MYTH AND RELIGION IN THE FU NUMERAL (BILANGAN FU) AND THE PRAU WITH THE SILENT SOUL (BEDAR SUKMA BISU)

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Abstract

This study compares two novels which are The Numeral Fu (Bilangan Fu) by Ayu Utami and The Prau with the Silent Soul (Bedar Sukma Bisu) by Faisal Tehrani using the Theory of Existence of Myth as a hidden narrative which expound the world view, value, code of ethics and moral that existed in society. This hidden narrative is seen in a theoretical context thus portraying the existence of myths which were often connected with efforts in questioning the existence, nature and energy elements surrounding them. Furthermore, it brings along the principle of belief, which eventually became life’s thrust. Samawi religions (monotheisme) were not borne out of myths, but from the revelations of The Only God. But, myth often existed as a destructive element or on the other hand contributed constructively in understanding the profound truth. This study is done to witness how the hidden narratives were eventually constructed to bring about the thoughts and ideology of these two authors in upholding their respective discourse.

Introduction

According to expert psychologist James Hillman, mythology is psychology from antiquity and psychology is mythology from modernity. Myth is

a tale that goes beyond facts and man’s true experience in depicting
natural phenomena and existence so imbued with magic. It was also
a transformation of man’s disposition to a creation characterized by
extraordinary magical prowess in gods and goddesses’ personification,
natural spirit etc. It also functioned for a specific purpose in enlarging
the extraordinary stories which were beyond facts and true experiences.
In addition to that, mythology could be seen as a subject or premise
relating to man’s pre-writing era on questions about their existence,
nature and the elements of forces surrounding them. It was a science of
antiquity about imaginative observation and research towards existence.
Mythology then expanded into a collective sub-conscious activity that
produced symbols from the human sub-conscious desire towards
the search and object set with a particular purpose. In that respect,
psychology is seen as a mythology and on the other hand mythology is
seen as psychology. There exist a solid symbiotic relationship between
the realm of psychology and the realm of mythology.

Robert Ellwood\(^2\) said myth is a tale about gods and goddesses,
heroes and super humans created at a much earlier backdrop of natural
creation or the realm beyond the real world in a narrative form and
intertwined in it are the world view and values that existed in a particular
society. Myths existed as understanding tool towards the origin and the
meaning to every practice, ritual, and organizational code of conduct
of the society. However with the influence of modern psychological
interpretation, the meaning of myth becomes more individualistic. So
myth seen from the individual, sub-group, model, behavior, attitude, and
personal ideals point of view as opposed to looking at it as an important
narrative in representing the society’s overall value.

Karen Armstrong\(^3\) explained that myth pushes man to exceed
beyond experience that could be achieved in the real world. These are
moments when men are taken to places they had never seen before
and did things they had never done in the real world.

Myths were about something unknown; something men were unable
to describe in the first instance. Myth is not a story created just for the
purpose story telling but is done to show how men should behave. In
other words, it is a code of ethics and moral to organize man. In this
context, myth seemed to be related to the unseen belief system and
became a powerful influence in the life of man in the real world. The realm
of gods and goddesses, sacred world in the context of primitive mind
became the basic theme to mythology. This is termed as the perennial
philosophy. Referring to this perennial philosophy was to believe that

\(^2\) See Ellwood, Robert (2008:1) \textit{Myth: Key Concepts in Religion}.
\(^3\) Armstrong, Karen, (2005: 3–5). \textit{Short History of Myth}. 

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whatever happened in this world, all that were seen and heard had a relationship in the divine realm, which was higher, stronger and powerful than man’s world. Myths that depicted how the gods and goddesses behaved not only displayed inquisitiveness and amusement but were models or examples for man to emulate the existence of these powerful ones and undergo the experience of the sacred realm based on their good behavior and ethics.

**Theory on Mythology**

According to Ellwood,⁴ the theory on mythology is divided into four types, namely; Euhemeric, Enlightenment, Romantic and Pedagogical. Euhemeric theory originated from the ancient Greek rational commentator and writer Euhemeros (330–260 BC) who founded the belief that myth was not actually based on facts but rather probably borne out of the overstatement of historical events in the process of story telling and repetitions thereof.

In mythology, the god would probably be a supreme king or a man who was a historical figure whose prowess was glorified until he was regarded as a divine, as in the case of Alexander the Great whose greatness made him be regarded as a God in Greek mythology. The Troy Wars led to the mythological notion that war heroes such as Achilles were regarded as half man, half god. The same situation prevailed with Odysseus, Oedipus and the like. Mythology is the earliest manifestation of thought and beliefs. And as such, mythology is regarded a form of science and primitive philosophy than formed in man’s imagination that was the outcome of basic questions on events and life itself. The Euhemeric Theory is clearly being applied in the East Asian tradition where mythology has created gods and goddesses from heroic and notable humans in history. As an example, the God Guan Di, who is also known as the God of War and worshipped in Guan Di temples as a peace keeper is derived from the character of the well known war general of the Eastern Han Dynasty, General Kwan or his original name Guan Yu (160–219 AD). General Kwan served under the Shu government led by Liu Bei in the era of the Three Kingdoms. His prowess in war and his invention of the war weapon known as Guan Do (an axe with a spear pole) was glorified in the ancient Chinese narratives. So much so that the renowned human named Guan Yu or General Kwan has been upgraded to become the God of War worshipped to ask for protection in Chinese temples.

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⁴ *Ibid*, (2008:30)
Meanwhile, the Theory of Enlightenment arose at the height of the industrial revolution leading on to the modern era. The theory of Enlightenment held a modern view that defined mythology as individual phenomena that repeated itself. This belief emerged through the work of Francis Lyotard, a post-modernist philosopher who saw mythology as meta-narrative arising from the dynamics of narrative progress and the narrative of the unity of knowledge. This meant that the narrative will be expanded to a more solid and complete level after the process of repetition such as retelling and so on. It will always create new interpretations, beliefs and values regarding human phenomena in line with the advances and development of the age and human thought. The understanding of mythology reaches a more complex level when its fundamental meaning is sought through the structural, functionalist and psychoanalytic theories. The rationale of the Enlightenment theory is in line with Darwin’s theory of evolution that sees the origin of life and existence begins from the simplest and shortest principles to the more complex sequences. In the approach of the study of beliefs, it searches for beginnings from tradition, heritage, spirit of the environment and dreams. It has been said by Edward Burnet Taylor, the father of modern anthropology, which the original form of anthropology emerged from dreams.

