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SADAQAH AND ITS RELEVANCE TO PEOPLE'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: A SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF FERDINAND DE SAUSSURE

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Abstract

This qualitative interpretative research aims at scientifically testing the signs and symbols of sharia economic values in the equitable distribution of justice in the Quran based on the semiotic discourse of the Quran and describes their significance in the economic sphere. Economic values and principles are presented in the Quran in Surah Al-Baqarah verse 261, which explains the meaning of charity with its seven-hundred-fold reward for whoever gives charity. Semiotics, as one approach to the Quran study, attempts to construct the meaning of language with a sign system. The marking interpretation method is to synergize between the mark and the marker, which leads to a new representation of the meaning. Based on semiotic reading, socio-economic justice may be realized through several ways: Eliminating monopolies; Guaranteeing all parties' rights and opportunities for active participation in the economic processes, including production, distribution, circulation and consumption; Ensuring fulfillment of the basic needs of every community member; and conducting socio-economic security assurance mandate for survival and assisting the weak.

Keywords: Semiotics, Economy, Sadagah, Income, Charity

1. Introduction

The Prophet (peace be upon him) leaves us the Quran, the complete super book containing instructions, prohibitions, threats, promises and many more from the God. The Quran may serve as a guide to lead the life to the right path, so that humans may go to the heaven in the future eternal life. The balance between the World and the Hereafter aspects is a unique characteristic of the Islamic economic system. This combination of material and spiritual elements is not found in any other economic systems, either capitalist or socialist. In their everyday life, humans can surely not escape from various needs requiring them to struggle for their daily needs. The Quran as human's guideline on action certainly contains laws to regulate and urge Muslims to fulfill their needs in a way blessed by Allah. Islam aims at forming a community with a solid social order. In that setting, each individual is bound by brotherhood and love as one family.

The rapid growth of the world's economies has led to the increasingly difficult economic condition to counterbalance the economic growth and acceleration of the weak and marginal economies, which may sometimes ruin people's life and exploit them. Even for survival, not all of them are able to move in balance one another, in which people with weak economy still need our attention to solve their economic and family problems. Current contemporary society is apathetic and do not care about the reality in the community.

The gap in income and wealth in the society is contradictory to the Islamic spirit of and commitment to brotherhood and socio-economic justice. Social and religious norms teach us sustainable social life by realizing concern about others. Mutual assistance and cooperation may realize a harmonious social life. Any gaps in the society must be solved using Islamic methods, such as: Eliminating monopolies; Guaranteeing all parties' rights and opportunities for active participation in the economic processes,





including production, distribution, circulation or consumption; Ensuring fulfillment of the basic needs of every community member; Conducting socio-economic security assurance mandate for survival and assisting the weak.

The concept of Islamic justice in the distribution of income and wealth and the concept of economic justice desires each individual to be rewarded according to his/her deed and work. The inequality of income in Islam is caused by each person's different contribution to the society. Any warnings of injustice and exploitation are intended to protect individual's rights in the society and to improve the general prosperity as Islam's main objective.

In the context of people's economic empowerment through Islamic economic institutions, zakat, infaq and sadaqah, which are assumed by Islamic economic experts as a new variable in economic theory, needs to be optimized for their roles and functions as a control variable for overconsumption pattern which may lead to economic problems, investment-driving variable to lead to production and create employment and policy variable to improve the distribution of equitable and fair public income.

Based on the Central Statistics Body's data regarding poverty in Indonesia in 2019, the number of the poor in March 2019 was 25.14 million (9.41 percent). The poor population was 6.69 percent in urban areas and 12.85 percent in rural areas in March 2019 ([BPS] Central Statistics Body, 2019).

Based on the assumption regarding poverty, Zakat, Infaq, and Sadaqah (ZIS) institution have big potential for improving the people's condition, especially in economy. The basic concept of implementation of the obligation to pay Zakat, Infaq, and Sadaqah is not intended to eradicate people's poverty and realize equality of income (Samsidar, 2016, pp. 179–180). In other words, ZIS is an Islamic method to realize equitable distribution of people's prosperity, instead of relying on the movement of market mechanism. Recently, many estimate that Indonesia's potential ziswaf (zakat, infaq, sadaqah and waqf) is approximately up to Rp 217 trillion annually (Azra, 2014, p. 1). Kasdi states that sadaqah may improve social empowerment by distributing fund to the poor directly, constituting an empowerment for human resource development (Kasdi, 2016, p. 1).

Such conception of sadaqah in people empowerment is ideal, but must be supported with a fundamental understanding of the concept of sadaqah in the perspective of the Quran. As an ideal framework to build an understanding that sadaqah is a concrete solution to develop people's economic potential, it is to observe the symbols in the Quran, Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 261 as a strong motivation and foundation of persuasive efforts for all people to practice sadaqah in daily life.

The Quran has a rich variety of different stylistic devices. The other effect of the variety of the Quran's stylistic devices is the emergence of various approaches in analyzing the verses of the Quran, which creates dynamic, relative and contextual meaning effects pursuant to the latest needs in the dimensions of life. Various disciplines of approach have been conducted by both insiders and outsiders. Insiders study the Quran with the urgency of religious study, normatively and historically. Normative study brings interpretation to religious vertical treatment in the form of subjection to God. Meanwhile, religious study has historically brought interpretation towards horizontal direction with an assumption that religion is scientific, empirical and objective knowledge. Besides, the outsiders also study the Quran with the tendency of historically religious reasoning which will result in scientific, empirical and objective knowledge (Hanafi, 2017, p.3).

