

## Power Relations in the Story of “Nommensen Bertemu Raja Panggalamei” by Patar Pasaribu

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### Abstrak

Relasi kekuasaan tergambar dalam Biografi Nommensen, khususnya dalam cerita “Nommensen Bertemu Raja Panggalamei”. Cerita tersebut merupakan bagian dari Buku biografi Nommensen tahun 2004 karya Patar Pasaribu dalam Bab 21, yang ditulis dengan menggabungkan puisi dan cerita naratif yang menggambarkan hubungan antara seorang misionaris bernama Nommensen dan Raja Panggalamei. Cerita ini mengungkapkan beberapa gagasan yang berfokus pada dominasi relasi kekuasaan, perjumpaan pengaruh atau hegemoni kekuasaan, dan juga kesejajaran komunikasi. Dominasi kekuasaan yang seharusnya dimiliki sepenuhnya oleh Raja Panggalamei, baik dari segi kekuasaan maupun pengaruh, justru mengalami ketakutan karena beberapa faktor terhadap Nommensen. Kajian ini merupakan penelitian kesusastraan khusus pada masa penjajahan Belanda yang secara khusus membahas tentang pengaruh Nommensen terhadap eksistensi dan keadaban orang Batak.

**Kata kunci:** *Relasi Kuasa, Nommensen, Sastra Batak*

### Abstract

Power relations are illustrated in Nommensen's biography, especially in the story "Nommensen Bertemu Raja Panggalamei". The story is part of Patar Pasaribu's 2004 biography of Nommensen in Chapter 21, which is written by combining poetry and a narrative story that describes the relationship between a missionary named Nommensen and King Panggalamei. This story reveals several ideas that focus on the dominance of power relations, the encounter of influence or hegemony of power, and also the parallels of communication. The domination of power that should have been fully owned by King Panggalamei, both in terms of power and influence, actually experienced fear due to several factors against Nommensen. This study is special literary research during the Dutch colonial period which specifically discusses the influence of Nommensen on the existence and civilization of the Batak people..

**Keywords :** *Power relation, Nommensen, Batak Literature*

### INTRODUCTION

Literary work is a form of manifestation of human culture and traditions that form an image of community life (Ingold, 2016). All things pattern structure, function, as well as activities and social conditions, religion and traditions, and culture make up the background of people's lives at the time the literary work was created. According to Dümcke and Gnedovsky (2013), literary works are considered social documents and are often associated with cultural heritage archives that seem to describe reality and the formation of history. When a literary work is considered as a history and a document of tradition, it works for

functions in the way of truth. Through a literary work an image of life becomes easier to understand and pass on. In the inheritance of this literary work, whether, in the form of literary modeling related to history, culture, social and even religion, the reaction of a relationship between humans will produce a power relation, which makes the process of social interaction can be described in literary works.

In fact, power relations can occur and can be seen in every relationship experienced by humans in life everyday life. In a simple sense, power can be defined as control over others. Another definition of power is that power is the control that refers to a system of social reality structures (Wieder, 2015). However, the power relations that occur are not only seen as the relationship that occurs between kings and slaves, parents and children, and the government and the people. Cheng, et al (2013) states that power relation domination is not only defined as a social structure or management but also as a system of domination that signifies an institution that allows it to lead, control and influence an individual or group of people.

In general, power relations can be seen in everyday life without having to specifically position who is dominant or submissive. Anyone who interacts with the people around him has shown a power relationship (Anderson et al, 2012). However, in a dominant projection, literary works, and even historical documents will always show cultural inheritance in Indonesia, because basically, before Indonesia was in the form of a state, Indonesia was divided into a form of kingdoms. Whether it's in royal content that shows the interaction between the ruler and the ruled, literary works that discuss dominant power relations can be found in literary heritage, both in traditional culture and religion (Brannigan, 2016). Even after, the colonial period is shown explicit power relations, the forms of slavery and colonialism specifically indicated who colonized. Especially in this study focuses on the power relationship between Nommensen and King Panggalamei, the story of this literary text occurred during the Dutch colonial period but in that area is still valid in the royal system.

In this study, the author will examine the two characters in one chapter of the biographical literature, where these characters influence each other and have power relations with one another which will be discussed in more detail. The error of one object and that which exists in the world of exclusive experience is a matter of power (Price, 2013). There are relation of powers who define the complex nature of the correlation of societies using groups of citizen leaders which is that the relationship is not only a political question in a narrow sense, but also a question of ideas and consciousness. The concept of power is one dimension of partner origin. The will for truth is the same as using the will to rule (Hyman, 2015). However, what should be noted here is that the notion of appropriate power is not at all compatible with the understanding understood by the people so far. Power is understood and spoken of as the power or effect possessed by a person or institution to impose his will on another party. According to Giroux (2013), power is not owned and practiced in a sphere where there are positions that are strategically related to one another.

