Sandiwara Sastra as an Indonesian Cultural Strategy and Literature Canonization

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Abstract. This study aims at analyzing Sandiwara Sastra, initiated by the Ministry of Education and Culture, as a form of cultural strategy and literary canonization. This research explores the adaptation of Indonesian literature from the early 1900s to the 2000s into audio formats. This research uses a qualitative approach as it focuses on scrutinizing the texts of literary works and their audio adaptations. The result reveals that the adaptation into audio format is made as a cultural strategy for promoting literary works to the young generation that has become acquainted with the digital elements. The transformation of the texts into audio formats is also regarded as an attempt to strengthen the canonization of the literary works and the articulation of several issues, such as culture, ideology, and history. This study contributes to the study of literary adaptation as a strategy for not only disseminating literary works to the young generation but also empowering the status of the works in the era of state-of-the-art technology.

Keywords: Cultural strategies, literature, canonization.

1. Introduction

Through the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Indonesian government has developed a national cultural promotion strategy, reinforced by the Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 5 of 2017 on promoting Indonesian Culture. Promoting Indonesian literature is one form of cultural promotion undertaken by the Indonesian government. This effort is carried out by organizing programs to introduce Indonesian literary works to the Indonesian people, especially students and the younger generation in Indonesia. In the strategy of cultural promotion, several fascinating steps and methods are determined, among others: protection, development, and utilization [1].

The three methods of cultural promotion are then implemented by initiating a literary development program called "Sandiwara Sastra." This literary podcast program implements cultural promotion strategies using new media and information technology. In this program, Indonesian literary works are translated into audio podcasts on the social media platforms Spotify and YouTube. This program is designed to provide broad and easy access for Indonesian people to enjoy Indonesian literary works through social media platforms that are popular today. Through this new format, the Ministry of Education and Culture aims to make Indonesian literary works more accessible and enjoyable to various groups of people, especially the younger generation. The transfer of Indonesian literary works in audio is familiar in Indonesia; from the 1980s to the late 90s, the transfer of Indonesian literary works in radio drama was very popular

in Indonesia [2]. The Ministry of Education and Culture then took over the glory of radio drama in that era by replacing radio media, which was beginning to be abandoned by its listeners, with entertainment media platforms loved by the Indonesian people, namely YouTube and Spotify.

Interestingly, as a representation of the government program, this program must maintain a good image of the government in the eyes of the public. Therefore, the selection of artists and actors who play a role in the Sandiwara Sastra program must also have a good track record in the field of literature and act as an attraction for this program in the eyes of the Indonesian people. In addition, the selection of Indonesian literary works featured in the Sandiwara Sastra program must also represent many factors because it is also related to the politics of canonization of Indonesian literature. This research will discuss the implementation strategies of this program to attract the Indonesian people's interest, as well as what is represented in the selected literary works so that they deserve to be called canon works in Indonesian literature.

2. Method

The research methods used in this study are descriptive and qualitative. Qualitative methods are used to explore an in-depth understanding of how podcasts of Sandiwara Sastra play a role in cultural strategy and literary canonization. The descriptive method provides a more comprehensive picture of the Sandiwara Sastra podcast as a cultural strategy and literary canonization. The work steps carried out in this research are data collection, data analysis, and finally, the compilation of findings.

The research data were collected from various sources on the Internet in the form of news texts, the audio content of literary podcasts, novels, short stories, and scholarly journals. The data collected was analyzed using thematic and narrative approaches. The data analysis process will produce common themes, insights, and meanings from the data. The analysis results will be used to formulate qualitative findings that describe the role of literary podcasts as a cultural strategy and literary canonization.

