

**REPRESENTATION OF INDONESIAN REVOLUTION IN POEM “RAPAT  
MENGGAN YANG 7 SETAN” BY H.R. BANDA HARO**

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**ABSTRACT**

This present study explores the representation of Indonesian Revolution in the poem “Rapat Mengganyang 7 Setan” written by H.R. Bandaharo. The meaning of the poem was revealed through the exploration of the reciprocal relationship between the speech delivered by President Soekarno and what was written by D.N. Aidit. The approach used was the qualitative one. The data were analyzed through parallel reading. The result of the study showed that the representation of the Indonesian Revolution through the themes and diction adopted from the expressions/slogans used during the revolution era. The reciprocal relationship between the poem “Rapat Mengganyang 7 Setan” and the speech delivered by President Soekarno and what was written by D.N. Aidit was based what is referred to as “Mukadimah Lekra” (Introduction to Lekra), “Konsepsi Kebudayaan Rakyat” (Conception of the People’s Culture), and “metode asas kombinasi 1-5-1” (Method of Combined Principle 1-5-1). Representation of the Indonesian Revolution in this literary work showed that literature was part of the political movement used to achieve what the Indonesian Revolution aimed at, namely, a community with justice and prosperity.

Keywords: representation, Indonesian Revolution, new historicism

## **1. Introduction**

The Indonesian Revolution was marked by the struggle among the ideologies of nationalist, religion (Islam), and communist (Nasakom) in the framework of controlling

the historical process. Such a struggle interfered with cultural and literary worlds in which it showed itself as a political movement. This was shown by the establishment of the cultural organization which affiliated with a particular political party (Violeta, 2012), such as *Lekra* which stands for ‘Lembaga Kebudayaan Rakyat’ (the Institution of the People’s Culture).

*Lekra* as the cultural front of the Indonesian Communist Party ‘Partai Komunis Indonesia (hereinafter referred to as PKI)’ was established by D.N. Aidit, M.S. Ashar, A.S. Dharta, and Njoto on 17<sup>th</sup> August 1950. Through the concept of the people’s art (Foulcher., 1986:50; Sastrowardoyo, 1989: 131; Rosidi, 1995:22) which was adhered to, this institution was intended to resist the colonial culture (Toer, 2003: 174) and to reject the concept that art was created for art and universal humanism as they were regarded as capitalist-bourgeois products (Teeuw, 1967: 136). It worked so effectively that it developed rapidly and was influential (Rosidi, 1995: 22).

In order to achieve what had been aimed at by the revolution through culture, PKI displayed banners that art for the people and revolution (Djunaedi, et al, 2014: 52), which CC PKI clarified as the attitude and official establishment of the party (Aidit, 1964c). Such attitude and establishment constituted the constellation of the Marxist ideology, social process, history, and political struggle in order to achieve socialism. From the beginning the *Lekra* literary works had been prepared as an important part of the Indonesian Revolution, as formulated in its Introduction (Mukadimah), the Conception of the People’s Culture, and the principle of the combined working method 1-5-1.

During the Indonesian Revolution era, the *Lekra* controlled the literary life and activities (Zaimar, 1990: 4). The poems and short stories collected in the anthology of *Gugur Merah, Sekumpulan Puisi Lekra Harian Rakyat 1950-1965* (Yuliantari and Dahlan eds, 2008a), *Matinya Seorang Petani* (Jajasan Pembaruan tt), and *Laporan dari Bawah, Sekumpulan Cerita Pendek Lekra Harian Rakyat 1950-1965* (Yuliantari and Dahlan eds, 2008b) proved what had been done by the *Lekra*. The anthology of the *Lekra*’s poems which were published after the Reformation (1998) contained 452 poems written by 111 poets. H.R. Bandaharo was one of the *Lekra* most important poets. Among his 15 poems, the poem “Rapat Mengganyang 7 Setan” most representatively contained the Indonesian Revolution. It could show the role played by literature in the revolution.