One of the approaches in the study of Quran which may be used in theoretical, interpretive form in linguistics is the semiotic approach. The basic framework of semiotics is the scientific discipline that examines social and cultural phenomena serving as a sign. Semiotics is a branch of modern science that examines the sign system. Semiotics means a systematic study of the production or interpretation of signs, working procedures and their use for human life (Imran, 2011, p. 10). Semiotics was introduced by Charles S. Pierce and Ferdinand de Saussure, the founders of modern semiotics. Semiotics, derived from English, Semiotics, according to Hornby is "the study of sign and symbols and of their meaning and use". The word semiotics is derived from the Greek, *semeion*, which means sign or *seme*, which means sign interpreter (Taufik, 2016, p. 1).

Semiotics is known in very restricted environment. This fact is a paradox since semiotics may actually be applied to all disciplines. It is commonly acknowledged that semiotics is imperialist since it may enter any fields of science. As a science of signs and of codes used to comprehend them, semiotics is an

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"imperialistic science", which may be applied to different areas of life. Some semiotic scholars even state that semiotics is one main discipline used to describe every aspect of communication (Berger, 2015, p. 8).

Semiotics continues to develop to the method to interpret the Quran with a semiotic approach, since there are many signs in the Quran which need to be examined more thoroughly. The Quran, as the revelation from God to Prophet Muhammad to be distributed to all mankind, is recited in Arabic, to be enlightenment and guidance in their life, and needs to be studied more for the meaning contained therein (interpreted) with a variety of approaches for optimal function of the Qur'an as the guidance (*huda*) for all mankind, so that its teachings will be "comprehended" better. This paper attempts to analyze the effectiveness of semiotic study in effort to interpret the verses of the Quran for more comprehensive interpretation. Furthermore, this method will be applied to the interpretation of some verses of the Quran as one measuring instrument to assess to what extent the method to interpret the verses of the Quran plays a role.

2. Literature Review

In the development of modern interpretation of Quran text, many theoretical theories have been developed. Ali Imron, Muhammad Arkoun and Nasr Hamid Abu Zaid are they who have tried to apply the theories to the interpretation of the Quran. They offer a methodology to read the Quran in semiotic perspective.

A previous relevant study to this paper, the research conducted by Dewi Apriliani Ningrum entitled "Semimotika 'Adduw' sesama manusia dalam Al-Qur'an perspektif Charles Sanders Pierces" explains that the Quran is the guidelines for mankind. The word 'Adduw' in the Quran bears negative meaning, but the author attempts to explain the solution from the sign of "Adduw" in the Quran which means hostility by directing to solution for peace. With the semiotic approach method of Charles Sanders Pierce's perspective as contained in the Quran surah Al-Maidah verse 2, the solution for hostility in the meaning of 'Adduw' is to respond to hostility with kindness (Ningrum, 2018, p. 5). Mardan discusses the "semiotics of women in the Quran's story" to analyze the symbols of women in the Quran with a semiotic approach, especially to obtain the whole meanings of the process of women empowerment and their actualization (Mardan, 2013, p. 2). Khusnul Khotimah explains semiotics based on Arkhoun and Netton's ideas of religious studies (Khotimah, 1970, p. 1).

Abdul Basit, discussing semiotics in "Health Communication in The Quran: Charles Saunders Pierce's Semiotic Analysis", states that health communication plays an important role in Muslim society. In the study, he explores health communication terms in the Quran and their ideology, by applying literary study to the verses of the Quran and their interpretation as the main data using Charles Saunders Pierce's semiotic approach (1839-1914) through semantic, syntactic and pragmatic analyses (Basit, 2017, p. 1). Budiono presents the role of the use of social science and humanities as an assisting interpreting instrument to deconstruct, reconstruct and develop the interpretation methodology of the Quran through a new, appropriate concept to the era, namely the semiotic approach of the concept of "sign" as a symbolic word to logically and concretely guarantee the language. This takes place because of human as animal symbolism or animal which can use, create and develop symbols to convey messages from one individual to another. Text and context become two inseparable words that they are intertwining to form a meaning. Context is then important in interpretation, which may be divided into two, namely intratextual and intertextual (Budiono, 2017, p. 1).

The concept of signification semiotics in structural analysis and its application to the Quran studied by Zainuddin Zoga of IAIN Manado adds to the semiotic researches in Indonesia. The characteristic of signification semiotics in the Quran includes the concept of *ma'rifa* and *nakirah*, that letter addition implicates in the change in meaning, and one word has many meanings. In this discussion, the authors will specialize in the interpretation of the Quran as a semiotic approach in sadaqah verses and their relevance to the development of the people's economy, for additional learning in the study of how the signs in the Quran are interpreted as verses which may lead to comprehensive thinking (Soga & Hadirman, 2018).

Hanafi's research is conducted to scientifically test the signs and symbols of reflective verbs of human behaviors in Surah al-Mā'ūn based on semiotic discourse of the Quran and to describe their meaning in social-religious biases. Based on semiotic reading, the characteristics of a person who denies religion in

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Surah Al-Mā'ūn are: First, one who does not give any aid to the orphans for their survival; Second, one who does not encourage and advise others to give aid and food to the poor; Third, one who is negligent in his salah, such as delaying salah until time is up, performing salah but not in compliance with its conditions and components or not solemn in salah; Fourth, one who likes to show off (Riya) in terms of worship and muamalat for others' good impression; and Fifth, one who is reluctant to help others, physically and non-physically, for some reason (Hanafi, 2017, p. 2).

3. Methodology

This literary research was conducted by studying experts' opinions in the field of semiotics and Al-Quran semiotics and reviewed the sources of science with a descriptive analysis for its discussion aiming at describing the signs of sadaqah (charity) in the verses of the Quran (Hajar, 2017, p. 14). According to Herlambang Wiratraman, identification in a socio-legal study is not limited to text, but also deepening of context, which includes all processes, e.g. from lawmaking to law implementation (Wiratraman, 2019, p. 2).

A socio-legal study or research always first discusses and completes the normative framework of a problem, since a normative study practically needs to be conducted first to get an understanding of the complex situation, for a complete discussion of the other side of the texts, norms, and works of the legal doctrine. A socio-legal approach may beneficially help understand and provide the context of a social and political configuration which influences the law and its implementation. Therefore, this research does not only serve as an attempt to develop a legal doctrine.

