Commemorative Street Naming of Historical Figures as Cultural Memory and Representation in Banyumas Regency

Ika Oktaviana[1], Siti Junawaroh[2]
Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Jenderal Soedirman[1,2], Purwokerto, Indonesia
ika.oktaviana@unsoed.ac.id[1*]

Abstract

Street naming is commonly used to give directions to some places. Moreover, street names can be used to memorialize some figures, for instance, historical figures. In this case, Banyumas Regency, one of the regencies in Indonesia, mostly creates street names by implementing historical figure names. Consequently, this paper aims to explore commemorative street naming revealing historical figures as cultural memory and representation in Banyumas Regency. Specifically, this paper examines the classification of the historical figures created as street names and their historical relations to the Banyumas Regency, whether connected or not. This research applied a descriptive qualitative method. The data were collected from multiple sources and analyzed by identifying the commemorative street names related to each figure's historical figures and historical background in Banyumas Regency. In this investigation, the findings show that the commemorative street names of the historical figures in Banyumas Regency applied four historical figure name classifications: heroes, religious figures, political figures, and others. The dominant street names of historical figures come from the hero names. Moreover, the street names with robust connectivity related to Banyumas' history, political figures and other figure names. The street names of heroes and religious figures are identified as national figures who are related and unrelated to Banyumas' history. In contrast, the street names of the political figures and others came from local figures who had roles and struggled in Banyumas. In this research, to conclude, the street names in Banyumas Regency are formed diversely to commemorate and tribute the figures influenced by politics and cultural systems. Therefore, it can implicitly describe or explain the understanding of the past from generation to generation, so it becomes a cultural memory and representation embodied in Banyumas' citizens.

Keywords: commemorative street naming; cultural memory; cultural representation; toponymy; Banyumas regency

Introduction

Street naming is used to mark the location information of a given street or road so that passengers (or drivers) can position themselves in a specific area (Zhang, 2020). Birnbaum (2023) also stated that the street names also help residents and visitors alike find their way in the urban landscape. Unfortunately, it is beyond that since he also added that it is claimed that the street names serve not only a functional purpose but also have clear political goals (2023). Additionally, the street names are recognized as witnesses and mirrors of the local history of every particular city or town, just they mirror and bear witness to national history (David, 2013). The street names also functioned as a manifestation of symbolic values and political order in their commemorative use as they link national past to urban geography (Cobangil, 2020). It can be said that not only do the street names sign directions, but also, they also have a hidden meaning toward history.

The street also had been named in various ways. For example, in every city in Indonesia, the street naming is commonly and mostly used by some historical figures. The historical figures represent some heroes or other figures and it can be mentioned as commemorative street names. The commemorative street names implicitly interpreted to tell the past. Subsequently, they have connectivity that allows them to touch the consciousness

of social actors and groups who may or may not identify with the person or event being remembered (Alderman, 2003). In addition, it is also used to create symbolic connections with the past by commemorating and honoring the contributions of the historical figures (Hsiyan, 2020). Therefore, it can be understood that the street names attend as both address and historical reference conveying a spatial permanence to the commemoration of the past and serving as a daily reminder of what (and who) is historically important (Alderman, 2002).

In addition, street names are, by design and function, limited to one or just a few words and thus cannot provide a lengthy description and interpretation of the commemorated figure as one would find at other memorials since it is possible that a person could live, work, and travel along a named street and not truly know the historical contributions of the person honored along that road (Alderman, 2002). Therefore, the commemorative street names become part of cultural memory. The commemorative street names are claimed as a media to carry the past into the present and insert history into an inscription in a city's landscape (Zhang, 2020). Furthermore, most commemorative street names were principally implemented the historical figures for the public to remember.

Additionally, the street names are regarded as cultural representations. The street names are not only an important label for a city, but also a cultural representative (Zhu and Zhang, 2022). Cultural representation refers to the entirety of processes involving actors, actions, and artifacts in the establishment and negotiation of the publicly accessible self-image of a given community (Purschke, 2021). He also explained three types of cultural representation namely modes, motives, and materials of representation. Modes of cultural representation are the different kinds of practical strategies necessary to establish or curate an ensemble of cultural artifacts, in this street naming case, related to administrative action and public participation in naming procedures. The second type is motives includes different kinds of ideological motivations used to legitimize action modes and their outcomes in street naming, for instance, practical organization of public space, social appropriation of the public sphere, and ideological consolidation of social spaces. The last, materials of cultural representation recognize different types of symbolic resources, like the use of different languages, the commemoration of persons, and semantic domains in creating the street names.

