



International Journal of Humanity Studies
<http://e-journal.usd.ac.id/index.php/IJHS>
Sanata Dharma University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

POWER RELATIONS IN TWO CONTEMPORARY INDONESIAN NOVELS WITH POLITICAL THEMES

Susilawati Endah Peni Adji

Sanata Dharma University

correspondence: peniadji@gmail.com

DOI: 10.24071/ijhs.v4i1.2788

received 2 August 2020; accepted 8 August 2020

Abstract

Since Indonesia began its political reform in 1998, Indonesians have enjoyed increased freedom of expression, and as such it has been possible for long-censored themes such as politics to be freely discussed in contemporary Indonesian literature. This article examines two such novels, (1) Junaedi Setiono's *Dasamuka* (2017), which deals with Javanese politics during the Diponegoro War; and (2) Arafat Nur's *Lolong Anjing di Bulan* (*Dogs Howling at the Moon*, 2018), which deals with Acehese politics during the Military Operations Era. This article borrows its theoretical framework from Fairclough, Bourdieu, and Gramsci, using the concept of power relations to investigate the novels *Dasamuka* and *Lolong Anjing di Bulan*. It finds that such power relations are strongly evident in both novels, particularly in their depictions of: (1) language as capital, (2) dominance and hegemony, and (3) opposition to outside dominance. This study finds that, in these novels, power relations have economic roots. Power is exerted, for instance, through (1) the taxation of civilians by the Yogyakarta Palace and the Dutch colonial government; (2) the land rental system implemented by the British and Dutch colonial regimes, which resulted in all profits flowing to these regimes, the Palace becoming economically dependent on these regimes, and the common people being reduced to laborers, and (3) natural gas exploration in Aceh, with all profits flowing to the Indonesian and American governments. Power relations in these novels, thus, are structured by economic factors, reflecting a Marxist paradigm. This reflects the Marxist view that economic factors are foundational for the class structure of society.

Keywords: power relations, dominance, hegemony, counter-dominance/hegemony, political literature

Introduction

The year 2019 was a highly political one in Indonesia, being a time of both presidential and legislative elections. Candidates and their supporters espoused their political beliefs using expressions that ranged from the polite to the offensive, from the logical to the illogical, from the factual to the fictional. Although such expressions were most commonly made using social networking platforms, they were not limited to such popular media. Works of literature, as forms of human expression, likewise offered their authors a medium for conveying political beliefs and attitudes as well

as exposing the equalities and inequalities in contemporary society.

As noted by Taum (2015: 1), in the early years of Indonesian literature, the political situation was not conducive to such practices. Under the Dutch colonial regime, the government-backed publisher Balai Pustaka would refuse to publish content with explicitly ideological, religious, or political themes (Teeuw, 1989: 31). Similarly, in the first decade after Indonesia's independence, few works of literature are recorded as having explicitly rejected the ruling government's ideology (Teeuw, 1989, and Rosidi, 1986). Under President Soeharto (1966–1998), the Indonesian Government (through the Office of the Prosecutor General) explicitly prohibited the publication and distribution of works identified as espousing communist beliefs, as well as any works that criticized the government. As authors who fell afoul of this prohibition were imprisoned (Suroso, 2015), writers began utilizing indirect and creative means of critiquing the government; as argued by Seno Gumira Ajidarma (1997), a journalist and short story writer who rose to fame in the 1990s, "when journalism is silenced, literature must speak". After political reform began in 1998, however, Indonesians began to enjoy greater freedom of expression.

Such a shift has been particularly evident in contemporary literature, where political themes—once prohibited by law—have become commonplace. Power relations are often prominent in such works, including Junaedi Setiono's *Dasamuka* (2017), which deals with Javanese politics during the Diponegoro War; and Arafat Nur's *Lolong Anjing di Bulan* (*Dogs Howling at the Moon*, 2018), which deals with Acehese politics during the Military Operations Era. These works, though of sound structural and aesthetic quality, are not included in books on the history of Indonesian literature, such as those written by Rampan (2000) and Wiyatmi (2018).

The novel *Dasamuka* follows Willem, a researcher from the University of Edinburgh, Scotland, who arrives at Sunda Kelapa Harbor on August 3, 1811, as part of an English armada. Willem is described as having travelled to Java for two reasons, academic and personal, simultaneously being a member of a research team investigating the Javanese custom of *bronjong* for the *London Times* and escaping his frustration over his erstwhile fiancée's decision to marry his father, Jeremias. As part of his duties, Willem becomes a student of Den Waryono, from whom he learns not only the Javanese language and culture, but also the political intrigues of Yogyakarta.

