

The City's Representative Meaning in Samosir's branding “Beautiful Country Pieces of Heaven” in the Heartbeat of Toba Film from the Ministry of Tourism

Riko Andika Rahmat Pohan¹, Samerdanta Sinulingga²

^{1,2}Univerity of Sumatera, Indonesia

ko.pohan96@gmail.com

Abstract

This study aims to describe the film The Heart of Toba showing the socio-cultural conditions of the Toba Batak people, especially in Samosir Regency. In the film The Heart of Toba, there are interesting polished images, and the creation of a light plot in capturing the reality of the life of the Toba Batak people and also the beauty and natural charm of Lake Toba. So, this study provides a complete review of the semiotic analysis of the film The Heart of Toba with the image of Lake Toba as a beautiful country, a piece of heaven. This research uses a semiotic approach with a qualitative research paradigm. This method is used to determine the semiotic meaning of the symbols contained in this film as a promotional film for the beauty of Lake Toba, analysis of criteria for the beautiful land of pieces of paradise, and the correlation of The Heart of Toba film with branding of Lake Toba, the beautiful land of pieces of paradise. Semiotic analysis tries to reveal the signifier and the signified as well as the meaning of the film The Heart of Toba. The theoretical framework used is a semiotic approach, namely the science that examines signs in human life, the meaning obtained from a sign at the mimetic level cannot be used to express its meaning. The results of this research will be published in an accredited international journal.

Keywords

Lake Toba, The Heart of Toba Film; The Land of Heaven



I. Introduction

Film is one of the mass media used as a means of entertainment. In addition, the film acts as a modern means used to disseminate information to the public. Film is one of the most effective mass media in conveying information. The ability and power of films to reach many people has the potential to influence the people who watch them. Technological advances that affect the development of art is one technology that is growing rapidly, one example of technology that is developing rapidly is electronic technology. The technology is closely related to the world of art, both as a means of production and as a medium of communication. Film is a communal medium and a combination of various technologies and elements of art, visual arts, theater, literature, architecture to music, the growth of films that depend on tradition and the combination of art and technology makes films have a high selling power value and are able to develop rapidly very rapidly in the midst of society.

The Heart of Toba film made by the Ministry of Tourism depicts the natural beauty, culture, traditions and attractiveness of various Indonesian tourism destinations which have become icons promoted through film trailers. Through this short film excerpt, it becomes a promotional event for tourism, disseminating information to the world's audience digitally so that it influences the audience to come and visit Lake Toba. Lake Toba is one of the

tourist destinations owned by North Sumatra. Lake Toba is the largest lake in Indonesia and Southeast Asia it includes several regencies, namely Simalungun, Toba Samosir, Dairi, North Tapanuli, and Samosir, Karo, Humbang Haangkalan, and Pak Pak Bharat regencies which are located in the middle of Lake Toba. The lake is originated from the eruption of Mount Toba in North Sumatra. Lake Toba is a Sumatran asset that has great potential to increase the development and economic growth of North Sumatra, especially the areas around Lake Toba. Lake Toba has potential in the fields of tourism, transportation, fisheries, and hospitality. In the Lake Toba area there are several tourist destinations such as Parapat, Simarjarunjung, Tanjung Unta, Haranggaol, and others.

The heart of Toba film shows the socio-cultural situation of the Toba Batak people, especially in Samosir Regency. In the film *The Heart of Toba*, interesting polishes appear, and the creation of a light plot in capturing the reality of the life of the Toba Batak people as a whole and also the beauty and charm of Lake Toba. For this reason, this study reviews in full the Semiotic analysis of the film *The Heart of Toba* with the image of Lake Toba as a beautiful land piece of Paradise (Wonderful Land piece of Paradise).

II. Review of Literature

2.1 Cultural Tourism

According to Muljadi (2015), cultural tourism is a travel activity to visit certain places with the aim of recreation, self-development, or learning the cultural attractions of that place. Examples of cultural tourism include religious tourism, educational tourism, historical tourism, city tourism, and so on. Meanwhile, culture-based tourism is one type of tourism activity that uses culture as its main object. This type of tourism is distinguished from other special interest tours. In an effort to understand the development of tourist destinations in general, this study also adapts the 6A destination attribute framework from Buhalis (2016: 98), which consists of: (a) attractions (natural, man-made, artificial, purpose built, heritage, and special events).); (b) accessibility (entire transportation, system comprising of routes, terminal and vehicles); (c) amenities (accommodation and catering facilities, reatailing, other tourist services; (d) available packages (pre-arranged by intermediaries and principals); (e) activities (all activities available at the destination and what consumers will do during their visit); (f) ancillary services (services use by tourists successful as bank, telecommunication, post, news agent, hospital, etc).

