

## Resistance to the Dutch Colonizers in the Novel *Tambera* The work of Utuy Tatang Sontani

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### Abstract

The novel *Tambera* by Utuy Tatang Sontani is a postcolonial novel. The story is set during the Dutch colonial period in the community of Banda Neira. This research utilizes a postcolonial approach and then dissects it using James Scoot's theory of resistance. The problem formulations studied are open and closed forms of resistance. Based on this research question, the aim of this research is to find forms of community resistance to the Dutch and the causes of community resistance to the Dutch in the novel *Tambera* by Utuy Tatang Sontani. In the novel *Tambera* by Utuy Tatang Sontani, there are 10 findings that caused resistance: (1) Wubani's opinion that the Dutch brought harm, (2) the kawista were angry, (3) the Maruko family became the topic of discussion for Imbata and his friends, (4) the kawista protested against construction of Fort, (5) kawista incited the residents who built the Fort, (6) nutmeg sale and purchase contract, (7) rejection of the nutmeg sale and purchase contract, (8) *Tambera* was annoyed with Imbata, (9) Wubani was suspicious of the presence of the Dutch army, (10) Gapipo's annoyance regarding nutmeg sales and purchase contracts and weapons searches. Benefits for an academic perspective, this research will produce a thesis on resistance as a theoretical contribution to the development of Indonesian language and literature education studies, especially regarding James C. Scoot's theory of resistance. Researchers hope that the results of this research will contribute to lecturers and teachers as teaching material in the development of literary science.

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## INTRODUCTION

Indonesia was historically one of the countries controlled by the Dutch, the abundance of spices in Indonesia was the reason why the Dutch colonized Indonesia. It is important that future generations of Indonesians are aware of this history in order to instill a sense of nationalism. Colonialism involves the control and occupation of a colony, which is the source of the term. The process of acquiring a colony through colonial conquest is known as colonization. Colonialism refers to the practice of controlling a region or country in order to expand its power over another country.

Postcolonial is a term derived from the English language, meaning "related to or existing after colonialism" as defined by Merriam Webster, or in Indonesian, something that is connected to the period after colonialism (Wijaya et al., 2020).

Bhabha's concepts emphasize the interconnectedness of the colonizer and the colonized, according to Taum (2017). Colonial relations were formed through conflicting and varied forms of beliefs. Bhabha claims that an "in-between space, a threshold space" (the liminal space) exists between the colonizer and colonized.

Postcolonial conversations are consistently found in this threshold space. In this third space, there are numerous meaning models, which include original texts. Various meanings are conveyed in the novel. The third space facilitates patterns and models of negotiation, which include stereotypes, mimicry, hybridity, and ambivalence.

Colonialism, which in many ways was instrumental in the formation of cultural studies, experienced significant shock in the mid-20th century. The same occurred with regard to colonial literature. The fall of colonialism in literature led to the emergence of a new postcolonial movement (Furqon and Busro, 2020).

The basic concept of postcolonialism from each figure is an understanding that believes that the effects of colonialism are still felt by the

people of former colonies, even though they have become independent. (Artawan 2015).

Postcolonial theory is a critical approach that aims to expose the adverse effects of colonialism. According to Ashcroft et al. (2003), postcolonialism deals with national cultures in the aftermath of the decline of imperial power. Postcolonial discourse scrutinizes the interplay between the West and East following the liberation of former colonies. Literary works comprehensively capture the social phenomena and dynamics of the postcolonial era. The process of colonialism made indigenous peoples have a lower position than the Dutch (Europeans) and foreign Eastern nations such as Arabs and Chinese. (Taulabi',2021)

A social system that exists in Society forms a role that provides functions to each individual in it. There is a relationship between individual along with its function of course will create conflict and problems (Nugroho,2022).

Literary works serve as a means of expressing the realities of life and conveying the values that are present in society. These core values include social, personal, aesthetic, moral, and others, as noted by Clara et al (2020)..

Postcolonial literature is literature that exists within the context during the colonial period. The word postcolonial does not only refer to the meaning of 'after' colonialism or the era of independence, but also the conditions left behind, since the beginning of colonialization and the impacts it caused (Ratna, 2013).