Meanwhile, the novel *Lolong Anjing di Bulan* is set in Aceh during the late 1990s. It follows a young student named Nazir, from elementary school through senior high school. Although his uncle is a recruiter for the Free Aceh Movement (*Gerakan Aceh Merdeka*, GAM), Nazir—as with his father and his brothers—care little for the separatist movement, focusing instead on maintaining their crops and avoiding conflict. However, after Nazir's father is brutally killed by Indonesian soldiers, Nazir begins to hate the Indonesian government and decides to join GAM.

This section will review previous publications that have examined the novels *Dasamuka* and *Lolong Anjing di Bulan*, thereby enabling the author to show the novelty of the current study. *Dasamuka* has been examined in several articles and theses. For instance, Hidayati et al. (2018) employ the theories of Sigmund Freud to investigate the personality and characterization of Willem. They conclude that Willem's id is dominated by his death instinct and his desire to avoid discomfort; Willem's ego is shown through the decisions he makes to realize his desires and complete his duties; and Willem's superego—his understanding of social mores and norms—is evident in his sense of guilt and shame.

Meanwhile, Muniroh (n.d.) uses a romance formula perspective to understand *Dasamuka*. According to Muniroh, this romance formula is apparent in

the novel's (1) strong Javanese cultural background and codes of etiquette, (2) depictions of its four female characters' beauty, which stimulate readers' imaginations, (3) detailed depiction of characters' romantic activities and struggles. However, she finds that the novel does not adhere strictly to such a formula, as the romance between Dasamuka and Rara Ireng comes to a tragic ending.

Misbakhmunir (n.d.) utilizes a genetic structuralist perspective to ascertain whether Dasamuka can appropriately be used as learning material for Grade 9 students. After providing a detailed description of the themes, characters, plot, and setting of the novel, he examines Dasamuka in terms of (a) human fact: cultural creation, social activity, and political activity; (b) collective subject: differences between the Javanese nobility (*priyayi*) and common people (*wong cilik*); and (c) author's worldview: humanitarianism. He then offers a lesson plan for using Dasamuka to teach students how to analyze the intrinsic and extrinsic elements of Indonesian and foreign novels. This lesson plan is designed following a Team Game Tournament (TGT) model of cooperative learning, one that incorporates lectures, discussions, question-and-answer sessions, and assignments.

In his thesis, Zahro (2018) uses a sociological perspective to investigate the novel's depiction of political conflicts and consensuses. He draws the following conclusions: (1) Dasamuka depicts both internal conflicts (within the Yogyakarta Palace itself, as a consequence of the weakness of its elites) and external conflicts (as a result of colonial influences on the Palace); (2) Dasamuka depicts political consensuses through the practices of law enforcement and deliberation; (3) Dasamuka depicts the Javanese propensity for compromise as a means of avoiding conflict and maintaining political consensus. Such practices are based on non-material considerations, being more influenced by the spiritual than the physical.

Faizah (2015) similarly reads Dasamuka through a sociological lens, but uses this perspective to investigate its potential for character education. She argues that this novel deals with such themes as kinship, morality, education, and finance. It also offers examples of such desirable character traits as courage, honesty, responsibility, tolerance, democracy, and nationalism.

Studies of *Lolong Anjing di Bulan*, meanwhile, remain uncommon; the author has only identified two, a review written by Dewi (2019) and an article penned by Adji (2019). In the newspaper *Kompas*, Dewi writes that this novel, which draws from recent Indonesian history, has a clear message: in times of war, humans lose their humanity. She contrasts this message with the undying fealty of dogs, who remain faithful to their masters in all situations, and are thus ironically more loyal than humans even though they are believed to have been created from the saliva of demons.

Meanwhile, Adji examines power relations in the novel *Lolong Anjing di Bulan* as apparent at the surface level. She argues that the novel presents power relations in terms of dominance and counter-dominance/hegemony. The former is practiced by political actors, i.e. the Indonesian military, which uses coercion to influence the behavior of Acehnese civilians and thus exerts a degree of hegemony in advancing a pro-profit ideology. The latter, meanwhile, is practiced by intellectuals, who consist of (1) civilians who enter political society; (2) political actors, who use their hegemony to counter the dominance of the Indonesian government and promote an ideology rooted in perseverance, harmony, and self-worth.

From this review, it can be seen that the novel *Dasamuka* has often been discussed by literature scholars and critics since 2017. However, the power relations presented in the novel have yet to be discussed. Meanwhile, although the power

relations depicted in *Lolong Anjing di Bulan* have been mentioned in the literature, they have not been explored in-depth. This study, thus, seeks to offer a deeper understanding of power relations in the novel *Lolong Anjing di Bulan* and link said power relations with those in a contemporary novel, *Dasamuka*.