The language of the street represents a novel area of applied linguistics research in its reliance on the theoretical and descriptive techniques of linguistics, in its multidisciplinary sources that have seldom previously been connected, and in its emphasis on language as actual concrete texts embedded in a material context (Cook, 2018). After identifying, the street names in Banyumas, one of regencies located in Central Java, are formed by several things. It consists of historical figures, mountains, rivers, plants, place directions, and many others. Moreover, it is found that most street names are created from historical figures. There are also some historical figures born or had important roles in Banyumas so they are used as the street names, for instance, 'Jenderal Gatot Subroto' and 'Jenderal Soedirman'. Conversely, they are some historical figures were not born or had roles in Banyumas recognized as the street names in Banyumas, namely 'Ahmad Yani' and 'Sunan Bonang'. Hence, based on the explanation above, it is interesting to analyze further related to the street naming of historical figures in Banyumas.

Studying street names was conducted by some scholars (Azaryahu, 2011; Chloupek, 2018; Rusu, 2019; Mamvura et.al, 2020; Zhang, 2020; Purschke, 2021; Rusu, 2022; Buchstaller et.al., 2023; Núñez & Dinas, 2023). Some scholars studied the street naming by observing

political issues. Chloupek (2018) studied political street renaming and vernacular responses to nationalist and communist periods of dynamic change. Rusu (2019) emphasized capturing the ethnopolitics played out at the level of the city's street names through the dual toponymic means of naming and renaming. Rusu (2022) investigated the gendered spaces of street names inspecting identity politics played out in the public space. Buchstaller et.al. (2023) studied commemorative naming strategies by presenting a comparative longitudinal study on changes in the urban toponymy of Leipzig (Germany) and Poznań (Poland). Núñez & Dinas (2023) demonstrated democratic political elites using the power to employ places of memory along with the ideology.

On the other hand, the street naming studies were also examined by approaching cultural issues. Zhang (2020) explored the street named by observing the cultural memory perspective. Mamvura et.al (2020) studied cultural landscape re-inscription in the post-independence era. Purschke (2021) determined the cultural representation of street naming practices in Luxembourg. To be specific, the study of commemorative street name also had been observed by some scholars. Azaryahu (2011) examined the political process associated with the renaming of commemorative streets. Fabiszak, et.al (2021) also investigated the concept of ideology relating to commemorative street naming by using a quantitative approach. Rubdy (2021) explored pattern of commemorative street names and place renaming in India's cities, Mumbai and New Delhi.

Based on the explanation above, the research of street names was conducted by exploring some cases and demonstrating particular politics or culture. In the previous studies, Zhang (2020) only used cultural memory, while Purschke (2021) cultural representation. Besides, both Azaryahu (2011) and Buchstaller et.al. (2023) analyzed commemorative street names but the difference was in the research approach namely political process and comparative longitudinal study. This paper aims to describe the commemorative street naming of historical figures by means of cultural memory and representation as the novelty of the research. To be specific, this paper investigates a pattern of commemorative street names of historical figure names and the relation whether it is connected to Banyumas' history reflecting cultural memory and representation.

Method
The research was descriptive qualitative method. The research population involved street names in Banyumas Regency. The street names purposively consist of historical figure street names since this paper identifies classification of the historical figures created as the street names and their historical relations to Banyumas Regency. The data on street names were definitely obtained only in Purwokerto, the capital of Banyumas Regency, since it has various street names especially historical figures rather than other areas. Therefore, a total of 54 street names were documented in the study.

To answer the research questions, the data also were collected from multiple sources and combined into a dataset. Subsequently, the data were analyzed to identify the historical figure name classification and the relation whether it is connected to Banyumas' history. Firstly, to categorize the historical figure names, the data were searched one by one to know who the figures are; moreover, secondly, to determine the relation, these figures were examined by observing their historical background and roles whether it is correlated to Banyumas' history or not. Afterward, the data were calculated into the classification of historical figures and also drew conclusions to the street naming in Banyumas Regency.

