

NEW PERSPECTIVE OF HISTORY THROUGH NEW HISTORICISM IN ANIMATED FILM: *BATTLE OF SURABAYA*

Aning Diah Wijayanti ¹⁾, Dwi Ario Fajar ²⁾.

Universitas Pekalongan

Indonesia

Aningdiahwijayanti@gmail.com, dwiariof@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze important events that are not widely known in the history of the battle of Surabaya. The theory of new historicism is used as the basis of analysis. In analyzing the animated film *Battle of Surabaya*, qualitative descriptive methods are used. The object of this research is the film *Battle of Surabaya* produced by MSV Pictures. This research's data sources were taken from films, journals, articles, and related internet web. In this research, the collection of data obtained in qualitative descriptive and after the data collected is carried out by analyzing the data. This research reveals that historical reconstruction can change over time, from place to place and from one person to another, depending on each other's point of view. This research concludes that the animated film *Battle of Surabaya* managed to give an overview, a new perspective on the battle in Surabaya that is not widely known.

Keywords: New historicism, New perspective, *Battle of Surabaya* film

INTRODUCTION

A great nation is a nation that values the merits of its heroes. This wise phrase is often heard to remind us that important figures are willing to sacrifice for Indonesia's independence. Therefore, as the next generation of the nation must continue the struggle of these heroes, not with war but by showing an attitude of love towards the homeland that it can reflect from the behavior to defend and protect the land, willing to sacrifice for the benefit of the nation, love the customs, culture, and environment. Some efforts that it can make to show the attitude of love towards the

country, including feeling proud to use and appreciate local products, using local products is a statement of love of the country. By using local products, it means helping the country's economy and opening up jobs. Next is to support the work of the nation's children. Some of the nation's children's works can be said to be quite proud on the international, one of which is through film, several films managed to make Indonesia more famous in the country of people—starting from the action film "The Raid", "*Perempuan Tanah Jahanam*," which won the Bucheon Fantastic Film Festival in 2020 (BIFAN) 2020, and the

animated film *Battle of Surabaya*, which became the first Indonesian animated film produced by the world-famous production house, Walt Disney Pictures. *Battle of Surabaya* is a 2D animated film, drama, action, and Indonesia history produced by MSV Pictures. The first work of young director Aryanto Yuniawan features fictional characters and stories but is set in the Indonesian struggle history during the Surabaya war of 1945. This film is the first 2D animated film in Indonesia that tells about the Surabaya people's battle against the invaders. In short, the *Battle of Surabaya* tells the story of a young man who has a high spirit of nationalism named Musa. Musa lived under the pressure of necessity in the era of Japanese colonialism until he had to work as a shoe shiner. The *Battle of Surabaya*'s story opens with the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by allies indicating Japan's surrender. Japan's surrender of the allies was signed aboard the USS Missouri. However, Surabaya's grief began again with the incident of flag raising and the arrival of allies boarded by the Dutch. However, there are figures such as Mr. Moestopo, Bung Tomo, and others who raise Surabaya and Indonesian youth's spirit in the fight against colonialism.

The next story begins to focus on the character of Musa. Musa is believed to be a courier of letters and secret codes combined with the sound of rattling songs from "RPRI" founded by Bung Tomo. Various heartbreaking events accompanied Musa's journey in carrying out this noble task, ranging from property loss to his loved

ones. However, on his way, he also meets Yumna, a brave girl who has a high determination and fighting spirit. Musa and Yumna worked together in fulfilling this important mission for Indonesia that was free from invaders. Moreover, *Battle of Surabaya* is the only animated film that adapts the story of Indonesian history events. It is very appropriate to analyze some parts that are part of historicism study through historical analysis.

New historicism is an approach to literary criticism that emphasizes literary texts' interrelationship with the various social, economic, and political forces that engage them (Brannigan, 1999: 421).

New historicism is a research method about the past, giving a new picture or perspective of history. New historicism holds no objective history, meaning it can change over time and who the author of the history is. Therefore, in this case, history can not be separated from the subjective word. A simple definition of the new historicism is based on the parallel reading of literary and non-literary texts, usually of the same historical period (qt. in Barry 116). Louis Montrose said that new historicism is a combined interest in history's textuality and the texts' historicity. Here, the texts' historicity is the text analysis based on how history there in the text or how history is documented. The analysis of non and literary texts will give a new kind of truth and idea or comment. Literary criticism of new historicism is one of the complaints and literature theories that thinks that a literary work should be

considered a product of its time, place, and environment of creation and not as an isolated work of genius. New Historicism holds the view that there is no objective, unified, and meticulous history. All history is written by people and will always be rewritten. Therefore, history always contains subjective biases of its authors. It is this subjective bias that influences their interpretation of the past. Stephen Greenblatt first used the word new historicism to introduce the journal *Genre* in 1982 to offer a unique perspective on Renaissance studies, namely by emphasizing the interrelationship of literary texts with the various social, economic, and political forces that surrounded them. Elevating social and political conditions into literary works doesn't always have to be literal. The reality in fiction can be contrary to fact in society. Based on the background above, this research will discuss the Study of New historicism in the animated film *Battle of Surabaya*. The purpose of writing in this research is to describe new events and hidden intentions in the animated film *Battle of Surabaya*.