Although power relations are inexorably related to collective efforts to survive and prosper, they exist in various forms and involve diverse groups. Such groups are often described in terms of binary opposition, with one group wielding and exercising more than another. This can be seen, for example, in the relations between the lower class and the upper class, between women and men, between blacks and whites, between youths and adults, etc. (Fairclough, 1989: 34).

According to Praptomo (2012: 18), language embodies the purposes of power, that which may be termed ideology (cf. Fairclough, 1989: 77–108); this ideology is an important element of studies into power and power relations. Similarly, Bourdieu (1991: 43-45) argues that the production and reproduction of formal language inherently involves the assertion of authority and power, and thus language has a central role in creating and maintaining power. When individuals express their thoughts through (formal) language, thus, they are tacitly limited by the power structure (cf. Haryatmoko 2016: 41). According to Bourdieu, power structures are shaped by capital (economic, cultural, social, symbolic), class, habitus, and field (Haryatmoko 2016: 35-61).

Gramsci argues that, to maintain the status quo and its embedded power relations, those who wield power rely on hegemony. Hegemony can only be practiced by those who exert dominance, and its particular form is determined by class and national considerations. Although Gramsci refers to the classical Marxist understanding of structural dominance, which regards power as being shaped simultaneously by the basic structure (economy) and the superstructure (ideology, politics, education, culture, etc.), he holds that power relations are not rooted in economic structures (Gramsci, 2013: 513–514). Referring to consensus as an element of hegemony in capitalist society, Gramsci argues that a contradictory consciousness exists in society. Bourgeoisie hegemony is perceived as being supported by some ill-defined consensus.

Gramsci thus recognizes three levels of hegemony: total hegemony (integral), declining hegemony (decadent), and minimal hegemony. Total hegemony occurs when the powerful and the powerless are locked in specific power relations, which are reaffirmed by a shared moral and intellectual framework. There is no contradiction or opposition, be it social or ethical. Declining hegemony occurs when conflict and disintegration become possible; this evidences that, although the existing system of power relations is being maintained, the powerful and the powerless do not share the same moral and intellectual views. As such differences become increasingly exaggerated, and as economic, political, and intellectual elites begin to fragment, a minimum hegemony is created. In such a situation, the average person is unwilling to become involved in state affairs.

Gramsci also identifies three elements of society: economic society, political society, and civil society. Economic society refers to those who determine the dominant means of production in society, those who own the means of production, and those who use production to shape interpersonal relations. Such economic factors create class and social divides in society (Gramsci, 2013: 289-300).

Political society, meanwhile, refers to those who are directly involved in the state bureaucracy and its practice of violence. Political society is coercive, exerting and maintaining its power not only through bureaucratic institutions (those tasked with taxation, trade, financial affairs, industrial development, social welfare, etc.) but

also through the military, police, judicial system, and the prison system. At the same time, it legitimizes its power by creating a consensus through education and other public programs (Gramsci, 2013: 200-204).

Finally, civil society refers to organizations that exist outside the government and the economic system. It is within civil society that intellectuals operate, challenging the existing hegemony by offering new mindsets, understandings, and worldviews, as well as by transforming the norms and mores of society in what Gramsci identifies as an intellectual and moral evolution. It is through the activities of civil society that those who experience domination/hegemony can learn to challenge it (Gramsci, 2013: 3–5).

This understanding of power relations, as developed by Fairclough, Bourdieu, and Gramsci, will provide the conceptual framework for this article's discussion of the novels *Dasamuka* and *Lolong Anjing di Bulan*. In more detail, it will consider language as capital, dominance, and opposition to said dominance.

Method

To obtain a comprehensive understanding of the research topic, this article will employ a discursive approach. In doing so, it assumes that the novels *Dasamuka* and *Lolong Anjing di Bulan*, as well as all analysis of them, are part of a discourse that is oriented towards producing knowledge (cf. Taum, 2017).

Data were collected from two novels, namely Junaedi Setiono's *Dasamuka* (2017), published by Ombak (2017), and Arafat Nur's *Lolong Anjing di Bulan* (2018), published by USD Press. Data were collected through library research. The researcher conducted a careful reading of *Dasamuka* and *Lolong Anjing di Bulan*, and from this reading recorded the words, sentences, and paragraphs within the novels that revealed the power structures within the novels.

Data were analyzed through content analysis (Ratna, 2004: 48–49, in Endraswara, 2011: 160–181). The novels were understood as communication between their authors and their readers, with a meaning that could be interpreted discursively. In this study, interpretation focused on the power relations contained within the novels *Dasamuka* and *Lolong Anjing di Bulan*.

