

## W. S. RENDRA'S IDEOLOGIES IN THE SCRIPT OF THE DRAMA *KISAH PERJUANGAN SUKU NAGA*

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### Abstract

Different ideologies, which directly and indirectly affect the people's lives especially those who love literary works, were expressed by W. S. Rendra through the script of his drama entitled *Kisah Perjuangan Suku Naga*. Therefore, it is necessary to identify what ideologies he expressed on which this current study focuses. The method applied in the study was the qualitative method focusing on the library research, meaning that the techniques applied were the reading, observation, note-taking, and interpretative techniques. The theory of semiotics was applied as the main theory, and the theory of ideology and the theory of literary sociology were applied as the supporting theories. The result of the study showed that through the script of the drama *Kisah Perjuangan Suku Naga* W. S. Rendra, as a writer and a society member, expressed a number of ideologies. They are the principles of economy, capitalism, land affairs, farming and leadership, and way of life and social criticism. They were all expressed using straightforward words and simple and short dialogues.

**Keywords:** Ideology, script, drama.

### 1. Introduction

The personal reflection of a writer and the interaction between his or her social environment inspires him/her to express messages and ideas he or she has through the literary work he or she writes. Based on the above mentioned reality, Darmono (1978, p. 1) states that every literary work expresses how life is, and that life is a social fact. The social fact which the writer faces is processed based on his or her imaginative ability. It is the result of his or her imagination which is written as a literary work expresses the principles of his or her life. One of the writers who created literary works through such a process was W. S. Rendra. All his literary works are full of ideologies which affect the other writers and readers.

This current study focuses on the ideologies he expressed through the script of his drama entitled *Kisah Perjuangan Suku Naga*. It is one of the best scripts of the dramas he wrote, although no publisher has published it as a book. It is essential to explore the ideologies he

expressed as they affect the social life of those who love literary works. It is highly important for the government to pay attention to the ideologies he expressed when formulating the policy required to develop literacy and the true national character.

Based on the background described above, the problems of the study are formulated in the form of two questions. They are (1) how the ideologies expressed by W. S. Rendra in the script of the drama entitled *Kisah Perjuangan Suku Naga* can be pictured, and (2) how he expressed his ideologies in the script of the drama entitled *Kisah Perjuangan Suku Naga*.

Based on the problems formulated above, in particular the current study is aimed at identifying the ideologies expressed by W. S. Rendra through the script of his drama entitled *Kisah Perjuangan Suku Naga*, and identifying the technique he applied to express his ideologies. It is expected that the result of the study can be used as a reference by the government when formulating a policy related to the way of strengthening the national character.

## 2. Review of Literature

After being explored, it turns out that no researchers have specifically discussed the ideologies expressed by W. S. Rendra in his drama. In 2012, Sudewa investigated the social criticism expressed by W. S. Rendra in his poems and dramas written from 1970s to 1990s. Therefore, it is essential to investigate the pictures of the ideologies he expressed through his drama entitled *Kisah Perjuangan Suku Naga* which both directly and indirectly reflect the people's real social lives. According to Susanto (2015, p. 351), in any literary work an ideology is often connected with the writer's context, work and social world. Every man of letters cannot be separated from the ideologies he/she has; therefore, the literary work he/she creates always reflects his/her ideologies. It is this which makes the current study important to be conducted from the scientific context and social context.

The theory of semiotics was applied as the main theory to discuss the ideologies which W. S. Rendra expressed in his drama entitled *Kisah Perjuangan Suku Naga*. The other relevant theories such as the theory of ideology and the theory of literary sociology were also applied as the supporting theories. It is expected that the theories applied can solve the problems of the study, causing the study to be valid and accountable. As time and space were limited, the only urgent references which were reviewed. The supporting references were mentioned in the analysis.

According to the theory of semiotics, everything in the world is a sign with a particular meaning, meaning that the drama *Kisah Perjuangan Suku Naga* is a sign with its meaning. Therefore, the phenomenon expressed by the author in his drama is a sign which signifies his ideologies. Meaning is determined by the reader as the commentator. Therefore, what is stated by Zaimar (2008, p. 2) that the theory of semiotics can be applied in every discipline is natural. The elements or the structure of the literary work should be understood before the signs it contains can be comprehended.

Semiotics is a science which is concerned with signs (Noth, 1990, p. 3). As everything is a sign, any social phenomenon in society can be the object of the semiotic studies. Conceptually, semiotics learns systems, regulations and conventions which allow a sign to be meaningful (Pradopo, 1995, p. 119). In the context of this study, the drama script *Kisah Perjuangan Suku Naga* and various ideologies in it is a sign that has a certain meaning.

