

Conference Paper

Representation of Locality in Osing Literature in the Novel *Agul-agul Blambangan*: A Description of Patriotism in *Osing Society*

M. Sunarti and Asrumi

Faculty of Humanities, University of Jember, Jember, East Java, Indonesia

Abstract

Agul-Agul Blambangan by Moch Syaiful is a historical novel that describes the struggle against and attack on the Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie (VOC). This research's aims are to describe (1) intrinsic elements, (2) the way, instrument, and strategy of war, and (3) values of patriotism. The data was collected through the observation method with the technique of record, and analysis was conducted using the interpretation method. The results indicate that: (1) Intrinsically, the literature's theme is the struggle against the Dutch due to oppression and blackmail. The main characters, *Agung Wilis* and *Mas Rempeg*, are simple and popular; conflicts occur between *Blambangan* warriors and the Dutch colonists and fellow conflicts; the setting is in *Blambangan* and royal villages; (2) To be a soldier, one is required to have strength and knowledge; be ready to support the motherland using spears, heirlooms, and arrows as weapons with a distinctive strategy; and (3) Patriotic values include the value of the fighter, the colonial mark, the seizure of the fort, and the nature of a soldier.

Corresponding Author:

M. Sunarti
 sunarti.mustamar@yahoo.com

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1. Introduction

Agul-Agul Blambangan is a historical novel written by Moch Syaiful, semiotically studied, i.e. the description of its meaning, e.g, but with different objects of study and content. As a piece of fiction, this novel contains information about the struggle of the Blambangan people against colonizers, i.e. the Dutch [1-3]. The Blambangan people were strongly opposed to being oppressed. Blambangan was a kingdom that comprised several smaller kingdoms. Therefore the Dutch, who wanted to dominate the territory for crops, were the Blambangan people's most unwanted. There were also several other foreign societies in Blambangan who did not intend to take control, such as the English who sought crops; the Chinese who usually sold drugs, jewelry, and groceries; and the Mandar people who liked to sell oil and clothes. Everyone lived

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peacefully together with the Blambangan people except the Dutch, who used various ways to put the Blambangan people into conflict. Blambangan's public figures had tried every way to drive out the Dutch. In the struggle, it is revealed that the main characters of the novel risked their life for the sake of the Blambangan motherland. The issues are: (1) which public figures have a patriotic heart in the struggle against the Dutch or *Kumpeni Landa* (the Dutch's ally); (2) what their weapons and strategies are to attack the Dutch; and (3) what their struggle's embedded values are.

The novel *Agul-Agul Blambangan* comprises 11 chapters, namely: (1) *Kendhali Putih*; (2) *Ksatria Agung Blambangan*; (3) *Ksatrian Lemahbang*; (4) *Utusan Agung*; (5) *Ulupampang*; (6) *Selamatan Agung*; (7) *Laskar Pamungkas*; (8) *Medhot Dalam Wijenan*; (9) *Ontran-Ontran Blambangan*; (10) *Mendhung Peteng Ring Kutha Lateng*; and (11) *Gumuk Badrang Tegal Perangan*. All of these chapters describe how the figures as descendants of Blambangan kings struggled against the Dutch.

The historical novel begins with the Blambangan kingdom with fertile ground, people living in peace and mutual cooperation with no conflicts, led by a popular king named Danurejo, grandson of the King of Tawang Alun's descendants. Agung Wilis is Danurejo's son with the Mengwi Bali kingdom's concubine. Together with Ki Uthun the Kendali Putih's stableman, Agung Wilis struggled against the Dutch in the Banyualit area. Other characters were also on the battlefield, such as Rangga Satoto, Agung Wilis's uncle from Bali who was appointed as King Danuningrat's *senopati*. In this matter, one of Tawang Alun's descendants named Tapasana was jealous of Rangga Satata and Agung Wilis. In the battle, conflict between Tapasana and Agung Wilis and Rangga Satata flourished until a slander was told to King Danuningrat, saying that Agung Wilis and his uncle would seize the kingdom from Danuningrat. This slander resulted in Rangga Satata being executed in Pagetasan. Agung Wilis knew about this when he visited his relatives in Bali. At that moment, the Dutch took over Banyualit.