Findings and Discussion

Language as Capital

Linguistic abilities provide characters with the necessary capital to access power, be it academic or political. In *Dasamuka*, Willem is dispatched from the University of Edinburgh, Scotland, to study the Javanese practice of bronjong; he is expected to report his findings to Doctor Leyden, the leader of the research team, and publish them in the London Times. To achieve this goal, Willem studies Javanese under Den Waryono.

In this context, Waryono is a Javanese man of some power, being an intellectual fluent in both Dutch and English. He has the power to direct Willem's studies of Java, shaping his understanding of Javanese leadership system (*pangreh praja*), local politics, the Diponegoro War, and the practice of bronjong. Willem's report to the University of Edinburgh is even formulated following a framework prepared by Waryono. After Willem's description of bronjong is published in the London Times, the British Government prohibits its practice in Java. Waryono thus plays an integral role, shaping not only Western knowledge of bronjong but also British practical politics (i.e. the prohibition of the practice). His command of the "formal" language of power, the language of the colonial government, enabled him to directly influence their knowledge and to indirectly determine their political

policies.

In the novel *Lolong Anjing di Bulan*, meanwhile, the use of language as capital is not as complex. Nazir, the novel's main character, is depicted as speaking Indonesian fluently. As such, he is able to better communicate with the Indonesian military than his fellow villagers; when captured and interrogated, he is even able to use his fluency to ensure his safety.

Dominance and Hegemony

Dominance and hegemony, dominator and dominated, are clearly depicted in the novel *Lolong Anjing di Bulan*. After Aceh is designated a Military Operations Area by the Indonesian government, the Indonesian military acts (as political society) uses violence to coerce the people of Alue Rambe (as civil society). This violence is not only physical, but also psychological and verbal.

In one incident, the civil society of Alue Rambe—young and old, male and female—are forcibly gathered in a field and held from morning to night. Several of the men are beaten and tortured in front of their wives and children. Meanwhile, soldiers raid the villagers' empty homes and steal their jewelry, money, and rice. Ironically, however, this occurs as the Commander is proclaiming his kindness and mercy: Follow the laws, and don't resist us. We soldiers defend the country; why do we get your enmity? We are good people. We don't like violence. We don't like to hit. Why, we don't even hurt animals" (Nur, 2018: 84).

Elsewhere in the novel, villagers are described as being held at military posts, where they are ridiculed, insulted, shamed, and threatened by the Indonesian troops (Nur, 2018: 97). Even when they install lights in front of their homes and in the streets to help the military, they are detained and accused of being GAM sympathizers. They are subject to significant verbal violence, as seen in the line, "Out, all of you! Swine!" (Nur, 2018: 101).

The violence practiced by the Indonesian military is presented symbolically in Chapter 14, which is titled "Kemanusiaan dan Kesetiaan Anjing" (Humanity and Canine Loyalty). In this chapter, Dahli (Nazir's father) is captured by the military and killed brutally.

"Father's body was only found thanks to his beloved pet dog, Nono. Father's body had been caught on a piece of driftwood in the river. Seven bullets had torn through his body, and his brown shirt and black cotton pants were ripped and torn. However, there wasn't even the slightest hint of blood. All of his blood had drained from his body through the torn flesh of his thighs and the holes in his thighs and back. His face was torn, his cheeks were bloated, and his nose broken, but all remained unsmearred by the blood that had been carried away by the river's flowing brown waters

For the soldiers, dead rebels were dirty, dangerous, and undeserving of a proper burial" (Nur, 2018: 175–176).

Through its title and content, Chapter 14 of *Lolong Anjing di Bulan* may be interpreted as depicting the Indonesian soldiers as lower than even dogs, which the Acehnese consider haram and inherently impure.

When military operations begin, Nazir is willing to accept their dominance. "I had never the Indonesian government, never intended to oppose the army, never wanted to rebel. I hadn't cared whether the Acehnese people were free of subjugation" (Nur, 2018: 182). Such an attitude reflects an implicit agreement

between the dominated and dominant, signifying that the Indonesian government had achieved at least partial hegemony over the people of Aceh.

Over time, Nazir changes, being driven by the repressive actions of the Indonesian government to challenge its hegemony (and even its dominance). As Nazir narrates, "I hated those vile people who had killed Father, and who had killed thousands of other guiltless men, who had raped [my sister] Baiti, and who had raped hundreds of other innocent women" (Nur, 2018: 182).

Indonesia's dominance over Aceh began under President Suharto and continued even after the fall of his regime. Legally, this dominance ended with the signing of the Cessation of Hostilities Framework Agreement Between Government of the Republic of Indonesia and the Free Aceh Movement on December 9, 2002, in Switzerland (Nur, 2018:334). Afterwards, Indonesia's hegemony in Aceh was reduced. Political and civil society did not share the same ideology, and civilians were unwilling to become involved in political life.