The Theory of Enlightenment brought in the rational spirit that attempted to view each subject and premise in the most objective angle. This led to the emergence of rational – objective theories that reflected the scientific spirit such as the theories of functionalism, structuralism and psychoanalysis. The functionalists argue that myths could only be understood by understanding its function in a specific society. To make comparisons with myths of another dimension is a meaningless and fruitless exercise. Myths looks at how an event functions or should function; such as how a king who has absolute authority over his subjects, the role of women, the functions of a festival and so on. It is clear that a myth is able to formulate the functions for every subject and object in a particular society. Functionalism looks at specialisation, while structuralism looks at myths as a normal rule. Myths have its own language rules as in any normal language. Claude Levi Strauss states that every word spoken by an individual has its own inner meaning to the speaker. When the words are linked together in sentence, it not only becomes clearer but also creates the existence of something. Meanwhile, Strauss sees the emergence of myths as the dichotomy collision between nature and culture, god and man, man and animals, and man and women through movement and linguistic reconstruction. In the hands of Roland Barthes, myths received the structuralist magic touch. Lastly, psychoanalysis which showcases its original greats such as Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung. Freud saw myths as the collective dreams of a society arising
out of the needs and uncertainties that arise in that society. Meanwhile, Jung saw myths as an individualization process in which as society is self sufficient and manifests its existence. It involves what is said as archetype as in the ancient shadows or mythical shadows that has its particular motives. Jung’s theories gave a more positive meaning to myths as compared to that of other psychoanalysts.

The Romantic theory emerged earlier than the Enlightenment theory, expanded around the 18th and 19th centuries in various forms but all based on the principle that emotion and the imaginative creativity are the source for understanding myths. Mythology aroused deep feelings more than the enjoyment of the arts and sensual pleasures. It was the human collective realization towards their objective in life in the environment of society and the natural world. John Gottfried Herder saw the development of myths by the national language and the physical surroundings. It forms the mind and feelings of a nation or society. Frederick W. Von Schelling expands Herder’s view by saying that myths are the connection between the specific and the universal. The prominent Romantic theorists that were controlled by German philosophers gave rise to its most famous exponent in Frederick Nietzsche who used myths in explaining the transcendent and social philosophies. Nietzsche used the mythological Greek character Apollonian as controlled and rational whole the character of Dionysian as out of control and subconscious. The two situations created the spirit of Romantic Mythology.

Lastly, the theory of Pedagogy which viewed myths as an approach in educating moral values and societal ethics. For example, Myths from the philosophy of ‘Plato’s Cave’ viewed myths as the understanding of the real world and the after world, but at the same time to bring man to understand the value of life from the philosophical standpoint. The Pedagogic Theory also viewed myths as a social culture, general belief and the structure of power.

Ayu Utami and Faisal Tehrani

The novel Bilangan Fu was written by Ayu Utami after the novels Saman and Larung. This novel was awarded the Indonesian Khatulistiwa Award 2009 with a cash award of 100 million rupiah, which represents the literary award with the highest cash prize in Indonesia. Meanwhile, Bedar Sukma Bisu, the work of Faisal Tehrani, was awarded the first prize Sayembara Mengarang Sempena Jubli Emas DBP for which Faisal was awarded a cash prize of RM fifty thousand, representing one of the most prestigious awards with one of the highest monetary value in Malaysia. Before this, Faisal had written many novels, among which are Cinta Hari-hari Rusuhan, Perempuan Politikus Melayu, 1515, Kombat 1511, Advencer Si Peniup Ney, Detektif Indigo, Surat – surat
Perempuan Johor, Tunggu Teduh Dulu, Nama Saya Sultan Allauddin, Manikam Kalbu, Tuhan Manusia and others. Faisal has also written works for theatre such as Rintih Chicago, Misi, Kopitiam Gadir and others.

Ayu Utami writes under the Utan Kayu group that is well known in bringing the liberal secular stream in Indonesia. The novel Saman by Ayu Utami was a starting point for the literary works referred to as Sastera Wangi (Fragrance Literature). It deliberates the sexual matters openly such that it has led to the emergence of a literary stream known by some literary critics as influenced by pornographic elements and more succinctly described as pornographic or sexual literature. Among the Indonesian writers that are said to be in this stream are Djenar Maesa Ayu, Mariana Amiruddin, Dewi Dee Lestari, Fira Basuki, Nova Riyanti and Dinar Rahayu. Other writers in this pornographically influenced literature are Hudan Hidayat, Binhad Norrohmat, Stefani Hid, Naning Panoto and many more. In fact, Taufik Ismail has named the Sastera Wangi literary as SMS or Sastera Mazhab Selangkangan with their literary works labeled by Taufik Ismail as FAK or Fiksi Alat Kelamin. The liberalist movement or stream had its centre at Komunitas Utan Kayu (KUK) led by Goenawan Mohamad. KUK has a connection with Jaringan Islam Liberal (JIL) which has opposed the laws, regulations and norms of Islam which they regard as being orthodox and stale. Apart from the sexual or fragrance literature, another group expanding under KUK was the anti religious group. This led to the emergence of the proponents of the liberal-secular stream in SUK such as Sitok Srengenge, Nirwan Dewanto, Nukila Amal and others.