The theory of semiotics applied in the current study is the one proposed by Ferdinand de Saussure concerning the linguistic sign. It is relevant enough as the drama *Kisah Perjuangan Suku Naga* is a literary work using language as its medium. It is stated that there are three things involved in the discussion of linguistic signs; they are (1) the sign, (2) the signifier,

and (3) the signified. Every sign is made up of two sides; they are the signifier (the sound) and the signified (the concept) (in Zaimar, 2008, p. 3). In the current study, the drama *Kisah Perjuangan Suku Naga* is the signifier and the ideologies expressed by W. S. Rendra are the signified.

So far the term ideology is defined from two perspectives. First, the term ideology is neutrally defined as the way of thinking, the system of belief and the symbolic practice related to the social and political actions. Second, it is critically defined as a conception related to the process of justifying the asymmetric power relation or the process of justifying domination (Thompson, 2014, pp. 14-15). In this case, what is stated by Thompson is supported by what is stated by Barker (2014, p. 139) that the term ideology refers to the binding ideas used as the basis for the justification made by all social groups.

In so far as the context of the current study is concerned, the term ideology refers to the concept or thought which someone (W. S. Rendra) or a group of people has which widely affects a wider social environment and leads to a certain movement. The term ideology refers to a series of beliefs and particular principles which can direct the behavior of an individual or a group of individuals (Ratna, 2013, p. 176). The belief and principle of a character in the drama used as the object of the current study can be identified from the dialogues among the characters and how they behave when they express them. They all reflect and picture the author's ideologies.

What has inspired the appearance of the theory of literary sociology is that there is no literary work written within a cultural emptiness. In other words, no literary work can function within cultural emptiness. Every literary work actualizes or realizes a system of conventions or literary and cultural codes (Teeuw, 1980, p. 11). In so far as the context of the current study is concerned, the object of the study, namely the script of the drama *Kisah Perjuangan Suku Naga* written by W. S. Rendra reflects the social facts observed by the author. Such social facts were then written in the script of the drama entitled *Kisah Perjuangan Suku Naga* through creativity and imagination.

Based on the above sociological view, the theory of literary sociology which is relevant to the current study is the theory proposed by Swingewood (1972, pp. 16-22). It is stated that the sociological analysis can be viewed from three perspectives: (1) the literary sociology is not only supposed to find out the history and social reflection which the literary work contains, but it is also supposed to be able to find out what the literary work contains, (2) the literary sociology views that the literary work is a production; it is, in particular, concerned with the author's social situation, and (3) the literary sociology attempts to investigate the track of the literary work which can be accepted as a social fact. Ratna (2004, p. 6) more clearly stated that the literary work cannot be separated from its society for four reasons. They are (1) the literary work is created by its author, (2) the writer is the society member, (3) the writer uses the society's social condition, and (4) the literary work, as a product, is used by the society. In so far as the current study is concerned, the object of the study is considered the fact containing different ideologies as the social facts in society.

It is expected that the result of the study in which the theories above are used can contribute to the development of sciences in general and literature in particular. Apart from that, it is also expected that the result of the current study can enrich the results of the research in literature, strengthen the national character, and improve the society's literacy ability as what is expected by the government.

### 3. Research Method

The method used in the current study is the qualitative method focusing on the library research involving the reading, observation, note taking, and interpretative techniques. As a sign, the script of the drama *Kisah Perjuangan Suku Naga* was read, observed, identified, and the data related to the author's ideologies, as signs, were determined through interpretative process. How W. S. Rendra expressed his ideologies were identified during such a process. In this way, it was expected that all the problems could be well answered and scientifically justified.

### 4. Results and Discussion

The result of the current study shows that W. S. Rendra expressed different ideologies through the script of the drama *Kisah Perjuangan Suku Naga* he wrote. The most prominent thing he expressed is the social criticism against the social environment during the period of time when the drama was written. The drama also shows the principle of life he had adhered to, as one of his ideologies, until he passed away.

The discussion starts from the principle of life which W. S. Rendra adhered to. The principle of life he adhered to was so strong that he believed that it could be justified. Pay attention to the sign shown through what is uttered by Abisavam as follows.