3. Result and Discusion

3.1 The Transformation of Indonesian Literature as a Cultural Strategy in the Digital Age

Indonesian literary works have undergone a remarkable transformation in line with the development of the digital age. In this context, transformation is not only a response to technological change but also an important strategy to ensure the existence and relevance of literary works in an increasingly digitally connected society. The digital age paves the way for writers, poets, and other literary creators to reach a broader and more diverse audience. Literary works can transcend geographical boundaries through online platforms, enabling a rich and engaging cultural dialogue. In light of this, new media, such as podcasts, is an innovative approach to presenting Indonesian literary works in a new and fresh light. Podcast platforms can be found in various music and audio applications, such as Spotify and video-based platforms like YouTube.

A breakthrough in the transformation of Indonesian literature has been introduced by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture in cooperation with the Titimangsa Foundation in converting Indonesian literary works into audio. These Sandiwara Sastra showcase the creativity of artists in transforming prose narratives into audio formats. Some of the literary works that have been adapted into audio format through this Sandiwara Sastra program are the

short story "Mencari Herman" by Dee Lestrari, the novel "Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk" by Ahmad Tohari, "Layar Terkembang" by Alisyahbana, the short story "Berita dari Kebayoran" by Pramoedya Ananta Toer, the novel "Helen dan Sukanta" by Pidi Baiq, and the collection of short stories "Zig Zag" by Putu Wijaya. Through this innovation, there is a refreshment in the world of literature that stimulates the interest of the younger generation to enjoy and appreciate Indonesian literature more easily.

The purpose of this step is to preserve Indonesian literature by utilizing existing technological advances. Podcasts are a form of audio recording that can be accessed by many people, and through their auditory aspect, they can stimulate listeners' imagination. This audio-based content offers excellent opportunities for its creators, primarily because of its ease of access and appeal to users. Podcasts have inherent advantages, including automatic access, ease of use, control in the hands of the consumer, portability, and constant content availability. Technological support such as smartphones, laptops and tablets further strengthens the existence of these podcasts [3].

The strategy of transferring Indonesian literary works to digital platforms in the form of podcast audio formats is the right step. This is supported by the results of research conducted by Supriyono et al. [4] , which states that 31 out of 44 students often use podcasts as entertainment media. In this case, students prefer digital media such as podcasts, audiobooks or videos as literacy media rather than reading books. This shows that as the current generation, students follow the development of existing technology and use technology by using digital media for entertainment and broadening their horizons. Meanwhile, podcasts as a digital media preference also showed a relatively high percentage of 72.7%. The existence of the "Sandiwara Sastra" podcast, a form of literary transformation into audio form, can be a solution to increase the public's interest, especially the younger generation, in Indonesian literary works.

3.2 Branding Strategy of Sandiwara Sastra Podcast Program

To attract the interest of Indonesia's younger generation to enjoy and love Indonesian literature, the government of Indonesia also collaborates with famous artists and actors, musicians, and directors who have a good track record in the art world. The involvement of these artists is a form of marketing a product or program to attract broader consumer interest. The involvement of artists or celebrities is partially coincidental, but this is a form of a larger strategy to attract the wider community's interest to this program. The public figures involved as actors and narrators in the Sandiwara Sastra podcast program are artists who have many fans and a good image in the eyes of the Indonesian public. Furthermore, this program is considered to represent the image of the Indonesian government.

The participating actors and actresses include Adinia Wirasti, Ario Bayu, Arswendy Bening Swara, Asmara Abigail, Atiqah Hasiholan, Chelsea Islan, Chicco Jerikho, Christine Hakim, Eva Celia, Happy Salma, Iqbaal Ramadhan, Jefri Nichol, Kevin Ardilova, Lukman Sardi, Lulu Tobing, Marsha Timothy, Mathias Muchus, Maudy Koesnaedi, Najwa Shihab, Nicholas Saputra, Nino Kayam, Oka Antara, Pevita Pearce, Reza Rahadian, Rio Dewanto, Tara Basro, Vino G. Bastian and Widi Mulia. Bastian and Widi Mulia. The artists, musicians, and performers involved in the staging of this literary play represent different generations, from the oldest generation to the millennial and Z Generation. The big names of these artists are considered to have characters and track records in the art world that represent the image of this program, such as the artist is heavily involved in the practice of literary activities, does not have a bad image in attitude, has a good name as a public figure in the art world, has many fans, and

has starred in many films. In addition, the Ministry of Education and Culture also appointed Gunawan Maryanto, an art worker with a big name, as a director to direct this activity.