Unlike in Lolong Anjing Di Bulan, the power relations depicted in Dasamuka are highly complex. Hegemony is minimal, and resistance is apparent. Responding to a new taxation policy, implemented by the Sultanate of Yogyakarta upon the instruction of the Dutch Governor General, Raden Rangga—the Regent of Madiun—rebels against the Sultanate and the colonial regime (Setiono, 2017: 20). Members of civil society, such as Ki Sena and Den Waryono, perceive Raden Rangga as heroically fighting to ensure that their interests are accommodated by the Palace. By transforming particular economic interests into collective ones, Raden Rangga is therefore capable of achieving total hegemony over civil society and gaining their support for his fight against the Palace and the Colonial regime.

At the same time, members of the Yogyakarta Royal Family (represented by Patih Natadiningrat) know and even approve of this rebellion. Such an attitude is understandable, as the Palace has limited power vis-à-vis the Dutch colonial government. "The Dutch Resident was no longer required to remove his hat to honor the Sultan. Rather, the Sultan was required to rise from his throne upon the Resident's entry to the Palace and to have welcome him to sit upon a chair located beside his throne" (Setiono, 2017: 20). Before the Dutch, the Sultanate of Yogyakarta therefore lacked the power to create hegemony.

To deal with the Sunanate of Surakarta, Raden Rangga sends a letter to the Sunan and to the other regents, urging them to recognize him as king (Setiono, 2017: 23). Having already gained the support of the common people by promoting an economic vision, he uses this approach to ensure the formal recognition of his power. Although Raden Rangga's rebellion is ultimately unsuccessful, his hegemony over the common people endures. This can be seen, for instance, in Ki Sena's description of his death: "[Rangga] met his fate while defending his dignity and his honor as a man, not as cattle, not as a Dutch whipping boy. He is worthy of remembrance, of being commemorated by the Javanese for years after his death." (Setiono, 2017: 24). A similar view is maintained by Patih Natadiningrat, whom the Dutch replace with the pliant Patih Danurejo as advisor to Sultan Hamengkubuwana II.

Java's power structures are transformed after the British replace the Dutch as the colonial overlords of Indonesia, including Yogyakarta and Surakarta. Willem, as a British scholar, describes the situation as follows:

The Javanese Palaces were no more, their valuables having already been seized by General Robert Gillespie and his troops on June 21, 1812... I can detail the fall of these palaces because I also partook in Gillespie's raids, as blessed by Governor General Raffles....

These palaces were attacked as they always are. If there is no significant opposition, the shouts of the victorious are always followed by the cries of the defeated. ...

The cruel joy of the soldiers, bearing the fruits of their raids, acting in a manner ill-suited to their claims of advanced civilization.

If such raids are not opposed, are they always followed by rape? (Setiono, 2017: 51–53).

Through his description of the fall of the Javanese Palaces, Willem insinuates that colonialism is the same around the globe. English colonialism is no better than Dutch colonialism, as both achieve dominance through bloodshed, seize the wealth of those they conquer, and practice rape. They remain motivated primarily by what Marxism identifies as the basic structure, by their own economic interests.

Complex power relations are also evidenced in Dasamuka through the division of power between the Dutch colonial government and the Javanese nobility. Although both assert dominance over the Javanese people, they are not equals.

"Years of Dutch colonial rule had resulted in the true kings, those who cared for the welfare of their people, being replaced by puppet kings who only enriched the Dutch... If a king refused to do so, he would be pushed aside by the Dutch. Sultan Hamengkubuwana II was exiled to Penang Island on June 28, 1812... So great was the power of the colonials that they could easily seize power from the Javan kings, play them as pawns in a global game of chess (Setiono, 2017: 50).

The Javanese nobility and the Dutch colonial government both exerted dominance over the Javanese people. The nobility, in turn, were under the hegemony of the Dutch. They were compelled to follow Dutch policy, as described below: "The Javanese, especially the nobility, feared hard work. It was useless to involve them in the advancement of world civilization The Javanese were in dire straits, their minds preoccupied with matters of wisma, curiga, kukila, turangga, and wanita, with their homes, krisses, birds, horses, and women. They weren't ready to understand matters of nation and state" (Setiono, 2017: 51).

