

Binary Opposition between Characters against Myths in the Novel *Begu Ganjang* by Ferdiriva Hamzah

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyse the narrative construction in a novel by Ferdiriva Hamzah that explores the myth of Begu Ganjang. The study investigates how traditional narratives passed down through generations become the subject of debate in the context of contemporary society. The focus of the analysis lies on the dynamics between the characters, where the main character who tends to represent the values of modernity and rationality confronts the supporting characters who still adhere to traditional beliefs. This research examines the contestation of binary oppositions that emerge from the tensions that occur as reflected in the interactions between characters in the novel. This research method applies a descriptive qualitative approach, using Levi-Strauss' structuralism analysis framework to analyse the mythological construction process. The Levi-Strauss structuralism paradigm is applied to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of the Begu Ganjang myth in the socio-cultural context of Batak society. This study aims to explore and analyse the contradictions that occur in the characters in the narrative of the Begu Ganjang myth. In Levi-Strauss' structuralist perspective, this opposition is conceptualised as binary opposition.

INTRODUCTION

Traditional societies believe in myths not as fictional narratives, but as symbolic manifestations that represent epistemology, belief systems, and fundamental values in a culture. Through the symbolic structures articulated in myths, traditional societies seek to convey ethical values such as harmonisation with nature, respect for ancestors, socio-cultural and morality. Thus, mythical stories are expected to become basic guidelines in life and pragmatic solutions in social life. This paradigm allows the interpretation of myth as a communicative system, as postulated by Barthes (2007: 295) who asserts that myth is the modality of a message.

In reality, the expectations of traditional communities regarding mythical narratives are not necessarily internalised or accepted thoroughly in various circles of society. Mythic narratives become an object of controversial pros and cons in various contexts. Proponents of myths appreciate the traditional values and morals embedded in the narrative. The pro society sees myths as an important aspect and cultural heritage that needs to be preserved. The opposition, on the other hand, sees myths not as a mystical narrative that is beyond reason, but a delusional disorder that can be explained scientifically. They highlight mystical phenomena that occur due to excessive worry that causes a person to be delusional. Cultural and environmental factors contribute to a person's delusional disorder (Siagian & Effendy, 2023: 89).

Tumanggor (2008) critiques the mythical phenomenon in a theological context, arguing that spiritual deficiency and a crisis of faith in the Christian tradition can influence people to shift blame and responsibility to others. By adopting the concept of Begu Ganjang, Tumanggor illustrates how individuals judge those who are considered guilty for their suffering. In conclusion, Tumanggor criticises the belief in Begu Ganjang as a form of spiritual emptiness towards God.

This debate shows the complexity of interpreting myths in the midst of the times and the influx of major religions and modern science. For some people, myths are still seen as a cultural heritage that needs to be preserved, while for others, myths are considered an outdated belief that must be abandoned. However, despite the pros and cons, the existence of the Begu Ganjang myth has become an inseparable part of the Batak cultural treasure that continues to intertwine with the dynamics of the lives of its people. The debate creates space for further exploration of the complexity of culture, morality and ethics in Batak society. An in-depth understanding of these pros and cons allows for a more contextualised and holistic analysis of the role of myths in shaping social norms and cultural values within a community. Basically, myths are cultural messages to community members (Lévi-Strauss, 1958: 94).

The description of myth as a literary work cannot be separated from the structuralism theory of Lévi-Strauss. In the viewpoint of this theory, myth is not just a fictional or superstitious story to scare, but a story that contains a number of messages. Lévi-Strauss' structuralism is unique in its study of myth. Lévi-Strauss combines various forms of narrative such as fairy tales, stories, legends,

and myths into a single entity called myth. With this approach, he managed to understand myth as a system consisting of interconnected elements. His concept of structuralism reveals how these myths have structural patterns that often recur and can reveal the basic structure of human thought in various cultures. Myth is one of the factors that organise society's activities in a normative direction (Daeng, 1993: 69).

Ferdiriva Hamzah's novel *Begu Ganjang* is a literary work that raises myths as a topic of discussion. The pros and cons of the Begu Ganjang myth are also carried out by the central and peripheral characters in the novel. The central character, who is represented as a modern society that has accepted science, rejects the myth. Meanwhile, the peripheral characters, who are represented as conventional people who are old enough and do not have a high educational background, believe in the Begu Ganjang myth as a supernatural entity that likes to look for sacrifices.