This is in line with what is stated by Karl Marx that culture is not an independent fact but it cannot be separated from the historical condition (in Selden and Widdowson, 1993: 71).

The Lekra literary words had only been discussed from the era when they were not written or from what is referred to as 'Manifesto Kebudayaan' (Cultural Manifesto), the political statement which was opposed to the Lekra. Such a condition should be made balanced by the exploration of its own historical process. Therefore, in this present study the theory of new historicism was chosen at it positions literature in the middle of its relationship with various institutions during a certain period (Culler, 1997: 130). This can be used to understand literary texts from when they are written by involving the non literary works which are not written in the era when the literary texts are written as the co-texts which are read in a parallel way. The theory of new historicism is the one which refers to historical facts as the source of meaning (Ryan, 2011: 218). The meaning of the poem "Rapat Mengganyang 7 Setan" was revealed by exploring the reciprocal relationship between it and one of the speeches delivered by President Soekarno in the book entitled "Dibawah Bendera Revolusi (1964), as the co-text.

## **2. Concepts**

### **2.1 Indonesian Revolution**

According to President Soekarno (1964: 409), the essence of a revolution is destructing every condition which is useless in order to establish and create a new condition. Every old condition was destructed in order to establish a new one (Soekarno, 1964: 527). Every useless condition was deconstructed in order to create and establish a new one. This led to various changes and turbulences (Soekarno, 1964: 401) as, basically, a revolution always led to the great changes followed by rapid growth (Soekarno, 1964:291, 299, 397, 562, 597). The great changes followed by rapid growth showed that a revolution was forward movement which would never stop before it reached its final objective (Soekarno, 1964: 399). A revolution refers to an attempt made to establish a new condition by deconstructing the old condition with a consequence that principle changes, rapid growth, and social turbulences will take place.

## **2.2 Representation**

According to Barker (2005: 10), representation is the social construction and presentation of the world. The world which is represented in a text is determined by social strengths (ideology, politics, economy, culture, religion, and societal values). Such social strengths also determine how a community defines the representation of the world. Therefore, representation is pragmatic, strategic, and politic in nature (Ratna, 2008: 86). Every representation of the world in a text is always controlled by various social interests. The concept of representation used in the present study states that the representation of social, political, and ideological representations in a literary work (a poem or short story) is controlled by the ideological and political strengths.

## **3. Research Method**

In the present study the qualitative approach was used to search for meaning (Geertz, 1996: 5). In addition, sociological and historical approaches were also used and the data were in the forms of literary works and non literary texts. The formal object of the present study is the representation of the Indonesian Revolution in the poem “Mengganyang 7 Setan” and its reciprocal relationship with the non literary texts. The material object included the speech delivered by President Soekarno, and what was written by D.N. Aidit.

The data were collected through library research, through several stages; they are (1) reading and observing every unit or title of the literary works thoroughly and intensively; (2) identifying the theme or the subject matter (the content) it contained; and (3) quoting data from the data sources, and (4) note taking and organizing the data in a file. The data were analyzed through parallel reading and using analytic descriptive method (Ratna, 2010: 336). Such a data analysis method was supported by the technique of content analysis.

## **3. Theoretical Framework**

The theory of new historicism considers that the literary history is part of the greater history of culture. A literary work is not the product of simple consciousness; it is a product of historical and cultural processes (Greenblatt, 1980: 3-6). Therefore, a literary work should be explored from the social and political contexts, and from the cultural history (Selden and Widdowson, 1993: 161).

The term *new historicism* was introduced by Stephen Greenblatt, an American critic (Greenblatt, 2005:18). He was influenced by Michel Foucault, Louis Althusser, who state that there is no objective truth in history (Selden and Widdowson, 1993: 163), and Clifford Geertz, who states that anthropologic text is a fiction. What is meant is that “everything which is formed” or “something which is created” and that it is now a non factual thing (Geertz, 1996: 19).