Meanwhile, Faisal Tehrani is a young Malaysian writer who produces works on Islamic theology. Faisal Tehrani is a graduate of Syariah in Islamic Studies, Universiti Malaya, Masters of Arts in Universiti Sains Malaysia and a candidate for PhD at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. Faisal is seen as a writer who strongly opposes the liberal-secular stream and is strongly advocates the Islamic values both in his works and principles. However, the Islamic stream that he advocates also raises controversies when it is associated with certain sects or streams. Some of Faisal’s works such as his novel Saasatul Ibad, serialised novel Perempuan Di Wajah Langit Pagi, dramatic novel Tuhan Manusia and lastly the play Koptiam Gadir, began to be seen as associated with certain leanings. Unlike Ayu Utami, who was upheld by KUK or Goenawan Mohamad, Faisal Tehrani is upheld by his own energies and carries on alone with his self sufficient quality and individual style. Whatever the controversies that may emerge over the literary stream that he brought; his diligence in bringing in the notion of Islamic literature in Malay literature in the current decade cannot be denied.
The Comparison Between the Stories of The Fu Numeral (*Bilangan Fu*) and The Prau with the Silent Soul (*Bedar Sukma Bisu*)

*Bilangan Fu* is divided into three parts according to the ideology that is being opposed as a source of man’s harmfulness and the destruction of nature, namely Modernism, Monotheism and Militarism. The story’s structure is seen as similar in form to that of the roman form namely a Beginning, Adventure and the Meeting. From this angle, it can be seen that modernism represents the introduction and start of the story and the ideology of the novel. This part tells of the background of the protagonist and antagonist. Subsequently, there will emerge the form and personalities that can be seen to favour the introduction of myths that is in collision with modernism. The background of the thought process, ideology, creative style, and technique are also introduced in this part. At the same time, modernism can be seen to be at odds with ideology, and is stated as giving modernism a role as the character that destroys the original values in society. As such, the efforts to uplift the values that are destroyed by modernism are centered in reintroducing the myths in society. The myths in *Babad Tanah Jawi* about Perang Bubak that witnessed the tragic case of Diah Patakola and the myths of Sangkuriang who wanted to marry his own mother, as well as the myth of Ki Wirasuta becoming a genie in Watagunung was created in regenerating the mythical values in society. All the myths here uphold the tragic stories, in the desire to give society an emotional relief that free themselves of the burden of modernism.

As it has been said by Roland Barthes, myths are a form of value but the truth is not guaranteed. However, nothing can prevent it from being an perpetual alibi; it is enough that it’s signifier has two sides for it always to have elsewhere at its disposal. Therefore, myth is a perpetual value that exists as a sign of the general existence in society of beliefs, view of life, philosophy, culture and all other values. Barthes’s views has been clarified by Claude Levi-Strauss who stated that one angle, myths refer to the previous events (reversible time) but from another angle myths shows patterns of relationships that still exist over time (non-reversible time).

In the Monotheism section, the setting that has been placed in Modernism is brought in a quest to find the values in myths. The search for the value in myths brings about the fundamental and major clash with monotheism. Myths reject monotheism in *toto*. This leads to the

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5 Barthes, Roland. (1972 : 123). *Mythologies*. Translation from Myth is value, truth is no guarantee for it; nothing prevents it from being a perpetual alibi: it is enough that its signifier has two sides for it always to have 'elsewhere' at its disposal.
emergence of the clash between the principles of ‘one’ in monotheism and principle of ‘zero’ in myths. In the matter of Kritik Hu on Monotheism, the basic principle is described. Monotheism stresses on the number ‘one’ namely that there only one god. However in myths, ‘god’ expands from the concept of zero which had existed much earlier to ‘one’ in a gradual step over time. The Monotheism period is carried on in a very challenging adventure, whether in the physical balance of the protagonist triangle facing the conflict in Sewagunung district or in the balance of spiritual paralleled of Yuda-Parang Jati in fighting for mythical values in their atheist-animist face through the usage of the mysterious gnosis sanguinity blood. This section brings in a lot of mythical stories that compares the original animistic values and the external monotheistic values. This is seen from the myths of emergence of both Parang Jati and Kupukupu. Then it extends to the original myths surrounding the origins of Ratu Selatan Nyi Roro Kidul, the controller of all genies in Pulau Jawa who are said to originate from Ki Ajar Cemara. The myths surrounding the emergence of Parang Jati is characterised with its connection to the myth of Siung Wanara, who killed his father, Raja Penjajaran and drove away his brother Raden Sesuruh who journeyed over to Java and established the line of Raja-raja Jawa Majapahit. Ki Ajar Cemara had a family relationship with Raden Sesuruh, which led to the connection between the two myths. Nyi Roro Kidul who originated from Ki Ajar Cemara also had connections with other myths such as Ki Ageng Mataram and Hindu-Buddha Dewaruchi, which simultaneously makes Nyi Roro Kidul as the centre of mythology in spreading the atheist-animist values here. The myth of Durga who was cursed by Betara Guru also expanded the religious injustice angle, simultaneously becoming a model for uplifting the ‘leadership/justice’ angle of atheist-animism in the centre of the Nyi Roro Kidul mythology.

The final part, namely Militarism becomes the separation of the story – the meeting of the value of myths with the hidden victory of atheist-animist in the tragic death of Parang Jati. Post-modernism which was assumed as the birth of a new value in myths emerged as the resolution to the principal of anti modernism referred to earlier. Subsequently, Militarism emerged as the third enemy of postmodernism after modernism and monotheism, as a representative of the power of force. The clash that previously took a non-physical form has now turned into a physical form. The Antagonist has risen in the form of physical threat. Antagonist Farisi @ Kupukupu arrives with his group of force. Tragedy occurs in this part along with the answer to the mystery in the earlier part.

The understanding of the relationship between power and militarism in this part can be derived from the statement of Michel Foucault who said that force exists in two forms; firstly in the form of rules and secondly
in the form of strategy that is tied to ‘force – relationships’. Force and strategy are related with each other and there is always some friction between them. Thus, the victory of the protagonist bringing the atheist-animist belief is resolved through the tragic death of Parang Jati. It gives rise to a form of emotional relief that searches for completeness after undergoing troubles and suffering, which is pictured in the form of the route of eros and thanatos (love and death).