Ferdiriva Hamzah in his novel narrates the misalignment between the central and peripheral characters. The misalignment between the characters is due to the denial by modern society, in this case the central character, of the traditional beliefs that have developed over centuries. The central character, who is described as a doctor, can then explain the spiritual myths with the medical knowledge he has learnt. His opposition to the myth makes the central character ignore the message or value that the myth is trying to convey.

The explanation and interpretation of myths becomes a crucial aspect in the context of academic studies, because myths do not only function as historical narratives, but also as cultural manifestations that reflect the values, norms and beliefs adopted by the local community. An in-depth understanding of the myth becomes the foundation for researchers in exploring the complexity of North Sumatran culture. This research is designed to understand, explain, and analyse the binary opposition of the characters depicted in the novel *Begu Ganjang*. Thus, this research has the novelty of research and is worthy of being submitted as a thesis entitled "Binary Opposition Between Characters against Myths in the Nove; *Begu Ganjang* by Ferdiriva Hamzah," where the focal point of this research is further exploration of hereditary things from ancestors that still exist and are always believed in the midst of the modern era.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Levi-Strauss Structuralism

Structuralism is a new for anthropology. Before the introduction of Lévi-Strauss Structuralism, anthropology at that time never considered the role of language, which is very close to human culture. This structuralism approach in the field of cultural anthropology and linguistics emphasises that an understanding of human culture can be obtained through the analysis of cultural structures that form the basis for various cultural phenomena. This research aims to reveal the patterns and interrelationships of Batak culture through language analysis, thus enabling an understanding of the fundamental principles that govern social and cultural life.

Ahimsa (2006: 24-25) explains that there are several understandings of the relationship between culture and language, namely: (1) In a group of people language is used to reflect the culture of the community concerned. (2) Language is part of the culture itself. (3) Language has a role for culture because there are similarities in type between what is in the culture and the material used to build language.

Lévi-Strauss' structuralism seeks to organise and account for phenomena related to a culture. In analysing these cultural phenomena, Lévi-Strauss divides the structure into two parts, namely the outer structure and the deep structure. The outer structure is the tangible manifestation or visible form of cultural phenomena. It includes the norms, rules, and practices that can be directly observed in a society or culture. The outer structure is visible and can be explicitly identified. Examples could include ritualistic procedures, family arrangements, belief systems, or forms of artistic expression that can be observed by members of the community. Meanwhile, the inner structure refers to the patterns of thought, values, and basic concepts that underpin the outer structure. It is a more abstract dimension and not always directly visible. The inner structure includes the principles that govern society's thought patterns, classifications, and worldviews. To understand the inner structure, deeper analyses are needed to identify the underlying patterns that shape people's collective understanding of reality.

The thing to note in structuralism is that there is a change in the structure of an object or activity. However, the change is not a complete change or commonly termed as a transformation process. In this process, only certain parts of a structure change while the old elements are still maintained. The basic principle of structure in Levi-Strauss' theory is that social structure is not related to empirical reality, but to the models built according to that empirical reality (Levi-Strauss, 2007: 378).

Myth

Lévi-Strauss' structuralism then developed his theory into myth analysis. Lévi-Strauss (via Susanto, 2012: 100) concludes that myths around the world are basically arbitrary. Myths are placed in linear parts that have a connection between episodes in the myth by combining each episode. The meaning of each episode depends on the whole story by paying attention to the position of the episode (Sunanang, etc., 2015: 3).

Lévi-Strauss in his book *The Structural Study of Myth* (via Ahimsa 2001: 81) explains that myths exist in two times, namely, reversible and non-reversible time. This view is based on the fact that, on the one hand myths point to events that have occurred in the past, but on the other hand myths have a distinctive pattern that makes myths timeless which can explain what has happened in the past, present and future.

Philen (2005: 222) writes that myth is the work of the human mind, but uses cultural codes. Myth, according to LéviStrauss, is a manifestation of the simple thoughts of the ancients, where events that occur are explained simply based on the reasoning of the ancients. This then gave rise to basic assumptions in studying myths. Lévi-Strauss explains the unit of myth formation, namely

mythemes or gross constituent units. Each mytheme unit will consist of relations that will produce meaning when combining them. So, if the substance of myth is a story, the forming units are not as they are in language. The units of myth will not be found in phonemes, morphemes, and sememes, but at a higher level so that to identify the mytheme it should be at the sentence level (Lévi-Strauss, 1963: 206-207).