The new concept introduced by the theory of new historicism is analyzing the relationship between literary works and various social strengths such as social, economic, and political strengths in which they are included (Brannigan, 1999:421; Bressler, 1999:326; Barry, 2010: 201; Budianta, 2006: 2-3). Any literary work created from this relationship is regarded as a cultural product and an ideological agent (Williams, tt: 125). Literature and history exist in the dialectic of the producer and product (Williams, tt: 125). They are woven in a dynamic dialogue or they are reciprocally related; in other words, there is a reciprocal relationship between textual historicity and historical textuality (Motrose, in Liu, 2006: 2); as a result, the meaning of a literary work is more easily described by referring to history (Greenblatt, 2005: 13; Ryan, 2011: 217). According to Greenbault (1980: 3-6), history and literature are not applicable absolutely among generations. The era when any literary work and history were written should be back referred to in order to define them using the texts written in that era. Any literary work is a text among other texts (Selden and Widdoson, 1993: 163) and there is no textual isolation (Focault and Harari in Junus, 1996: 1).

According to Barry (2010: 202), the historical documents which are written in the same era are not subordinated as the work context (Payne, 2005:6); they are analyzed as independent texts (co-texts). This is based on the view that the boundaries of disciplines of sciences and disciplines of knowledge, the boundaries of fictions and realities have

become dissolved (Liu, 2006: 3). Liu affirms that the focus of the theory of new historicism is on the reciprocal relationship between textualism and contextualism.

#### **4. Discussion**

##### **4.1 Representation of Indonesian Revolution in the Poem “Rapat Mengganyang 7 Setan”**

The poem “Rapat Mengganyang 7 Setan” (H.R. Bandaharo, pp. 388-389) describes the atmosphere of the general meeting held by PKI at the square of Klaten City (Central Java). It was attended by the official of PKI, namely, Nyoto. The speech delivered by Njoto in the poem “Rapat Mengganyang 7 Setan” represented the Indonesian Revolution, such as : (1) Nasakom (Nationalist, Religion, and Communist); (2)the people were the strength of the Indonesian Revolution; (3) the *sokoguru* (the central pillar) of the Indonesian Revolution were farmers and laborers; (4) the resistance to imperialism and colonialism; (5) the resistance to the village’s seven devils; (6) landreform; and (7) socialism.

The daily diction and the slogans of the revolution clarified what the Indonesian Revolution looked like in this poem. The diction, the simple sentences , the clarification of the contents or messages showed that this literary work was specific to the Lekra literature; the language used was simple and easily understood by the people (Teeuw, 1996: 31) and Foulcher (1986: 141). Such revolutionary slogans showed the reciprocal relationship between the poem “Rapat Mengganyang 7 Setan” and the speech delivered by President Soekarno and what was written by D.N. Aidit.

The reciprocal relationship between the poem “Rapat Mengganyang 7 Setan” and the speech delivered by President Soekarno and what was written by D.N. Aidit could be observed from the expressions or slogans of the Indonesian Revolution, such as “tujuh setan desa” (the seven village’s devils), “kaum tani dan buruh” (the farmers and laborers), “berdiri dengan dua kaki” (standing on two feet), “tanah garapan” (the land cultivated by tenant farmers), “palu-godam revolusi ditangan Rakyat” (the large hammer of the revolution is in the People’s hands), “ganyang” (crush) Malaysia, the United States of America, the wicked landlords, the rural gangsters, bureaucrat capitalists, the

profiteers, those who bought goods for resale, “UUPA and UPPBH”, “partial action”, “ritul” (derived from the word “retool”, meaning completing), “Nasakom”, “Socialism”, “the people”.

The expression “setan desa” (the village’s devils) showed that they were the enemies of the people, the farmers, and the Indonesian Revolution. The expression “setan desa” was used to refer to a group of enemies who inflicted the people; they are the wicked landlords, the rural gangsters, the bureaucratic capitalists, the profiteers, those who bought goods for resale.