The three parts weave together a tragic melody when it form the tragic death of Parang Jati. This incident goes against the roman structure and changes it into a tragedy. The tragic death of Parang Jati resolves the spiritual theme of the story that is linked to the objective of mind cleansing or the discovery of truth through terror and sympathy. And so the three parts that make up Bilangan Fu can also be seen as the structure of a tragic story namely Poema (determination), Pathema (suffering) and Mathema (understanding). From the angle of arrangement of parts, The Modernism part can accommodate Peoma, the monotheist accommodates Pathema and the militarism accommodates Mathema. The formal arrangement of tragedy sees the formation of the three parties as movement or process towards social relief that completes the resolutions on the principles and ideologies that the author brings in.

The structure of the story in Bedar Sukma Bisu is divided into five chapters with one prologue. The prologue is a collage to the basis of the story and the ending of it. In other words, it brings out the overview of the story as well as the foreshadow of what will happen at the end of the story. The story in five chapters does not give a special division to the chronology of it; on the other hand it is written in many forms of ‘flashback’, current timing and future events that are not synchronized with each chapter. In terms of story structure, Bedar Sukma Bisu is rather non-orderly and does not give a clear demarcation to the ideological structure and the development of the story. It moves somewhat like waves of the sea that flounders in the depth of the story. There are many protracted matters and deep thoughts that are attempted to convey but the uncertain structure of the story mainly keeps it untold.

The first chapter serves to introduce the main character, Wefada, and the origins of the history of Bedar Sukma Bisu namely a ship originally built by Ben Qurtubi and then became the name of a big family firm descended from Ben Qurtubi – Tengku Fatimah. It simultaneously became the symbol of the diligence and glorious Malay civilization with Islamic foundations. Ben Qurtubi, a man from Oran city in a Turkish province who married a Malay noblewoman from Terengganu Tengku Fatimah Tengku Ahmad is the founder of an aristocratic Malay family

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that developed a large shipping firm named Bedar Sukma or BSG Corporation. This firm engaged a business in tour shipping that operated around the world. This chapter introduced the characters Wefada, Tengku Fatimah, Ben Qurtubi, Waqeel, Muawiyah, Haiqal, Elamine, Ayah Par and Rashidah.

Apart from that, it included the Malay myths in the tradition of ship building as the art of woodworking that was grand and could not be found elsewhere. The greatness of the Malay building technology was indirectly linked to the advanced building technology of the old government of Saba' that is mentioned in the al-Qur’an. This chapter also gives and early insight of the thinking and ideology that uplifted Islamic values as the highest and most honorable in the society. It was inferred in the thinking behind the relationships between man and woman within Islamic laws and the honorable dealings in society according to Islamic principles.

In the second chapter, the triangular relationship between the protagonists Wefada – Elamine – Haiqal began to exist and expand. The story developed the relationship between feelings and the soul. More importantly, the trianglarly influenced protagonists become united to build the case for Islamic values. Wefada is the main character who speaks on the ideology and thoughts on Islamic values in the economy and life in society. In the meantime, Elamine appears as a heroic character that is extraordinary in that he is from a far away world with higher esteem than the normal man in the local society. The mythical character in Elamine is strengthened by his attribute as a person of faith. In this chapter, he appears and states his point of view. Haiqal appears in this triangular protagonistic relationship as the linking point in the feelings between Wefada and Elamine. The story expands with the emergence of the antagonistic Muawiyah (the uncle of Wefada) who becomes the catalyst to the external conflict, simultaneously bringing out the power of Wefada as the main heroine in saving her brother Waqeel through her economic prowess. The ideological thought that upholds Islamic concepts appears through the concept of *Malakah* from the thoughts of Ibn Khaldun relating to the concept of thinking that similar to ‘a ship that saves humanity through obedience and faith that controls the basis of knowledge.’ The concept of the importance of material wealth in society as a tool for propagating the mission of Islam, and also channeled through the comparisons with the stories of the companions of Rasullullah (Prophet Muhammad *p.b.u.h.*).

The third chapter expands the story or chronology of the descendants of Ben Quturbi – Tengku Fatimah through the stories of Waqeel, Wefada and Muawiyah. Waqeel, the brother of Wefada, now the third generation leader of Bedar Sukma after Ben Quturbi’s grandfather and Marwan’s father. Waqeel succeeded in bring a big change in Bedar Sukma but there
were weakness seen in his character. This resulted in the emergence of Wefada as the esteemed and unexpected saviour. Meanwhile Wefada’s story moved on the history of her marriage to Muhamad Chen, the Chinese convert that ended tragically with the death of Chen. The prowess of Wefada appears softly and artistically in her role in ending the conflict by placating Muawiyah to return to Bedar Sukma. Muawiyah also appeared as a rounded character with a lot of good intents. The family relationships was well nurtured by Wefada when she invited Muawiyah to be her trustee in her marriage to Elamine.

The development of the story in chapter four focused on the history of Bedar Sukma that rose to become a multinational firm. It introduced the character of Marwan, the father of Wefada and Waqeel who built Bedar Sukma into an international firm. In the triangular protagonistic relationship, the character of Haikal was given a small but important role whether within or outside of the triangular protagonistic relationship in the development of Bedar Sukma. Myths and values are expanded in parallel in this chapter to show the thoughts and ideology of Muslim society that was founded on belief and faith. At the same time, it introduced the concept of a Malay realm that represented Islamic culture in South East Asia. The story of Elamine is filled with several events that justifies his role in the centre of the story of Bedar Sukma.

The fifth and final episode to the story formulates the thoughts and views of Wefada to transform Bedar Sukma into a micro Islamic world. The mythical view (from the background) moved to uplift Islam in the manner of projecting Islam as the solution provider to all aspects of disorder, depravity and wantonness in nature and society. The ending of story is suspended with Wefada searching for the strength to build a micro Islamic world; Haiqal and his grandfather were attacked by pirates in the waters of Sabah and in the strange dreams of Ben Quturbi.