Hegemonized by Dutch/British colonial rule, Java's kings act repressively towards their own people. This is exemplified by Sultan Hamengkubuwana IV, who prioritizes his own pleasure over the needs and interests of the people. For example: (1) The Sultan travels in a carriage that is drawn by Persian horses and escorted by an honor guard. However, he cares little for the safety of his escorts, and many have died under the hooves of his horses or the wheels of his carriage. Such a dire fate has also befallen several of his subjects. (2) The Sultan's mother, Gusti Ratu Kencono, ensures that beautiful women are made available to the Sultan to fulfil his libidinal urges. Many of these women feel tortured, not desiring his advances but being unable to refuse them. (3) The Sultan frequently travels to Karangbolong, finding mirth in the deaths of those who fall to their deaths while collecting swallow nests.

The power struggles continue even after the death of Sultan Hamengkubuwana IV. Fearing what would happen if Prince Diponegoro II were made sultan, Gusti Ratu Kencana manipulates the court to ensure that her three-year-old grandson is made Sultan Hamengkubuwana V. with palace policy being set by herself and Patih Danurejo. These maneuvers are backed by the Dutch Resident, Baron de Salis. Consequently:

The sultanate fell into chaos after the death of Sultan Hamengkubuwana IV, and fell further into chaos after Smissaert's appointment as Resident of Yogyakarta on February 10, 1823. Resident Smissaert, Patih Danurejo, and a colonel named Wiraguna consolidated their power. They considered Puri Tegalrejo (Diponegoro II and his allies) their greatest threat....

Taxes became increasingly illogical. There were taxes for having too many doors, for mothers bringing their children to market, and more. These new taxes widened the gap between the Palace and the people (Setiono, 2017: 275).

In Lolong Anjing di Bulan, the power relations between the dominant and dominated are clear. Political society, as represented by the Indonesian military, exerts its dominance by coercing the civil society of Alue Rambe, Aceh. Its hegemony, however, is minimal; although Nazir initially chooses to focus on his agricultural activities and avoid conflict, the wanton cruelty of political society drives him to join GAM and challenge the dominance of the Indonesian government.

Meanwhile, in Dasamuka, the question of dominant and dominated is a complex one. Even as the Dutch colonial government exerts partial hegemony over the Sultans of Java, the colonial regime and the Javanese nobility use taxation to assert their dominance over civil society, which responds with resistance and rebellion. Similarly, the British exert dominance over the Javanese nobility shortly after their arrival, then use this dominance to create hegemony and advance their economic interests. Even as the Javanese nobility benefit from this arrangement, profiting significantly from the rental of their lands to the English and the Dutch, the common people are reduced to laborers and farmhands.

Agents of Change: Countering Dominance and Hegemony

Both of these novels depict an organic intelligentsia that is opposed to the practices of dominance and hegemony. Such individuals thus become agents of change. In Dasamuka, the main agents of change are Raden Ranga, Ki Sena, Den Waryono, and Prince Diponegoro II. Rejecting the new taxation policy, implemented by the Sultanate of Yogyakarta upon the instruction of the Dutch Governor General, Raden Ranga—the Regent of Madiun—rebels against the Sultanate and the colonial regime (Setiono, 2017: 20). He thereby becomes a political actor, one capable of challenging the political structure that solely advantages the Sultanate and the colonial regime.

Ki Sena, meanwhile, begins Dasamuka as part of civil society, but over the course of the novel he becomes a political actor by allying with Raden Ranga. He is driven by two motivations: his displeasure with Governor-General Daendels decision to implement new taxes (Setiono, 2017: 20), and his personal vendetta against the political elites. Ki Sena is described as having been born in Bagelan, an area west of the palace whose residents are frequently derided for their less refined language and behavior (Setiono, 2017: 20–21). Despite being a simple farmer, Ki Sena is an intelligent man, one with a deep knowledge of history, strategy, and mindfulness. He is so exceptional that he is allowed to marry Den Rara Ningsih, a woman of noble birth, after answering a series of questions about Prince Diponegoro and winning a fight against Den Mas Mangli (Rara Ningsih's brother). However, even after marriage Ki Sena continues to be mocked for his low birth, and thus he feels most at home amongst the rebels (Setiono, 2017: 22). Ki Sena may thus be said to use his organic intelligence to counter hegemony and dominance.

The third agent of change in Dasamuka is Den Waryana, Willem's teacher.

By choosing what Willem learns, and how he learns it, Den Waryana is able to indirectly shape the world's knowledge of Java. Den Waryana is a man of great intellect, being not only fluent in English and Dutch but also well-versed in the political intrigues of the Javanese nobility. However, Willem knows little about Den Waryana's personal life; his past and family are not discussed. Indeed, only towards the end of the novel is Den Waryana's importance in Prince Diponegoro II's campaign revealed. Recognizing that the British seek an alliance with the prince, Den Waryana writes to Willem, "according to Diponegoro II, this war is a holy one, intended to ensure the rule of religion in Java. His campaign is supported by most of the religious scholars living in the Yogyakarta Sultanate and the Surakarta Sunanate. As such, he does not require the support of the British" (Sutiono, 208: 286).

