousness. (Movva 2004) In the world of literature, myths become inspiration for fictional writings and not infrequently new myths are formed as developments or combinations of old myths.

Types of myths

According to Huck et al, whose authors quote from Burhan Nurgiyantoro's book, Myth is divided into three categories. Distinguish myths into three types based on the content told. Among them are the following (Burhan Nurgiyantoro, 2013):

Creation myths or also called cosmogony myths are myths that tell or explain the beginning of something. Each society with a certain cultural background generally has myths that tell about the beginning and / or creation, such as stories about how the world happened, humans, animals, the sun and moon, and others. This type of myth is part of the folklore categorized into the origins above. Examples are myths that tell the occurrence of various certain places, such as the myth of the occurrence of Mount Merapi, the fog surrounding Mount Merapi, certain animal events, and others.

Nature myths, are stories that explain natural things such as the formation of the earth, the movement of the sun and moon, astrology, weather changes, star characteristics, and others. Besides being found in Java, this type of myth is also widely found in various cultures in remote parts of the world, for example myths originating from classical Greece. For example, the gods and goddesses in wayang stories that feature ruling figures in their respective regions, such as Batara Wisnu is the guardian god of nature, Batara Bayu the god of wind, Batara Brama the god of fire, Batara Baruna the god of the sea, Batara Kamajaya-Dewi Ratih the gods of love, and others.

Hero myths are myths that tell the story of a character who becomes a hero because of his qualifications that have certain miracles beyond human reason. So, the characters of the story

shown are characters who have supernatural powers, miracles, or other qualifications as possessed by gods, or demigods, who are told in their extraordinary life journey.

Historical myths, are myths that relate to historical events, events and figures that actually exist and occur. So, it is a combination of mythical stories with historical figures and events. Examples such as: The life story of Nyai Rara Kidul or Queen of the South Sea and so on.

From the information above, researchers can conclude that myths do have classifications according to the words of the myth in the speech. So that the myth is more directed to where the myth is told. So that the existence of types of myths makes it easier to see the elements contained in myths.

Mythical values in society

Myth is a handle that is believed by humans for something certain. Myths are often used as material to prevent or cultivate the innate nature of our ancestors. Myths themselves have their own meanings and values, depending on when using them. The various mythical values in everyday life are as follows (Nasrimi, 2021):

Ethical Values, myths often contain values that are so phenomenal in society, especially the value of politeness (ethics) related to one's behavior in everyday life, because basically the purpose of previous people created various myths, especially in the value of politeness or behavioral values in the life of someone whose message is conveyed indirectly, or messages conveyed through myths.

Religious Values, the religious and religious elements in literature are as far as the existence of literature itself. A religious person is one who tries to understand and live life and this life is more than just being born. He is not tied to any particular religion that exists in this world. Religious values possessed by a person or group can directly be norms that exist in the surrounding society.

Educational Value, education as a human effort to grow and develop innate potentials both physically and spiritually in accordance with the values that exist in society and culture. Education is often also called civilization because in a broad sense, education lasts throughout life. Educational or educative values can be interpreted as useful things or properties related to education. The educative value intended in this study is related to religious education and ethical education. In the world of education, mythical characteristics that are functional in nature seem to be dominant, where values, assumptions, life guidelines that direct human behavior in social life become the main characteristics of a myth.

The Value of Beauty (Aesthetics), beauty is one of the efforts to preserve the environment, so that a myth that contains the value of beauty arises, namely: If you say hello / work do not be half-half, later have children also half. Actually, this myth contains a message that is conveyed indirectly, which is not good if someone does something half-heartedly, it would be nice to do it to completion or completion.

Cultural Values, the term special culture means social heritage with a special pattern. Culture is a whole made up of a large number of cultures, each characteristic of a particular group of individuals. Humans in explaining invisible reality, tend to refer to culture as a set of symbols that can clarify the environmental phenomena they face.

Concept of Religion

Religion contains related understandings and regulates all aspects of human life that are spiritual and physical. Religion as a regulator of life will be able to feel the benefits if its adherents live and practice the teachings of their religion.

The term religion in English is known as religion, while in Dutch it is known as religious, and in Arabic the word *ad din* is used. *Ad din* is a term to refer to a kind of knowledge based on

faith in God Almighty, which is conveyed to His Messenger or messenger by way of revelation. In Latin, the term religion comes from the word re-eligare, which means to choose back from the false path to the way of God. The term religion, originally derived from Sanskrit which consists of three syllables, namely: a, gam, and a. Letter: a as the beginning of the word contains the meaning: no, the word: gam as the root of the verb means to go, while the letter: a as the suffix does not contain any meaning. Thus the term religion in Sanskrit means not to go, to remain in place, to last, to be eternal. The Sanskrit term religion can also be interpreted as a doctrine, or sacred traditional rule (Sodikin, 2003).