Myths and Religion from the View of the Comparison of Novels

The existence of myths is normally associated with beliefs. In the early phase of human civilisation, myths usually exist as the key to the concept of religion. In fact, it has a strong relationship with the world of gods and goddesses or the perennial world in the context of perennial philosophy. In the context of beliefs, myths is said to be the bridge or archway between the mortal world and the after world. Meanwhile, in the context of culture, myths is the passage between beliefs and culture. At the same time, myths exist as a cultural system where society communicates and synchronise their lives especially in the normative concept, namely to arrange their lives according to specific norms and rules based on general beliefs. Myths embody certain norms that will enable man to create rules and practices of life. In the myths in the
form of etiology, namely that connected to the origins or beginnings of life, the concern for preserving nature becomes the primary principle. In the end, it creates a belief in the spirit of nature and the importance of preserving the balance of nature. On the other hand, the myths that are in the form of eschatologist, namely that concerning the world of life and death and the end of the world, the spiritual/everafter world becomes the attitude and principle belief. It goes on to set up the religious relationship in the context of belief in the existence of a godly world or an ideal and powerful world.

*Bilangan Fu* shows how myths that are etiologist in nature are used to expand the old beliefs that are based on belief and honour for the natural spirit as the true road for society in arranging their lives harmoniously – the harmony of man and nature. The old belief that worships or honours the spirit based on the belief that everything whether living or not has a worldly soul, which according to Du Bois is animism chosen as the natural or local religion which is sacred and unblemished. On the other hand, the religion of monotheism – Christianity and Islam is seem as a sky based religion or religion from the outside brought in and contaminates the harmony between man – nature that has hitherto been formulated by the earth religion. As such in *Bilangan Fu* the numeral concept is based on the rules of the numeral 12 as a doctrine of the earth – religion and rejects the rule of the numeral 10 as incomplete, and in so doing to simultaneously become the doctrine of rejection to the monotheist or *samawi* religion.

The rule of the numeral 12 is a Cosmo centric rule, namely to refer to the stars in determining the planting period. The count of 12 was formulated by those that were searching for the sign on earth. Meanwhile, the rule of the numeral 10 is an anthropocentric rule, namely to refer to the marks on the human body as in the fingers which sum up to 10. At the moment the numeral basis 12 has disappeared from the earth. The numeral 10 has become the world norm. Parang Jati who had twelve fingers exists as the symbol of the truth of the rule of 12, which existed as the saviour of the earth religion. More so that in the different view, Parang Jati is a symbol of the earth religion as well as being the god on earth with heroic and sympathetic qualities and simultaneously concepts of masculine - feminine, male - female from the hero-comforter said earlier. There is another view that Parang Jati exists as myth that creates the concept of antromophism that creates angels or gods in the form of a human named Parang Jati. As such Parang Jati is viewed as ‘an angel fallen to earth, or a near angel seen through hazy eyes’. Parang Jati is the key to the myth that was created for the new animistic concept. This can be seen in Suhubudi’s dialogue:

“You have twelve fingers, Parang Jati. That’s no coincidence.’
Suhubudi’s eyes looked deeply at his adopted son.
‘Parang Jati, there are ancient things that are forgotten by people. Such as counting based on the numeral 12. Son, you, duty is to preserve it, this ancient concept. To find it, if it is lost and to love it.

Parang Jati nodded, even though he did not really understand what his father had said.

‘My duty is to centralise my thoughts about it. Ever since the 12 years I had you until now, that is what I think about Twelve comes to me to tell stories about the ancient world. The ancient world that has been forgotten by people because Ten has become one of the languages used in all corners of the world.’ (Bilangan Fu, 277–278)

The connection between the rule of count of 12 and the doctrine of the rejection of monotheism, linked to the numeral after 12 namely 13. The numeral 13 in the ancient Jawa Kuno calendar is the closing part of the cycle of 12. Thirteen is zero where anything becomes one again. Suhubudi names it as ‘hu’. For Yuda ‘Hu’ means ‘fu’ namely a silent numeral. Nought or zero is an ancient concept known in India as the sign of sunya, and in Sanskrit language as sunyat, sunyata namely loneliness, nil or none. The sign of sunya is a sign of emptiness. This doctrine of zero that is referred to as the doctrine of the count of fu or hu, or the thirteenth count after the end of the circle of 12, meaning that something has returned to its original state. Fu or hu is where one and nought become concentrated. It is not a mathematical count but a metaphorical one. It is not a rational but rather a spiritual numeral. Such that the count of one that represents monotheism where god is regarded as One as a count that is with force or coercive nuance. One divided to one, equals one (1/1 = 1). One multiplied by one equal one (1x 1 = 1). Therefore, monotheism (represented by antagonist Farisi@ Kupukupu) is said to have faith in a system that is rejected by the Hu concept. In the Hu concept, monotheism based on the count of one is said to cause non alignment between the metaphoric and the mathematic, the spiritual with the rational. If there is only one god, then we cannot worship other gods nor can we honour the land in any other way. Worship and honour is only for the one above. In the end it has no ability to compromise, to be friendly to others and always to force the good terms. It is dissimilar to the count of zero, which is the interval that brings back harmony, good relationships, and often believing in dialogue and pluralism. So it is said that the count of nought is earlier than one. And the god for the count of nought exists before that for the count of one. Nought has a god that is harmonious, whereas one has a god that is coercive. It is here that the doctrine of rejection towards religion or monotheism is expanded.

This belief is seen as similar to that propounded by the atheist group. As an example, Richard Dawkins said ‘The god of the Old Testament
is arguably the most unpleasant character in all fiction; jealous and proud of it; a petty, unjust, unfor
giving control freak, a vindictive, blood thirsty ethnic cleanser; a misogynistic, homophobic, racist, in
fanticidal, genocidal, filicidal, pestilential, megalomaniac, sadomasochistic, capriciously malevolen
t bully." The god in monotheism as pictured as a subject of strong power, malevolent and greedy. Bilangan Fu also portrays monotheismic god with his main attribute of coerciveness and, forceful and uncompromising. Dawkins also brought out the concept of oneness as the decisive form of god with the concept of X that has a link with mathematics and science. Apart from that, the concept of god and religion said to have been derived as a by product of psychology. The discussion on the rule of numeral fu that is linked to takwim or natural calendar is also used by Dawkins to reject god or monotheism through the principal of anthropy in the planetology and cosmological versions that were presented in a mathematical and scientific manner.