The semiotic research on the Quran regarding verses of sadaqah employed a normative study on the Quran as the source of law/legal doctrine and the semiotic approach discusses the signs, codes and symbols in the Quran's text, so as to examine the sociological, philosophical, and other meanings contained therein.

The research data were classified into primary data source and secondary data source. The research's primary data source includes the *Quranic semiotics*, a method of and application to the story of Joseph by Ali Imron, an introduction to semiotics by Kahfie Nazaruddin, an introduction to semiotics, the signs in contemporary culture by Arthur Asa Berger and Semiotics for Literature and Quran Studies by Wildan Taufiq. The secondary data source constituted the supporting data in this paper in the form of journals, articles and other books contributing to this paper composition.

The data analysis was conducted in two stages. First, the data analysis employed Ferdinand de Saussure's semiotic method. The researchers understood the textbook of *tafsir* (interpretation) and reviewed it through social-philosophical theory explaining the relationship between languages in economic verses of Quran text. Second, the researchers conducted an analysis employing a deductive method. The authors specifically made a conclusion of the signs in the sadaqah verses, of which results were to be presented in general regarding the purpose of the signs in the sadaqah verses in interconnectivity with sociological meaning.

4. Discussion and Result

4.1. Tafsir (Interpretation) of Al-Quran with Semiotic Approach

Definitively, semiotics is derived from Greek *seme*, which means interpretation of sign. Some state that semiotics is derived from "*semeion*", which means sign. This science considers social and cultural phenomena as a collection of signs. Therefore, semiotics is in this case deemed a science to learn the system, rule or convention that allows a sign to have a meaning (Imran, 2011, p. 10).

The emergence of modern semiotics cannot be separated from two figures, who are often referred to as the founders of modern semiotics: Ferdinand de Sausure (1857-1913) and Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914). Sausure was a structuralist with a concept of semiotics leading to signification, while Pierce develops semiotics leading to communication. Signification means the relation between signified and signifier based on langue.

Semiotics serves as scientific expression of all signs in human life, both verbal and non-verbal. It is indisputable that we will always find a diversity of signs that humans must understand in their daily life. Understanding signs serves to make any processes effective and efficient in life. Appropriate





interpretation of signs is an important issue, since different interpretations between individuals will cause misunderstanding.

The Quran with language as its medium is a potential subject for semiotic study. The Quran contains meaningful signs, which may be examined using semiotics. Thus, the Quranic semiotics may be defined as a branch of semiotics to examine the existing signs in the Quran using the convention contained therein. The Quran has verses (signs) as its basic units. The signs in the Quran are not only the smallest parts of its elements, such as sentences, words or letters, but also the total structure connecting every element included in the Quran's category. This shows that the Quran is entirely a series of meaningful signs.

The Quranic text is a collection of systemized signs that contain God's messages to humans. This means there is a communication between the sender and the receiver of message, which is a communication between God and human. There is an interesting statement in relation to communication. The Quranic text is one text which explains how the God communicates with human. (QS. As-Syura: 51): "And it is not for any human being that Allah should speak to him except by revelation or from behind a partition or that He sends a messenger to reveal, by His permission, what He wills. Indeed, He is Most High and Wise."

The issues of the codes used by Allah, Jibril and Prophet Muhammad to communicate are problematic. The next important issue of communication process is found between Prophet Muhammad and his followers. The medium used to communicate in this period is Arabic, even the Quran states that it is *Qur'anan 'Arabiyyan*, so are the language codes used by the Quran. In this case, the Arabic linguistic codes are an important issue to find the first level semiotic meaning of the Quran.

a. The Quranic Semiotic Framework

The Quran's text is a collection of signs within which is dialectic relationship between signifier and signified. Quranic signifier is a form of Arabic text, which includes: letters, words, sentences, verses, surahs or relationship between elements. The complexity of the interconnected elements also includes signs of the Quran. Meanwhile, the signified of the Quran is the mental aspect or concept behind the signifier of the Quran. An example of this may be seen from the semantic aspects, such as the Quran's vocabularies with a dimension of relational meaning. Relational meaning means connotative meaning, which in practice highly relies on context as well as its relation with the other vocabularies in a sentence.

b. The Quranic Semiotic Procedure

The Quran's language is a sign system which becomes a medium to convey messages. The Quran's language as a sign system is the level one sign system, which in semiotic study is referred to as the level one semiotic system. The semiotic reading based on this language convention will produce level one meaning. In addition, the Quran also has higher conventions than language conventions, such as internal relations of the Quran's text, Intertextuality, historical background, *asbab al-nuzul* and instrument of Quranic study, which is referred to as level two semiotics.

Semiotic reading does not end at the level one. The subsequent reading is retroactive reading or hermeneutics, i.e. reading based on level two semiotic system, or the convention above the language convention. This convention includes internal relation of Quranic text, Intextuality, *asbabul nuzul*, historical background and other instruments of Quranic study.

- c. One of the duties of a Quranic semiotic reviewer is to explore the relationship between sections. Therefore, a Quranic semiotic reviewer should be capable of and sharp in comprehension.
- d. Knowledge of *asbabul nuzul* and historical background is also important to help explore semiotic meaning. However, not all verses of the Quran have *asbabul nuzul*. Similarly, historical fact always relies on historical data found. The use of *asbabul nuzul* and historical background in the process of exploration of level two semiotic meaning depends on the extent the data are found. In addition to the convention above, there are other conventions which may be used to help explore level two semiotic meaning, such as *tajwid*, *figh al-lugah* and other instrument of Quranic study.

4.2. Thematic Interpretation of Sadaqah and Economy in the Quran Using Semiotic Approach

The Quran gives economic players and practitioners highly superior and systematic directions and





regulates all muamalat aspects in their daily life. This makes sharia economic law always requires good development to meet the needs of the contemporary society. When the teachings of the Quran are obeyed and fulfilled enthusiastically and strictly consistently, any matters and fields will bring all people prosperity.