The definition of religion in the sense of the spiritual soul of the religion concerned contains the meaning of dharma and eternal truth that covers all human life. In his book entitled "An Anthropological View", the definition of religion is a set of ceremonies, which are rationalized myths, and which move supernatural forces with the intention of achieving or avoiding a change of state in man or nature. Thus, in Wallace's view, religion can be viewed as beliefs and patterns of behavior, which humans use to control aspects of the universe that humans cannot control (Indriyawati, 2009).

Ogburn and Nimkoff define religion as a pattern of creeds, emotional attitudes and practices used by a group of people to try to solve the "ultimate" problems of human life. In this regard, Ogburn and Nimkoff only view religion as a social phenomenon and do not refer to religion as a guide or guide to human life. Emile Durkheim, on the other hand, defined religion as a whole whose parts depend on each other, consisting of creeds (beliefs) and worships, all linked to sacred things and binding its followers in a religious society. Operationally, Mircea Eliade in her book entitled "The Sacred and the Profane" explains that a religious person is one who realizes the main difference between the sacred and the ordinary (profane), and prioritizes the sacred (Indriyawati, 2009).

Definition of religion according to anthropologists

In dephysicalizing religion, the figures have great difficulty. In terms of etymology there may be agreement among religious figures. But in defining in terms it has entered into the subjectivity of its adherents. Then it is very difficult to define. This is experienced by anthropologists in defining religion. So to further this opinion, let's look at the opinions of anthropologists about religion (Nur 2020):

According to Edward Burnett Tylor (1832-1917), Tylor proposed that the definition of religion is a belief in spiritual being. Tylor considered the characteristic shared by all religions great and small, ancient or modern, to be a belief in a spirit that thinks, acts and feels like a human person. The essence of religion according to Tylor is animism, that is, the belief in personal power that lives behind all things.

According to James George Frazer (1854-1941), Frazer did not actually propose his own definition of religion. He fully agreed with Tylor's definition, only that he wanted to distinguish religion from magic as a system that he thought preceded religion. In primitive societies, Frazer said, when natural conditions did not accommodate human interests, then their efforts to understand and change it took magic, namely the pattern of human action to achieve their goals by empowering supernatural forces. But then after magic is considered to often fail, then people turn to religion.

According to Lucien Levy-Bruhl (1857-1945), Bruhl criticized Tylor's opinion on religion. For Bruhl, primitive humans are too stupid to think abstractly about the soul behind every object as theorized by Tylor. According to Bruhl, religion is a primitive view and way of human life. Religion, like magic, has never been able to bring human life to progress.

According to Radcliffe Brown (1881-1955), Brown suggests that religion is an expression in one form or another of awareness of dependence on a force outside of ourselves that can be called a spiritual or moral force.

According to Clifford Greetz (1926), Geertz views religion as a cultural system, meaning: "A system of symbols that play a role in building strong, pervasive and long-lasting mood and motivation in man by formulating a conception of a common order of life and wrapping this conception with an aura of such faculties so that the mood and motivation appear uniquely realistic."

From the various definitions of religion put forward by the anthropologists above, we can conclude that religion is a belief in something supernatural believed to have more power. And it can encourage oneself to do good.

Religion in Human Life

Indeed, religion is a universal phenomenon that occurs in human life anytime and anywhere. Religion is basically the belief in the existence of magical, extraordinary or supernatural forces that affect human life both individually and socially. This belief gives rise to certain behaviors such as fear, optimism, resignation, which in modern life are often seen as unique or strange. Unique because although religious beliefs often seem irrational, not empirical and unscientific, they still survive in civilization as it is today.

No matter how strange or unique the phenomenon of religion, especially in the modern world, it is certainly impossible for religion to continue to survive in human life if religion does not have a function and role for individuals and society. Among the functions and roles religion can feel in our lives are (Irawan, 2022): Transcendence (giving a lofty final direction and goal for humans for eternal salvation in the hereafter), Education (educating humans to be insightful and behave religiously), Motivation (moving human consciousness to behave and act correctly and well according to religion), Transformation (providing insight and moving human consciousness to change the social order of this society for the better), Sublimation (controlling the latent potential and vices of humans so as not to manifest become bad behavior), Identification (giving certain characteristics to followers of a religion as a group identity in life), Integration (uniting individuals on the basis of religious similarities and life goals), Conflict (contains potential conflicts between people of different religions; between religious and non-religious people), Social control (maintaining social harmony so as not to collapse by deviant behaviors of society by means of moral guidance).