What helped Dawkins most in expounding atheism is the rule of Darwinism that he used in many of his discussions, including the question of honouring nature by the evolitional concept that creates all forms of life on earth. It has the same assumptions as the fu count that assumes that religion and monotheism causes destruction and waste to natural resources by its coercive concept. As such, the religion of the land, namely belief in nature or atheist-animist that is similar with Darwinism obstructs the destruction and wastefulness of the natural resources mentioned. For example, we can see that Parang Jati fights to obstruct the quarry firm from destroying the mountain, whereas Kupukupu side with the firm because he wanted to unearth the sacrilegious belief of the residents to the mountain spirit and so on. In line with the atheist-animist thought, Richard Dawkins said ‘Religions is so wasteful, so extravagant; and Darwinian selection habitually targets and eliminates waste.’

The myth that is used to put forward the concept of hu, namely the count of zero which is low or quiet where anything that returns to the origins exist as the natural religion that is harmonious and arranged since an earlier time. Yuda emerges in a group of 12 slope climbers that make the climb in a modern manner namely by using nails on the slope front, and in so doing destroys the slope. Then, Parang Jati appears as number 13, that teaches Yuda to climb the hill slope without using nails and to prevent the destruction of the slope and of the natural surroundings. Yuda who accepted the system of Parang Jati declared the new religion of clean climbing. It simultaneously mirrored the new religion namely

atheist-animist that opposed the three principles that were different but had the same promise that is monotheism, modernism and militarism. The three were assumed to be of coercive power. Monotheism with its concept of complete oneness that will oppose anything that competes against its ‘Oneness’. Modernism brings with capitalism that destroys the earth, controls the current life with the decimal rule based on the count of 10 that eliminates the rule of 12 of ancient times. Militarism is the peak of the coercive power that manifests itself in the use of physical force. Therefore the ‘new religion’ that is brought in by Parang Jati namely the principle of atheist-animist world that fights against all the coercive forces and reinforces once more the old animistic religion that is the original religion that is made extinct by the advent of other external religions.

This is different from what is propounded in Bedar Sukma Bisu. Monotheism which clearly empowers Islam as the whole truth is laid out as the holy religion in which everything that exists will return to Allah the Exalted one (The One). Islam not only brings the light to mankind but also brings rational thought in the development of human civilization. The orderly and sublime thinking in the concept of the Malay realm or region that emerges as the symbol of Islamic civilisation in South East Asia. According to Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, The advent of Islam has ushered in a new age in the history of Malay civilisation. Islam brings with it rationalism and knowledge as well as sets up a form of system based on freedom, justice and the dignity of personal principles. The arrangement of religion and physical purity as well as knowledge of them is spread wide and clutches tightly in the minds of Malay society. Islam brings with it the rational and intellectual spirit not just within the royal and noblemen groups but also spread within the general society. This has been proven from the pamphlets that were written to meet the public’s requirements. The pamphlets on tasawuf and Islamic religion were written based on the knowledge that encompasses the subjects of ontology, cosmology, psychology, history, laws, ethics and aesthetics which are completely scientific and sophisticated, even to reach a serious and high rational level.

Bedar Sukma explores the Malay world through the representations of hidden background that is the foundation of the expansion of the Malay – Islamic civilisation. This background also infiltrates the groove of the advent of the Islamic religion that has brought the enlightenment to South East Asia, beginning from Oran, the Turkey – Algerian region representing the spread of Islam from the Middle East to Terengganu.

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that led to the meeting between Ben Qurturbi and Tengku Fatimah. It supports the thesis that Islam spread to the Malay Peninsula with the discovery of the stone writings in Terengganu which proves that Islam had already come to the Malay Peninsula in the 13th century. Subsequently, the background of Medan emerged through the marriage of Muawiyah with a Sumatran woman, which showed the symbiosis of the early Malay Peninsula – Malay Sumatran civilisation that was also the centre of the early Malay – Islam civilisation. The voyage of exploration of Bedar Sukma within the Malay Nusantara regions coincided with the spread of Islam to these regions. Bedar Sukma is the hidden symbol of the spread of Islam that brought enlightenment to the Malay world. It sailed and brought a new form of tourism, and simultaneously brought the Islamic values in the tradition of tourism. It is quite clear that the voyage of Bedar Sukma is a symbol of the voyage of the spread of Islam that moved in the regions of the Malay world in the previous centuries. Bedar Sukma now reappears as the return voyage in spreading and welding the values of Islam not only in the Malay world but also throughout the entire world.

The explanation the movement to reintroduce the Islamic values can be seen through the concept of malakah that was referred to in pages 96–97 in the novel Bedar Sukma Bisu. Incidentally, the arrival of Ben Quturbi himself is a symbolic of the repeat of the arrival of Arab missionaries bringing Islam to the Malay world. This was told as;

"... It’s true that their descendents gave priority to malakah. Umi said that her grandfather, Ben Quturbi from Oran on many occasions said that malakah is the source of the strength of culture and civilisation.

'And it is because of malakah that I come to this golden peninsula. Malakah that is extra ordinary in the knowledge of seafaring, sailing and the carpentry of the ship made me berth forever in Pulau Sukma'. That was the statement of his grandfather that was handed down through the ages. Haikal had determined that this was also the inheritance to his children. (Bedar Sukma Bisu, page (2007:96).

Malakah was a concept about the skill and wisdom that was proposed by Ibn Khaldun. He stated that malakah is the smartness and wisdom of man absorbed by cleverness and knowledge that was already inherent in a place such the cleverness and knowledge became like a bunch of hardwood that was firmly bound, that allowed the race to be advanced and capable of achieving a civilisation as if building a wooden ship that was strong and capable of plying and getting through the cruel seas. And then, there emerged the thinking of Wefada who expanded the concept of malakah by saying that whatever comes by, be it any obstructions, globalisation, or post-modern phenomena, malakah
will, with the assistance of Allah, be the saviour, be like the ship that will strongly sail to save mankind. Malakah has a close connection to beliefs and faith such that every basis of knowledge is assimilated and becomes a good practice for both worlds. Malakah becomes the energy and force that burns inside oneself. Malakah shines in front of us, like a pole of strength.