The involvement of specific artists and public figures in this program is a marketing strategy called the celebrity endorser strategy by Hani, Marwan, and Andre [5]. According to them, the involvement of celebrities is a powerful tool in the marketing strategy of a product or program. Celebrities marketing a product or program as a consumer interest attractor must also meet at least three essential factors: credibility, attractiveness, and power. A celebrity's credibility is related to attitude, ability, and expertise. The celebrity's attractiveness is based on familiarity, likability, and closeness to consumers and fans. A celebrity's physical attractiveness, intelligence, and charisma significantly impact products and programs. The selection of an inappropriate celebrity figure will fail to convey the message of a program or product, thus reducing the public's attractiveness to the program's product. According to the celebrity endorser theory presented by Hani, Marwan and Andre [5], The attractiveness and credibility of celebrity endorsers positively impact consumer recall of an advertisement for a marketed product or program. In addition, the attractiveness and credibility of celebrity endorsers positively influence consumer purchase intention. In connection with the Sandiwara Sastra Podcast Program implemented by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture, the celebrity endorser strategy is well used in selecting artists and actors involved in this program to attract the interest of all segments of Indonesian society to enjoy Indonesian literary works through this Sandiwara Sastra Podcast Program.

3.3 Podcast Sandiwara Sastra and the Politics of Indonesian Literary Canonization

Canonized literature is defined as literature whose quality is unquestionable and therefore considered standard [6] and is dynamic and a form of consensus. Therefore, literary critics and scholars are considered the most competent and responsible in this process. The literary canon is also often understood as a group of authors or works recognized by academics, historians, and teachers as worthy of study. Meanwhile, the Indonesian literary works selected to be performed in this Sandiwara Sastra podcast program consist of 10 literary works [7], [8]. The ten works are:

3.3.1 Layar Terkembang Novel's by Sutan Takdir Alisjahbana, (1937_Balai Pustaka)

The novel Layar Terkembang plays a role in criticizing (symbolic resistance) the patriarchal hegemony that was still strong during the colonial period. The opposition in the book is depicted in the form of giving equal opportunities to women in terms of education and being active in the public arena [9]. The principle of gender equality and the modern thinking of the female character to determine her life path independently in this story is very interesting.

3.3.2. Short story Berita dari Kebayoran by Promoedya Ananta Toer (PAT); (1957_Hasta Mitra)

Post-Independence brought about new problems, especially in Jakarta. This story, which observes the "lower" society, tells us about the complicated issues that arose after the revolution. Pramoedya Ananta Toer presents the social context following the spirit of the times through his stories. The depiction of social and political problems was present in a slick/ exciting manner. In the story, the author seeks to provide experience to readers about the importance of a modern/post-colonial society free from oppression.

3.3.3. Short story Seribu Kunang-kunang di Manhattan by Umar Kayam; (1972_Pustaka Jaya)

The dialogue between Marno and Jane, which is very natural despite their different cultural backgrounds, is the strength of this story. The lights on the tall buildings in Manhattan remind Marno of the lights of thousands of fireflies in his village. The way of looking at Western culture in this story leads readers not to forget the culture of their ancestors even though they have lived for a long time and have direct contact. The narrative of equality in terms of gender, origin, and the region that forms culture (West and East) contained in this short story opens the awareness of the (Indonesian) reading public to be free from inferior attitudes towards the West.

3.3.4. Novel Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk by Ahmad Tohari; (1982_Gramedia Pustaka Utama)

Through this novel, the author attempts to make readers aware of the suffering that arises from ideological and political conflicts in Indonesian history. This work indirectly influences readers to objectively see the history of ideological and political conflict in Indonesia in 1965.

