

Semiotic Study: The Meaning Of Women In The Structure Of Social Political Movements In The 4 Series Of Books The Buru Island Tetralogy

Moh. Dey Prayogo^{1*}

Ilmu Komunikasi FISIP, Universitas 17 Agustus 1945 Surabaya, Indonesia

***Corresponding author:** Moh. Dey Prayogo, E-mail: deyprayogo@untag-sby.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

This study tries to observe and describe the meaning of women in the socio-political movement in the colonial era, which was described by the writer Pramoedya Ananta Toer in the book tetralogy of Buru Island (Bumi Manusia, Anak Semua Bangsa, Jejak Langkah, and Rumah Kaca). The analysis in this study observes the three female characters described in the book as representations of the meaning of women, described by Pramoedya Ananta Toer as struggle figures in initiating socio-political movements. The book, which describes the embryonic formation of the Indonesian nation during colonialism, has the style and analogy of an emancipatory struggle in a society that does not look at gender, as well as the absence of previous research that holistically discusses the four series of books in the context of women and the socio-political movement as a whole. This study uses a qualitative approach using a semiotic analysis model from Charles Sanders Peirce, which includes representation, object, and interpretant, which is then supported by compatible literature studies. The results of research on women from the natural side or in terms of their strength to fight colonialism with socio-political movements are arranged in a network of text symbols in the Tetralogi Pulau Buru novel series.

1.INTRODUCTION

The novel is a medium to be used as a place to express thoughts and ideas, which is very common and is widely practiced by writers in the world. There are many literary works that we can find in the form of novels that contain criticism and contain history which was intentionally archived throughout the storyline in it to capture important moments in the past. A novel is also commonly used as a medium to convey a message that is indirectly filled with propaganda and criticism of a reality with the style and language typical of the novel itself. (Budianta, 2006) says that language is an instrument or primary means of literature which has its own variations with the aim of explaining the intent of the message to be conveyed, and the ability to convey this intention makes literature a means of social criticism.

Indonesia has a great writer named Pramoedya Ananta Toer who has been recognized by the world for the phenomenal works he has written, such as one of his most famous works, namely the Buru Island tetralogy which consists of 4 series of books entitled Bumi Manusia, Anak Semua Bangsa, Jejak Langkah, and Rumah Kaca, in which the four book series are interrelated with each other which in a structured and continuous manner

describes the initial phase of the struggle and the dynamics of the socio-political movements carried out by the natives in achieving equality of rights and justice in the Hindia Belanda government during the colonial period.

The historical story narrated by Pramoedya Ananta Toer in the form of a novel is very interesting to be studied according to researchers, because it has a picture of the struggle of several female figures in initiating a socio-political movement in the midst of an apathetic and powerless society in demanding equality related to rights and legal certainty for indigenous or non-indigenous peoples, amid cultural discrimination and the force of applicable law. The popularity and phenomanality of Pramoedya's work in the Buru Island Tetralogy has been translated into dozens of languages in the world and received 11 prestigious awards in the international arena, one of which is from the *University of California* as the best historical archive and its contribution in elevating global culture, (Toer, 2005)

History does not record too much about women who have a great influence in a country or society, because there is a tendency that women are subjects who do not have equal power to men which eventually gave rise to many feminist movements in various parts of the world. Feminism is motivated by a dominant patriarchal culture and gender discrimination, in which case women who are often victimized in it are often powerless to get out of such discrimination because the patriarchal culture is believed to have grown naturally in the system of society. The notion that all lines of the public sphere should be quasi-dominated by men is an old-fashioned assumption that in recent decades has experienced harsh criticism from various quarters, especially women, because the equal political and social rights of society should be the same whether it is men or women. Therefore, modern society must be aware of gender existence which can start from oneself (Tong, 2010)

A literary work has had an influence on the development of text-focused feminist studies. (Aryanika, 2016) mentions that literary criticism of women and social movements stems from the desire of feminist figures to examine the work of many gender-oriented male writers in the past and to show a picture of the image of women who are presented as beings who are easily suppressed, misinterpreted, and underestimated by the dominant patriarchal tradition. . The condition of women who are often portrayed as being lagging and backward from men is a depiction that we often encounter in literary works and film works, and the study of literature related to feminism tends to be close to the conditions of reality in everyday life, (Astuti, 2015).