Malakah is strong force that is meaningful in the development of intellect, spirit, morals and human personality. That is why malakah was ingrained by Ben Quturbi into ‘his family’ (in the context of the immediate family and also the whole of the Islamic community) so that they will possess the knowledge, expertise and wisdom in any aspect of knowledge which is acquired in principle, so that any problems that may arise within the scope of that knowledge becomes a normality and easy to handle, and the effort to study further an expand the particular knowledge does not become a problem.

The concept of a ship or a boat also represents a special symbol in the subject of tasawuf. Hamzah Fansuri uses the allegory of the boat in order to expand the message in the tasawuf book Zinat al-Wahidin, namely the four levels in the learning of tasawuf principles for ordinary people namely syariat, tarikat, hakikat and makrifat. All the four levels will bring man to embrace Islam, with a strong, complete faith and voluntarism. Hamzah Fansuri projects the four complete principles of Islam as if a strongly built boat that can wade the stormy waves and overcome all obstructions and subsequently build a glorious Islamic faith. Hamzah Fansuri imagines that in the building of the boat the base is syariat, the wood is tarekat; the filling is hakikat and the sails are makrifat. In the same way, the concept of Bedar Sukma as a ship wading the seas and welding the Islamic values in the strengthening of Islamic civilisation coincides with the concept of the boat in tasawuf stream which is built using syariat, tarekat, hakikat and makrifat in completing the comprehensive Islamic principles. The strength of Islam that is built by the four basic principles mentioned above will give rise to malakah that is capable of wading through all challenges to fight for Islamic civilisation in any place on earth.

Bedar Sukma Bisu directly and indirectly gives rise to many myths. Ben Quturbi, Wefada and Elamine are given characters that are mythical in the form of ‘extraordinary appearances’ in the general human society. This extraordinary existence is created to form the strength in the premise of Islamic truth. In fact, Bedar Sukma is itself a myth. This is because the boat or ship known as ‘bedar’ or a big ship made through the artistic carpentry skills of the Malays that had been used for generations but has been lost today.

Thus bedar, the ancient boat from the past is resurrected in this modern age as a concept of the ‘voyage’ of the glorious Malay-Islamic
civilisation of the previous age. Bedar Sukma Bisu actually upholds the myth about the ancient ship or boat of the Malays known as bedar as the centre point of the story's progress. Faisal creates myths in a world that has no more connection with the strength of myths to formulate a relationship among them in the increasingly vague realization such that malakah will fade from their hearts.

The relationship in the context of modern myths is stated by James Hillman, ‘modern absence of myth is part of an even greater absence; of a sense of connectiveness with the universe, and with the various fragments of our own consciousness.’

Myths as a Background to Ideology

Carl Gustav Jung talked about the existence of primitive inferences in man’s soul as the numinous or numinousm aspect. This appears as the ancient archives that are already existent in human souls. The numinous aspect or primitive inferences exist and moves in the sub-conscious mind and brings about inclinations that are not talked about, even as something that moves in the conscious mind. It exists as a submerged stream. In that situation, it expands to become an archetype, that is mythical inferences that forms certain motives. In the development of the human mind it becomes a unique process. The development of the conscious human mind takes shape along with its physical development. As such, the numinous aspect is left to become what is referred to as the ‘hole’ in the man’s memory. This ‘hole’ is the outcome of the primitive psyche and the infantile world that is submerged in the development of consciousness or rational thinking in man. It is here that man will start to experience dreams. One of the main functions of dreams is to return the memory of the primitive psyche and the infantile world that was submerged earlier, simultaneously creating the archetype namely the ancient inferences or mythical inferences from the inclinations that was submerged in the sub conscious mind.

The inclinations that are submerged in the sub-conscious mind forms inferences that are always present and have the potential to be destructive to the conscious mind. Jung talked about the original thought or the numinous aspect as ‘the primitive self’ that forms the general being in human psyche. It is different from ego that only forms a small part of the human psyche. The ‘self’ becomes the inner centre of man. Man’s development in balancing the inclination of the sub-conscious and rationality becomes a process in which man becomes ‘the real self’

or the process of individualisation as stated by Jung. The destructive inferences towards the conscious mind or rationality will rub against the conscious world in accepting the primitive thoughts or freeing itself from the primitive obstructions.

The development of myths is more likely to move against this situation. Myths arise from dreams, that brings the original inferences or primitive psyche to return the lost memory.

From a different angle, it develops the basic human of human life namely the submerged unconsciousness. It is the point of friction between the acceptances of primitive thought and the freedom from the primitive obstruction mentioned earlier. Myths bring in certain motives. In *Bilangan Fu*, myths are classified as efforts to return the original thought that was submerged by the development of rational human thought. As such the fight to return the numinous aspects was interpreted as returning the intelligent mind to something primordial; to return to the earth religion, namely the early ancient belief before the onset of the influence of the external religions. It is in the form of the animistic original societal belief; the belief in the spirit of the earth. *Bilangan Fu* took up the myth that is believed to have come from the local environment. Although the myths cannot escape from the influence of the external religions namely Hindu-Buddha, nevertheless the absorption and the existence of local attributes is regarded as the old beliefs that need to be reformulated and reinterpreted. In other words, it is to be screened and inspected to observe the original forms.