3.3.5. Short story Kemerdekaan by Putu Wijaya; (1996_Pustaka Firdaus)

Through this short story, the author defines independence as physical and independence of mind and will. The author's meaning of independence as a whole was packaged in a story about a bird's refusal to be freed by its master from its cage. The short story, published at the end of the New Order government in Indonesia, is a form of criticism by the author of the freedom of thought and opinion at that time.

3.3.6. Short story Persekot by Eka Kurniawan; (2005_KPG)

Similar to the story Berita dari Kemayoran by PAT, which raises social problems in the periphery of society. The story describes a group of people who are often in trouble with the law and far from a sense of justice. The terminal as a place setting that unites all the characters in the story also has negative potential in its continuity. Power relations that are very real physically and changeable result in chaotic living conditions. Law enforcement officials easily criminalize terminal people (the Boy characters) without valid evidence. The story shows the actual situation of most public spaces (especially terminals) in Indonesia at the beginning of the Reformation.

3.3.7. Short story "Mencari Herman" by Dee Lestari (2006_Gagas Media).

The author's aphorism "Satu menggenapkan tapi dua melenyapkan" is the key to understanding this nuanced love story about a man and a woman. The plot is interwoven with prevalent urban social issues, including patriarchal tendencies that are ultimately overcome by the characters' realization of gender equality in the story's conclusion. This story highlights the influence of the environment on an individual's character and personality. The author employs an aphorism that suggests that the female character, Hera, ultimately discovers a man named Herman Suherman, who has already passed away. In contrast, the male character, Abang, ceases to dwell on his deceased lover, Hera, and his wife, who also perished in a ravine.

3.3.8. Lalita Novel by Ayu Utami; (2012_KPG)

"Lalita" addresses gender equality and showcases the rich culture of the Indonesian archipelago through the Borobudur temple story. Ayu Utami's 2012 novel "Lalita" addresses gender equality and showcases the rich culture of the Indonesian archipelago through the Borobudur temple story. The novel also presents a strong female protagonist who challenges gender stereotypes. The setting of the story is the urban culture of Jakarta. Criticism of societal concerns (the country's negligence of history), male dominance in various aspects, and significant exploration of philosophical concepts of life are among the merits of this novel.

3.3.9. Helen and Sukanta novel by Pidi Baiq; (2019_The Panasdalam Publishing)

This story, set in Indonesia's independence struggle, has its tragic history behind it. It is said that the Japanese colonized Indonesia and committed torture/war crimes against the Dutch, Totok, descendants, and even indigenous people suspected of being close to them. The virtue of universality (marriage between an indigenous man and a Dutch woman) was destroyed by the atrocities of war. The virtue of this story is the expression of the voices of minorities who are marginalized because of political issues.

3.3.10 Orang-Orang Oetimu novel by Felix K. Nesi (2019_Marjin Kiri)

The collapse of the New Order and the secession of East Timor are the setting of this story. This novel presents a paradox about the ideology and attitudes of the Oetimu people. Where nationalism is juxtaposed with communism and the preservation of the grudges of his people, in its unique way, the novel invites the reader to stand up against oppression, care for the victims of violence, and understand the importance of being tolerant of differences.

The selection of these ten works of Indonesian literature in the Sandiwara Sastra Podcast program is a canonization process of Indonesian literature. A political effort by the government to determine works worth reading for the Indonesian people, especially students. Apart from the many works of Indonesian literature that deserve canonical works, these ten works deserve to be called canonical ones and staged in the Sandiwara Sastra Podcast. The analysis of the text content of literary works shows that the ten works have represented various things related to national identity and Indonesianness. These ten literary works represent Indonesian society's different group identities and ideological patterns.

The texts of the ten literary works in the Sandiwara Sastra podcast are representations of each periodization of literary works, gender representations of both works and authors, representations of multicultural Indonesian identity, representations of groups and ideologies, and representations of Indonesian history. The following describes the grouping of the ten literary works in their various representations.