2. Methods

This study uses structural study theory and semiotics. Structural theory means the study of forms or structures. In this respect, it is used to analyze the intrinsic elements of the novel. Semiotic theory or the study of the meaning of signs is used to find meanings or patriotic values expressed in the novel *Agul-Agul Blambangan*.

2.1. Structural theory

Etymologically, the word *struktural* originates from *structural*, which in Latin means "form" or "building." The origin of the concept of structuralism can be traced to *Poetika Aristoteles* (Poetics of Aristoteles), especially the tragedies. It says that in composing a literary work, we need to deal with a plot that must have the characteristics of unity, entirety, completeness, and occurrence [4]. In literature, the theory of structuralism developed from formalism, in which the results achieved through formalism were mostly continued in structuralism. This means that on the one hand, formalism was involved in establishing structuralism, and on the other hand, structuralism was established as the basis of formalist pioneers' experiences. This means that formalism's deficiencies were revisited in structuralism.

In literary works, there are four approaches: mimetic, pragmatic, expressive, and objective. Structuralism theory belongs to the objective approach, which reveals literary works as standalone entities, autonomous and separated from the surrounding environment, the readers, and the writer him/herself. A structural analysis of the novel *Agul-Agul Blambangan* is discussed through the intrinsic elements, including: theme, characters, conflict, and setting [5].

First, the theme is the meaning of a story or the key ideas or key purposes. The key story is the main purpose of the story. If the story development is subject to the key story, in this analysis this theme aims to allow readers to capture the key story [6]. Themes divide into major themes (ones that become the key ideas of a literary work) and minor themes (ones that support the major theme). Second, a character is an imaginary individual who experiences events in a story. Additionally, characters are the ones, the subjects, who drive events in the story supported by a certain nature or traits. Traits are the qualities of a character, which include logical and mental qualities that distinguish one character with another. Based on their role, characters in a story are divided into main characters (ones with important roles) and supporting characters (ones who support the main character). Third, conflict is a contradiction, which in literature means something dramatic, in which two powers are involved in a balanced fight with action and reaction. Conflict is divided into physical and mental conflict. Conflict classified into five types [7], namely (1) human and human; (2) human and society; (3) human and nature; (4) one idea and another; (5) someone and his/her inner voice. Fourth, setting is a place where events happen in a story of the character. Setting of conventional story should be clearly depicted, except for symbolic or absurd literature. In absurd literature, elements are often randomized, including the blurred

setting. Setting categorized based on its function into five types [8], namely (1) the place of the event; (2) life environment; (3) life system based on the character’s life environment; (4) tools or stuff of life; and (5) time of the event.

2.2. Semiotics theory

The word *semiotics* originates from *semion* (Greek), which means “sign.” Piliang thought that semiotics theory can be used as a method in various disciplines due to the great tendency to see various social discourses as linguistic phenomena. In other words, language becomes a model in many social discourses. According to semiotics, if all social practices can be considered linguistic phenomena, all of them can be seen as signs. This is possible due to the broad meaning of sign itself [2].

Two semiotic figures according to Berger are Ferdinand de Saussure (1857–1913), a linguistic figure who said that the knowledge he developed was European semiology, and Charles Sanders Peirce (1839–1914), a philosophy and logic expert from the United States. Both developed the study of semiotics separately and they did not know each other [9].

Semiology, according to Saussure, is based on the assumption that as long as a human’s attitude and behavior have meaning or function as a sign, there is a system of difference based on social convention. Peirce stated that human logic is always conducted through signs. This means that logic is similar to semiotics and semiotics can be applied to all signs [9]. The theory of meaning according to Ferdinand de Saussure in regard to signs like Figure 1. Figure 1 means that the significant (t-a-b-l-e) that means “table as a facility to study” and its real form do not have direct connection.