From the description above, we can understand that religion has a big role in religious life. It is appropriate to continue to survive and be defended by humans. Because religion has a real function.

The Role and Function of Mythology for Religious People

In relation to religion, myths are important not only because they contain miraculous events or events concerning supernatural beings, but because they have an existential function for humans. A myth is a story told to establish a particular belief, act as a novice event in a ceremony or rite, or as a fixed model of social or religious behavior. Therefore, the mythology or sacred traditions of a society are collections of stories interwoven in their culture, which voice their beliefs, determine their rites, which act as maps of social rules as well as fixed models of their moral behavior.

According to Wilkinson & Philip myth has several functions, namely (Heriyanti dan Hartaka, 2022): the path to holiness: myth provides the way to the sacred world of the gods and how all aspects of human life in the world have their own consequences in the world of the gods, managing human activities: gods and goddesses in myths help humans in carrying out certain

activities, templates for everyday life: myths are more than stories, myths have a function to maintain human life and interaction in society and human interaction with nature. Through the structure and values carried in the story created a system of culture, ritual, and belief.

Eliade views that myth as the experience of archaic society, has the following structure and function (Heriyanti dan Hartaka, 2022): myth is a history of supernatural deeds, this history is regarded as sacred and absolute truth. Absolute truth because it pertains to reality and whereas sacred truth because it deals with supernatural works and deeds, myth always relates to a creation (everything arises as existence, or how a model behaves, a model of institutions, and so on, therefore myth is the paradigm for all human actions), mythical knowledge is to know the origin of everything and hence be able to supervise and move things according to his will; Here is not knowledge in an external and abstract sense, but a knowledge based on ritual experience, so that the rite can be formed and carried out on the basis of mythical justification.

In accordance with the above opinion, myths have a very important role for religious people. Myths help a person to develop his belief in the religion adhered to. Myths spread through sacred stories will affect the psychology of a religious community. The myths provide answers to one's longing for the gods who are his idols. Through myths one can understand the realm of the gods better.

Myth is neither an intellectual thought nor a product of logic, but a spiritual and mental orientation to relate to the divine. Myth acts as a religion but, however, does not replace religion itself. Because in this case myths are universal virtue dreams that act as a source of value that can be used as a guide for their lives. While religious conceptions contained in sacred texts also always contain beautiful ideal dreams aimed at delivering people into a better life.

Myths start from creative imagination to dynamic reality, beautiful dreams, for example, such as the beautiful image of heaven with the image of a garden filled with colorful flowers, under which flows clear river water and in which there are fruits. The difference between the two lies only in the subject that carries out the construction of the ideal dream. The subject of mythical construction is man, while the subject of religious construction is between God as the representation of his revelation and man as the representation of the results of his interpretation.

Religious beliefs provide answers that vary in the nature and scope of their boundaries. Some of these answers will inevitably point to the absolute truth of 'God' and point also to specific answers concerning how we should govern our behavior on earth. In relation to religion, often the earliest forms of human religion have always been characterized to primitive societies. Primitive is not seen as something that existed and lived in the past, but can even occur in a person or society now (modern) based on certain indications that show the characteristics of primitive humans, can be as primitive behaviors, views or traditions (Heriyanti dan Utami, 2021).

In the modern world, myths also have a function in everyday life and in the organization of social life. Belief in myths shapes the human mindset and even values in organizations. The relationship between humans and nature that is established because of beliefs in the form of myths shows relational relationships that are beneficial to human life in protecting the natural environment (Angeline, 2015). Myth is an element of culture that almost exists in every group of people around the world. The existence of a myth is inseparable from its function to the supporting community. Myths are not limited to a kind of reporting of events that once happened, in the form of stories of gods and magical worlds, but provide clues to human behavior. In the relationship between humans and nature, myths are used as conservation media because they can provide knowledge related to natural symptoms that will cause various impacts on human life (Nensilanti, 2019).

The benefits of myths in the social life of society, culture as an abstraction of human experience is dynamic and tends to develop, in line with the development of its supporting

society, on the other hand myths also reflect culture and tend to convey transformative messages, which are integrated in one myth, or can be manifested in a new version in the same myth. The function of myths in the socio-cultural life of the supporting communities is (Nasrimi, 2021): to develop meaningful symbols and explain the environmental phenomena they face, as a guide for the supporting community to foster social solidarity among members so that it can distinguish between one community and another, as the most effective means of education especially to strengthen and inculcate certain cultural values, social norms and beliefs, To maintain civility between people in daily life, to develop or revive literary values that have been lost, to preserve the environment, to maintain kinship and so on.