RESEARCH METHOD

In analyzing the *Battle of Surabaya* film about new historicism, a descriptive qualitative research method is used. Qualitative research is research that produces a procedure of analysis. The data in this research divided into two parts, primary and secondary data. The primary data source is the leading data obtained

from the *Battle of Surabaya Animated Film*.

It then analyzed the film's contents and selected visuals or images from several film scenes necessary for this research. Secondary data sources (research libraries) are complementary data that are to complement existing data sources. Secondary data sources in this research are obtained from reference books, journals, and various articles from websites on the internet and other websites supporting this research. In this study, the data collected was descriptive qualitative. After the data collected, it is continued with data analysis. By using qualitative descriptive, that is related to the elements in question.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

1. Battle of Surabaya Story in General Perspective

In a general perspective or widely known by the public, the battle of Surabaya briefly tells about the first battle of Indonesian troops with foreign troops after the Proclamation of Indonesian Independence. After the armistice between the Indonesians and the British army was signed on October 29, 1945, things improved slightly. However, there were still armed clashes between the British people and soldiers in Surabaya. The conflicts culminated with the death of Brigadier General Mallaby (British Army Chief for East Java) on October 30, 1945. General Mallaby's death angered the Indonesian side. It resulted in Mallaby's successor, Major General Eric Carden

Robert Mansergh, issuing an Ultimatum on November 10, 1945, asking the Indonesians to surrender weaponry and stop the resistance to the AFNEI army and the NICA administration and the threat of storming Surabaya from land, sea, and air if the Indonesians did not obey British orders.

Moreover, they also issued instructions containing that all Indonesian leaders and youth in Surabaya must arrive no later than November 10, 1945, at 06.00 am at the designated place. However, the ultimatum was not obeyed by the people of Surabaya, so the battle of Surabaya was very intense on November 10, 1945, for about three weeks, and many people fell. Their sacrifice made Surabaya known as a city of heroes.

2. New Historicism

History can change depending on each author's point of view, and it becomes an important point in the theory of new historicism. New historicism is a research method on the past based on the placement of historical and non-historical documents (literary works), between written and non-written sources, as equally important sources. New historicism is a very heterogeneous literary critique and cannot be given a traditional boundary (Vesser: 1989). New Historicism holds that there is no objective history. All history is the result of people's writings and will continuously be rewritten, or in other terms, history can change over time, from place to place, from person to person, so in this case, no objective or changeable history is

depending on the point of view of the author or the person who knows about the history or commonly called subjectivity. Subjectively it is this that influences their interpretation of the past.

3. Battle of Surabaya Story in Animated Film

Slightly different from the story of Surabaya battle history that the public has widely known, the animated film, the battle of Surabaya, is told from Musa's point of view, the fictional character in the film. Musa was a young man who witnessed the struggle of the Indonesian people in fighting the invaders. He worked as a shoe shiner and had a great job helping the country. In his duties, Musa was given the mandate to deliver a letter containing secret codes combined with keroncong songs. Also, he meets Yumna, a girl with high nationalism. In the film Battle of Surabaya, there are:

a. Jugun Ianfu as Slavery and Woman Right Abuse

Jugun Ianfu: a slave girl during the Japanese colonial period. In this battle of Surabaya film introduces a relatively unfamiliar term in the story of the Battle of Surabaya. Jugun ianfu is a term used to refer to the comfort women of the Japanese army. Many girls and women were victims of coercion. In the process of recruiting, Jugun Ianfu Performed By Force. Jugun Ianfu's recruitment was forced. Someone's been abducted from home. Some are lured by the promise of being given a job in a factory or

restaurant. Some were even persuaded to be made a showman. But what happened was that the women were arrested and then forced to work as comfort women for the Japanese army.