It is indisputable that the revelation of the Quran occurred in a quite distant period, in the past 14 centuries, but the rules contained therein may still be guidance and do not degrade until now. The development of *tafsir* (interpretation) science also continues to progress and various methods are used to study the Quran by *kaffah* (in a holistic manner). This discussion is regarding how to interpret the Quran's verses of sadaqah and their relevance to the economy in a semiotic approach, so that the meaning contained therein will optimally serve as a guide for us.

It requires complicated assisting scientific instruments to get to interpretation and contextualization. In the beginning, those who observe and are interested in the Quran study are certainly advised to get immersed in secondary literatures related to the Quran study disciplines, one of which is the interpretation science that has drawn the attention of experts of the Quran study since the beginning of time. However, there is no literature in their language for beginner available. Therefore, supporting books are quite helpful and crucial in this interpretation study, such as the Quranic semiotics, which discusses interpretation of the Quran through the existing signs in the Quran's original text (Setiawan, 2014, p. 5).

The methodologies developed in interpretation and *mufasir*'s (interpreter) objectives in their works are quite diverse. Among those who still maintain the basic reference, some highlight strengthening of ratio, some make their works enriched with new knowledge, some emphasize vocabulary and grammar and some focus on fiqh (Samsurohman, 2014, p. 182).

The principles of interpretation are divided into three main sources, namely:

- a. Certain disciplines, such as linguistics (grammar and literature), *Ushul Fiqh*, and theology.
- b. Essence specifically needed by interpreter before getting into interpretation.
- c. Principles drawn and sourced directly from observations on the Quran, either unrelated to one discipline or not in line with the principles of other disciplines (Shihab, 2019, p.14-16).

It is necessary to study the method to interpret economic verses with a semiotic approach with the matter which needs to be examined early of the economic verses is the values of the Islamic economic system. Sharia finance system is a financial system which mediates a party who needs fund with a party with excess fund.

The first value in the Islamic economic system is that an economy will be in good condition when it uses the framework or reference of Islamic norms. The existing signs in the semiotics in the first value may be observed in the Quran Surahs: Al-Baqarah verse 60 "... Eat and drink from the provision of Allah, and do not commit abuse on the earth, spreading corruption."; Al-Baqarah: 168 "O mankind, eat from whatever is on earth [that is] lawful and good and do not follow the footsteps of Satan. Indeed, he is to you a clear enemy"; and Al-Maidah verses 87-88) "O you who have believed, do not prohibit the good things which Allah has made lawful to you and do not transgress. Indeed, Allah does not like transgressors. And eat of what Allah has provided for you [which is] lawful and good. And fear Allah, in whom you are believers."

These verses are the basic determinants of the Quran's message in economic field. From these verses, we may understand that Islam encourages its followers to enjoy the gifts that Allah has given. The gifts should be utilized for their growth, both material and non-material. Islam also encourages its followers to struggle for materials/wealth in various ways, as long as in compliance with the established conditions. Drawn into semiotics, the expressed conditions or signs in the verses will, among others, result in the following meanings: the signs or codes of Allah's communication with humans are about the instruction to have something halal and good, while not using bad means; not to transgress; not to mistreat nor be mistreated; refrain from *riba*, *maisir* (gambling) and *gharar* (obscurity and manipulation) elements; and not to forget social responsibility in the form of zakat, infaq, and sadaqah.

4.3. Interpretation of Surah al-Baqarah Verse 261.

The example of (wealth spent by) those who have spent their wealth in the way of Allah is like a seed of





grain which grows seven spikes, in each spike is one hundred grains. And Allah multiplies (His reward) for whom he wills. And Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing (Q.S. al-Baqarah (2): 261).

In this verse, the discussion of semiotic signs related to the values of the Islamic economic system in Q.S Al-Baqarah: 261, "The example of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah is like a seed [of grain] which grows seven spikes; in each spike is a hundred grains. And Allah multiplies [His reward] for whom He wills. And Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing." is strengthened.

The semiotic sign in the verse above is a seed [of grain] which grows seven spikes; in each spike is a hundred grains. In *Al-Misbah Al Muniir fii Tahdziibi tafsir ibnu Katheer*, Ibnu Katsir states that infaq is a good charity highly glorified by Allah, and He will multiply the reward up to seven hundred times the person perform sadaqah (charity) with sincerity.

In Ibnu Katsir's interpretation, this is an example made by Allah to describe the multiplication of reward for ones who spent their wealth in the way of Allah for His contentment. Every good deed will be rewarded tenfold to seven hundredfold. Therefore, Allah says in Q.S Al-Baqarah, verse 261, the example of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah is in the obedience to Allah, such as give infaq for jihad, for example for the procurement of cavalry, weapons, and the likes. Ibni Abbas said, "Dirham spent for infaq in jihad and hajj will be multiplied to seven hundred times." (Nasib Ar-Rifa'i, 1999, p. 437).

The sign in this verse has a lot of meanings, for example the word "way of Allah" means to obey Allah (according to Sa'id Ibnu Jubair). Meanwhile, according to Makhul, the way of Allah means to spend one's wealth for jihad, such as preparing horses and weapons and others for the purpose of jihad.

Syabib ibnu Bisyr narrated from Ikrimah, from Ibnu Abbas, that wealth spent for jihad and hajj will be rewarded seven hundredfold. Furthermore, in the other sentence, "like a seed [of grain] which grows seven spikes; in each spike is a hundred grains". The sign contained in this text is more memorable than merely mentioning seven hundred-fold. The expression implies that any good deed will be rewarded exponentially by Allah SWT for they who do it, just like a farmer who is raising seeds in fertile land. Hadith mentions a seven hundred times reward for good deed (Nasib Ar-Rifa'i, 1999, pp. 437–438).