More power in the individual becomes a deep subject, the smallest scope because it spreads without being able to be localized and permeates all social fabrics. This power operates and is not owned by any person in the relations of knowledge, science, and forums that normalize the compositions of the people (Prince & DiFranco, 2017). Gradually, power operates within the network of citizen consciousness. Due to power relation does not come from outside but determines the structure, rules, and correlations that originate from within. Furthermore, power is always actualized through knowledge, and knowledge always has an influence on power. The administration of knowledge always makes knowledge the basis of power (Haas, 2018). There is no knowledge without power and conversely, there is no power without knowledge. The problems in the idea were made into the legitimacy of power.

## **METHOD**

This study uses a social literary approach. This approach has the strength that literature is seen as a cultural product that is very much needed by society because literature is used to educate the public (Mertens, 2019). Literature is also capable of recording

community events. The method used in this research is the qualitative method. Wohlin & Aurum (2015) state that qualitative methods prioritize the depth of appreciation of the interactions between concepts that are being studied empirically. Qualitative methods are used to obtain accurate data, as well as data that contains meaning. Meaning is actual data, definite data is a value behind visible data (De Mauro, etc, 2016). Therefore, qualitative research does not emphasize generalization but emphasizes morefully.

This research uses the data source from the book Biography "Nommensen Apostel di Tanah Batak" by Patar Pasaribu, especially in Chapter 21 entitled "Nommensen meets King Panggalamei". While the data in this study are the words quoted in the book that contain the research problem. The data collection technique used is the reading and note-taking technique. The steps in data collection techniques include reading repeatedly in order to find and understand the power relations contained in the book and identify the forms of power from Michel Foucault's point of view and how that power can be manifested in society, as well as how the Characters convey their power to other characters by classifying the data that has been obtained (Foucault, 2014). The data analysis technique used the descriptive technique. The descriptive analysis technique is the technique used to describe the meaning of the data so as to create clarity on the answers to the problems presented and easily understood by the reader. The data analysis procedure in this study is to identify the data that has been classified and then the data is interpreted and concluded as the result of the analysis (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Results**

Power relations are a mode of action that does not work directly and immediately against others, different from violent relations that act on bodies or materials, which are coercive, destroy or close all possibilities. If in a violent relationship there is direct contact with a member of the body of one of the parties who is the object of violence, for example in a direct slap on the face of the party who is the object of violence, then the relationship power refers to actions taken in response to the actions of others (Lelaurain, etc, 2018). In other words, power relations are reactions taken by one party to actions taken by the other party. Another point used in analyzing power relations is the variation of objectives with the maintenance of privileges as an example. According to Benoit (2014), concession maintenance here can be interpreted as someone's effort to maintain previously owned from the actions of other parties which are considered to threaten his position as the owner of power.

For example, parents punish their children for violating the rules that have been set by people the elder as the owner of power in the family institution. Giving this punishment can be seen as a parent's effort to maintain his position as a power holder who has more rights than the child to determine the standard definition of good or bad that must be followed by the child. Efforts to maintain power as one example of maintenance of privileges can be done in various ways that more or less involve a process, such as the reaction action process that has been discussed by the author. This process can be done, either in a short time or in a relatively long period of time. Then, the last point seen in the analysis of power relations is described by Foucault by mentioning some examples of instrumental modes, such as the use of violence. Violence is something that allows the object of power to feel stronger intimidation by physical contact made by the more dominant party (Bob-Milliar, 2014).

Violence is a tool of anarchic power: violence has an effect, both visible and hidden, that causes trauma. Power is oppressive. But in power, this will become fragile if only suppressed. The application of power in the simplest form of institutions can be found in the family in which there are mix tradition conditions, legal structures, and matters of habit or fashion, where the father is considered the absolute power holder for the child (Gluckman & Moore, 2017). The position of the father as the holder of power is marked by a symbol. The results of the study in this story reveal several ideas that focus on the dominance of power relations, the encounter of influence or power hegemony, and also the parallels of

communication. The domination of power that should have been fully owned by King Panggalamei over Nommensen who was just a visitor and even a missionary who was not a colonizer, could be immediately removed by King Panggalamei because he and his followers had also killed missionaries before Nommensen before, namely Munson and Lyman. However, in this study, he actually experienced fear of Nommensen.