The use of mythology in a literary work is related to human life and human relationships that are controlled by myths. The attitude of a human being can be determined by the myths that reside within him. Therefore, the issue of myth does not question the truth, but helps direct society in the legal order, social structure and system, environment, and the reality of the cosmos (Esen, 1988: 7).

Binary Opposition

The concept of binary opposition was originally theorised by linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, but it was Claude Lévi-Strauss who made it particularly influential. Lévi-Strauss was a structuralist anthropologist who used many of Saussure's language theories to analyse all cultural processes such as cooking, dress, family systems, myths and legends in society. For Strauss, binary opposition is 'the essence of sense making', a structure that organises our system of meaning towards culture and the world in which we live. In a binary system, there are only two signs or words that only have meaning when each is in opposition to the other. Their existence is determined by the absence of the other (Sandiyasa, 2008).

The concept of binary opposition is an important foundation in understanding how the human mind organises and interprets socio-cultural reality. The human mind tends to organise the reality of life through pairs or binary oppositions, such as: high-low, hot-cold, male-female, nature-culture, etc. Binary oppositions allow humans to categorise, organise, classify, and interpret the world in a structured way (Lévi-Strauss, 1958:63).

Lévi-Strauss sees that binary opposition is not only found in the way humans think, but is also reflected in various aspects of people's lives. Binary opposition is the most important aspect that can reveal how humans think, how humans produce meaning and understand reality. Therefore, the discovery of binary oppositions is useful in providing clues to the operation of human reason. In the context of narrative analysis, binary opposition can reveal the logic behind the creation of a narrative (Everina, 2021).

The binary opposition found in language is similar to the binary opposition in the Western philosophical tradition. It is because of this similarity that Derrida calls the binary opposition the property of logos or 'the truth of truth' (Norris, 2003: 10). The truth is that binary oppositions are never neutral or equal. There is always a hierarchy in which one pole is considered superior and more valuable than the other pole. This is called the 'truth of truth' or logos, which is the dominant thought that determines what is considered true, rational, and meaningful in a culture. And meaningful in a culture.

Dundes (1997: 47) explains that even so, it should be emphasised that the presence of binary opposition in a narrative does not necessarily identify it as a myth. Given Levi-Strauss' main focus on the nature of human thought in general, not on myths alone. While the presence of binary opposition in myths cannot be denied, the critical argument put forward is that binary opposition is not exclusive to myths. This raises the question of how binary opposition can be used to analyse a culture based on mythical stories, given the universal nature of binary opposition.

METHODOLOGY

The research method used in this research is descriptive qualitative. This research aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of the Begu Ganjang myth in Batak society by understanding and revealing the contradictions that exist in the novel. Where the meaning to be revealed in the Begu Ganjang novel may be different from the meaning found on the surface. This deconstruction approach will help reveal the contradictions of the text against itself so that the absence of logic that is latently mentioned and implicitly hidden in the text can be revealed (Budianta, 2002: 44).

The data collection instrument in this qualitative research is the researcher himself / human instrument. Researchers as instruments will carry out planning, collect data, interpret, analyse, and who will report the results of their research. will report the results of his research. In addition, researchers must also validate their research. Validation of the researcher as an instrument includes validation of understanding qualitative research methods, mastery of insights into the myth of Begu Ganjang being researched, and researcher readiness to enter the research object.

This research emphasises the use of data credibility and reliability tests as important aspects in ensuring the quality of the data used. Data credibility, which reflects the validity of a measuring instrument or instrument, is carefully measured to ensure measurement accuracy (Arikunto, 2010: 211). The suitability of a measuring instrument or instrument in research, as stated by Arikunto, is reflected in its validity (2010: 211). In the context of qualitative research, validity is associated with efforts to check the accuracy of research results through the application of certain procedures (Creswell, 2010: 285).