In the development of tourism destinations, the six destination attributes provide a good understanding and are a unified component to make a destination more attractive and improve the image of the destination and the perception of the attributes themselves and are mutually sustainable because they can provide experiences to tourists. The concept of tourism products in this study is useful when it will identify tourism products that have been marketed or are being planned by the community in the Lake Toba area to be developed. These tourism products are activities that tourists can do while visiting Lake Toba or the types of services provided by the community when serving tourists who come.

2.2 Film as Tourism Marketing Promotion Media

Film can be one of the effective marketing promotion tools in making promotional strategies to market tourism. At this time the place of tourism which is used as a place for filming has become a unique phenomenon in the world (Hudson et al & Ritchie, 2006). A business can be successful if it successfully pays attention, retains and grows customers (Marlizar *et al*, 2020). Londhe in Kusumadewi (2019) stated that marketing association was referred to an instrument for marketing and deemed to have a positive impact upon the

enhancement on the customer value. Film is one of the factors that expose parts that show the characteristics and attractions of a destination. Therefore, films are one of the factors that can affect the journey of an individual (Iwashita in Vagionis and Louminoti, 2011). Butler in Vagionis & Louminoti (2011) people often sees the destination of what they see audiovisually such as movies. The process of influencing intentionally, unintentionally, consciously and unconsciously. Film is part of a culture where film has become an important communication tool through product placement. Placement of a destination as a product in a film helps to have both positive and negative effects on the destination. The idea makes the audience familiar with the destination that becomes a product.

The film can influence the potential market to visit the destinations in the film. Placement of tourism within a film is a way in which international films influence tourism demand worldwide (Saltik et al., 2011). Films can have a positive effect on film-making sites, because these positive effects include an increase in economic activity, an increase in the number of visits. This has a good impact on the local economy of the place (Saltik et al., 2011)) The influence of films that can attract visitors, make local people or organizations the destination can also have a negative side effect, as a result of very fast growth in popularity. What is felt include congestion and population density. With these negative influences, marketers of these tourism destinations must make special strategies for tourism places so that they can be controlled properly (Saltik, 2011).

III. Research Methods

The method as in Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia stated that method is an organized and well thought out way to achieve goals. Meanwhile, the method in this study is a qualitative method (qualitative research). Qualitative research methods as expressed by Bogdan and Taylor (LJ Maleong, 2011:4) as a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observable behavior. In addition, qualitative research methods according to Syaodih Nana, (2007:60) are ways to describe and analyze phenomena, events, social activities, attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, thoughts of people individually and in groups.

This method is used to determine the semiotic meaning of the symbols contained in the film *The heart of Toba* as a promotional film for the beauty of Lake Toba, the analysis of criteria for the beautiful land of a piece of heaven, and the correlation of *The heart of Toba* film with the branding of Lake Toba, the beautiful land of a piece of heaven. Semiotic analysis tries to reveal the signifier and the signified as well as the meaning of the film *The Heart of Toba*.

Data collection techniques in qualitative research are by conducting observations, interviews, and documentation studies. 1) Observation. Observations made in this study were observations. Observations were made by means of non-participant observation Film *The heart of Toba*. 2) Interview. Interviews were conducted to find out to complete the data and efforts to obtain accurate data and appropriate data sources. 3) Documentation Study. Documentation study in this research is needed to sharpen the analysis of research related to film as tourism promotion.

IV. Results and Discussion

4.1 Samosir Criteria Analysis “Beautiful Country Pieces of Heaven”

Today's tourism has become a necessity for humans to escape from the boredom of their daily work routines. According to Pitana (in Prihatiningsih, 2015: 3) a person's decision to travel is influenced by the strength of the push and pull factors. This indicates that humans have a need in themselves to carry out social interactions that are not found in their homes so that there is a need to go away from the home environment. An area or country will be interesting if the area has something that can be used as a tourist destination such as natural tourism, culinary tourism and even cultural tourism.

Efforts to introduce regional potential to other regions (the outside world) is by giving a brand (branding). In marketing science, branding is considered a powerful tool to provide a characteristic that can distinguish a product from other products. Currently, branding is not only limited to tangible products, the service sector (intangibles) has also taken advantage of the role of brands. Branding for a location or place is indeed a fairly new thing in marketing science. Locations or places can be branded with relative certainty from the location's actual name.