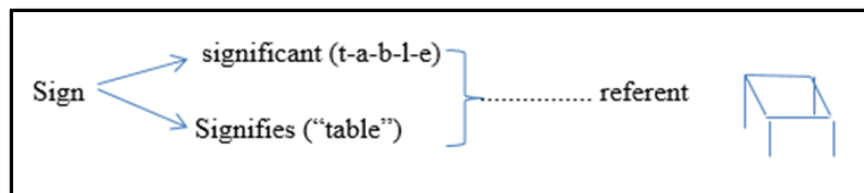


Figure 1: Theory of meaning.

Semiotics is a study of signs, functions as signs, and produce meaning. Signs are something that someone else sees as another thing. Something that can be observed or made observed is called a sign. In this respect, it is not limited to an object, but also an event and other forms [10]. Peirce suggested that the semantic triangle theory includes *sign*, *object*, and *interpretant* as in Figure 2.

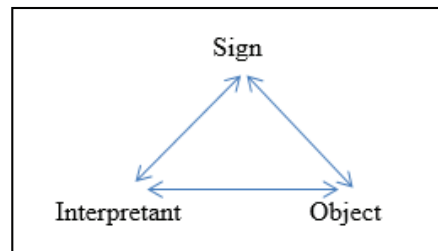


Figure 2: Semantic triangle theory.

A sign in semiotics according to Peirce is something with physical form that can be captured by human senses and something that refers to or represents other things. A sign is something that comprises symbols agreed by society. An object or referent (icon and index) is a social context that becomes a reference for a sign [11]. An interpretant or sign user is a concept of thinking of a person who uses the sign or meaning of the object referred to. The important thing in semiotics is about the meaning that appears from a sign when someone uses the sign to communicate.

2.3. Patriotism

Patriotism as a social phenomenon can take place in the soul of society, e.g. Russian society [12]. Patriotism or soul patriot can be implanted in children through fictional literature, including comics [13]. Hence, patriotism means “a tenet of war soul.” In other words, it is someone or some people who have the war soul with all their shortcomings as well as their social and educational background. In this case, the soul specifically refers to that depicted in the story of *Agul-Agul Blambangan*. The war soul can be represented in interpersonal physical form, the spirit expressed in their speech, support for war, war equipment, strategies, and symbols used to support the strugglers.

2.4. Method of the study

The method used to collect data was observation on the story text of Moch Syaiful's *Agul-Agul Blambangan*. The descriptive qualitative approach was used on the intrinsic elements and the values of patriotism in the characters. The data was then classified and analyzed using the interpretation method.

3. Results

Based on the writer's observation on *Agul-Agul Blambangan* (hereinafter referred to as AAB), and based on the intrinsic elements of theme, characters and traits, conflict, and setting, the results are as follows.

3.1. Intrinsic structure of aab novel

3.1.1. Theme

The theme of AAB is the war of Blambangan soldiers against the Dutch colonizers, which includes the following: Kendhali Putih horse as Agung Wilis's ride; Agung Wilis and Senopati Rangga Satata as strugglers supporting the King of Blambangan Danuningrat; the place of soldiers in Blambangan fortress; Agung Wilis comes back from Bali after convincing *bekel* to fight the Dutch; one of the small towns in Blambangan is nationally popular with prosperous people living happily together with other nationalities; Mas Rempeg is seen as the bead of Agung Wilis to fight the Dutch as *Agul-Agul Blambangan*; the war strategies against the colonizers; war against the Dutch in Banyualit, Singolatreng; Politics of Ripping Apart by the Dutch; and the Dutch turning Blambangan soldiers into a mess.

3.1.2. Characters and traits

The main characters in AAB are Agung Wilis and Mas Rampeg. The supporting characters include: Ki Uthun, Pungkas, Rangga Satoto, Tapasana, Mas Ayu Wiwit, Ki Bomo, Ki Baluran, Ki Singotaruno, dan Lembu Akas, Rempeg, Ki sumur Gumilang, and Kemuning. As a soldier, Agung Wilis has the following traits: leader of the army, responsible, firm, likes to seek knowledge in places located beyond the reach of humans through meditation. This is suggested by the following excerpt.