RESULTS

The results of this study discuss the contestation of binary opposition between central and peripheral characters against the myth depicted in the novel Begu Ganjang by Ferdiriva Hamzah. To see the contestation of binary opposition, the author groups every action, thought, word, sentence, and event of the central and peripheral characters. With the coding card below, the author groups each aspect and shows the frequency of the data findings

Table 1. Binary Opposition Contestation

Episode	Categories	Binary Opposition	Data Frequency
1st Episode 'Tobi's family accused of keeping Begu Ganjang'	Kinship	Parents-Village residents	1
2nd episode 'Tobi's house and family burnt down'	Kinship	Parents-Children	2
3rd episode 'Little Tobi is adopted as a son by his Father Uda and Mama Udanya'	Kinship	Family-Village residents	3
4th episode 'Tobi's Host Family's Economy Has Improved'	Conservative and Kinship	Modern society-Traditional society	3
5th episode 'Tobi Grows Up to be a Doctor and Has a Side Job as a Vlogger'	Education	Doctors-Nurses	1
6th episode 'Tobi sees and feels strange things at Rotua Hospital'	Education	Doctor- Society	4
7th episode 'Tobi's Girlfriend is Plagued by a Begu Ganjang'	Gender	Male- Female	7
8th episode 'Things Get Worse, Tobi Seeks Advice from Batak Parents'	Conservative	Modern society-Traditional society	1
9th episode 'Tobi Goes to Samosir to Meet Datu'	Conservative	Egoisme-Altruisme	1
10 th episode 'Datu Tells Us that Tobi's Family Has Bequeathed the Begu Ganjang to Him'	Conservative	Doctor-Shaman	5
11th episode 'Tobi's adoptive parents die'	Kinship	Family-Mate	3

DISCUSSION

The concept of binary opposition was initially theorized by linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, which Claude Lévi-Strauss later expanded upon. Lévi-Strauss, an anthropologist, adopted many of Ferdinand de Saussure's theories in analyzing cultural systems, one of which is myth. According to Lévi-Strauss, binary opposition is a structure that governs the meaning system of a culture (Sandiyasa, 2018: 68).

Binary oppositions are structurally related to one another and can be transformed into other systems of binary oppositions. The binary opposition system consists of two elements that gain meaning when they are in opposition to each other. Their existence is determined by the non-existence of the other. For example, in the binary system of gender—male and female; terrain—land and sea; age—children and adults. Someone will be called male because they are not female, an area will be called land because it is not sea, and someone will be called a child because they are not legally an adult.

These are also the things that the researcher found in the novel *Begu Ganjang* by Ferdiriva Hamzah. The findings of binary oppositions in the novel are then formed by the writer into an interpretation that produces the true values and meanings that the author wants to convey to the reader about the Begu Ganjang myth and the reality of Batak society.

The episodes in the novel *Begu Ganjang* explain about the character Tobi and his family, as well as what they experience as members of Batak society. Ferdiriva Hamzah's novel, especially *Begu Ganjang*, explicitly explains how the central character tries to deny supernatural myths and attempts to educate society that everything considered mystical can be explained medically. Tobi – the central character of the story – has a traumatic wound due to accusations of keeping a Begu Ganjang, made against his family by the people in Batu Lapan village. The psychological wound experienced by Tobi for years makes him grow into a person skeptical of everything related to supernatural myths, moreover, as an adult, Tobi studies and works as a doctor, making him even less likely to believe in such things.

Finding the binary oppositions present in the novel *Begu Ganjang*, the researcher categorizes them into thirteen episodes, similar to the mythemes explained by Lévi-Strauss. These episodes are numbered based on the sequence of events in the text of the novel *Begu Ganjang*. Each episode is given an explanation that can serve as a sign to interpret and sort them into units that lead to the search for binary oppositions. The episodes that the researcher has compiled are as follows:

Episode 1 "Tobi's Family Accused of Keeping a Begu Ganjang"

The Begu Ganjang episode by Ferdiriva Hamzah begins with the description of an atmosphere of anxiety and anger in a village facing a series of mysterious deaths. At the guest house, Tumpal, also known as Tobi's father, becomes the victim of accusations from the villagers of Batu Lapan, Siantar, who have flooded his house carrying torches. Their arrival is not for socializing, but to demand accountability for three deaths that occurred in the past week. The entire event indicates that the community feels disturbed and needs an explanation for these tragic incidents.