Abu Ubaidah said that he had heard Prophet Muhammad said: "Whoever spends some excess wealth in the way of Allah, the reward will be multiplied by seven hundred times. And whoever spends his wealth for himself and his family or visit a sick person or removes obstruction (from the road), for such good deed (his reward) is ten times of such deed". Fasting serves as a fortress as long as the concerned person does not break it. And whoever experiences an ordeal from Allah on his body, it may remove (sin) (Ibnu Katsir Al-Quraisy Ad-Dimaski, 774, p. 324).

Imam Muslim and Imam Nasai narrated through hadith of Sulaiman ibnu Mihran, from Al-A'masy with the same narration. The *lafaz* (narration) according to Imam Muslim's history is as follows: A man came carrying a camel with reins attached, and he said, "O Prophet, this camel is for the way of Allah." So the Prophet said, "You will someday receive seven hundred camels for it" (Ibn Katsir Al-Quraisy Ad-Dimaski, 774, p. 324).

Another hadith narrated by Imam Ahmad states "has told us Amr ibn Majma' Abul Munzir Al-Kindi, has told us Ibrahim Al-Hijri, from Abul Ahwas, from Abdullah ibn Mas'ud who told that the Prophet had said: Indeed, Allah makes a good deed of a son of Adam ten to seven hundred-fold reward for the good deed, other than fasting (Ibn Katsir Al-Quraisy Ad-Dimaski, 774, p. 324).

It is stated that in the hadith above "In the meaning of semiotic sign/code, the multiplication of charity seven hundred-fold serves as our motivation that what we do will be responded with multiplied reward by Allah.

The sign in the Quran text on the concept of the values of Islamic economic law regarding charity is "... like a seed [of grain] which grows seven spikes; in each spike is a hundred grains" This sentence means that what we spend in charity will develop economically up to seven hundred times. Meanwhile, the other meaning regarding social values contained therein is a grain of seed given to the poor will give them a little hope to increase their and their family's economy.

4.4. Philosophical Message in Al-Baqarah Verse 261





Ideology and myth are often found in human life, which play an important role in communication process. Van Zoest states, "Ideology and mythology in our lives are similar to codes in our semiotic conducts and communication (Sobur, 2006, p. 208).

Ideology in semiotics never plays a real role, and is even practically never seen and is hidden, thus it is subtle. Therefore, a researcher needs to be more sensitive to find the ideology contained within a text. In the literary world, and ideology often presents new and unexpected surprise. Such surprise made literary work attractive to its readers. Although ideology is something hidden, but it can be found by examining various connotations in the text.

Below is an explanation of the hidden ideologies and messages found in the signs/semiotics in this verse (Muslich, 2004, p. 46):

a. Justice (balance)

Islamic teachings are oriented to creation of human characters, with balanced and fair attitudes in the context of relationship of humans with themselves, others (society) and the environment. An overview of those in the way of Allah during ease and hardship is a test of patience for anyone who can do it. If we are grateful for God's favors, one of which is realized with charity, it will undoubtedly create a harmonious relationship in the society. A proverb states that the world stands with four things: first, ulama's (scholars) science/knowledge; second, *Umara*'s (leader) justice; third, the rich's generosity; and fourth, the poor's patience. If these four things are realized, it will create security and tranquility in the society, instead of social jealousy, envy and spite.

b. Ethics

The definition above may be explained that Islam requires every Muslim to work, especially those with dependents. Working is one basic reason allowing people to have wealth. For people to make a living, Allah extends the earth and provides various facilities which may be used to make a living. "It is He who made the earth tame for you - so walk among its slopes and eat of His provision...". "And We have certainly established you upon the earth and made for you therein ways of livelihood..." With the spirit to work and collect wealth, the concept of sadaqah (charity) will be realized well.

c. Optimism

The verses and hadiths above show that working for sustenance is an inherent activity in Islamic teaching. Working for sustenance in the context of Islamic teaching is certainly not merely enriching oneself, since Islam teaches that wealth has social functions. The Quran expressly prohibits collection of wealth in the sense of hoarding (QS. Al-Humazah (104): 2), prohibits collection of wealth using inappropriate method (QS. Al-Baqarah (2): 188) and orders us to spend wealth well (QS. Al Baqarah (2): 261).

d. Da'wah (Proselytism of Islam)

To struggle in the way of Allah today, to fight ignorance, poverty, through education, one may participate in building the place or wealth, energy, mind and knowledge.

e. Economy

The synergy between religious and economic aspects will result in positive attitudes which may encourage productivity, instead of otherwise, that some people assume that Islam inhibits economic growth. History proves that Islam brought by Muhammad has the capability to change society's condition. Such change also maintains local wisdoms with positive or neutral values existing before Islamic era, which are even "enlivened" with new tones in the context of Islamic culture.

f. Law

The verses above explain the guidance on profitable transactions and useful commerce, so that one will get great advantages and lasting success. The said commerce means keeping in faith, sincerity in good deed for Allah and material and non-material jihad by spreading the religion and exalting His words.

From the foregoing, we may conclude that charity in semiotics is not merely an act in humanitarian relationship, but is also of godly nature. Willingness and openness of the concerned people are required in business. Therefore, if they are not available, there will be no benefit and advantage in what is done. The verses above clearly show not only material, but also immaterial nature of business.

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g. Allah's Power

Allah multiplies (reward) for whom He wills. And Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing. And among the things that are most beneficial to the believers are infaq in the way of Allah. And the example of believers who spend their wealth in the way of Allah is like a seed planted in fertile land. Not too long, grows a stem with seven branches. And in each branch is a stalk. And in each stalk, there are a hundred grains. Allah multiplies the reward for whomever He wills, according to the heart of the person who gives infaq in the form of perfect faith and sincerity. And Allah is all-Encompassing.