This understanding creates a new religious doctrine namely the world religion. It views existence as coming from the number of attribute of nil that whirls. It is shown clearly as the numeral *hu* or *fu* (nil) which is the sign of something that is characterized by movement. It takes the form of something that whirls. Therefore it is called the ancient numeral, that originates from time when man did not need to separate the earth from the sky, man and women, knowledge and art (*Bilangan Fu*, page 304). From here the numeral *fu* introduces the etiological myths. This etiological myth is stated along with other myths that move through the Euhemeric theory, Enlightenment and Romanticism; simultaneously with the objective of propounding this new religion. In the myths of the Euhemeric theory, the characters of revolutionary humans become the unseen characters such as Kir Ajar Cemara becoming Nyi Roro Kidul, Ki Wirasuta becoming a ghost and Uma becoming Betari Durga. The myths that were related to the representations of the Enlightenment theory could be seen through the myths of Sangkuriang and Prabu Watagunung with the encouragement of incest as well as in Siungwanara. The myths go through a process of solidity through the repetition of the stories to see how the something functions or should function and then to be seen in as structuralist, functionalist or psychoanalyst forms. Meanwhile the
Romantist theory that believes in myths as national emotion can be seen in the citation of Babad Tanah Jawa (taken from historical events) about the Perang Bubat that brings in the tragic case of Hayam Wuruk and Diah Pitakola. Similarly with the myth of Siungwanara links to the history of the royalty of Jawa Majapahit.

All the myths become the backdrop to the main myth that becomes the framework in presenting the religious ideology of the earth or more accurately the atheist-animist ideology. The main myth moves and emerges in ‘Parang Jati world’ and the sub-conscious thoughts of Yuda who had sexual intercourse with Sesebul the half man – half women being, and received the knowledge of the ‘gnosis sanguinis’ race. Thus the general ideology of Bilangan Fu that defies monotheism is anti atheist-animist. It rejects religion whereas religion is the fact of enlightenment that rationalises the ancient inferences to the truth. Religion is the curtain raizer to the closed world, and brings man to a clear thought and rational knowledge. Nevertheless the desire of the atheist-animist ideology turns it backwards to be in the world of darkness that is destructive to the rational thought.

This is different to the ideology of Bedar Sukma Bisu, which brings in the enlightened spirit, namely to move towards the truth of enlightenment through discourse of Islamic values, simultaneously stressing religion as the guide to man to live in a type of life that is truly based on the revelations of the One True God. Knowledge no longer comes from the inferences of dreams that are floating aimlessly in the current of man’s sub-conscious, but on the other hand knowledge is the ‘rule’ that comes down from The One God. It is difficult to speak of the truth about God to the group that sees the dark colour as the true world and sees the colour white as the defiler of the dark colour. Islam as a rational religion is the truth in white that comes to light the dark world, as has previously been said by Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas.

Bedar Sukma Bisu took the myth from La Galigo with the definition of the character of Atuf, and also Babad Tanah Jawa. But this myth is not viewed as a backdrop to bring back the lost old belief but to use the myth in describing how a civilization existed from the point of intellectual movement which existed in its society. These myths were seen as an intellectual movement in the Malay world, which was a grand Islamic civilizational domain. So Bedar Sukma, an old prau which is non-existent in this era is created to portray the intellectual movement that experienced change, from an epoch of a different rational to an epoch of another rational. This rational era is represented by the core development of thoughts - belief in the Oneness of God as mentioned by Muhammad Naquib al-Attas. Wefada and Elamine were also created from those that possessed mythical features, but these mythical features became the background in creating the religious image (Islam) that strengthened
the realm of rational thinking. It then gave birth to the thoughts on the concept of *malakah*, which is knowledge based on the belief of *tauhid* [belief in the Oneness of God].

Both these novels erected a mythical building as a backdrop to their respective ideologies. *The Fu Numeral (Bilangan Fu)* brought myth to the regenerative mind in order to worship the darkened world of man’s enclosed mind. Whereas *The Prau with the Silent Soul (Bedar Sukma Bisu)* brought myth stepping forward together with the fact of enlightenment in Islam that preaches rational attitude and intellectualism in man’s life. Islam released the realm of man’s thoughts from its enclosure, to accept the meaning and essence of their life which was created by Allah the Oneness. So religion (Islam) brought man into the enlightened era from the dark age of animism. The dark age of animism is likened to a Plato’s cave; the image seen was a reflection of the true image. Therefore religion (Islam) opens the cave and brought man to witness the true image and no more the ray on walls of the cave that was dark and enclosed. Furthermore, with the addition to the darkened animism into atheistic-animism which was even much darker, *Bilangan Fu* portrayed a reversed ideology.

Without a religious prejudice or nationhood, religion (Islam) had been clearly discussed as a fact of truth from rationalization whether epistemologically or ontologically. In fact even Jung could never dispute the fact that the complete enlightenment of man’s being into individuality is when the self entered the profound point of *Imago Dei*, i.e. the point of profound faith. So enlightenment comes when a human being ‘enters’ religion, and not gets out of it.

**Conclusion**

Robert Ellwood connected myth with narrative that are underlined with world view and existing values in society. It is strengthened with Karen Armstrong’s view on myth that it was a code of ethics and moral in organizing human beings. *Bilangan Fu* tried to present a narrative to reorganize the world view and existing values in society; and in a sense evaluated monotheistic religions of Islam, Christianity, Judaism and others as ‘foreign religions’ that appeared and destroyed the native values of society. So it tries to remove religion by presenting atheistic-animistic values which were upheld as the native heritage of society. The myth in *Bilangan Fu* is moulded as the value, ethics and moral based on the primitive instinct that rejected the concept of the Oneness of God.

*The Prau with the Silent Soul* created a more intrinsic myth in the context of building a world view and Islamic religious value, which is seen a wave of enlightenment bringing out societies from the dark ages of atheistic-animistic, i.e. the era of world view based on irrational worldly
beliefs. The belief on the spirit of nature, superstition and idol worship is seen as a primitive instinct that existed during the dark ages. Islam eventually came as a wave that cleansed the dark minds and at once brought rational thinking towards the consistency in the relationship of God-Nature-Man.

Whereas *Bilangan Fu* performed deconstructive efforts in order to destroy the world view and religious values which were the thrust of today's societies, *The Prau with the Silent Soul* on the other hand put in constructive efforts in strengthening the world view and Islamic values which have absorbed the moral and ethical code of the societies in the Malay world. Both waves of this different thinking opposed each other in the comparative context brought about by this discourse. Therefore this comparative study could visualize how myth was brought about as a world view and society's values that built different streams of understanding on these two novels. All at once it shows how these two different poles are arising and forming two prime opposing waves in the present and the future of the literary world.
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