Figure 1. (Forced arrest “Jugun Ianfu”)

In this part, one of the characters in the film "Yumna's Mother" is forcibly recruited by the Japanese army to be used as Jugun Ianfu. The scene indirectly provides evidence that the recruitment of jugun ianfu was carried out by force, not voluntarily, as the assumption circulated in society in ancient times. In the scene, Yumna's mother, who intends to hide her daughter, is captured by two Japanese soldiers as Jugun Ianfu, in this context proving that jugun Ianfu's recruitment process was done by force. *Scene 1: (18.12 – 18.17)*

b. Kipas Hitam Organization as Propaganda to persuade Indonesian to support Japan's in battle toward allies

After Japan surrendered to the Allies on August 14, 1945, the

Propaganda Department (Sendenbu) under Hitoshi Shimizu attempted to resist. He founded a secret society of black snakes, containing Indo-Dutch people based in Bogor; Chin Pan, housing the Chinese; and the Kipas Hitam. Kipas Hitam was formed to prepare the Indonesian people to conduct a war of independence under the Japanese's guidance. In the battle of Surabaya, it is said that Kipas Hitam is a secret organization consisting of Indo-Dutch people and led by Hitoshi Shimizu. The goal was to fight the Allies and the Dutch. But when the Dutch captured Shimizu, the organization became distressed and often caused chaos.

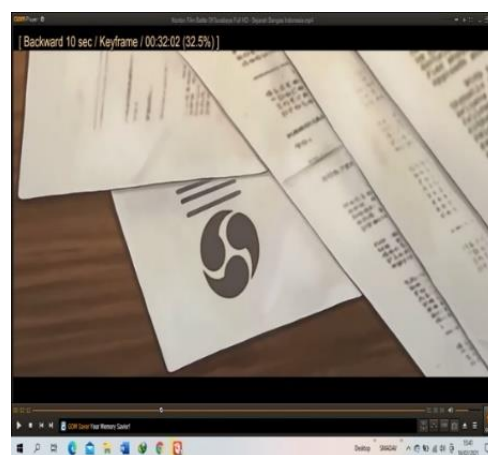


Figure 2. (The logo)



Figure 3. (Kipas Hitam Organization)

In this part, an explanation of the Kipas Hitam organization begins when Musa asks about the black logo.

Musa : "Sir, What's this?"

Mr. Dirman: "Kipas Hitam, is an organization founded by Hitoshi Shimizu in Japanese times, under "sendenbu". After Shimizu was captured by the Dutch, Kipas Hitam went without direction". *Scene 2: (32.05 – 33.00)*.

From Mr. Dirman's explanation, it can be concluded that The "Kipas Hitam" has a deviant purpose to do propaganda by inciting the Indonesian people to dislike the "white nation". In the film, The Kipas Hitam's goal becomes unclear after being abandoned by Shimizu. They often brew in the market and commit violence by destroying people's trade.

c. Allies Resistance Through Art

In the film *Battle of Surabaya*, the people's resistance is not only done using weapons only. Resistance is done through art, namely music. It was proven when Musa was given the task of delivering messages containing secret codes combined with "Keroncong" songs. This indicates that the people of Surabaya's resistance in fighting the invaders were also carried out secretly.



Figure 4. (Keroncong Songs Code)

This part describes the music of "keroncong", which participated in the resistance in Surabaya.

Mr. Dirman: "Musa, the leaders, and commanders of the army have agreed, that the translation codes used to coordinate through radio broadcasts by Bung Tomo are the songs of "Keroncong" that are the key, this message must reach the leadership of the southern TKS".

d. Most Indonesian patriots cannot use modern weapon

The people of Surabaya's relentless resistance was marked by the seizure of weapons from the British army. They were starting from rifles, cannons, tanks and grenades. However, the limitations of education and insight at that time made the people of Surabaya do not know how to use these advanced weapons is depicted in one of the scenes in the film:



Figure 5.



Figure 6.

In the scene, it is seen that the three fighters seem confused in using cannons. They didn't know how to use it, and the grenade that was supposed to be thrown away almost exploded in front of them.



Figure 7. ("*Bambu Runcing*")

This scene shows the use of "*Bambu Runcing*" against British soldiers. "*Bambu Runcing*" is a traditional weapon, and this is a simple weapon made of a piece of Bamboo with a taped top end. In this scene, Surabaya people who do not know how to use modern weapons choose to use "*Bambu Runcing*" instead, which is why "*bambu Runcing*" is very famous at the time of independence.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, new historicism reveals history from a different point of view. New historicism revealed that history could change from time to time, from one place to another, and from person to person. And also, this theory gives a new view that many things from the unknown history for example, from this animated film Battle of Surabaya, there is a dark story behind the battle of the people of Surabaya.

Including the illegal recruitment of women to be made "Jugun Ianfu", The Kipas Hitam organization is not widely known, the resistance of the people through the arts, namely with "*keroncong*" songs is not widely known because so far, the historical story only reveals the use of

traditional weapons only and the reason traditional weapons of “*Bambu Runcing*” can be famous at that time told in this film, namely because the people do not know how to use modern weapons. Despite all that, the film can provide new information about the history of battle in Surabaya.

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