The branding of a city is intended so that the public is aware or aware of the existence of the location and then creates a desire to associate it. Because a city is an area or location that also has an interest in having a brand that is familiar with city branding, so that it can compete and look different from other regions. The phenomenon of competing in a country or region through marketing techniques is known as City Branding. City branding is an identity, symbol, logo, or brand attached to an area. An area or city can have a strong brand by forming these items. However, these items must first be conceptualized in accordance with the objectives and potential of the existing area. Furthermore, the identity of an area or city can be seen and has a value. At this time city branding is pinned to Samosir, especially Lake Toba in promoting Lake Toba to become world-class tourism, namely with the slogan "The Beautiful Country of Heaven".

Samosir Regency is located in North Sumatra Province and is a Regency that is still relatively new to the division of Toba Samosir Regency in accordance with RI Law Number 36 of 2003 on December 18, 2003 concerning the Establishment of Samosir Regency and Serdang Bedagai Regency. Its area is 70% surrounded by Lake Toba, so it is identically called Samosir Island. The jargon or slogan of this regency is "A BEAUTIFUL COUNTRY OF HEAVEN". The analysis of the phrase "The beautiful land of pieces of Heaven" can be seen as follows: Heaven in the literal sense is a pleasant place that is promised to people who do good deeds during their life in this world after they die. Beautiful = Conditions that spoil the eye so that anyone who sees it will last a long time aka feel at home Pieces of Heaven = Comfortable conditions, no conflict and free from distractions. Treats natural panorama plus the beauty of Lake Toba is the main attraction for tourists.

In this study, researchers raised about City Branding for a tourist place, namely Lake Toba. Lake Toba is the largest volcanic lake in the world, the people of North Sumatra certainly know Lake Toba, but not all people in North Sumatra have visited Lake Toba, of course, for various reasons. Therefore, the local government of Samosir Regency is trying to build an image through City Branding, namely by making several slogans, and one of them in this study is Lake Toba which is located in Samosir Regency, North Sumatra Province, which is likened to "The Beautiful Country of Heaven". The local government hopes that the slogan that describes Lake Toba will have an impact on increasing the number of people who know about Lake Toba, so that the number of visitors to Lake Toba

will increase. The local government of Samosir Regency is trying to make Lake Toba the main tourist attraction in North Sumatra, because Lake Toba is undeniably a vital object for regional income from the tourism sector, and is the main livelihood support for the people around Lake Toba. So one of the local government strategies is to create a Branding for Lake Toba.

The phenomenon of establishing City Branding is also a popular thing today, because it is considered to be able to increase visitors in an area. So in this study, researchers want to prove whether there is an effect on determining City Branding with an interest in visiting Lake Toba. Through this research, the City Branding that has been created gives a positive influence, namely the interest in visiting Lake Toba. This study has proven that City Branding significantly affects the interest in visiting Lake Toba. Its influence is through several aspects, such as seeing, hearing, reading, and stories from other people, as well as photos of tourists visiting Lake Toba which are uploaded on their respective social media accounts as promotional media in introducing the beauty of Lake Toba and based on the information obtained from the government of Samosir Regency, City Branding is indeed quite helpful for their media promotion. Because with City Branding, many people want to see firsthand the beauty of Lake Toba which is likened to heaven.

Some tourist attractions that spoil the eye are very diverse to choose from and visit according to the Jargon mentioned above. Starting from beach tours, cultural destinations and natural scenery. Beach tourism: Parbaba White Sands (Pangururan), Simanindo, PIS (Beautiful Beach Situngkir Pangururan), Sipinggan (Nainggolan) Cultural Tours: King Siallagan Chair Stone, Sigale-gale, Batak Museum (Tomok Simanindo), Hobon Stone, Sopo Guru Tatea Bulan, Toba Caldera Geopark, Siraja Batak Village, Aek Sipitu Dai / Seven Taste Water (Sianjur Mula-mula).

