

The Meaning of Opposing Element in the Drama “Aku Diponegoro”

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Abstract—This study aims to find the meaning of the opposing elements contained in the drama "Aku Diponegoro". This drama contains many elements that are opposed to each other giving birth to stresses. This research uses the theory used is semiotics version of Ferdinand de Saussure. In this context the opposing elements in the drama "Aku Diponegoro!" Are the formal aspects, while the meanings are the focus of this research. From the results of this study can be seen that the opposition characterisation Diponegoro with General De Kock means a different world. Diponegoro is honest, polite and religious, while De Kock likes to betray, is not ethical. The opposition between Diponegoro with Wet Kerto Pangalasan describes two quite different characters, namely unyielding Diponegoro and persistent in the struggle, while Pangalasan easily surrenders to the enemy. The opposition between Tegalrejo atmosphere with Mataram Palace depicts two contrasting atmospheres. Tegalrejo is full of the peaceful and religious atmosphere of the Mataram Palace during Hamengku Buwono II full of worldly oriented intrigue.

Keywords— drama, meaning, Diponegoro

I. INTRODUCTION

“Aku Diponegoro!” (I am Diponegoro!) a drama was written by Landung Simatupang [1]. “Aku Diponegoro!” (hereinafter abbreviated as AD) was written by Landung based on the history book that concerns Diponegoro’s opposition to the Dutch government written by Peter Carey entitled *Kuasa Ramalan* (the Power of Prediction) [2] and *Babad Diponegoro* (the Autobiographical Chronicle of Diponegoro) written by Diponegoro. The drama AD is quite interesting to analyze as it is one of a few Indonesian dramas written based on factual historical events that really happened.

After a thorough analysis, it is revealed that AD contains a great number of opposing or paradoxical elements, giving rise to interesting tension. For example, the opposing characters between Diponegoro and General De Kock, Diponegoro and Basah Kerto Pangalasan, and Ratu Ageng and Hamengku Buwono II. Moreover, the opposition is also found between the atmosphere in the village and that in the palace, and between the peaceful atmosphere and the atmosphere that is full of intrigue, all of which are interesting to study. Such opposition, in addition to making the story’s structure become dynamic, also has certain meanings. It contains signs that need further analysis.

II. METHODOLOGY

Based on the foregoing, the researcher will analyze signs connected with the opposing elements in the drama AD using the approach of theater semiotics. An expert in theater semiotics Keir Elam defines semiotics as a science specially designated for the study of the production of meanings in society [3]. Semiotics also relates to the processes of ‘significance’ (the process of attributing signs) and the processes of ‘communication’, i.e. a tool or medium where meanings are established and exchanged. According to Saussure, signs are an inseparable unity between the signifier and the signified [4]. The signifier is defined as the image of the sound, in the context of spoken language and culture, while the signified is defined as a concept or a meaning [5]. Hjemslev states that there are two layers of meaning in semiotics, namely the denotative meaning and the connotative meaning [6]. The connotative meaning is a semantic function that places the signifier-signified aspects as the second-order relation. These semiotic theories will be used to analyze the drama “Aku Diponegoro!”.

III. DISCUSSION

The paradox in the characterization between Diponegoro versus Basah Kerto Pangalasan. Unlike Basah Kerto Pangalasan, Diponegoro was a persistent, courageous fighter, who strongly upheld Islamic principles and had a high sense of nationalism, making him not easily surrender to the enemy. Actually, Basah Kerto Pangalasan was one of Diponegoro’s right-hand men to bridge communication between himself and the Dutch government. Unfortunately, it turns out that he was neither a persistent fighter nor a courageous man as he easily surrendered to the Dutch government [7]. His characters contrast with those of Diponegoro. Seen from the perspective of semiotics, the attitude of Basah Kerto Pangalasan represents a signifier of a fighter that is weak and does not have a high sense of nationalism (signified). Connotatively, a model of fighters that easily surrender to the enemy like Basah Kerto can be found in any Indonesian historical period. On the contrary, Diponegoro is a manifestation of a fighter who has no ulterior motives who regard national independence as a priority (signified).

The paradox in the characterization between Diponegoro versus De Kock can be seen from the characters of

Diponegoro who upheld the religious values of Islam, and was well-mannered and honest, which contrast with De who was a traitor and had no manners. Prior to negotiation between Diponegoro and De Kock at the Residence of the *Residen* of Magelang, both parties had agreed that the meeting would be undertaken in an amicable manner, especially as it was convened in Ramadan. Therefore, Diponegoro and his troops came without bringing any weapons at all. But, on the contrary, De Kock secretly prepared thousands of fully armed troops to detain Diponegoro and his followers. These imply that the characters and way of life of Diponegoro are quite paradoxical compared to those of De Kock.

Semiotically, De Kock's betrayal is a signifier which connotatively represents a manifestation of betrayal which the Dutch invaders often did to the Indonesian nation during the period of struggle later (the signified). For example, the Dutch government also broke the Linggarjati Agreement which Indonesia and the Dutch Government executed on March 25, 1947, which reads: 1. The Dutch Government shall acknowledge the rule of the Republic of Indonesia, which covers Java and Madura; 2. The Dutch Government shall leave from Indonesia on January 1, 1949; 3. Indonesia and the Dutch Government agreed to establish the Republic of the Unitary States of Indonesia (RUSI); 4. RUSI shall be put under control of the Dutch Commonwealth [8]. Nevertheless, the Dutch Government under the rule of Van Mook violated the agreement and on July 21, 1947, committed Aggression I against Indonesia.

Another paradox in the drama *AD* is the significant opposition between Ratu Ageng and Sultan Hamengkubuwono II. Ratu Ageng decided to accompany her great-grandson Diponegoro in the village of Tegalrejo who tried hard fighting against the Dutch Government. She loved the village of Tegalrejo, which is home to numerous students learning about Islam, and loved to stay close to commoners. As a pious female royal family member, Ratu Ageng enjoyed reading religious books and keeping the Javanese tradition alive. She chose to stay away from the Palace, which she found to orientate itself too greatly towards the worldly life, which was too boisterous and full of intrigue, not to mention Sultan Hamengkubuwono II whose lifestyle did not reflect the one prescribed by the teachings of Islam [9]. Sultan Hamengkubuwono II thought about worldly life only. It is definitely clear that the characters of Ratu Ageng and those of Sultan

Hamengkubuwono II are quite the opposite. Connotatively, action taken by Sultan can be interpreted as a leader who orientates himself towards the worldly life only, thereby distancing himself from his people and religious teachings. Conversely, Ratu Ageng is one of the leaders who attaches a lot of importance to the balance between public welfare and life after death. The paradox between Ratu Ageng and Sultan Hamengkubuwono II (signifier) is a manifestation of Indonesian leaders who in each era are often split into two groups, the first is comprised of those leaders who safeguard public interests while the latter is comprised of those leaders who care about their personal interests only, making them dare to get involved in the practices of corruption, breaking the law, and so on (signified).

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis above, it can be concluded that Diponegoro is a character that is quite strongly contradictory to the characters *De Kock*, *Patih Danurejo IV*, and *Basah Kerto Pengalasan*, thus semiotically producing differences in meaning that are quite noticeable. Diponegoro is the sign of the power to live for the future, while De Kock and others think about their short-term needs only. The paradox between Diponegoro, and De Kock and others connotatively represents a paradox that always occurs in the reign of every leader in this country. On the one hand, there are leaders who aim for national welfare and, on the other hand, there are also leaders who care only about their personal and group interests (signified). Those facts always remain until now.

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