One of the novels with a colonial background is the novel *Tamera* by Utuy Tatang Sontani. Utuy Tatang Sontani is a drama writer, short story writer and novelist. He was born in Cianjur, West Java, 31 May 1920 and died in Moscow, 17 September 1979. Utuy came to Moscow originally because he had to seek treatment in Beijing before the G-30-S/PKI tragedy occurred. The eruption of the G-30-S/PKI meant that Utuy could not return to Indonesia and spent seven years in Beijing. Finally he decided to live in Moscow while teaching Indonesian at the Moscow Institute of Eastern Languages for seven years and then died.

The Tambera novel discusses the conflict between the Bandanese and Dutch people. The conflict began with a unilateral sale and purchase contract agreement by the Dutch. A group of Bandanese people felt unfair and disadvantaged, they felt increasingly pressured when the Dutch built a fort. Kawista, who led a group opposing the Dutch, made a plan to fight and drive out the Dutch. Another word for "perlawanan" is resistance.

Resistance is an attitude of rebellion between the characters in the story. "Perlawanan" in English is referred to as resistance which has a state or position, an attitude of defensive behavior, trying to resist, resisting, or attempting opposition. In general, this attitude is not based on, or refers to, a clear understanding. Resistance is the same as criticizing, literary criticism is careful observation, appropriate comparison and fair consideration of the good and bad qualities, the truth value of something. Thus, resistance is an action designed to free society from its oppressors by criticizing, resisting, and resisting as a way to create justice.

The novel Tambera tells a picture of the reality of life of the Bandanese people during the Dutch colonial period. The novel has a progressive plot with the main character named Tambera. The setting presented by the author is in 1599 (the Dutch colonial period). In this way, when readers read the novel, readers can recall the history of Indonesia during the Dutch colonial period. The actuality of the story in the novel is limited, so it is necessary to set boundaries between historical research and research on literary texts that summarize history, especially the postcolonial period. The Tambera novel is one of the literary works that successfully applies phenomena and dynamics to the postcolonial period, so researchers are interested in researching the novel.

A sense of empathy for Indonesian history, especially the Bandanese people, will emerge when reading the Tambera novel. This novel is indeed suitable for increasing knowledge of the history of Dutch colonialism in Banda Naira. Tambera's novel, which discusses stories with a

colonial background, is suitable to be understood using a postcolonial approach because it will focus more on finding the effects of colonialism. A postcolonial approach can support researchers to find resistance to the novel. Then the theory of resistance is interesting to use rather than other theories because the researcher believes that the conflicts in the novel Tambera are dominated by community resistance to the Dutch.

Based on the background, the novel Tambera by Utuy Tatang Sontani has the form, causes, resolution of resistance, so researchers are interested in conducting this research with the research title "Resistance to the Dutch Colonizers in the Novel Tambera by Utuy Tatang Sontani" with a postcolonial approach.

## METHODOLOGY

The approach used is a postcolonial approach. Budiman in (Khotimah, 2018) explains the concept of postcolonialism as the study of how literature reveals the "traces" of colonialism in the confrontation of "races, nations and their cultures" which occurred within the scope of "unequal relations" as a result of colonization Europe over the nations of the 'third world'. The word postcolonial, which is often used as a translation of postcolonial, refers to the problem of "time after" colonialism. In fact, postcolonial does not only refer to literary studies after the colonial era or the independence era but more broadly refers to everything related to colonialism. The impact of colonialism was not only felt from the physical side, but also from the mental side of the colonized people. Likewise with the Indonesian people who were colonized by the Dutch for approximately three and a half centuries (Sultomi Achmad, 2021)

This research uses resistance theory. The word resistance itself comes from English. Resistance comes from the words resist and ance. The meaning of the verb to resist according to the dictionary is "against", namely trying as hard as possible to resist or respond to the power or effects of oppression.

According to the psychology dictionary, resistance in the general sense, resistance, or a

resisting force in psychoanalytic literature, is used in the active resistance of a subject, which prevents unconscious material from becoming conscious, or from receiving expression, especially such unconscious material as who have suffered from oppression, (Drever, 1988).