"Kacang mestine sing bakal ninggalaken lanjarane, Prabu Tawangalun embah buyute Pangeran Wilis bengen uripe gedigu. Dhemen urip madhep nyang hang kuawa, ring panggonan hang sepi lan sing tahu diambah manungso.... Wilis dadi wong kajan ring sak tlatah bumi Blambangan, didhemeni rakyat mergo andhap asor ring lakune lan diwedeni musuh mergo kesakteane" [14].

This means: "Nuts should not leave its skin, so that's how Prabu Tawang Alun of Prince Wilis's grandson lived then. It was peaceful to live by looking up to the God

Almighty, in a quiet place and unknown to people... Wilis became a respected person in Blambangan land, people liked him for his kindness and he was feared for his powers." The main character Mas Rempeg is considered the bead of Wilis for the many traits they have in common.

3.1.3. Conflict

In the novel, there is a conflict between the main character and his followers and the Dutch, as well as a conflict between the supporting characters of Tapasana and Rangga Satata in the fight to take over the *senopati* of the Macan Putih kingdom while fighting against the Dutch. This can be seen from the following. The conflict with the colonizers can be seen in the following.

"Bapak labuh perang ring Banyualit ngusir Kumpeni hang arep nguasani Blambangan. Kumpeni Landa nggawa bedhil lan meriyem ngancuraken Benteng Banyualit. Laskar Agung Wilis ngalangi lakune Kumpeni Landa. Sulus Ampedan lan Ki Uthun ana ring ngarep nyungsum nyang pelore Kumpeni. Pelor nuju nyang laskar Wong Agung Wilis" [14]

The above paragraph means "Father led the war in Banyualit to drive out the Dutch who wanted to take over Blambangan. The Dutch carried weapons and cannons to destroy Banyualit fortress. Agung Wilis's army blocked the way. Sulus Ampedan and Ki Uthun were in the frontline to block the Dutch bullets. The bullets flew towards the army of Wong Agung Wilis."

Meanwhile, the conflict between Blambangan figures can be seen in the following.

"Bengen Agung Wilis ngelungguhaken pamane hang teka Bali, hang aran Tumenggung Rangga Setata. Tumenggung Rangga Setata mula uwong hang sakti lan duwe ilmu kanuragan lan ilmu perang hang linuwih. Mula iku Pangeran Wilis percaya nyang kepinterane Rangga Setata. Sakjerone Rangga Setata dadi Senapati ring Macan Putih, para prajurit Macan Putih bisa duwe ilmu kanuragan lan ilmu perang hang linuwih pisan, mergane Rangga Setata mesthi ajeg anggone ngelatih para prajurite. Sing luput uga Agung Wilis. Rangga Setata aju dadi senapati perang hang didhemeni prajurite. Wis sing keitung pira akehe peperangan hang bisa dimenangaken Rangga Setata lan Pangeran Wilis. Sampek-sampek Prabu Danuningrat saya dhemen nyang, senapatine iki.... Mas Tapasana, sepupu Prabu Danuningrat iri hang jenggi marang Rangga Satata, satemene Mas Tapasana kepingin dadi senapati Macan Putih...." [14].

This means: "Agung Wilis once assigned his uncle from Bali named Tumenggung Rangga Satata. Tumenggung Rangga Satata was a man with supernatural powers, *kanuragan* power, and advanced war insights. Therefore, Prince Wilis trusted Rangga Satata. During the leadership of Rangga Satata as *senopati* in Macan Putih, the soldiers gained *kanuragan* powers and advanced war insights also, since Rangga Satata trained them regularly. He often won wars with Agung Wilis. Prabu Danuningrat eventually fell for this *senopati*... Mas Tapasana, Prabu Danuningrat's cousin, envied Rangga Satata. Mas Tapasana wanted to be Macan Putih's *senopati*..."