Meanwhile, in Lolong Anjing di Bulan, the dominance and hegemony of the Indonesian government is resisted by Arkam. Through his actions, attitudes, and behaviors, he is able to influence the people of Alue Rambe (in the mountains of North Aceh) and their acceptance of Indonesian policies. Through his speech and actions after returning to Aceh from Malaysia and Libya, Arkam is able to mobilize the village youth and convince them to defend their religion and land by joining GAM. Borrowing from Gramsci, Arkam is an organic intellectual, one whose knowledge enables him to convince others to oppose Indonesian hegemony and dominance. His position as the commander of the local sagoe (GAM unit), a group of forty youths, enables him to act as a political actor.

Another organic intellectual in Lolong Anjing di Bulan is its main character, Nazir (Arkam's nephew). At the beginning of the novel, which is set in July 1989, Nazir is depicted as paying little heed to Arkham's lectures and struggles. He focuses instead on his studies and on helping his father, Dahli, with his agricultural activities. He views Dahli as a good father, from whom he learns how to work the land. They, as with many of their peers, simply accept the hegemony of the Indonesian military.

Similarly, Nazir does not oppose the Indonesian military when soldiers enter his village. "I knew that they were looking, hunting, for those involved in the rebellion, people like Arkam and his followers" (Nur, 2018: 9). He also sees the operations of Mobile Corp, an American oil company with massive refineries and pipes spread along the Acehnese coast. Drawing on his knowledge as a junior high school student, he attempts to understand the connection between Arkam's fight, American gas operations, and Indonesia's military activities in Aceh:

"They said that Hasan Tirta's rebellion traced its roots to the construction of these enormous refineries, which had begun as early as 1976. As Arkam claimed in one of his speeches, almost all of Aceh's natural wealth had been carried to Jakarta, without anything being sent back. The government continued to drain Aceh's natural wealth, treating Aceh as nothing more than a cash cow. The people of Aceh lived in destitution amidst a cornucopia of natural resources. Even though the Arun gas field was the world's largest producer of gas, the people of Aceh could only stand by as it was drained" (Nur, 2018: 10).

The only local youth with a senior high school education, Nazir possesses a literacy and fluency that enables him to communicate with the Indonesian soldiers. It may thus be concluded that Nazir, a young man of considerable intelligence, initially accepts Indonesian dominance and hegemony without protest.

However, Nazir and his brother-in-law Muha begin opposing Indonesian hegemony after Nazir's father Dahli is brutally killed by Indonesian soldiers. Their

opposition becomes stronger after Nazir's sister, Baiti, and beloved Zulaiha are raped by Indonesian soldiers. With their domestic lives having been destroyed by the Indonesian military, the young men are driven by their hatred, anger, and desire for vengeance to join GAM and fight against Indonesia's dominance (Nur, 2018: 307).

From this discussion, it is evident that the primary agents of change in these novels are intellectuals. Although the majority of these agents (Nazir, KI Sena, and Waryono) are members of civil society who later enter political society, some (Arkam and Raden Rangga) begin their journey within political society. Through their struggles, they challenge hegemony and oppose dominance.

Conclusion

Power relations are clearly depicted in Junaedi Setiono's *Dasamuka* (2017) and Arafat Nur's *Lolong Anjing di Bulan* (Dogs Howling at the Moon, 2018). This topic has been fruitfully examined using the theories of Fairclough, Bourdieu, and Gramsci, which are rooted in understandings of language as capital, dominance and hegemony, and opposition to outside dominance.

Power relations are clearly depicted in *Lolong Anjing di Bulan*. Dominance is practiced by political society, as represented by the Indonesian military, and maintained through coercion. Initially, there is minimal hegemony, with Nazir (as a member of civil society) avoiding conflict and focusing on his agricultural activities. However, over time the wanton cruelty of political society leads him to challenge this dominance by joining GAM.

In *Dasamuka*, meanwhile, power relations are highly complex. The Dutch exert partial hegemony over the Sultans of Java, and both use taxation to assert their dominance over civil society. Facing such subjugation, the regents and common people of Java respond with rebellion. Similarly, the British exert dominance over the Javanese nobility shortly after their arrival, then use this dominance to create hegemony and advance their economic interests. Even as the Javanese nobility benefit from this arrangement, profiting significantly from the rental of their lands to the English and the Dutch, the common people are reduced to laborers and farmhands.

Opposition to such dominance is undertaken predominantly by intellectuals. Although the majority of these intellectuals are members of civil society who later enter political society, some begin their journey within political society. No matter their origin, they consolidate the public to challenge hegemony and oppose dominance.