Foss and Foss in (Suciati, 2017) revealed that their research shows that from the perspective of communication used by women contains the value of themselves, and it is proven that they are not as important in the public world as men. The general notion of women's weakness in voicing injustices experienced by themselves or that afflicts a society is a condition that is used by some people to exploit the dark side of a civilization that is so present as a thing that exemplifies commercial value in it. An assumption that has been developed in the UK around the 1970s that has a correlation with the view of feminism says that if representation does not always show a reality that exists, whether it is in line or distorted between the two many prefer to side with a product produced from a process that

has its own criteria for choosing and then displaying, organize and shape, or create something that gives rise to a meaning so that later it can be called a marking effort (Jackson & Jones, 2009).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

(Olivia, 2016) In her research on the study of feminism through semiotic analysis in a literary work reveals that texts used with various analogies describe women directly opposing values or dogmas that shackle over themselves, *gender* values become a central issue in a patriarchal culture entrenched in a social group. Meanwhile, (Puspita, 2018) who uses semiotic analysis in research on feminism on a digital video, concludes that women have the power to oppose social discrimination through a work through a popular medium in a society to give a direct message to the struggle of women themselves. (Taqwim, 2018) in her research on the position of women in the novel *Bumi Manusia* describes the central position that postcolonial era women can have that are told in the book provides a brief overview of Pramoedya's content and interpretation in describing women in one of his novels.

3. METHODOLOGY

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach method as a way to observe and dissect the findings in the objects that the author has determined. (Creswell, 2014) explains that qualitative research is a type of research used to explore, describe and understand every meaning detected in a reality that concerns social and humanitarian conditions or problems, in this case it is necessary to point out that the 4 tetralogy book series of *Buru Island* by Pramodeya Ananta Toer are stories raised from empirical conditions in a reality that concerns the problem serious humanity in the era of colonialism that has been experienced by the Indonesian nation. Meanwhile, descriptive research is the result of the case study method presented, namely describing the research theme systematically, factually and accurately regarding the phenomena present in an object under study (Kriyantono, 2006).

(Sugiono, 2014) emphasizing the importance of naturalistic elements in a qualitative research which means maintaining the natural conditions of the data taken or the researcher himself for the objectivity of the research results obtained. Therefore, the author takes a direct text excerpt from the *Buru Island* tetralogy book which is from 4 books, namely the *Bumi Manusia*, *Anak Semua Bangsa*, *Jejak Langkah*, *Rumah Kaca*, which the author then uses the semiotic analysis method from Charles Sander Pierce to reveal the meaning contained in the text in the novel tetralogy of *Buru Island*. (Piliang, 2003) Explains that semiotic analysis methods are basically qualitative-interpretive, meaning that they focus their analysis on a sign and text as objects of study, as well as how researchers understand and interpret the code contained in the sign and text. Piliang further describes the semiotic analysis of Pierce's model which includes the *representation* (something that represents one another), the *object* (something that is represented), the interpretation (the *interpretation of the sign*). In the *triadic* model Pierce shows the great role of the subject as part of the transformation of language, or what Pierce calls the process of creating an endless series of interpretations.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research takes data through direct documentation of the text contained in the novel. John Fiske (Suciati, 2017) Explains that Pierce's semiotic model is a concept that explains

that a sign always has the property to express something, whether it is through text, images, codes and symbols. The results obtained in this study show the findings of several words and sentences that describe the struggle of women through socio-political movements as a form of resistance to colonial-era government and culture that discriminates against women's rights in particular. Furthermore, the author explains the data findings from the results of observations in the 4 tetralogy books of Buru Island (Bumi Manusia, Anak Semua Bangsa, Jejak Langkah, Rumah Kaca) which focus on depicting 3 female characters told in the 4 books. 1. Nyai Ontosoroh. A female character who was initially underestimated because she was only a mistress (Mistress without marriage) but in the storyline built throughout the novel shows that Nyai Ontosoroh is not an ordinary woman (mistress). In his introduction alone, Nyai Ontosoroh has been described so elegantly as the author quoted in the first book of the Buru Island Tetralogy entitled Bumi Manusia follows:

"A mistress who performs unshakably marriage, gives birth to a child is not shaky, but I cannot say she is a fool of fluent, good and civilized Dutch. Her behavior was as subtle and thoughtful as that of an educated woman in Europe" (Bumi Manusia, p. 38)

"His words... the tone sounds like it came out of the chest cavity of a priest in a puppet story" (Bumi Manusia, p. 59)

"Man and his environment are indeed in his grasp, as well as his own. What school graduate he was, Seemingly so intelligent and learned could confront several people at once with different attitudes" (Bumi Manusia, p. 68).

The story of the novel continues in a situation where the female character named Nyai Ontosoroh faces a problem that befell her and her family to deal with the colonial government that deprived indigenous people of their rights in the eyes of the law. As a form of resistance Nyai Ontosoroh utters a few sentences that further amaze the reader,

"They can't see natives not being stomped and trampled on their feet. For those natives should be wrong and europeans should be clean. Being born a native is already considered wrong for us to face a more difficult situation, son. Are you going to run away from this?" (Bumi Manusia, p. 413)

"Before the law you will not win, you face the europeans, the advocates can not be trusted, the writing just answer with the writing, challenge them with the writing" (Bumi Manusia, p. 414).

"The judge's Q&A with Nyai Ontosoroh made the woman the star of the court. He was not allowed to speak Dutch, he was told to use Javanese, he refused, and then he spoke Malay" (Bumi Manusia, p. 420).

After going through a phase of the story that describes the criticality and knowledge of one of the indigenous women of the colonial era, the storyline continues towards an increasingly emotional situation when Nyai Ontosoroh does not want to give up easily with the legal discrimination faced, although at the end of the story in the book Bumi Manusia she suffers defeat and cannot maintain what she fought for as in the following quote:

"Boy, we have to fight... We won't be ashamed when we lose. Here's it, kid, we, the whole native, don't bias hiring advocates, there's money not necessarily biased, more so no

courage., more generally never learning anything, suffering, no sound like miles of times and mountains, how crowded when they all talk like us..... by fighting we are not completely defeated" (Bumi Manusia, p. 499)

"We've lost, Ma. I whispered

We have fought, son, preferably, honorably" (Bumi Manusia, p.535)

2. The San Mei

In the third book series entitled *Jejak Langkah*, Pramoedya tells the story of a woman named Ang San Mei who is an immigrant from China who entered the Nederlandsch Indie as a form of escape from the political turmoil in her home country. Ang San Mei later founded a Chinese educational institution as well as an illegal socio-political movement organization as a form of concern for the younger generation to save the Chinese state from colonialism and colonialism in Japan at that time. Pramodya begins to narrate Ang San Mei in the *Book of Footsteps* with the following narrative.

"Our rising generation works for and for China, and its loyalty is dedicated to it to resist Ye Si's empire supported by western invaders" (Jejak Langkah, 106)

"Our countrymen consider there to be a more important work done, namely the liberation of the Chinese nation as a whole" (Jejak Langkah, 149)

When Ang San Mei traveled to several places on the island of Java, he studied and discussed with several orans to learn and initiate social movements that brought changes to the life of his nation from the hands of the colonizers, Ang San Mei said in a discussion:

"The easy way to achieve is to organize, friends, associations, many tens of people, hundreds, thousands, into one giant with greater power" (Jejak Langkah, 151)

"Ang San Mei a girl from a distant land, following the fiancée in the struggle... a simple girl with a head full of idealism" (Jejak Langkah, 155)

The story goes towards the conclusion of Ang San Mei's true identity, that she has always been a woman involved in a social movement through rebellion against the Chinese rulers. Ang San Mei staged a joint uprising with youth organizations that shared the same ideals of justice and freedom of their nation from western invaders. The rebellion failed and Ang San Mei fled to the Nederlandsch Indies to reconstitute a stronger social movement to fight the invaders in his native country. Not having had time for him to realize his ideals, death first took his life, killed his dreams and struggles until the end of his life.