Di ruang tamu, Tumpal – amang Tobi – mengintip ke luar sambil sesekali berteriak menanggapi teriakan warga. Rumahnya malam itu terang benderang oleh kepungan obor yang dibawa puluhan warga desa Batu Lapan, Siantar. Mereka datang meminta pertanggungjawaban atas tiga nyawa yang melayang dalam satu minggu ini. Untuk Togu, yang meninggal dalam kondisi mata terbelalak dan mengeluarkan paku berbalut kain dari mulutnya. Juga Sondang, pedagang barang kelontong yang sedang sukses, meninggal dengan memar hitam di lehernya dan jasadnya ditemukan di kamar mandi yang terkunci dari dalam. Hingga tadi pagi, jenazah Toras-seorang kepala desa yang baru terpilih-ketika diletakkan di peti mati, darah tetap mengucur dari mulutnya diikuti keluarnya belatung. (4)

Parents-villagers signify opposing oppositions. Tobi's parents are individuals who have a parental kinship tie to Tobi, while the villagers have no kinship relationship with Tobi. Parents will protect their child because of the emotional bond and functional role to protect and care for their children.

Meanwhile, villagers who have no kinship ties tend to be indifferent to what will happen to Tobi, even if he has to lose his parents.

Episode 2 "Tobi's House and Family are Burned"

This episode depicts a tense situation where Tobi, the central character, faces physical danger that threatens his life. Despite being aware of the risks, Tobi quickly attempts to save his parents who are trapped in a fire caused by the villagers' rampage. However, his efforts are suddenly halted when something unknown pulls him back with great force, causing his body to be thrown backwards violently.

Tidak peduli dengan semua bahaya, Tobi bersiap berlari menyusul orang tuanya yang hampir hangus terbakar. Namun, langkahnya terhenti karena ada sesuatu yang menarik piggang dan memelantingkan tubuhnya ke belakang. Ia terpelanting cukup kencang. Sebelum pandangannya gelap, samar-sama Tobi melihat sepasang tangan hitam berkuku panjang-tajam menggapai tubuhnya.(7)

The binary opposition found in this episode occurs between the central character and his parents. Parents-Child signifies opposing oppositions. Parents have certainly experienced being a child, while a child will become a parent when they are adults, old enough to marry and have children. Essentially, one of the roles of parents is to raise, protect, and teach their children until they become mature and strong enough for their future lives. Tobi's parents do the same thing.

In a desperate and difficult situation, Tobi's parents still think about their child's safety. Tobi is ordered by his parents to run first when the fire starts to consume their house. Nevertheless, Tobi, who is also a child, doesn't want to leave his parents. Tobi tries to refuse his parents' order; after initially getting out, he attempts to enter the burning house to help. However, this attempt fails because something throws him away from the flames.

Episode 3 "Young Tobi is Adopted by Bapa Uda and Mama Uda"

The incident of the burning of his house and parents leaves young Tobi an orphan. As a further consequence, this traumatic experience results in Tobi facing deep social rejection, both from villagers and his schoolmates. Tobi's family (in this case, Bapa Uda and Mama Uda—Uncle and Aunt) eventually adopt Tobi as their child. This decision gains additional motivation because the family doesn't have biological children, making Tobi's adoption a form of acknowledgment and responsibility for his unexpected fate.

Setelahnya, Tobi langsung memutuskan berhenti sekolah. Ia pun mengemasi pakaiannya yang hanya tersisa dua setel ke dalam kantung plastik dan berniat minggat. Tobi sudah tidak punya siapa-siapa dan tidak ada yang mau menerimanya. Namun, tepat dihari itu, paman beserta bibinya datang ke rumah Pak RT untuk menjemputnya. (73)

This episode discusses in detail how Tobi's family, which has a patrilineal connection, treats Tobi differently from society. During this critical period, Tobi is supported by his paternal uncle and aunt, who are relatives on his father's side. The arrival of his father's family highlights the responsibilities and obligations of kinship within the kinship system, where the paternal uncle

and aunt step in to take on parental roles for him, in accordance with the principles of kinship that uphold blood ties and the obligation to care for one another among family members.

The kinship system in this episode creates a narrative that contrasts with the sanctions Tobi is supposed to face. This opposing element forms the contrasts referred to as binary opposition (Everina, 2021: 108). The binary opposition evident in the excerpt is seen in the conflict between Family and Village. The family has an emotional bond and a duty to support and protect each member, as represented by the arrival of Tobi's paternal uncle and aunt to pick him up. In contrast, the community is responsible for enforcing the sanctions and punishments that Tobi faces due to his parents' actions, which are deemed to violate societal norms.