Power relations are shaped by language, dominance, hegemony, and counter-dominance, all of which serve to advance specific economic interests—what Marxism identifies as the basic structure. In the novels discussed, these interests include: (1) natural gas exploration in Aceh, with profits taken by the Indonesian and American governments; (2) taxation, collected by Javanese nobility and the colonial governments, (3) land rent, resulting in the Javanese nobility becoming economically dependent on the colonial regime and reducing the common people to mere laborers. In all cases, profits are enjoyed by those in power.

References

- Adian, D.G. (2011). *Setelah marxisme: Sejumlah teori kontemporer*. Depok: Koekoesan.
- Adji, S.E.P. (2019). Relasi kekuasaan dalam novel *Lolong Anjing di Bulan* karya Arafat Nur. *Jurnal Ilmiah Kebudayaan Sintesis*, 13(1), 19-25.

- Ajidarma, S.G. (1997). *Ketika jurnalisme dibungkam, sastra harus bicara*. Yogyakarta: Bentang Budaya.
- Baryadi, I. P. (2012). *Bahasa, kekuasaan, dan kekerasan*. Yogyakarta: USD Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1991). *Language and symbolic power*. Cambridge: Blackwell.
- Dewi, N. (2019). Kemanusiaan dan kesetiaan anjing. *Kompas*, 19.
- Fairclough, N. (1989). *Language and power*. New York: Longman Group.
- Faizah, U. (2015). Kajian sosiologi sastra dan nilai pendidikan karakter novel Dasamuka karya Junaedi Setiyono. Paper presented at the National Seminar on Literature, Character Building, and Creative Industries, Surakarta.
- Gramsci, A. (2013). *Prison notebooks: Catatan-catatan dari penjara (trans. Teguh Wahyu Utomo)*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
- Haryatmoko. (2016). *Membongkar rezim kepastian: Pemikiran kritis post-strukturalis*. Yogyakarta: Kanisius.
- Hidayati, F, Suwandi. S., & Slamet, St. Y. (2018). Kepribadian tokoh Willem dalam novel Dasamuka karya Junaedi Setiyono. *Jurnal Lingua Didaktika*, 2(2), 140–153.
- Misbakhmunir, M., Kadaryati, K., & Bagiya, B. (2017). analisis strukturalisme genetik novel dasamuka karya Junaedi Setiyono dan rencana pembelajarannya di kelas XI SMA. *Surya Bahtera*, 5(48).
- Muniroh, Z. (2015.). Romance formula pada novel Dasamuka karya Junaedi Setiyono. *Jurnal Bahtera-Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Sastra dan Budaya*, 2(4).
- Nur, A. (2018). *Lolong anjing di bulan*. Yogyakarta: USD Press.
- Patria, N., & Arief, A. (2015). *Antonio Gramsci, negara, dan hegemoni*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
- Ratna, N.K. (2004). *Teori, metode, dan teknik penelitian sastra dari strukturalisme hingga postruktural*. Jakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
- Rampan, K. L. (2000). *Angkatan 2000 dalam sastra Indonesia*. Jakarta: Grasindo.
- Rosidi, A. (1986). *Ikhtiar sejarah sastra Indonesia*. Bandung: Binacipta.
- Setiono, J. 2017. *Dasamuka*. Yogyakarta: Ombak.
- Suroso. (2015). Sastra dan Kekuasaan di Era Orde Baru. Paper presented at the National Seminar on Language, Literature, and Power, Faculty of Language and Arts, State University of Yogyakarta.
- Suwardi, E. (2011). *Metodologi penelitian sastra: Epistemologi, model, teori, dan aplikasinya*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Widayatama.
- Taum, Y.Y. (2015). *Sastra dan politik*. Yogyakarta: USD Press.
- Taum, Y. Y. (2017). Kritik Sastra Diskursif: Sebuah Reposisi. In *Makalah disampaikan dalam Seminar Nasional Kritik Sastra yang diselenggarakan Badan Pengembangan dan Pembinaan Bahasa Kemendikbud, Jakarta* (pp. 15-16).
- Teeuw, A. (1980). *Sastra baru Indonesia I*. Ende: Nusa Indah.
- Teeuw, A. (1989). *Sastra Indonesia modern II*. Jakarta: Pustaka Jaya.
- Wiyatmi. (2018). *Novel Indonesia periode 2000-an*. Yogyakarta: Ombak.
- Zahro, L.H. (2018). Konflik dan konsensus dalam konstelasi politik keraton Yogyakarta (Kajian Sosiologi Sastra Novel Dasamuka Karya Junaedi Setiyono). Thesis. Department of Indonesian Language and Literature Education, Post-Graduate Program, Muhammadiyah University of Malang.