Sayyid Quthb in *Tafsir Fi Zilalil Qur'an* states that the verse does not start with obligation or assignment, but a recommendation and stimulation or influence. This method very effectively stimulates feelings and creates an impression in human's mind, so that wealth spent in sadaqah will develop and invite blessing for the owner. Sadaqah may also be in the form enlightenment, treating a wounded heart, entertaining someone sad, encouraging a weak heart, and inspiring any thought and creativity (Abdul Halim, 2015, p. 232).

4.5. Asbabun Nuzul in relation to the meaning of sadaqah (charity) in Ferdinand De Saussure's semiotics

The Prophet in his hadith explains that sadaqah may be conducted by anyone, either the rich or the poor, thus the rich may make a charity with their wealth, those knowledgeable may make a charity with their knowledge and those who have power may make be a charity with their power. Second, sadaqah is still understood in a narrow sense, that only something material is said to be sadaqah. This makes the recommendation of charity is deemed only as a burden by the poor. However, sadaqah is one of the easiest ways to do good deeds and obtain reward from Allah SWT. Doing every good deed both personally and socially is called sadaqah (Bahmid, 2014; Saadiyah, 2014).

Al-Quran surah Al-Baqarah verse 261, as the signification of the meaning of sadaqah giving the example of sadaqah in the way of God to be multiplied 700-fold, is deep in its meaning. Sadaqah as a symbol in the interpretation of semiotic approach makes the meaning contained therein an attractive object to make sadaqah a symbol of reward to be given with an example of a seed of grain where 7 spikes grow, each with 100 grains.

The Asbabun Nuzul of surah Al-Baqarah verse 261 is in relation to the generosity of companions of Prophet Muhammad, namely Ustman bin Affan and Abdurrahman bin Auf. Both companions of the Prophet donated their wealth to the operational costs of Tabuk war. The Asbabun Nuzul of surah Al-Baqarah verse 261 is related to what Uthman ibn Affan and Abdurrahman bin Auf had done. In surah al-Baqarah verses 261, Allah encourages the rich companions to always give their assistance in the struggle. Quraish Shihab in Tafsir al-Misbah (Shihab, 2011) explains that surah al-Baqarah verse 261 is an affirmation by Allah regarding those who perform sadaqah willingly. Those who are willing to perform sadaqah will be given with multiplied reward.

4.6. Representation of reflective verbal meaning of sadaqah (charity)

The signification of the signs in the Quran is the scope of verses on sadaqah as the focus of this research. This discussion is conducted heuristically. The verses are figurative, in the sense that they have meaning that may be reviewed, analysis and interpreted through a semiotic approach. As it is known, the Quran contains the smallest basic unit referred to as verses (Imron, 2011, p. 49). The important point in the discussion of the signs in the Quran is that all the verses written therein may likely be examined semiotically. The construction of the signs in the Quran may present a relatively sustainable language system so that we may find it easy to understand the storyline. In addition, presenting the meaning of verses of the Quran should consider social and humanitarian values. Therefore, the semiotics of Quran on sadaqah will represent the verses of Quran in a linguistic conversion in a more representative form based on semiotic work scientifically.

Allah reveals His *kalam* to integrate individual piety and social piety in an integrated and sympathetic manner in a Muslim. To realize the function, the Quran first criticizes imbalanced social-economic system. Criticism and prohibition of monopoly system are followed by a call for people to donate, which





is an educational process of character building. A person who is always grateful for Allah's favor will be concerned about others (sadaqah), therefore this paper describes the meaning of sadaqah in the review of *maudhu'i* interpretation through a semiotic approach (Firdaus, 2017, p. 91).

Based on the description above, this paper will present the theme of how to interpret the meanings of sadaqah (charity) contained in the Quran using thematic method through semiotic approach and their effect on the contribution to the economic principles.

4.7. Symbols of Sadagah in Quran

The book *al-Mu'jam al-Mufahras Lil al-Fasi al-Quran al-Karim* states that the word shada-qah in singular form is repeated for five times in the Quran in surahs: al-Baqarah verses 196 and 263, an-Nisa verse 114, at-Tawbah verse 103 and al-Mujadila verse 12.

Meanwhile, there are three plural forms existing in the Quran:

- a. (al-sadaqatu), for seven repetitions in surah al-Baqarah verses 271 and 276, at-Tawbah verses 58, 60, 79 and 104 and al-Mujadila verse 13.
- b. (sadaqatikum) one-time only in surah al-Baqarah verse 264.
- c. (sadugatihinna) one-time only in surah an-Nisa verse 4 (Abdu Al-baqiy, n.d.).

Morphologically, all of the words are derived from the letters sho-dho-qof which have the basic meaning of "power of word" or is, in other words, different from "lie", since the word lie has no power and is also classified as incorrect (false) (Ahmad paris Zakariyan, 1991, p. 239). The word (shodaqon) lexically means "true" or "in accordance with the statement and reality" (Anis, 1972, p. 155). Such meaning may be found in QS. Al-Isra [17] verse 80:

And say, "My Lord, cause me to enter a sound entrance and to exit a sound exit and grant me from Yourself a supporting authority."

Obviously, the word sadaqah is derived from *al-shidq*, which means true or truth. The word sadaqah shows the truth and/or justification of one's faith, both from the outward viewpoint (confession of faith) and the inward expression (form of sacrifice) through the property (Suma, 2015).

When the word (shadaqon) is added with letter Ta at the beginning of the word, it will result in verb shadaqoh and tasadda-qoh, which means "give sadaqah", such a meaning may be found in QS. Al-Ma'idah verse 45. And We ordained for them therein a life for a life, an eye for an eye, a nose for a nose, an ear for an ear, a tooth for a tooth, and for wounds is legal retribution. But whoever gives [up his right as] charity, it is an expiation for him. And whoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed - then it is those who are the wrongdoers.