The study of resistance to a given event considers various elements present in people's everyday experiences, such as narratives, topics of conversation, curses, praise, and other actions, resulting in a tit-for-tat dynamic within social sciences (Susilowati, 2018).

In postcolonial societies, resistance takes form as a means of preserving cultural identity and ownership by utilizing alternative methods of resistance.

Resistance or opposition is frequently intertwined within imperial discourse aimed at subjugating colonial subjects. The colonial administration wielded significant power in subduing the colonized. Essentially, colonial discourse consistently depicts a binary opposition between the colonizer and colonized, the civilized and savage, the white and black, in pursuit of economic and political exploitation (Ashcroft, 2001).

Reviewing the general understanding of resistance which looks at the actual situation in society. Resistance is defined as something that is (1) organic, systematic and cooperative, (2) has principles of selflessness, (3) has revolutionary consequences, and (3) includes ideas or intentions that eliminate the background surrounding family life According to James Scott, there are two forms of resisting: open and closed resisting (Scott, 2000).

The researcher will explain in detail the theory used as a guide in this research. The study begins with an examination of the novel *Tambera*, followed by a description of the formulation of the problem, which includes the types and origins of opposition. Subsequently, a postcolonial approach by Homi K Bhabha was implemented to analyze it. Following that, we will analyze the resistance section employing James C. Scott's theory. Afterwards, we will describe the research findings outlining the causes

of resistance, particularly regarding the Dutch's unilateral nutmeg sales contract agreement.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This position posits that the oppression experienced by individuals in their daily lives is the impetus for resistance movements. Oppressed communities leverage resistance as a means of protecting their rights (Scott, 2000). Hence, individuals who feel oppressed utilize resistance movements to preserve their subsistence amidst changes they reject. The following is an explanation of the causes of community resistance to the Dutch in the novel *Tambera* by Utuy Tatang Sontani.

### **Wubani's assumption that the Dutch caused harm**

Before Van Speult said goodbye to Imbata, Wilington arrived. Van Speult and Wilington got acquainted with the situation coldly. After Van Speult left, Wilington conveyed his wishes to the host. He went to Imbata's house to ask for land, but Imbata refused the request because many people did not agree with Wilington getting land in Banda. Wilington then said goodbye and said he would not go to Imbata's house again. Wubani, who listened behind the door to her husband's conversation with Wilington, commented as follows:

"Wow, as long as they are white, it makes us disturb the peace." (Tambera, 2011: 51)

Wubani thought that the arrival of the white people would bring harm. This was because Wubani saw that the Dutch and British people had different blood from the Bandanese people. Wubani considered all these differences as a sign of impending disaster, especially when he dreamed about a fire that almost burned his whole body.

### **Kawista was angry**

Kawista came to Imbata's house angrily, Kawista was already holding a knife and showed it to Imbata. Then Imbata asked what the problem was. Kawista's dislike for the Dutch increased even more because his goat was beaten

by the Dutch. Even though Imbata tried to calm him down, Kawista remained angry and demanding.

"I want to bleed someone, Uncle," he answered, showing a knife. "If Uncle doesn't want to take care of it right now, I will stab that person in the chest." (Tambera, 2011: 53)

"My goat was beaten, breaking its leg, even though the animal's only sin was eating grass in their yard." (Tambera, 2011: 53)

So, Kawista was angry because his goat was beaten until its legs broke, so he resisted the Dutch through Imbata.

### **The Maruko family became a topic of conversation for Imbata and his friends**

Imbata came home with his friends from the group at Mr Van Speult's house, they laughed as they climbed the stairs of Imbata's house. The friendship agreement which also promised to advance Banda by the Dutch people was welcomed by the Bandanese people. Then Wubani served lunch to her husband and his friends before they entered Imbata's house.

"Only Maruko's family won't come," said Ambalo, laughing.

"I can't think why they would raise their voices against us," Gapipo took his turn to speak. "Even though their lives can be said to depend on us."

"There's no mistake that Kawista has an opinion that doesn't agree," said Ambalo again.