Episode 4 "Tobi's Foster Family Economy Experiences Improvement"

Illustrates how adopting Tobi positively impacts his new family, particularly in economic aspects. His presence brings blessings, which is reflected in a significant improvement in the family's financial condition. Tobi's foster father, who was previously just the owner of a small hardware store, now receives large projects such as building constructions and commercial properties. However, this economic success does not always bring unblemished happiness. One day, Tobi discovers his foster father engaging in behaviors that remind him of his biological father's actions.

Tobi marah besar ketika menemukan bapak udanya sedang membakar dupa dan memotong ayam jantan yang darahnya dikururkan ke mangkuk berisi bunga tujuh rupa. Hal ini berulang-ulang terjadi. Tobi tidak mau hal buruk yang dialaminya dulu terulang kembali. Sangking bencinya ia melihat apa yang dilakukan bapak udanya, setelah tamat SMA, ia memilih untuk tinggal di Medan. (74)

In this episode, the opposition between Modern Society and Traditional Society is a key element. The paternal uncle is represented as part of traditional society, still believing in spiritual matters, while Tobi symbolizes modern society, rejecting and disbelieving in the Begu Ganjang myth, particularly due to the traumatic experiences he has endured. Tobi's efforts to deny and reject the Begu Ganjang myth manifest in his decision to move to Medan, as a way to escape from an environment that practices such beliefs.

Episode 5 "Tobi Grows Up to Become a Doctor"

This episode narrates how adult Tobi succeeds in his education, and just six months after taking the Hippocratic Oath, he is accepted as a doctor at a hospital in Medan. This achievement is undoubtedly supported by the emotional and financial backing of his foster family. Education plays a crucial role in shaping Tobi's beliefs about spiritual myths. As a health science graduate, he develops critical thinking skills and learns to trust scientific facts and rational explanations for natural phenomena and health issues. This understanding allows Tobi to comprehend the causes and treatments of diseases scientifically, leading him to reject mystical or supernatural explanations more than the general community.

Tobi tersenyum kecut dan memperhatikan wajah Coki yang ketakutan. "Itu namanya delirium. Pak Haposan kan, lagi sakit. Udah tua dan matanya buta. Masa orang buta bisa melihat? Biasa itu delirium – halusinasi, atau yang lain nanti saya periksa. (85)

Doctor-Nurse represents a paired opposition. A doctor has the role of giving medical instructions to nurses regarding the care that should be provided to patients, such as medication administration, procedures, and monitoring patient conditions. Nurses are required to carry out all medical instructions or orders given by doctors concerning patient care. In this episode, the portrayal of the doctor refers to Tobi, while the nurses refer to the healthcare staff at Rotua Hospital.

Episode 6 "Tobi Sees and Feels Strange Things at Rotua Hospital"

Tobi's positive actions described in the previous episode, particularly his efforts to educate the public through video blogs, end up disturbing certain supernatural entities. However, Tobi's apathetic attitude toward mystical matters renders him untouchable by these forces. Lena – Tobi's girlfriend, who frequently visits the hospital and contributes to the production of Tobi's video blogs – becomes the one affected. She experiences mystical disturbances from Begu Ganjang, the spirit of the hospital owner's pet, which feels threatened by Tobi's activities in the hospital.

Tak sampai di situ, Lena mencari di Youtube. Dia terkejut melihat hasil pencarian yang banyak menceritakan tentang begu ganjang. ada video keluarga yang didapati memelihara begu dan dipukuli oleh warga setempat. Lena ingin menelepon Tobi untuk menceritakan pencariannya. Namun ia urung melakukannya karena dia tahu Tobi pasti akan marah jika ia bercerita tentang hal seperti ini lagi. Lena menutup laptopnya lalu memutar lagu klasik yang membuat dia tenang. (113)

Male-Female represents a contrasting opposition that reflects the gender dichotomy rooted in culture and society. Women are significantly more likely to believe in paranormal phenomena and mystical experiences than men (Aarnio & Lindeman, 2007: 106). According to binary opposition, these two categories are viewed as opposing poles that mutually exclude one another.

The binary opposition of male and female also shapes perceptions and attitudes toward mystical and supernatural matters. Gender stereotypes often portray women as more emotional, intuitive, and open to spiritual aspects of daily life. In contrast, men are depicted with rational, logical traits and are more skeptical of things that cannot be explained scientifically.

Episode 7, "Tobi's Girlfriend is Disturbed by Begu Ganjang."