*ABISAVAM:*

*Hai, anak muda! Dengarlah!  
Kenapa mesti gentar dalam menjaga keseimbangan?  
Menjaga daya hidup mendatangkan ketenangan.  
Kemarin dan esok  
adalah hari ini.  
Bencana dan keberuntungan  
Sama saja.  
Langit di luar,  
langit di badan,  
bersatu dalam jiwa  
(Rendra, p. 72)*

The translation is as follows:

**ABISAVAM (THE AUTHOR)**  
Hi, the youth! Listen!  
Why should you be afraid of maintaining balance?  
Maintaining life capacity leads to tranquility.  
The day before and the day after  
are not different from today.  
A disaster is not different from luck  
they are the same.  
The sky outside and  
the sky in the body  
get united in the soul  
(Rendra, p. 72)

What can be interpreted from the signifier above is that maintaining balance is one of the W. S. Rendra's principles of life. The author, using the style usually used by an orator, asks the young people not to be afraid of maintaining balance, which, according to him, shows the human life capacity. Balance leads to tranquility. The today's life is not different from the life in the past and in the future. Disaster is not different from luck, and the external life is not different from the internal life. The soul is balance; balance is not different from life capacity; and life capacity is not different from the soul. It is this principle of life which always inspired him to write poems, prose and drama.

As described above, the most prominent ideology expressed by W. S. Rendra in the drama *Kisah Perjuangan Suku Naga* is social criticism. He criticized capitalism, economy, politics, development, law, and corruption. He also criticized environment, agriculture and so forth. The social criticism addressed to capitalism and economy can be seen from the signifier uttered by DALANG as follows.

DALANG  
*Mampuslah aku!*  
*Uang berputar*  
*uang beredar*  
*berpusing-pusing di udara*  
*menuju sorga.*  
*Nun di sana*  
*Namun,*  
*tak pernah turun kembali*  
*Dewa uang makin kaya.*  
*Rakyat miskin tetap kuli*  
*sepanjang masa*  
*rakyat miskin dibina,*  
*dididik,*  
*dan dibentuk agar Cuma jadi pembeli.*  
(Rendra, p.5)

The free translation is as follows.

DALANG  
To hell with you!  
Money turns over  
money circulates  
Money goes around in the sky  
money goes to heaven.  
But there  
yet,  
it never goes down again  
The lord of money is getting richer.  
The poor people still earn their living by working as laborers  
all the time  
they are nurtured,  
educated, and are made only to be buyers.  
(Rendra, p. 5)

Pleonasm and sarcasm are used to express the signifier uttered by the narrator above. These figurative expressions are relevant to the ideology of social criticism as they can express it strongly to the reader. It can be defined that money which symbolizes capitalism controls the life of the rich, entrepreneur and those who belong to the upper class. The rich or the capitalist is getting richer and the people remain poor and are educated in such a way that they always become the consumers (buyers) of the products produced by the capitalist. Such social criticism is expressed by W. S. Rendra as the response to the social condition of the people living in Astinam (a country which is associated with Indonesia during the New Order government).

The ideology of social criticism, which controls the Astinam society and government, can also be observed from the following signifier.

*KOOR:  
Yang mulia,  
pinjaman bisa diatur.  
Semuanya demi kemajuan,  
demi kebudayaan,  
dan demi kemanusiaan.  
Oleh karena itu,  
uang pinjaman  
harus benar-benar dipakai untuk rakyat.  
Rakyat perlu super mall and mini market,  
kami punya tenaga ahli,  
punya tulang-tulang baja  
dan juga punya barang-barang  
untuk dijual di dalamnya.  
(Rendra, p. 10)*

The free translation is as follows.

*KOOR:  
Your Excellency,  
loans can be organized.  
Everything is for development,  
and culture,  
and humanity.  
Therefore,  
the loans should be really used for the people.  
The people need supermalls and minimarkets,  
we have experts,  
we have steel  
and commodities to see in them.  
(Rendra, p.10)*

The repetition used in the signifier shows strongly and clearly one of W. S. Rendra's ideologies to the reader. The signified shows that the power of the capitalist, symbolized by the super mall and mini market, is getting stronger in Astinam. The capitalist offers loans, experts, steel, and commodities for developing culture and humanity in Astinam. The Astinam government cannot do anything to encounter the capitalistic power.

In the drama *Kisah Perjuangan Suku Naga*, W. S. Rendra also expresses the ideology of environment, as can be interpreted from the following signifier.

*KOOR:*  
*Pohon buah-buahan.*  
*Pohon kayu-kayuan.*  
*Segala macam pepohonan*  
*Adalah saudara kita.*  
*Yang satu memberi makan.*  
*Yang satu memberi bahan peralatan,*  
*yang lain memberi keteduhan,*  
*dan kita harus lindungi mereka.*  
*Inilah hubungan alam menurut karma.*

The free translation is as follows.