Figure 1. Banyumas Regency Maps

Source: pinhome.id

Finding

After analyzing, in this paper, the street naming of historical figures in Banyumas are categorized into four patterns, namely heroes, religious figures, political figures, and other figures. Besides, the categories, there are several street names that are connected and unconnected to Banyumas' history. The following table shows the street naming in Banyumas and its connectivity to Banyumas' history.

Table 1. Frequency and Percentage of Commemorative Street Naming Patterns in Banyumas

No	Banyumas' history	Street Naming									
		Heroes		Religious Figures		Political Figures		Other Figures		Total	
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
1	Connected	7	13	5	9	12	22	6	11	30	56
2	Unconnected	16	30	8	15	0	0	0	0	24	44
	Total	23	43	13	24	12	22	7	11	54	100

Source: Research Result

As can be seen in Table 1, statistically, the commemorative street naming of heroes is dominantly found for nearly 43 percent (n=23), religion figures (24 percent, n=13), political figures (22 percent, n=12), and other figures (11 percent, n=7). The commemorative street naming of heroes consists of local and national heroes struggling in the colonial era. Unfortunately, when being examined, the street naming of heroes is not mostly involved or connected (30 percent, n=16) and the rest (13 percent, n=7) is connected to Banyumas' history. Besides, for the second pattern, religion figures are those who spread Islam religion whether in Banyumas or not. The religious figures have the same result as their connectivity to Banyumas' history unconnected figures (15 percent, n=8) are indicated more than connected ones (9 percent, n=5). Thirdly, political figures are all connected to the Banyumas' history (22 percent, n=12). For the last, other figures are those who were not involved in three

figures before and it shows that all of them are included in Banyumas' history (11 percent, n=6).

Illustrating from the statistical result, it also can be said that the commemorative street names pattern of hero names is foremost used in Banyumas, whereas the street names of religious figures are in the second place after hero street names. Nonetheless, by observing the connectivity to Banyumas' history, political figure and other figure names have higher connectivity than other street naming patterns i.e heroes and religious figures. Moreover, after inspecting, the street names of the heroes are renowned as national heroes who had given their great and amazing struggle to fight for the colonists even in Banyumas or other area so then they are divided into two types. The first type of national heroes is who are involved or connected to Banyumas' history by determining their role and fight for in Banyumas.

Nevertheless, other hero names recognized as national figure names did not straightly play role in Banyumas. They were also implemented as the street names in order to honour some famous Indonesia's heroes. Not only in Banyumas, the names of famous heroes also applied as the street names in almost all areas or cities in Indonesia. These results reinforced that the commemorative street names with well-known heroes or figures can be a sound way to secure a regime in building historical consciousness and national identity (Zhang, 2020). It can be identified that the street names in Banyumas mostly used national figures rather than local figures in order to memorialize and figure national identity.

Furthermore, the street names of religious figures also have the same way as the street names of heroes. The street names involve local and national religious figures. The local religious figures denote who had immediately spread Islam religion in Banyumas, while the national religious figures were famous and influential figures in disseminating Islam religion in Indonesia. Uniquely, in point of fact, some local and national religious figures interrelated each other. For instance, some local religious figures were ordered by national religious figure to spread Islam religion in Banyumas. Besides, it is also found that not only do the street names of heroes and religious figures signify the local figure names, but also national figure names. The street names of local figures identify only for commemorating who fight for especially in Banyumas. Hence, the street names of heroes and religious figure names are established to commemorate some figures and build national identity.

In addition, the street names of political and other figure names merely consist of local figures who had a role in Banyumas, so then they are unquestionably related to Banyumas' history. These political figures are described as those who got their position in the political system such as headman, regent, governor, and chief in some areas or departments in Banyumas. It is also proved that the street naming is exactly related to power and political system. Moreover, when invested with commemorative function, not only do street names belong to the language but also to public memory and the symbolic infrastructure of the ruling sociopolitical order (Azaryahu, 2011). In other words, the street names of political figure names indirectly become symbol of power of particular political figures and embed to public memory.