In accordance with the above opinion, myths will always coexist with human life. Myth provides the basis for rites, beliefs, moral imperatives, and social organization, so in this case myth is neither a primitive science nor a philosophical allusion, nor is it a strange history distorted. The main function of myth is not to explain or recount historical events in the past, nor to express the fantasies of the dreams of a society, but to provide a basis for the initial events of the glorious past to be repeated in the present, to express, elevate, and formulate beliefs, protect and strengthen morality, ensure the efficiency of rites, and give practical rules to guide people. Myth is an inheritance of a particular form of storytelling from oral tradition based on a logical scheme contained in that myth and which allows integrating all the problems that need to be solved.

People who believe in mythology will try to apply the values contained in it. Belief in various forms of gods, souls, and afterlife, as well as belief in objects or things that contain magical powers, and rebirth in the minds of those who truly believe in them are certainly complexes of minds that are interrelated and not inseparable (Koentjaraningrat, 2005).

In essence, myths always appear in the psychic realm of man. Therefore, according to Djamhari, myth depends on the primordial intellectual articulation model of that belief. In turn, myth also depends on the subjective decisions of its devotees. Myth means a religious attitude or is a primitive philosophy, a simple expression of thought, a series of attempts to understand the world, to explain life and death, destiny and essence, God and worship (Djamhari, 1988).

Departing from that subjective statement myth is also understood as a complex and dramatic human statement, involving thoughts, feelings, attitudes and sentiments. It is outside the empirical world, but always actualizes what has been told. So when someone listens to a myth, then they have their own meaning which makes it easier to apply in everyday life. Listening to myths is not just an entertainment, but looking for the deepest meaning to be conveyed in the myth.

Under these conditions, man would not be able to live without religion, nor without the myths that have been believed since the existence of man in primitive times, even though religion and myth always change from age to age and from generation to generation. Such changes, both religious and mythical due to the situational and conditional demands that come with them (Roibin, 2010).

This situation makes Arkoun optimistic about the value of the myth's function. Myths have a very different understanding from mythology. In Arkoun's view, myth and mythology are two words that have fundamental differences. The difference lies not in the type, but in the level. For Arkoun, when a myth has collapsed and degenerated, it has turned into a khurafat (mythology) that has no value, even though it remains firmly embedded in the populism consciousness of a nation or group. That's where myth according to Arkoun has a positive meaning by filling determination in ideals and pushing towards victory and self-realization on this earth. Meanwhile, mythology, he argued, would only weaken resolve and call for a relaxed, contented and surrendered attitude to the embrace of fanaticism that has long been sick and sleeps above history. Outdated myths give birth to khurafat (mythology). In relation to this modern context, the

scientific portrayal of reality has replaced myth, while ideology (in a negative sense) has replaced mythology (Muhammed Arkoun, 1999).

In other words, myth as Arkoun views it always idealizes reforms according to the level of development of the times. Once it loses its actual power, it does not have the ability to generate the financial value of its people. The spirit of the value of mythical construction will not be separated from the socio-cultural background of the myth construct itself, depending on where, when the myth was constructed. That way it can be understood that the characteristics of myths that develop in Javanese society, certainly not far from the beliefs and beliefs of the *kejawen*. Likewise, myths that develop in Lombok, Sulawesi, Ambon and other places, all of them will not be separated from the basic character of the conditions of the locality.

Conclusion

Myth is a sacred saying believed by adherents of the myth. Myths are not just a fantasy. But myth is considered a secret of nature, especially for primitive man. A myth tells the story of the creation of the universe, the gods, demigods and so on. The values contained in mythical stories are used as guidelines by the community of adherents. Myths can be likened to inspiration or revelation. In the view of primitive societies, myths were considered true stories and even myths became their most valuable stories. There are several types of mythical forms, namely cosmogony myths, origin myths, myths of gods, androgynous myths, and myths of the end of the world. In relation to religion, myths have a very important role. A myth is a story told to establish a particular belief, act as a novice event in a ceremony or rite, or as a fixed model of social or religious behavior. The main and essential functions of the myth are to justify magical acts, as a practical guide in dealing with and relating to the supernatural. In religious life, man will always use a myth to strengthen his belief in the Most High.

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