The word “sjaitan” appeared in the speech entitled “Penemuan kembali revolusi kita” (The recovery of our Revolution)”, the instruction of President Soekarno on 17<sup>th</sup> August 1959. In this speech, the word “sjaitan” means the Indonesian Revolution (federalism, ethnicity, individualism, agglomeration, deviation, corruption, multiparty, and separatism (Soekarno, 1964: 376). The use of the word “setan” (devil) in the poem “Rapat Mengganyang 7 Setan” and the word “sjaitan” in the speech delivered by President Soekarno had the same purpose, namely, subordinating and underestimating the enemies of the Indonesian Revolution.

The expression “kaum tani dan buruh” (the farmers and laborers) refer to the view that the farmers and laborers were the “sokoguru” (the central pillar of the Indonesian Revolution (Aidit, 1964b: 71). The farmers and laborers, as the “sokoguru” of the Indonesian Revolution were talked about in the speech entitled “Genta Suara Republik Indonesia” (abbreviated to Gesuri), the instruction of President Soekarno on 17<sup>th</sup> August 1963. The reason why the farmers and laborers were used as the “sokoguru” of the Indonesian Revolution was to increase production (Soekarno, 1964: 543). The productive power of the farmers and laborers should be developed in order to increase production (Soekarno, 1964 543). The farmers and laborers worked hard and produced the products which could satisfy the human needs so that their community and history would develop (Aidit, 1964a: 51). Ironically, as long as the history of the higher class is concerned, the working people were becoming oppressed (Aidit, 1964a: 52). They were suffering as they did not have production tools (Aidit, 1964a: 50); as a result, the landlords oppressed them (Soekarno, 1964:419).

The expression or slogan ‘berdiri dengan duakaki ditanah garapan’ (standing on two feet on the cultivated land), was intended to free the farmers from the landlords through the landreform program (Undang-undang Pokok Agraria [UUPA] and Undang-undang Pokok Bagi Hasil [UUPBH]). The landreform means strengthening and widening the land ownership for all the Indonesian people, especially the farmers (Soekarno, 1964: 419). Essentially, the Indonesian Revolution was the agrarian revolution as the landreform had something to do with the Indonesian people’s fate. Most of the Indonesian people were farmers (Aidit, 1964b: 70). The implementation of UUPA and UUPBH was not easy as it was obstructed by the landlords. Therefore, the farmers were required to make a revolutionary movement to reinforce UUPA and UUPBH. The expression “aksi sepihak” (partial action) in the poem “Rapat Mengganyang 7 Setan” referred to the revolutionary movement made by the farmers in reinforcing UUPA and UUPBH reflecting the level of the farmers’ political consciousness (Aidit, 1964b: 71).

The expression or slogan “berdiri dengan duakaki ditanah garapan” (standing on two feet on the land cultivated by the tenant farmers) was also used by Aidit (1964b:56) in another version, “berdiri di atas kaki sendiri dibidang pangan” (being independent on food); however, the meaning is the same. This expression or slogan was actually created in the framework of “nation-building and character-building” during the Indonesian Revolution era (Aidit, 1964b:70). According to Aidit (1964b: 69), the nation building and the character building was based on three principles; they are being politically free, being economically free, and having cultural personality.

The expression of resistance “ganyang” was found in the speech entitled “Tahun Vivere Pericoloso”, the instruction of President Soekarno on 17<sup>th</sup> August 1964. In this speech, the expression “mengganyang neo-kolonialisme “Malaysia”!” (curse the neo-colonialism “Malaysia”) was made to be the instruction for the volunteers who were supposed to perform their national-patriotic responsibility as a holy struggle to curse the neo-colonialism “Malaysia” (Soekarno, 1964: 591). In the poem “Rapat Mengganyang 7 Setan”, the use of the expression “ganyang” (curse) was widened into “ganyang Amerika Serikat” (curse the United States of America), ‘ganyang tuan tanah jahat’ (curse the wicked landlords), “ganyang bandit desa” (curse the village’s gangsters), “ganyang kapitalis birokrat” (curse the bureaucratic capitalists), “ganyang lintah darat” (curse the

profiteers), “ganyang tukang ijon” (curse those who buy goods for resale), and “ganyang tengkulak” (curse the brokers).