The street naming of other figures represents Banyumas' characteristics since it consists of local figures who had role only in Banyumas and could not be originated in other areas. The other figures are related to some cultural and social figures told in Banyumas' folklore. The result of this study also supported that street names denoting noteworthy turning points in the history of a nation, including its political leaders, historical heroes, and mythical legends, represent the preferred narratives of collective past and identity symbolically (Kashfi, 2023). In other way, the commemorative street names become a symbol or sign associated to specific power, political, and cultural systems in Banyumas' history embedded as cultural memory and representation to Banyumas people.

Street Naming of Heroes

Street naming of hero names, as shown in table 1, has the most dominant names in this study. Heroes are persons well-known for their courageous acts or character nobility. In Banyumas, there are some hero names becoming street names. These heroes are also renowned as national heroes who had given their great and amazing struggle to fight for the colonists. In addition, in this category, the national heroes in this case are divided into two types. The first is the heroes who are involved or connected to Banyumas' history and the second is not. It is examined by determining their role and fight for in Banyumas. The street names of heroes involved in Banyumas' history are Jenderal Soedirman, Diponegoro, Dr. Brigjen Encung, Jenderal Gatot Subroto, Oviste Isdiman, Dr. Angka, and Dr. Gumbreg. These names are created for the street names for some reasons, for example, because of his hometown, struggling area, and roles in Banyumas. Jenderal Gatot Subroto was born in Banyumas, while Jenderal Soedirman and Diponegoro had one of their struggling areas in Banyumas. On the other hand, Dr. Brigjen Encung, Oviste Isdiman, Dr. Angka, and Dr. Gumbreg had the responsibility to handle their roles in Banyumas.

Furthermore, there are also some heroes who are not included in Banyumas' history but they become the street names. These heroes are national heroes who were not born, had not struggled, and played roles in Banyumas, namely Prof. Moch. Yamin SH, Letjend MT. Haryono, Kapten Patimura, Slamet Riyadi, Kolonel Sugiri, Prof. Dr. Suharso, Sultan Agung, Supriyadi, Mayjend Sutoyo, and Laksda Yos Sudarso as national heroes. While the names of Ahmad Yani, Jenderal Soeprapto, S. Parman, Letjend MT. Haryono, Mayjen DI. Panjaitan, Mayjend Sutoyo, Karel S. Tubun, Brigjend Katamso, and Kolonel Sugiono are regarded as revolution heroes. Based on the explanation, Banyumas tried to commemorate some heroes in Indonesia and also to immortalize their names, not only for those who had a role or struggled in Banyumas, but also for other national heroes. Beside for memorializing them, it is also implied to build national identity to Banyumas people.

Street Naming of Religion Figures

The spread of religion, especially Islam, is recorded in Indonesian history. This is no less important than the history of the Indonesian nation's struggle against colonialism. In the history, there are several figures involved in the spread of Islam religion. Some of them are created as street names, like in Banyumas. The religious figures are Adipati Mersi, HOS. Notosuwiryo, H. Nurhakim, Pasiraja, Rajimustopa, Sunan Bonang, Raden Patah, Raden Suwito, Sunan Ampel, Sunan Giri, Sunan Gunung Jati, Sunan Kalijaga, and K.H. Wahid Hasyim. In this part, some religious figures are correlated with Banyumas' history, and others are not. Its association comes by identifying their area of the spread of religion whether in Banyumas or not. The street names using figures such as Adipati Mersi, HOS. Notosuwiryo, H. Nurhakim, Pasiraja, and Rajimustopa are directly correlated with Banyumas' history. On the other hand, Sunan Bonang, Raden Patah, Raden Suwito, Sunan Ampel, Sunan Giri, Sunan Gunung Jati, Sunan Kalijaga, and K.H. Wahid Hasyim are figures who did not spread Islam religion in Banyumas area, but well-known and famous in Indonesia and indirectly also influenced Islam in Banyumas.