"He fled china after his rebellion failed... he was a member of one of the organizations involved in the failure of the rebellion" (Jejak Langkah, 161)

"Mei, what exactly have you accomplished in your short life? You have insisted on working for that abstract nation and country of yours that does not know you either. You're a woman to love, like a jewel in life. All of that had passed after the death had come" (Jejak Langkah, 231)

3. Siti Soendari

It is told in the book of the 4th series of the buru island tetralogy entitled "Greenhouse" the development of the resistance movement against colonialism is growing dynamically. Siti Soendari became one of the female figures told by Pramoedya in the book to give information that she had a great influence and influence on the awareness of struggle for the indigenous people of the Nederlandsch Indie. The modern and revolutionary mind of the woman attracted a lot of attention throughout the country of the Nederlandsch Indie at that time. His main weapon is to write propaganda in newspapers with the courage and intelligence he has. Here is an excerpt of a series of texts describing a woman named Siti Soendari in the 4th book of the tetralogy of buru island.

"I studied the writings of Siti Soendari, the writings of an educated woman, and got a good education. Where each line brings its reader carrying ideas and mind building... a writing containing so much wisdom" (Rumah Kaca, 356)

"Siti Soendari has a meekness, and in her tenderness she gains her strength,... It seems that he is a clean man and knows what he wants. His hatred of colonialism" (Rumah Kaca, 357)

The story continues about the concerns felt by the colonial government of the Dutch East Indies over the influence caused by writings in newspapers written by Siti Soendari because it raised awareness and upheaval of struggle by indigenous peoples through organizations that stood as the first step of resistance to the oppression of colonial rule. In the book dei explains,

"There is only one woman who is gliding brilliantly in the indies right now, just one, Siti Soendari... educated girl, beautiful, attractive supple and intelligent, delicate and alluring... never swayed by flattery and temptation, he was a strong-spirited" (Rumah Kaca, 366)

"Soendari's writing style is in a conscious state of soul, to encourage indigenous people to face colonial rule. the first woman to appear in public and lead" (Greenhouse, 374)

"His influence made the seemingly calm and thirsty for experience turn hard and firm. And the great work sarekat was born" (Rumah Kaca, 381)

Marking doesn't always have a look that contradicts a reality. In practice, there is a literary work that prefers to provide an anomalous perspective on an existing reality, as in the work of Pramoedya Ananta Toer who is the object of research in this paper. This marking practice relates to the image of women written in a sastra work that does serve as a sign, but a sign that derives its meaning not from the reality of women's lives in general, but through imagination and the desire that the author's subjectivity wants to display to frame the chosen female character in the existing historical time span

Documentation and text excerpts from the 4 series of tetralogy books that the author has previously described regarding the construction of the image of three female figures in sociopolitical movements then the author compiles more specifically through the table column below which is based on the semiotic analysis of Pierce's model:

Representamen	Obyek	Interpretan
Pramoedya Ananta Toer	Women (Nyai Ontosoroh)	Civilized, wise, erudite, intelligent, critical, against
Pramoedya Ananta Toer	Women (Ang San Mei)	Allegiance, liberation, China, struggle, idealism, resist, gem of life, rebellion
Pramoedya Ananta Toer	Women (Siti Soendari)	Learned, wisdom, meekness, lues, native, intelligent, alluring, strong-spirited, leading, influential, assertive

Table 1. *Classification of semiotic analysis of Pierce's model based on data findings*

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The semiotic analysis of Pierce's model, which emphasizes aspects of representation, object, and interpretation, makes it easier for researchers to focus their studies on finding the true meaning of Pramoedya Ananta Toer's view of women who can be the subject of great power in initiating social change in society. Of the many historical figures who have contributed greatly to the change of Indonesian society from the era of colonialism to the era of independence, Pramodeya focuses on the emotional side of the struggle of women who are central figures in a socio-political movement in several parts of the story in the Buru Island Tetralogy book series. The representation in this study is an interesting analysis as the researcher has explained in the introduction that so far male literati have a view that tends to discredit women in stories constructed in a literary work, or in other words, rarely encounter thoughts that lead to gender equality. However, unlike Pram, as a man who has a great reputation among the ranks of other great Indonesian literati with the achievements of various awards obtained, he is consistent and structured in his view that women actually have greater and more special essential values. A common awareness that can be achieved when Pramoedya always slips a story with a female character in it is to observe the structure of writing and word usage in each text related to the female character being told.