Tobi's good deed, as explained in the previous episode about educating the public through his video blog, ends up disturbing some supernatural entities. However, due to Tobi's apathy towards mystical matters, he remains untouchable. Lena – Tobi's girlfriend, who often visits the hospital and contributes to Tobi's video blog – ultimately becomes the one affected. She experiences mystical disturbances from the Begu Ganjang, the spirit of the hospital owner, who feels disturbed by Tobi's activities in the hospital.

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Episode 8 "Things Get Worse, Tobi Seeks Advice from the Batak Elders"

After experiencing disturbances from the Begu Ganjang, Lena becomes increasingly weak, making her unreachable by Tobi for several days. Concerned, Tobi goes to Lena's home, where he finds her in a dire state, even witnessing her being possessed by an unknown entity that demands to be released. Without hesitation, Tobi rushes to seek help from the Batak elders being treated at the hospital to explain what has happened at Lena's home. The elders only advise him to consult a renowned shaman or healer in the Batak region. Initially reluctant to engage with a shaman or healer, Tobi ultimately realizes he must set aside his beliefs for the sake of his girlfriend's recovery.

Mendengar kata orang pintar, dahi Tobi langsung berkerut. Di pikirannya, ia sebisa mungkin tidak akan mau berhubungan dengan dukun, datu, orang pintar, apalagi itu. Cukup! Namun karena tidak enak dengan pasiennya itu, ia mengambil kertas itu dan memasukkannya ke saku celana. "Ya, Pak, terima kasih," ucap Tobi berusaha sopan lalu bergegas pergi. (162)

Traditional Society and Modern Society represent opposing oppositions that reflect a conventional dichotomy rooted in culture and society. In this construct, traditional society is associated with inherited values and practices, such as mystical beliefs, customs, and strict social hierarchies. They are viewed as being bound to tradition and resistant to change. Conversely, modern society is linked to rationality, technological advancement, individualism, and a more open mindset towards change.

Episode 9 "Tobi Meets the Datu on Samosir Island"

The internalization of the character Tobi in response to the situation he faces is significant. Tobi, who initially does not want to engage with shamans or spiritual practitioners, must set aside his ideologies to save his girlfriend. Previously, Tobi may have looked down on those who sought help from shamans or spiritual practitioners, considering it irrational. However, now Tobi finds himself involved in an unexpected situation that exceeds his previous reasoning or understanding.

Tobi memasukkan kamerannya ke ransel. Ia berkemas untuk sebuah perjalanan yang sangat bertolak belakang dengan apa yang ia yakini. Ke Samosir untuk bertemu dukun tidak pernah masuk bucket list-nya sama sekali. Ia sering menertawai orang yang pergi ke dukun, kini ia termakan omongannya sendiri. Namun kejadian akhir-akhir ini benar-benar di luar nalarnya. Penjelasan tentang semua ini harus ia temukan. (165)

Egoism-Altruism represents opposing oppositions that depict two different poles in human behavior and motivation. Egoism is characterized by a focus on one's own desires at the expense of the well-being of others, while altruism emphasizes the interests of others, often requiring self-sacrifice (Putra, 2023: 177). In this context, egoism and altruism have concepts that directly contradict each other. Egoism is portrayed as individualistic, materialistic, and self-serving, whereas altruism is described as humble, self-sacrificing, and caring for others.

Episode 10 "The Datu Reveals That Tobi's Family Has Inherited the Begu Ganjang"

This episode narrates how a character known as the Datu – shaman – explains to Tobi about the spiritual inheritance he received from his biological family. The Begu Ganjang, considered a spiritual entity, has a lineage connection to Tobi's family. This reflects the beliefs and spiritual practices taken seriously by the Batak community. By sharing this information, the Datu aims to help Tobi understand his spiritual origins and heritage, as well as the implications and role of the Begu Ganjang in his life and personal experiences.

Tobi menggeleng lalu menghela napas. Otaknya berkecamuk. Ia masih yakin bahwa apa yang dilihatnya adalah ilusi akibat dari kelelahan yang berlebihan. ia mengeluarkan amplop dari tasnya lalu memberikannya ke Pak Marihat. (177)

Doctor-Shaman represents an opposing opposition that reflects the dichotomy between formal education and traditional knowledge. In this context, the doctor embodies formal education based on a modern educational system, while the shaman represents traditional knowledge passed down through generations via local wisdom.