According to this verse, it seems that the *tasaddaqa*'s meaning (Shihab, 2000, p. 107) of to "release" is quite relevant to the first meaning "give charity", although in *tafsir* of the Quran is different (in its meaning) from what is proposed by some ulama, but it does not reduce its substance meaning.

Similarly, when the word shadaqo is added with *ta marbuta* at the end of the word, it will form shadaqatun "sadaqah (charity)" or "something given with the intent of expecting Allah's pleasure", however, examining the Quran, we may find that the word *shdaqatun* has similar meaning (synonym) with the word *ihsan* which means "generosity or mercy ". This word is used in QS. Al-baqarah, 2/83:178:229, al- Taubah, 9/100. Al-Nahl, 16/90, al-Rahman, 55/60: 60, al-Nisa, 4/36: 62, al-An'am, 6/151, al-Isra, 17/23 and al-Ahqaab, 46/15. The term sadaqah (charity) is then interpreted as giving something to the poor or those rightful to receive it; other than the obligation of zakat and zakat *fitrah* pursuant to donator's ability (Nasional, 2003, p. 1008).

In addition, sadaqah (charity) may be interpreted as giving wealth to the poor and those in need by expecting the reward of Allah (Ibrahim bin Abdullah at-Tuwaijiri, 2012, p. 962). Sadaqah (charity) is a provision given by a Muslim to others spontaneously and voluntarily without limitation to a certain time and amount; only reward. In the sense of the foregoing, fuqaha (experts of fiqh) refer sadaqah as *attatawwu* (shadaqah (charity), politely and voluntarily) (Ensiklopedi Islam, 2001, p. 259). According to Didin Hafidhuddin, the word sadaqah is defined as "right", thus those who like to perform sadaqah are those who are righteous in their confessions of faith. Meanwhile, Yusuf Qardawi says that sadaqah means





the evidence of the truth of faith and justifies the day of judgement (Qardhawi, 1991, p. 39).

In sharia terminology, sadaqah (charity) has the same meaning as infaq, which means incurring some of one's property or income as directed by Islamic teaching. Further, it is said that if zakat is on *nisab*, while infaq is not on *nisab*. The word infaq is derived from *anfaqa*, *yunfiqu*, *infaqan* (Arabic), which etymologically means something depleted, expense, sold commodity (Munawwir, 1984, p. 1548). According to Ibnu Fariz Ibn Zariyah, there are two meanings of the word infaq: first, disappearance or loss of something and, second, hidden or disguised (Ibn Zakariyah, 1972). Allah commands humans to perform infaq in a good way and righteously as one measure or indication of human's piety to Allah and as a form of one's social investment.

In QS. al-Baqarah (2) verse 264, Allah specifically commands us not to mention provision we have given. The example is symbolized as a slippery stone (Ibn Mas;ud Al-Baghawi, 1412, pp. 324–327) on which there is soil, then heavy rain falls on the stone, then it becomes clean. This is a sign that when someone gives infaq, he should not mention it since it will make the charity wasted. Therefore, the main requirement for useful charity is to have it getting into the heart, requiring sincerity and awareness that wealth is not absolutely owned and that spending such wealth is the connotative meaning that Allah has intended us to understand. Similar message may be seen in QS. al-Kahfi verse 42 (Shihab, 2011, p. 301), al-Baqarah verse 271 and al-Baqarah verse 263. Likewise, Allah presents an example of the practice of charity with a seed of grain (QS. 2:261), explaining that infaq is symbolized with a seed of grain, which develops to *sabilillah* (the way of Allah), indicating that wealth must be spent for fundamental social interest.

Seed denotatively means seed and seedling, and connotatively means that sadaqah (charity) is physically lost, embedded, buried or invisible, but, though planted without air, will remains alive, grows and develops. The sign with the sentence indicates that wealth is gone from our hands, but God's promise shows that such wealth will grow and develop to multiplied reward and blessing and abundance of sustenance.

4.8. Contextual meaning of sadaqah (charity) in economic principles with a semiotic approach

Allah reveals His *kalam* to integrate individual piety and social piety in an integrated and sympathetic manner to realize its function, and the Quran criticizes the unbalanced social-economic system. Criticism and prohibition of monopoly system are followed by a call for people to donate, which is an educational process of Islamic character building. Islam is concerned about the functions and benefits of wealth as a source of social life and mobility and has since its early period commanded those wealthy to donate their wealth to those in need, as stated in the QS. an-Nahl (16:75).

In this verse, the call for sadaqah emerges repeatedly in the context of attempting to describe the terms of sadaqah in detail. The terms are displayed fully courteously and compassionately. It also explains the procedure of sadaqah which may turn it into an educative act and something useful for the recipient, transforming the society into a large, mutually beneficial family and takaful as well as mutual care and loving. Sadaqah may also raise human to a noble level, both the giver and recipient (Quthb, 2001, p. 62).

In discussion of the foregoing, the word wealth/property will always be paired with the term economic. As the public prosperity domain, it is the economy which discusses how to process wealth/property to a symbol of prosperity. In *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*, economy means science of the principles of production, distribution and uses of goods and wealth/property.

4.9. Economic basic principles, the concept of Tamlîk (ownership)

The concept of tamlîk in Quran may be traced in many verses including QS. al-Syûrâ [42] verse 4:

According to al-Syawkânî, the verse explains that the real owner of wealth/property is Allah (Ibn Muhammad al-Syawkani, n.d., p. 536). Semiotically, the verb *lahu* is a typology of symbol/signifier (ground) of the sign that everything existing in the heaven and on and in the earth is within the grasp and power of Allah. *Lahu* denotatively means that all of these show to the omnipotence of Allah upon all His





creations. He creates and eliminates them as He wills. Humans only serve as holders of management mandate, as in QS. al-Mulk [67] verse 15 (Quran, 2018, p. 563).