3.1.4. Setting

The setting in AAB is generally located in Blambangan kingdom territory or Banyuwangi, East Java. The wars against the Dutch occurred in various locations: *Kebalen Blambangan* village, *Benteng Banyualit*, *Tanah Merah*, *Ulupangpang*, *Alas Malang*, *Wijeman*, *Singolatre*n, *Tegal Perangan*, *Benteng Lateng*, *Darwono*, and *Alas Bayu*. AAB was set in the year 1771.

3.2. War requirements, tools, and strategies against the dutch

Every Blambangan soldier was ready to fight for the motherland. The requirements to become a soldier are as follows: having *kanuragan* power and immunity power, being able to do *bintean*, being able to ride a horse, and not fearing facing the enemy. The tools used for the war were weapons, *pusaka*, *tumbak*, *jemparing*, pistols, cannons, and bombs.

Meanwhile, the war strategies of the Blambangan soldiers were making traps or mines in the form of deep holes with sharp weapons; making forts for defense and watching the enemy; parting the river water with *sasak*; blocking enemies from entering the forest; and consolidation with the subdistrict heads. The Dutch strategies were setting up conflicts, ripping apart, and slander trade.

3.3. Values of patriotism in aab characters

The patriotic values or spirits in AAB include strugglers' values such as widows of strugglers; signs of colonizers and signs of Dutch fighters; fort seizure with the Dutch; and noble traits. The values of strugglers and widows of strugglers can be seen in the following quote. "*Emak isun dadi randha. Randhane uwong hang berjuang ngelawan*

Kumpeni Landa... [14], which means: "My mom became a widow. The widows of strugglers died in the war against the Dutch..." The heroic soul of the Blambangan people was strong, as this quote indicates: "*Hei Kumpeni Landa, aja enak mangan enak turu ring bumi Blambangan, kesatriya sagah tanding...*" [14].

The signs of colonizers can be seen from the following quote. "*Bapak labuh perang ring Banyualit ngusir Kumpeni Landa hang arep nguasani Blambangan. Kumpeni Landa nggawa bedhil lan meriyem ngancuraken benteng Banyualit...*" [14]. This means that father fought in Banyualit to drive out the Dutch who wanted to dominate Blambangan. The Dutch carried fire guns and cannons, destroying Banyualit fortress.

The value of fort seizure for the Dutch can be seen in the following excerpt. "... *Laskare Agung Wilis mbedhah lawang kidul. Ambyak-ambyake laskare mlebu nang benteng. Uwong-uwong Landa benteng ceweng diuber-uberlaskare Agung Wilis ...*" [14]. This means that Agung Wilis's army opened the south gate. All of his army entered the fort. The Dutchmen were chased by Agung Wilis. Furthermore, the values of noble traits can be seen in the following quote. "... *Para kesatriya magih sagah abela pati njunjung bumi pertiwi, sagah tandhing adu pati totoan nyawa, surut sakwetara nyang Derwono aju mbangun kekuatan ring alas bayu kanggo jejege telatah Blambangan*" [14]. The excerpt means that those with a noble heart will not fear dying for the motherland, being able to fight and risk their life, kneeling to the God Almighty, let's build strength in Alas Bayu for Blambangan's victory.

4. Conclusion

The intrinsic elements in AAB include: the main theme of the struggle against the Dutch with several supporting themes. The main characters were Agung Wilis and Mas Rempeg as soldiers from the son of the king's concubine with their modesty and closeness to the society. The conflict was with the colonizers due to their oppression and extortion. The requirements for being Blambangan soldiers are: immunity and fearlessness in fighting against enemies with weapons such as *tumbak*, *kelewang*, *pusakan*, *jemparing*, pistols, cannons, and bombs. Simple strategies were used for the war. The patriotic values include a fighting spirit, signs of colonizers and Dutch fighters, seizure of Dutch forts, and noble traits.

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