The mentioned religious figures in Banyumas are actually meanderingly linked form one to another. For example, based on history, Raden Patah who founded and led Demak Kingdom sent a figure called Syekh Ma'dum Wali who had a son named Adipati Mersi, to spread Islam in Banyumas. Raden Patah also founded the Demak Kingdom with Wali Songo, in this case, four of them are mentioned as the street names explicitly Sunan Ampel, Sunan Giri, Sunan Gunung Jati, and Sunan Kalijaga. Furthermore, Raden Suwito was a trusted student of Sunan Kalijaga who previously studied with Sunan Kudus and was mentioned as the street name in Banyumas. Besides, in this street name pattern, Pasiraja and Rajimustopa are declared as the same name since Rajimustopa is the real name and Pasiraja is the nickname commemorated as the street names in the same area specifically in Bantarsoka, Purwokerto, Banyumas. Like heroes who gave their struggle for Indonesian freedom, the religious figures also had their own struggles to spread the religion, so then the street naming of religious figures is a form of respect for their services. Also, it is implemented to socialize national figures to the local people. In addition, the street names in Banyumas are all created form Islamic religious figures who spread Islam religion to Banyumas people.

Street Naming of Political Figures

The political system absolutely influenced street naming, including in Banyumas. It can be shown in its street naming using political figures in Banyumas. These political figures are described as those who got their position in the political system such as headman, regent, governor, and chief in some areas or departments in Banyumas. There are some political figure names used as the street names, namely Ahmad Djaelani, Kom. Bambang Suprapto, Prof. Dr. HR. Benyamin, Kartawijaya, Brigjend M. Bachrun, Martadireja I, Martadireja II, Pancurawis, RA. Wiryaatmaja, and Letjend Pol. Soemarto.

Uniquely, some of political figure names in Banyumas are identified as the first person occupying particular positions, for instance, Ahmad Djaelani as the first Village Head of Karangwangkal, Kom. Bambang Suprapto as the first Mobile Brigade Corps in Banyumas, Kartawijaya as the first Village Head of Randegan Wangon Banyumas, and Letjend Pol. Soemarto as the first Deputy Chief of the National Police Department born in Banyumas. The street names are closely related to power holding figure's location. In this case, for instance, Ahmad Djaelani is named as the street name in Karangwangkal since he had political power as Village Head of Karangwangkal. Prof. Dr. HR. Benyamin, Dean of Agriculture Faculty of Jenderal Soedirman University, is account as the street name on its university area.

The street naming cannot be parted from the political issues. The politics of history and memory is embedded in the practice of commemorative street naming that has been a powerful tool to analyze totalitarian or semi-totalitarian contexts or simply the values of past regimes (Palonen, 2017). It has a significant role in creating street naming by political figures. Not only are they for commemorating, but also it can show their power holding location.

Street Naming of Other Figures

This street naming is less than other street naming categories. For this classification, street naming is also created from other historical figures excluding others. It is categorized as a figure stated in Banyumas folklore, for instance, Kamandaka, Pekih, and Ragasmangsang. Suteja is the name of a composer who had a hand in the founding of RRI from Banyumas. Madrani is Waqf for mosque land in Grendeng, Purwokerto, Banyumas. It is named for the local figures whom Indonesian people or even Banyumas people probably may not recognize them well, but some people want to remember and commemorate them through the street names in Banyumas. Hence, the street named by other figures can portray Banyumas' characteristics more than another regency.

Conclusion

After being investigated, street names in Banyumas Regency are created by various historical figure names depending on the sociocultural and political situation. Moreover, in Banyumas Regency, the street names are also named by some figures names such as heroes, religious figures, political public, and other figures. These figures are connected and unconnected to Banyumas' history, especially for political and other figures.

For the street naming of hero names, most of them are not correlated to Banyumas' history since they are regarded as national heroes who did not struggle or have a role in Banyumas. They had been named streets in Banyumas as nationalist reflection to appreciate national heroes since Banyumas is one of the regencies in Indonesia. The religious figures were also identified as the street names in Banyumas. They came to Banyumas to spread Islam religion and were also mostly unconnected to Banyumas' history but they undeniably are famous as the religious figures in Indonesia. The political figure street naming, are all associated with Banyumas' history as headman, regent, governor, and chief in some areas or

departments in Banyumas. Last but not least are other figures related to Banyumas folklore so then they are all correlated to Banyumas' history.