The expression or slogan “ganyang Malaysia” was related to the view and attitude of President Soekarno that Malaysia was the imperialistic fortress of the American Imperialist and that Tengku Abdul Rachman (the Prime Minister of Malaysia) was the henchman the imperialist (Soekarno, 1964:563). D.N. Aidit quoted what was said by President Soekarno that Malaysia was the dog which guarded the imperialism installed in front of the gate of the Republic of Indonesia (Aidit, 1964b: 51). According to D.N. Aidit, cursing Malaysia without cursing the United States of America was impossible (Aidit, 1964b: 51) as the American investment in Indonesia, the support given by the United States of America to Malaysia through Fleet VII, the collective statement of Johnson-Tengku which was hostile to Indonesia and the American subversive activities in Indonesia (Aidit, 1964b: 51).

The expression or slogan “persetan bantuan Amerika Serikat” (To Hell! The assistance given by the United States of America) and “ganyang Amerika Serikat” (hate and resist) stated by President Soekarno who chose honor, patriotism, independence of the nation, and the State of Indonesia rather than the assistance provided by the United States of America (Soekarno, 1964: 586).

“Nasakom” which appeared in the poem “Rapat Mengganyang 7 Setan” came from the view of President Soekarno published on the newspaper “Suluh Indonesian Muda” in 1926 (Lane, 2012: 84). It referred to the three objective political groupings of the Indonesian people which were in line with the 1945 Constitution and *Pancasila* (the Five Principles) (Soekarno, 1964: 544). According to Aidit, Nasakom referred to the three political ideologies (nationalist, religion, and communist), and constituted the essence of the national unity (Aidit, 1964b: 72). “Nasakom” in the poem “Rapat Mengganyang 7 Setan” refers to the strength to defeat the enemies of the Indonesian Revolution in order to achieve “socialism”. According to President Soekarno (1964: 459), socialism should be the second nature of the Indonesian people (Soekarno, 1964: 459) as socialism had a great objective, namely, creating happiness for the people (Soekarno, 1964: 460). The Indonesian revolution which was aimed at Socialism or a

New World without exploiting *de l'homme par l'homme* and exploiting *de nation par nation* (Soekarno, 1964:566-567).

According to D.N. Aidit, socialism is a community without any oppression and exploitation of man by man as the production tools were not owned by individuals any longer; they were already owned by the community in which everybody was equal (Aidit, 1964b:50; Aidit, 1964b:79). The future of the Indonesian people would be good with socialism (Aidit, 1964b: 113) which constituted the Indonesian social class and historical consciousness (Aidit, 1964b:114).

The reciprocal (parallel, equivalent, correspondent) relation of “Rapat Mengganyang 7 Setan” and the speech delivered by President Soekarno and what was written by D.N. Aidit took place as the literary works as part of the political movement which was based on the political principles. The writer and cultural observer were obliged to integrate themselves with the people, especially the farmers and laborers (Situmorang, 2004b: 198). In this present study, the “politics of literature” is not equivalent to literary politics (Foulcher, 1986:119). The Introduction to Lekra “Mukadimah Lekra” and “Konsepsi Kebudayaan Rakyat” (the People’s Cultural Conception) was the political attitude/view of the cultural politics. According to Karl Marx, culture is not an independent fact; it cannot be separated from the historical condition in which man creates his life materials (Selden and Widdowson, 1993: 71). This view was implemented by the Lekra activists by treating culture as the ideological and political weapon/tool which would lead to propaganda as the way in which literature could be glorified.

## **5. Conclusions**

The result of the study showed that the representation of the Indonesian Revolution in the poem “Rapat Mengganyang 7 Setan” through the theme expressed through the expressions or slogans of the Indonesian Revolution. The poem took part in the reproduction of the text of the Indonesian Revolution. In the poem, the Indonesian Revolution was not only used to intensify the definition/understanding/ meaning but it

was also used as a tool or the “fuel” for inspiring the oppressed classes to show resistance.

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