The statement above is quite reasonable since one of humans serve as musta'mir, besides their position as mustakhlif on the earth. The term musta'mir may be interpreted as the builder of prosperity. The basis of this statement is Allah's words in QS. Hud [11] verse 61:

The verb ista'mara is an expression showing human's position. The verb is formed from another verb, This word consists of letters 'ain, mim and ra. This symbol is a signifier of "eternity and long period. and something rising" (such as voice, etc.) (Ahmad Ibnu Zakariya, 1961, p. 141,142). The morphological analysis of this word is 'amara-ya'muru which generates the signifier of "long life, abundant wealth/property, inhabiting, lengthening age, building and taking care of something well" (Anis, 1972, p.

From the description above, we may understand the ground at the first level that عمر is to prosper something as an attempt to build and progress. The word and with all of its forms is found 28 times in the Quran (Abdu Al-baqiy, n.d., pp. 482–484). The Quran uses ya'muru twice respectively in QS. al-Tawbah [9] verses 17-18. In these verses, the word ya'muru is coupled with the word mosque. This means to prosper the mosque by building, maintaining, cleaning and performing i'tikâf. Meanwhile, QS. al-Rûm [30] verse 9 uses past tense 'amaru coupled with ardh, which mean building buildings and managing them to gain benefit from (Shihab, 1994, p. 164).

4.10. Fairness and balance in commerce

Allah commands humans to apply justice and balance in doing commerce. They are the basis of Islamic economy. Commerce must follow applicable balance, applicable financial transactions and applicable economic standards. We must not commit misconduct, fraud or cover any defects or weaknesses of what we transact in. Everything will surely be held accountable by Allah, as described in the following verse:

وَأَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ إِذَا كِلْتُمْ وَزِنُوا بِالْقِسْطَاسِ الْمُسْتَقِيمِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأُويلًا "And give full measure when you measure, and weigh with an even balance. That is the best [way] and best in result." (QS. al Isra verse 35)

The verb wa aufu linguistically means a command to "perfect" in denotative meaning. The representation of the meaning to perfect will generate non-perfected signified (object) in dose and scale. At this stage, it means cheating. Ground generates first-level signified (object), constituting behaviors and attitudes which encourage one to commit fraud, such as reducing scale and prioritizing personal benefit while disregarding others' advantage. Furthermore, third-level representation (object) implicates in apathy, disregarding social life, not paying attention to others' life while paying more attention to personal benefit. The representations of meaning are still at the connotative contextual consistency stage, that the meaning is to apply justice in commerce while considering buyer's rights, which is to benefit from the goods bought. This is more meaningful to the wide application of economic principles in building the fairness and balance values in economy.

The basic Islamic economic principles always stand on justice issue. Islam does not desire an economy that may lead to gaps, for example, capitalist economy which only emphasizes the investor aspect without considering labor, humanitarian and other marginal aspects. Therefore, Islam instructs Muslims to help each other. There is indeed the term competition or compete in all that is good. However, this does not mean putting aside justice and social concern aspects (Abdul Majid, 2016, pp. 252–253).

Brotherhood and Justice also require resources to be distributed fairly to all people through fair zakat, infaq, sadaqah, tax, kharaj, jizyah, export-import duty and other policies. The concept of socio-economic justice in Islam differs fundamentally from the concept of justice in capitalism and socialism. The socioeconomic justice in Islam is, besides based on the spiritual commitment, also based on the concept of universal brotherhood among humans (Suryani, 2011).

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4.11. Charity as people empowerment

Amidst the social problems in the community and the need for prosperous economy lately, sadaqah (charity) exists very strategically. Besides serving as one aspect of Islamic teaching in the spiritual dimension, zakat, infaq, sadaqah, and waqf are also taught to emphasize the importance of prosperous economy and social dimension. Sadaqah serves as the pillar to establish social religious institutions of Muslim community for centuries, which is made through provision of funds and supporting facilities for religious ritual activities, education, science development, arts and culture.

As social donation which may positively influence the society's welfare, sadaqah in its mandatory and voluntary forms is an effective medium for equal economic distribution. The current global economy, especially in the national context, grows unequally. On one hand, the country seeks only economic growth, while equitable economic distribution is overlooked, causing the economic growth enjoyed only by a handful of people classified as Conglomerates. On the contrary, it is out of the majority of society's reach. The said equalization is clearly not just dividing a large economic portion, but more importantly, it should involve the people to the greatest extent possible in overall economic development through ownership of assets and access. Economic equitable distribution in the fulfillment of basic needs such as foodstuffs, garments, other basic needs and people's income are strongly influenced by the economic growth itself.

5. Conclusion

Semiotics examines the systems, rules or conventions allow a sign in the community to have a meaning, thus semiotics has many areas of application, such as animal semiotics, signs of smelling (semiotics of smell), communication semiotics, paralinguistic semiotics, medical semiotics, kinesics and proxemics semiotics (gesture semiotics), music semiotics music and so on.

Using language as a medium, the Quran is a fertile land for the development of semiotics. Therefore, the semiotics of Quran may become a branch in the application of semiotics, since there are signs with meaning. Therefore, the semiotics of Quran may be defined as a branch of semiotics to examine the signs of the Quran. The semiotics of the Quran in the concept of the values of sharia economic law on sadaqah (charity) is found in surah al-Baqarah verse 261 with semiotic sign in the verse of a seed of grain which grows seven spikes and, in each spike, there are one hundred grains. The review gives us an understanding that sadaqah (charity) with sincerity will be advantageous to the one who does it, the society and people empowerment.

The example is presented by Allah to describe the tenfold to seven hundredfold multiplication of reward for those who have spent their wealth. Sadaqah (charity) effectively stimulates feelings and creates an impression in human's mind, so that wealth spent in sadaqah will develop and invite blessing for the owner. Sadaqah of which example is presented with "a grain of seed which grows seven spikes, and in each spike, there are one hundred grains" in the verse is one which may give the people benefits. Sadaqah also contains messages such as patience, ethics, optimism, da'wah, economy, law and the Power of Allah.

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