"Yes," said the host, "the older the child becomes, the more his special qualities become apparent. Of course he wants to be the village head." (Tambera, 2011: 79)

Imbata's friends talked about Maruko's family not being involved in building the house, they guessed that it was Kawista who was the reason Maruko didn't come.

### **Kawista protested against the construction of the Fort**

Kawista and his group came to Imbata's house to express their disagreement with the construction of the Fort. He was also annoyed because the construction of the fort had not been held beforehand, whereas Imbata felt that the

Dutch had the right to build the fort because the land belonged to them.

"Uncle! I don't envy seeing other people earn money. What I am asking about is the construction of the fort. "Aren't you suspicious about the existence of a fort on the border of their land?"

Imbata frowned again, but quickly answered: "Suspicious or not, what do we need to do, Kawista, because the land already belongs to them."

"That's right, but if we had discussed it beforehand, at least the fort wouldn't have been built. Uncle has made a big mistake, because he did not heed the voice of the people." (Tambera, 2011: 174)

Kawista continued to press Imbata about building a fort, he thought Imbata could not understand the current situation.

"Uncle, do you believe the Dutch people's statements like that? If you believe it, Uncle is that Uncle is too old to understand the current situation. The fort, Uncle, is to separate them from us natives. And what does that separation mean? This is what should make us suspicious" (Tambera, 2011: 176)

Kawista's protest against Imbata regarding the construction of the fort was because Kawista was suspicious of the Dutch's purpose in building the fort. He believed that the construction of the fort would separate the Dutch from the Bandanese people so that the Bandanese people would not know what the Dutch were planning, which was clearly not a good goal for the Bandanese people.

### **Kawista incited the residents who were building the Fort**

Kawista's suspicions about the construction of the Fort did not stop with his protest to Imbata. He incited the people who were working to build the fort in secret. One by one he instigated them, but those who were instigated asked them to think about 5 days of work because they had already been paid to work for 5 days.

"For what?" asked one person. "To make money of course."

"Yes, but in that way you are actually helping the Dutch to harm their own people. Do you know what they actually built the fort for, Ara?" (Tambera, 2011: 177)

Kawista incited people to stop working because according to him the construction of the fort was a form of the Dutch to distance themselves from the people of Banda so he was suspicious of what the Dutch would do.

#### **Nutmeg sale and purchase contract**

During the meeting at Imbata's house, Kawista continued to argue that the Dutch were not good people, as evidenced by the arbitrary nutmeg sales and purchase contracts. Kawista thought the Dutch would shackle the Bandanese people.

Addressing the audience, Kawista said: "If so, who among us still believes that the Dutch people did good to us? We both know that the Dutch people did good to us? We both know that money that gives us strong energy, whereas now the amount will be reduced, 10 money per 1 hook of nutmeg is enough for what? In addition, we have to enter into an agreement to sell nutmeg to them forever, which means being shackled. Doesn't the contract certainly explain that if we violate it, they will take action in the form of punishment?" (Tambera, 2011: 202)

The nutmeg sale and purchase contract carried out unilaterally by the Dutch made Kawista even more convinced of his suspicions that the Dutch wanted to control Banda with the rules contained in the nutmeg sale and purchase contract. Kawista used this situation to influence other residents to be suspicious of the Dutch.

#### **Rejection of the nutmeg sale and purchase contract**

After Kawista expressed his opinion at the gathering at Imbata's house which discussed the nutmeg sale and purchase contract, 2/3 of the meeting participants agreed with Kawista's disagreement with the nutmeg sale and purchase contract. The results of the meeting showed that the people of Banda chose their own choices, those who did not agree to continue the meeting at Kawista's house while those who were still

thinking about going home went to their respective homes. The arbitrary attitude of the Dutch people made Kawista want to expel them from Banda. The resistance carried out by Kawista was open resistance.