The second aspect in the semiotic analysis of Pierce's model is the study of objects, The first book in the Buru Island Tetralogy series entitled Bumi Manusia features a figure named Nyai Ontosoroh who has a bold and critical character to fight directly against the form of colonial legal injustice at that time. The description of the character named Nyai Ontosoroh has the essence of women's struggle which is so dramatic and emotional when

we refer to a semiotic analysis of the meaning of a text built by Pramoedya to give a deep impression of the power of women in resisting a current of oppression. Words that contain praise such as wise, educated, critical, and resistant, which are then connected to the inter-text network in the sentence quotations that researchers have previously described, show that the socio-political movements contained in the early period of the women's struggle compiled by Pramoedya in the Buru Island Tetralogy book series through the figure of Nyai Ontosoroh are still in the early stages and have not been structured because the movement to fight the government colonial is limited to personal awareness and defense of one's own rights and justice, but does not refract the basic essence of women as a major milestone in a sociopolitical movement within it.

Ang San Mei became the second female character taken by researchers as an object analyzed in the story to find out the image of women in socio-political movements described by Pramoedya. The character is contained in the 3rd book series entitled *Jejak Langah*. She is a reflection of the world's women who are aware of the experience and knowledge of the importance of a nation's independence from colonial rule. A person who is narrated as a woman who has a strong determination to change the fate of her people even goes so far as to join an organization that rebels against legitimate government, even if it fails. Then he made an escape to the *Nederlandsch d Indie* to learn and reconstitute strategies and strengthen stronger socio-political movements. Ang San Mei is a picture of women who are one step ahead of Nyai Ontosoroh in resisting a government that oppresses indigenous peoples, if Nyai Ontosoroh only takes action against colonialism based on injustice and self-interest, Ang San Mei has carried out socio-political movements based on the interests of the people and the nation.

Interpretant in the semiotic analysis structure of Pierce's model in this study discusses the female image of the sublime values inherent in the object itself such as the words beauty, lues, tenderness, thoughtfulness, and allure, often the researcher encounters in each story that is constructed to describe the three objects of the female characters in the story observed. But what becomes more in the construction of the image of women in the series of novels in the Buru Island Tetralogy series is how the three female characters who are the focus of the study are not only glorified from their natural side as women, more than that, Pram always emphasizes that women also have great power and influence in consciousness through socio-political movements carried out according to the context and conditions experienced by each object. This is evidenced by the use of diction such as resist, idealism, rebellion, educated, intelligent, struggle, liberation, and embedded influence to describe the contribution of women in fighting for the independence of their nation from the hands of colonizers.

The meaning of women built by Pramodeya through her novel is a form of propaganda that is spread out to respect and uphold the values and rights of women as equal living beings and even surpass men in diverse contexts and conditions. There is propaganda behind language through text with everything that might systematically distort messages or meanings (Beyes et al., 2019). Pram's selection of words that include a network of propagandists towards a propaganda to respect women seems very systematic and

structured in the overall course of the story that focuses on explaining the three female characters in this study.

5. CONCLUSION

Although the stages and processes are different, the three women still have the same essence of image in the imaginary framework of Pramoedya in the novel series of the Buru Island tetralogy. Through a series of words or texts that have gone through the study of semiotic analysis of Pierce's model in defining the meaning of women and socio-political movements in a structured and systematic manner in the 4 series of Buru Island tetralogy books that the author presents also shows that the pattern of socio-political movements pioneered by women in becoming the main character gives an impression and expression of meaning towards the direction of women's privilege in Pram's eyes with expressions of meaning such as progress thinking, mastery of knowledge, and superior implementation carried out by each character, by not reducing in the slightest the noble value of the female figure herself.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

The author is lecturer from Communication Studies Departement, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas 17 Agustus 1945 Surabaya, Indonesia.

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