Furthermore, the names were also embedded in cultural memory since they are significant memorial sites retelling the past, so then the public especially the local people can recognize who they are, what their roles are, and what they fight for. Street naming is also regarded as cultural representation since its process creates an order of cultural representation based on local traditions or folklore. Henceforward, street naming is essential to be used and cannot be separated as the symbol of politics, culture, and history.

References

Alderman, D. H. (2002). Street names as memorial arenas: The reputational politics of commemorating Martin Luther King in a Georgia country. *Historical Geography*, 30, 99-120.

Alderman, D. H. (2003). Street names and the scaling of memory: the politics of commemorating Martin Luther King, Jr within the African American community. *Area*, 35(2), 163–173.

Azaryahu, M. (2011). The politics of commemorative street renaming: Berlin 1945–1948. *Journal of Historical Geography*, 37(4), 483–492.

Birnbaum, E. (2023). Street renaming as a means of symbolic insult and a diplomatic slap in International Relations. Millennium, 0(0). https://doi.org/10.1177/03058298231171612

Chloupek, B. R. (2019). Public memory and political street names in Košice: Slovakia's multiethnic second city. *Journal of Historical Geography,* 64. *25-35.* https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhg.2018.11.007

Cobangil, O. (2020). The transition of urban toponymy of Izmir: Impacts of modernism and nationalism on the street names. *Athens Journal of Mediterranean Studies*, 6(4), 293-314.

Cook, V. (2018). Naming in the language of the street. *Vigo International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 15, 47-65. https://doi.org/10.35869/vial.v0i15.86

David, J. (2013). Street names-between ideology and cultural heritage. *Journal: Acta Onomastica*, 54, 53-60.

Fabiszak, M., Buchstaller, I., Brzezińska, A. W., Alvanides, S., Griese, F., & Schneider, C. (2021). Ideology in the linguistic landscape: Towards a quantitative approach. *Discourse & Society*, 32(4), 405-425. https://doi.org/10.1177/0957926521992149

Hsiyan, A.S.A. (2020). A sociolinguistic study of street names in Amman Jordan. *International Journal of Linguistics*,12(4), 139-154. https://doi.org/10.5296/ijl.v12i4.17444

Kashfi, E. (2023). The politics of street names: Reconstructing Iran's collective identity. *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism*, 23(2), 122-143.

Núñez, A.R. & Dinas. E. (2023). Mean streets: power, ideology and the politics of memory. *Political Geography,* 103*.* 10.1016/j.polgeo.2023.102840.

Palonen, E. (2017). Building a new city through a new discourse : street naming revolutions in Budapest in R. Rose-Redwood, D. Alderman & M. Azaryahu (eds), *The Political Life of Urban Streetscape : Naming, Politics, and Place*. Routledge: Abingdon , pp. 98–113.

Purschke, C. (2021). Cultural representation in Luxembourgish street naming practices. *Linguistics Vanguard,* 7(s5). https://doi.org/10.1515/lingvan-2021-0003

Rubdy, R. (2021). Patterns of commemorative street and place renaming in India's two mega-cities: Mumbai and New Delhi. *Linguistics Vanguard,* 7(5). https://doi.org/10.1515/lingvan-2021-0018.

Rusu, M. S. (2019). Shifting urban namescapes: street name politics and toponymic change in a Romanian(ised) city. *Journal of Historical Geography*, 65, 48-58. 10.1016/j.jhg.2019.07.001

Rusu, M. S. (2022). Gendering urban namescapes: the gender politics of street names in an eastern european city. *Names: A Journal of Onomastics*, 70(2), 12-25. https://doi.org/10.5195/names.2022.2233

Tan, P. & Purschke, C. (2021). Street name changes as language and identity inscription in the cityscape. *Linguistics Vanguard*, 7(s5). 10.1515/lingvan-2020-0138

Zhang, H. (2020). Street naming and name preserving in urbanization: a cultural memory perspective. *World Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 6(3), 81-84.

Zhu, P. & Zhang, N. (2022). Study on the cultural connotation of street names in Kunming City *[Paper presentation].* International Conference on County Economic Development, Rural Revitalization and Social Sciences (ICCRS 2022), 650, 119-122.