*KOOR:*  
Trees of fruits  
Trees for timber  
Every type of tree  
is our friend.  
One feeds us.  
Another gives us material for equipment,  
and shelter,  
and we should protect them.  
That's the karma-based relationship of the nature.

*DALANG:*  
*Nah, makanya jangan serakah sama alam!*  
*Menggunduli hutan seenaknya!*  
*Hutan-hutan digunduli! Sungai-sungai dikotori!*  
*Lautan dijual pula!*  
(Rendra, p. 13)

The free translation is as follows.

*DALANG:*  
Therefore, it is wrong if we are greedy to the nature  
denude the forest as we like!  
The forests are denuded! The rivers are contaminated!  
The ocean is sold too!  
(Rendra, p. 13)

Again W. S. Rendra used repetition to express another ideology of his. The signifier signifies that the universe with its different types of trees should be treated as friends by people. People cannot live without the universe as it is which gives life, clothing and food. According to him, that is the karma of life; one is dependent on another as the ecosystem. Therefore, people should preserve the nature and keep the universe, including the sea and what it has in it, balanced. We should not be greedy to the universe for personal interests.

If the forests are denuded and the rivers are contaminated, then flood cannot be avoided from taking place, which, according to WS. Rendra, was taking place in Astinam.

W. S. Rendra's ideology of agriculture is also expressed in the script of the drama *Kisah Perjuangan Suku Naga*, as can be seen in the following signifier.

*KOOR:*

*Begitulah adab leluhur kita,  
dengan arif menjaga desa pertanian.  
Petani yang menjual tanahnya  
mencelakakan petani lainnya.  
Kenama mesti kau jual tanahmu?  
Untuk gelang dan giwang?  
Gelang dan giwang tidak bisa tumbuh.  
Tak ada buahnya.  
Untuk membangun rumah tembok?  
Rumah tembok bukan kemajuan.  
Tak ada hasilnya.  
Salah-salah malah gampang lumutan.  
Petani yang maju,  
Adalah petani yang cinta pada tanahnya.  
Petani yang maju,  
adalah petani, yang mampu, melindungi petani lainnya.  
Petani yang maju, adalah petani, yang mampu membina desanya, menjadi desa  
yang kaya, karena produk unggulan.  
Petani yang maju punya koperasi sendiri untuk segala keperluannya.  
Petani yang maju, cepat mengenal tanaman baru dan cara yang baru untuk  
menjaga alamnya.  
(Rendra, p. 15)*

The free translation is as follows.

*KOOR:*

*That's our ancestors' culture,  
they wisely look after the agricultural village.  
The farmers who sell their land  
bring misfortune on the other farmers.  
Why should you sell your land?  
To buy bracelets and ear studs?  
They can't grow.  
They don't bear fruit.  
To build houses with walls?  
They are not identical with development.  
They produce nothing.  
If they are not well maintained, they will get mossy.  
The developed farmers  
are those who love their land.  
The developed farmers  
are those who can protect the other farmers.  
The developed farmers are those who can nurture their villages in such a way that*



they become rich, resulting from the products they produce are superior.  
The developed farmers have their own cooperatives which sell everything they need.  
The advanced farmers get quickly familiar with new plants and know new ways of  
preserving the nature.  
(Rendra, p. 15)

Sociologically, the above signifier signifies the ideologies of agriculture and agrarian affairs which W. S. Rendra intended to express, reflecting the social condition of the people living in Astinam in general and how their agriculture is in particular. According to him, the ancestors of Astinam had never sold their agricultural land. The repetition was intensively used to express his ideologies to the reader. He asked the farmers in Astinam not to sell their land to buy things which do not contribute to the agricultural development. One farmer should be able to be independent on and collaborate with another for the sake of their development and prosperity. They can develop and become prosperous by looking after their agricultural land and preserving the universe as they are the local wisdoms in Astinam.

## 5. Conclusion

From the discussion above, it can be concluded that W. S. Rendra expressed his ideologies through different signifiers in the drama *Kisah Perjuangan Suku Naga*. The most dominant signified was the social criticism against different aspects of the society's life, followed by the economic, environmental and agricultural ideologies. He clearly and strongly expressed different ideologies using repetition, pleonasm and sarcasm to the reader. Sociologically, the ideologies he expressed reflect the society's social condition in Astinam, which is associated with Indonesia.

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