"You will die, brother!" said Kawista. But if everyone here now does not agree to the arbitrary demands of the Dutch, then it would be good if we now also determine a plan on how we should expel them. Anyone who does not agree with the intention of expulsion can just go home." (Tambera, 2011:207)

"This isn't a game either, Father," answered his son. "Do you think the Dutch people's request is a game? Think about it! They asked us not to sell nutmeg to other nations, except the Dutch, at a set purchase price of 10 money. for each 1 nutmeg hook. That way, they actually want to kill us, just not openly" (Tambera, 2011:208)

The existence of the sale and purchase contract made Kawista and Wina, Maruko's children, angry, because the rules were determined unilaterally by the Dutch. The price of nutmeg, which was originally 20 money per bunch, is now only priced at 10 money per bunch and is only allowed to be sold to the Dutch. This regulation was considered oppression by the Dutch people against the Bandanese people, so they formed groups to defend their rights.

#### **Tambera is annoyed with Imbata**

Tambera told Imbata's father that Imbata's name was not recorded by the Dutch, because if it was recorded he would be considered an enemy and his garden would be confiscated. Tambera's words were considered just the chatter of a child, but even so, Imbata still thought about her son's words.

"Oh, apparently you don't understand that someone who loses a war means they lose their possessions. "Meanwhile, the Dutch will wage war with anyone, even if necessary, with the islanders." (Tambera, 2011: 232)

Tambera's initial goal in working at the Fort was to stay close to Clara, but apart from that, she also gathered all the information she

could from inside the Fort, information related to the survival of the Banda people.

### **Wubani was suspicious of the presence of Dutch soldiers**

Wubani, who came to Swamin's house with the aim of trying for Tambara, told the beginning of Kawista's threat to destroy Tambara who worked at the Fort. This made Kawista even more angry with Imbata. Apart from Tambara, Kawista was also angry because Imbata wanted to sign a sale and purchase contract, according to Kawista, this was a bad example for society.

"That is their latest attitude in the way they bring chaos to the villagers. The contract promised to sell nutmeg to Dutch people only at a very cheap price. Sales to other nationalities are not permitted. In short, it's an arbitrary rule. My man is very heavy to bear. "But because there were soldiers beside the contract, which, although it was not said, it could be felt that the soldiers were used to protect them in entering into the contract, in the end my son decided to sign it too." (Tambara, 250)

Apart from Kawista, Wubani also felt that the Dutch had acted arbitrarily. He considered that the nutmeg sale and purchase contract and the presence of the Dutch army were a form of oppression from the Dutch.

### **Gapipo's annoyance at the nutmeg sale and purchase contract and weapons searches**

Gapipo, a close friend of Imbata, spoke up after hearing the village head's description of his conversation with Mr. Van Speult. Van Speult forced the Banda residents to sign a sale and purchase contract, apart from that there would be security guards from the Dutch because Imbata was considered negligent in maintaining order. The order in question is about the resistance of the Kawista group. Gapipo's attitude was open resistance because the discussions at this meeting were rational and focused on the interests of many people.

What is the will of today, brothers? Today's wishes may be like what Kawista did, looking at the Dutch as enemies who are forcing us to sell nutmeg according to the contract they

want and to search our houses for weapons? It's not good, isn't it?" (Tambara, 2011 :272)

Gapipo was annoyed with the behavior of the Dutch and now he considered them to be enemies. The intimidating attitude of the Dutch became even more pronounced when Dutch soldiers searched their houses, even just gathering together was not allowed.

### **CONCLUSION**

In the novel Tambara by Utuy Tatang Sontani there is resistance, namely open and closed resistance which refers to James Scoot's theory. There are 16 open resistances and 2 closed resistances. The figures who carried out open resistance were Wubani, Supani, Maruko and the Kawista group and the figures who carried out closed resistance were Wubani and several Banda residents.

The causes of resistance in the novel Tambara by Utuy Tatang Sontani: (1) Wubani's opinion that the Dutch brought harm, (2) Kawista was angry, (3) Maruko's family became the topic of discussion for Imbata and his friends, (4) Kawista protested against the construction of the Fort, (5) Kawista incites the residents who built the Fort, (6) the nutmeg sale and purchase contract, (7) rejection of the nutmeg sale and purchase contract, (8) Tambara is annoyed with Imbata, (9) Wubani is suspicious of the presence of the Dutch army, (10) Gapipo's annoyance regarding the existence of a nutmeg sale and purchase contract and a weapons search.

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