4.2 Construction of Tourism Destination Attributes in the Heart of Toba Tourism Promotion Film

The attributes shown in promotional films are essentially the most important or phenomenal icons of all tourism attractions presented in a tourist destination. It is hoped that some of the main components used as film content can boost the motivation of potential tourists to visit and travel to the targeted locations. In the context of storytelling and instagramable tourism films. In particular, the context of instagramable storytelling will usually only show a few attractions, amenities and anselaries in the content of the film, but is expected to be able to cover the entire 4A component (according to Cooper, 2005) which is the main symbol of tourism. The things that are shown in the tourism promotion film are:

Attractions:

- a. Natural Attractions: Air Terjun Ponot, Sipholon Hot spring, Gua Sigalapang, Hole island, Paralayang di Huta Gintang, Bersepeda di Bukit Holbung, Sungai Asahan Rafting, Rafting di Air Terjun Katasa

- b. Cultural attractions : Simarmata, Desa Budaya Huta Bolon, Tarian Topeng Batak, Bermain Musik Tradisional Batak, Mandi Pangir, Tor Tor, Martonun (menenun kain/ulos), Kehidupan Peladang

Other supporting factors such as the friendliness of the residents, the appearance of a clean location, the display of various activities that tourists can do later.

V. Conclusion

The conclusions that can be drawn from the results of the research above are:

1. This research is about semiotics, which describes the film the heart beat of toba has several meaning approaches. To find out the creative element that the theme maker wants to convey, the meaning will be described through an analysis, namely semiotic analysis in the form of a signifier, the signified and the meaning.
2. Giving the Samosir branding "Beautiful Country Pieces of Heaven" as a tourism marketing strategy so that it attracts tourists to come for tours. The meaning of "Beautiful land of pieces of Heaven" represents the real samosir.

References

- Ayawaila, Gerzon R. 2012. Dokumenter: dari ide sampai produksi. FFTV-IKJ Press. Jakarta. Brata, Vincent
- Bayu Tapa. 2017. Videografi dan sinematografi praktis. Jakarta: PT. Elex Media Komputindo.
- Christina, Natalia, dkk. 2017. Perancangan film dokumenter tentang perjalanan hidup pelaku hip-hop. *Jurnal Desain Komunikasi Visual Adiwarna* Vol 1, 13-27 | vol: | issue : |2017.
- Hasan, Ali. 2015. *Tourism marketing*. Yogyakarta: CAPS (Center of Academic Publishing Service).
- Himawan Pratista. 2018. *Memahami film*. Homerian Pustaka. Yogyakarta.
- Hudson, S., Ritchie, J. B. (2015). Film tourism and destination marketing: the case of captain corelli's mandolin. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, Vol. 12 (3), p. 256–268.
- Irawan, Etsa Indra. 2011. *Sinematografi (panduan usaha mandiri)*. Bandung: Yrama Widya.
- Juškelytė, Donata. (2016, June). Film induced tourism: destination image formation and development. *Regional Formation and Development Studies*, Vol 19, No 2, 54-66. Doi: 10.15181/rfds.v19i2.1283Nare, Amogelang Tsholofelo, Gwinyai Mercy Musikavanhu
- & Simon Chiutsi. 2017. Tourism diversification in Botswana-a stakeholder perspective. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure*, Volume 6(3) -(2017) ISSN: 2223- 814X.
- Kusumadewi, R. (2019). The Role of Marketing and Individual Environment Association in Elevating the Customer Value. *Budapest International Research and Critics Institute (BIRCI Journal)*, p. 451-460
- Marlizar, et al. (2020). The Role of Market Orientation and Creativity in Affecting the Marketing Performance of Market Traders in Aceh Market Banda Aceh City. *Budapest International Research and Critics Institute-Journal (BIRCI-Journal)* Volume 3, No 2, Page: 1114-1127
- Pemerintah Indonesia. 2011. Undang-Undang No. 10 Tahun 2011 tentang kepariwisataan. Kementerian Pariwisata dan Ekonomi Kreatif.
- Sarosa, Samiaji. 2017. *Penelitian kualitatif (dasar-dasar) –edisi kedua*. Jakarta: Penerbit Indeks.
- Semedhi, Bambang. 2011. *Sinematografi-videografi suatu pengantar*. Bogor: Penerbit Ghalia, Indonesia.
- Suryajaya, Minghadi. 2018. *Wonderful indonesia revolusi tour & travel digital*. Jakarta: Elex Media Komputindo.
- Tudor, Gabriela-Cosmina. 2017. Film Tourism –A Successful Journey For New Zealand. *Cactus Tourism Journal* Vol. 12, Issue 2/2015, Pages 45-53, ISSN 2247- 3297.

Yusuf, A. Muri. 2013. Metode Penelitian (Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, Penelitian Gabungan).
Jakarta: Prenadamedia Group.