The binary opposition of doctor and shaman in the context of education reflects fundamental differences in sources of knowledge, learning methods, and academic legitimacy. The doctor represents formal education recognized globally, while the shaman embodies traditional knowledge that is more local and passed down through generations. Nonetheless, in societies that strongly uphold traditions, these two forms of education often complement and are valued alongside each other, reflecting the richness of culture and knowledge in the field of healing.

Episode 11 "Tobi's Foster Parents Pass Away"

After receiving an explanation from the shaman about his spiritual inheritance and the release of that legacy, Tobi is soon shocked by the news of his paternal uncle's death. This is then linked to the risks associated with letting go of the Begu Ganjang. According to Batak beliefs, the only way to release this Batak myth is through the sacrifice of oneself or a loved one who has been caring for the Begu Ganjang.

Tobi is devastated by this news. His mind races as he tries to find a connection between his uncle's death and his efforts to heal his girlfriend from the Begu Ganjang. The shaman explains that Tobi's uncle, as his closest relative, has become a sacrificial offering for the release of this spiritual inheritance. It is a sacrifice that must be paid to free Tobi from the curse of the myth that has haunted him since birth.

With a heavy heart, Tobi attempts to accept this fate. He understands that within Batak traditional beliefs, there are consequences to bear when someone seeks to break free from the shackles of myths like the Begu Ganjang. The sacrifice of a soul is the price that must be paid, serving as a redemption for the ancestral sins that follow them.

"Hal ini terkadang dihubungkan dengan tersesatnya orang ke dunia gaib, atau ada orang yang sudah meninggal ingin menyampaikan pesan ke kita. Padahal semua itu ada penjelasannya. Gejala itu biasa disebut halusinasi visual. Salah satu penyebabnya adalah karena faktor kurang tidur atau istirahat. ..." (212)

Family-Couple represents a paired opposition that illustrates the dichotomy of interpersonal relationships. In binary opposition theory, family and couple are viewed as two opposing yet complementary concepts. Family represents blood ties and relationships that are formed from birth, consisting of parents, siblings, and other close relatives. In this context, family is a fundamental social unit where individuals receive emotional, material support, and core values in life. Family bonds are permanent and cannot be easily severed.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the analysis conducted, it can be concluded that myths can influence the treatment, behavior, and worldview of a society. The myth of Begu Ganjang, as portrayed in the novel by Ferdiriva Hamzah, creates disharmony between the central character and peripheral characters. This is evident from the findings related to binary opposition in the story. The central character's rejection of the myth generates conflict with those around him, namely the peripheral characters. This difference of opinion is reflected as binary opposition, with four aspects identified in this study that contribute to the disharmony between the central and peripheral characters.

First, conservatism: this aspect explains that the central character's denial of the Begu Ganjang myth stems from being depicted as part of modern society. Growing up alongside technological advancements makes him more aware of mystical matters. Second, kinship: the central character's rejection of the Begu Ganjang myth is also rooted in the trauma caused by the death of a relative. His parents are accused of harboring the Begu Ganjang, leading to a tragic event stemming from this accusation. The instinct of a child, unwilling to see their parents judged for violating customs, leads him to convince himself that their death was not due to their fault but rather the excessive belief of the Batak society in mystical phenomena.

Third, education: the central character's rejection of the Begu Ganjang myth is largely attributed to his educational background. As a young doctor, he

represents someone who has learned about science, making it difficult for him to accept myths. Fourth, gender: while the central character's rejection of the myth with this motive is not overtly visible, Ferdiriva Hamzah seems to convey this implicitly.

FURTHER STUDY

This research has several limitations that may affect the results, including:

1. Limitations of Data Sources: The study on the novel *Begu Ganjang* may be restricted to previous critical reviews, interviews with the author, or the text of the novel itself. These limitations could influence the understanding and analysis of the novel in relation to Levi-Strauss's structuralism theme.
2. Subjectivity of the Researcher: The way the researcher perceives Levi-Strauss's structuralism in the novel *Begu Ganjang* may impact the research outcomes. The researcher must grasp the intent of the novel and how it can influence the analysis of the subject.
3. Cultural and Historical Context: To provide an accurate interpretation of Levi-Strauss's structuralism, it is crucial to understand the context in which the novel was written, as this context can affect how its themes are explored.

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