### **Discussion**

It is written in this literary work about Nommensen, "*The company (King Panggalamei) was always suspicious of passersby, eighty members, ready to watch the road. Lyman and Munson missionaries, crossing the road, dozens of people causing trouble, each carrying spear. The missionary was killed, his blood dripped on the ground, and the interpreter ran and ran somewhere...p. 119*" In this study, specifically King Panggalamei before the arrival of Nommensen already had strength, power, and troops that were always ready to serve him. Until the death of Munson and Lyman, the power relationship of King Panggalamei was also shown in the form of intimidation and violence that claimed lives. This power relation is entirely a form of authority and uniqueness, especially in the government during the Dutch colonial period.

Of course, this study is the study of the relationship between King Panggalamei and Nommensen. Still on page 119, it is written "*The news of the killing of Munson and Lyman spread to Europe, even the tragedy was very embarrassing and became a propaganda tool. The Batak people were insulted, because of Panggalamei and his friends, the news was spread widely, and dramatized by the Dutch. Nommensen was very moved, wanted to "save" Panggalamei, showed his love, and he announced the Prince of Peace.*" In this study, power relations seem to be in a hegemony as shown in the reverse reaction between the European and "Zending" missions against Nommensen's ideas, which actually wants to meet King Panggalamei immediately. It is not the fear that Nommensen shows as the result of the Munson and Lyman murders, but rather the desire to immediately save Panggalamei. This is in the hegemony of power relations that looks reversed because the elements of violence and control actually force Nommensen's emotions and desire to act oppositely.

In the recitation of Panggalamei, the uniqueness can be seen in his parents' time when he met Nommensen. On page 120, it is written that Nommensen and several mission workers are moving towards the hills in Lobu Pining Village. Nommensen was accompanied by Raja Musa (one of the kings in the Tapanuli area) and some local residents who took a long time to meet Raja Panggalamei. The relationship of a king's power which is identical to power and luxury was broken. After his visit, Nommensen did not find a gang of people for Panggalamei like a king. They only found a few houses surrounded by bamboo fences indicating protection against Panggalamei's house.

Panggalamei and several areas were even burned to the ground because of power problems with other kings. "*They arrived at a deserted village after half a day of walking. The village of Sisangkak where Panggalamei lives has been burned to the ground by the people of Banuarea because of revenge for what Panggalamei did to the King of Silo... page 120*". It is said that King Silo was killed by King Panggalamei by being shackled to death because of revenge. The king of Silo who died finally left a grudge on his people who was avenged to the village of Panggalamei. Contrasting power relations are actually shown to be somewhat contradictory because, in the end, King Panggalamei had lost his control over the area because it was burned by his opponent, King Silo. The contradictory power relations are not shown by the power-to-power relationship like a king to a king but between the people (the people of Raja Silo) and Raja Panggalamei.

In a parallel relationship of communication, it is shown in the conversation of Nommensen the missionary, and King Panggalamei on page 121: "*He (King Panggalamei) said, yes, sit down, sir. But let me call my wife first so someone can cook tea for us. Panggalamei wants to run.*" into the forest because he was unable to meet Nommensen. Nommensen introduced himself and stated the purpose of his visit by showing the impression that he had wanted to meet for a long time. Nommensen wanted King

*Panggalamei to repent and believe in Jesus Christ.*" In this study, parallel communication power relations are actually shown by the absence of doubt or reluctance even though Nommensen knows that Munson and Lyman's deaths are based on the knowledge and orders of King Panggalamei. However, fear and a decrease in the level of communication tend to make King Panggalamei want to avoid and find excuses because of his fear. This fear is based on the fact that, in Panggalamei's imagination, Nommensen seems to be Munson or Lyman seeking revenge.

## CONCLUSION

The idea of the dominance of power relations, the encounter of influence or hegemony of power, and also the parallels of communication have been shown in the story of the direct encounter between King Panggalamei and Nommensen. The dominance seems hegemonic by culture of thought of King and being afraid for sense of guilt over the deaths of Munson and Lyman. This power relation actually seems pragmatic because it is not in accordance with the context of power, where Raja Panggalamei is the King and Nommensen is an immigrant missionary. In terms of influence, the fear of wanting to communicate and interact as a whole was actually wanted by Nommensen, and was avoided by King Panggalamei because of fear. The existence of a position of power is expected in literary research to develop further along with theoretical progress and the uniqueness of a literary work.

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