Representation of literary works periodization
The ten literary works represent different periods of the emergence of these literary works. They were starting from the pre-independence period of Indonesia to 2019. The novel Layar Terkembang (1937) by Sutan Takdir Alisjahbana represents literary works from the pre-independence era of Indonesia (Balai Pustaka era). Promoedya Ananta Toer's short story Berita dari Kebayoran (1957) represents literary works from the 50s.

Umar Kayam's short story Seribu Kunang-kunang di Manhattan (1972) represents literary works of the 70s. Ahmad Tohari's Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk (1982) represents literary works of the 80s. Eka Kurniawan's short story Persekot (2005) and Dee Lestari's short story Mencari Herman (2006) represent literary works from the 2000s. Ayu Utami's Lalita (2012), Helen and Sukanta (2019) and Felix K. Nesi's Orang-Orang Oetimu (2019) represent literary works from the 2010s.

Representation of Women (Authors and Their Works)
The short story "Mencari Herman" by Dee Lestari and the novel "Lalita" by Ayu Utami represent literary works written by Indonesian women writers, whom male writers mostly dominate. Regarding story content, Lelita's novel explicitly criticizes the dominance of men in a patriarchal culture.

Representation of Indonesia's diverse and multicultural identity
Ahmad Tohari's Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk represents the Javanese cultural setting in a village in remote Java. Pidi Baiq's Helen dan Sukanta represents the interaction between indigenous and European ethnicities in the colonial setting of West Java. The novel Orang-Orang Oetimu by Felix K. Nesi describes the people's history, culture and daily life in a small region in Timor, East Nusa Tenggara.

Representation of Groups and Ideologies
The novel Layar Terkembang by Sutan Takdir Alisjahbana (1937) illustrates women's resistance to breaking the patriarchal culture full of injustice. The short story Berita dari Kebayoran by Promoedya Ananta Toer (1957) in the Sandiwara Sastra podcast represents literary works produced by writers affiliated with the Lekra group. During the Suharto era in Indonesia, writers affiliated with Lekra, including Pramudya Ananta Toer himself, were repressed by the Suharto government because they were considered part of the Indonesian Communist Party. Their works were considered forbidden reading at the time. Eka Kurniawan's short story Persekot (2005) raises the issue of marginalized people in urban society who are marginalized in an unjust social structure. The novel Orang Oetimu by Felix K. Nesi (2019) is a literary work from a community setting in eastern Indonesia that is untouched by state development programs.

Representation of Indonesian History
The novel Layar Terkembang by Sutan Takdir Alisjahbana (1937) represents people's social life in the colonial era. The novel Helen dan Sukanta by Pidi Baiq (2019) depicts the social life during Dutch and Japanese colonialism. The short story Berita dari Kebayoran by Promoedya Ananta Toer (1957) depicts the social and political life after Indonesian independence. The novel Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk by Ahmad Tohari (1982) depicts the political events of 1965, which has become a dark chapter in Indonesia's history. The novel Orang-Orang Oetimu (2019) by Felix K. Nesi represents the history of the separation of East Timor from Indonesia.

From the above explanation, each work represents a variety of representations that depict the face of the Indonesian nation, both visible and hidden. The selection of the ten works of Indonesian literature in the Sandiwara Sastra podcast program is a step taken by the state through the Ministry of Education and Culture in compiling the canonical literary works in Indonesia,

which is an effort to introduce Indonesian literary works to the public and to improve the quality of literacy and reading material of the Indonesian people, especially students.

4. Conclusion

The transformation of literary works is crucial in promoting Indonesian culture in this digital age. Literary works have great potential to become a window of Indonesian culture to the international world. Through methods of protection, development, and utilization, innovations in transferring Indonesian literary works make them more accessible to people from different cultural backgrounds. At the national level, literature can be integrated into the educational curriculum to foster a love of Indonesian culture and language from an early age.

The effort to transform Indonesian literary works in the Sandiwara Sastra podcast program is also a step that is indirectly a political effort by the state to create a canon of literary works in Indonesian literature—an effort to improve the quality of literacy and reading material for the Indonesian people.

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