
Intertextuality in the Regent Theatre Script by Dede A. Majid

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Abstract

In the context of literary studies, this openness of meaning shows that dramatic texts do not stand autonomously, but are always in a network of relations with other texts. This study aims to analyze the forms, patterns, and functions of intertextuality in the theatrical script *Regent* by Dede A. Majid. It employs a qualitative descriptive method with a text analysis approach based on Julia Kristeva's theory of intertextuality, supported by the ideas of Roland Barthes and Gérard Genette. The findings reveal that intertextuality appears in the forms of allusion, quotation, transformation, and adaptation, with dominant patterns of transformation and opposition toward colonial discourse. Its functions include aesthetic, semantic, social critique, and ideological roles that construct meaning dialogically. The study confirms that *Regent* reconstructs and critiques colonial historical narratives. This research contributes to the development of intertextuality studies and strengthens the study of Banten regional literature.

Keywords

Banten literature, colonial critique, intertextuality, theatrical script.



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INTRODUCTION

Theater, as a branch of performing arts, is a medium of expression that combines literary, visual, and performative elements into an artistic whole. In practice, a theater script functions as a textual foundation that builds dramatic structure, character development, dialogue, and conflict. Unlike other literary genres, a theater script is not only intended to be read, but also to be performed, thus opening up a space for the production of dynamic and layered meaning. In the context of literary studies, this openness of meaning shows that dramatic texts do not stand autonomously, but are always in a network of relations with other texts (Nurgiyantoro, 2018). The interconnectedness between texts is in line with the concept of intertextuality introduced by Julia Kristeva, who views texts as mosaics of quotations and the results of absorption and transformation of previous texts. In this perspective, meaning is not singular, but is formed through dialogical relations between discourses. This idea is reinforced by Roland Barthes, who asserted that text is a network of signs open to various interpretations, and by Gérard Genette, who classified the relationship between texts as intertextuality. Thus, intertextuality is

understood not only as a formal relationship between texts, but also as a complex and dynamic mechanism for the production of meaning (Ratna, 2022).

In the development of contemporary Indonesian literary studies, intertextuality has become a widely used approach to uncover the relationship between texts and social, historical, and ideological realities. Research by Octafiona (2024) shows that intertextuality in modern Indonesian literary works appears not only in the form of quotations or allusions, but also through ideological transformations of meaning. Similarly, Pasaribu (2025) asserts that intertextuality serves as a medium for social criticism, particularly in uncovering power relations and social inequality in literary texts. Furthermore, Marwan (2017) explains that intertextuality has diverse functions, ranging from aesthetic to cultural, which enrich the depth of a text's meaning. These findings demonstrate that intertextuality is not only structural but also has a significant functional dimension in constructing meaning.

Most previous research tends to focus on established literary works, such as novels and short stories, and has not extensively examined theater scripts as objects of intertextual analysis. Research by (Arisandi et al., 2021) has indeed examined intertextuality in traditional texts, but it is still limited to identifying the forms of textual relations. Meanwhile, (Pulungan et al., 2010) emphasizes the function of intertextuality in non-literary discourse. This situation indicates a research gap: the absence of studies that comprehensively integrate the analysis of the forms, patterns, and functions of intertextuality in contemporary theater scripts, particularly those based locally.

Meanwhile, in Banten itself, an artist named Dede A. Majid, who comes from Guriang Indonesia Warunggunung, has succeeded in creating and directing a theatrical performance based on his own script entitled *Regent*. *Regent* is a theatrical performance that reveals the inner struggle and history of a figure, Adipati Kartanata Negara. The second regent who led Lebak for 20 years, during which time the existence of the duke was known through the novel *Multatulli*. This narrative invites the audience to reread colonialism and the politics of power towards a person who was considered a "great enemy". The theatrical script *Regent* by Dede A. Majid shows a very strong and explicit intertextual tendency. Through dialogue, monologue, and dramatic structure, this script presents a direct clash with colonial history, social reality, and the collective memory of the Indonesian people. Specifically, Dede A. Majid engages in an open dialogue with the grand narrative of Dutch East Indies colonial history, particularly the events in Lebak involving the figures of the native rulers, Adipati Karta Natanegara, and Eduard Douwes Dekker, also known as *Multatuli* (Havelaar, 1999). More than simply reproducing the past, *Regent* radically transforms meaning. While in colonial historical accounts and previous literature, the regent is often positioned unilaterally as an accomplice to the oppressor, this manuscript provides a counter-narrative for the Duke. He is portrayed not simply as an accused subject, but as a human being experiencing existential inner conflict, caught between bureaucratic powerlessness, the suffering of the people, and the crimes of colonialism that hide behind his power. This manuscript re-examines who truly has the right to the narrative of historical truth.

Regent's manuscript is rich in historical content, social criticism, and complex textual play, making it a relevant object of study from an intertextual perspective. This complexity is

reflected not only in the diversity of discourse sources utilized, but also in the author's strategies for constructing intertextual relationships through various forms such as allusion, transformation, and reinterpretation. Given the complexity of the Regent manuscript, I, as an academic, am interested in further researching this manuscript.

This research has contextual urgency, particularly within the realm of regional literature. Banten, as a region with a rich cultural and historical richness, still faces a relatively limited academically documented literary study. This limitation has resulted in the potential of regional literature, both in the form of manuscripts and oral traditions, remaining underexplored and under-analyzed. Therefore, this research is expected to make a direct contribution to the development of literary studies in Banten, particularly by enriching the body of research focused on local texts and traditions.

Thus, this research not only contributes to the development of intertextuality theory in literary studies but also has strategic value in strengthening the identity and documentation of regional literature. The results of this research are expected to serve as an initial reference for further studies related to Banten literature, as well as encourage increased academic attention to literary works that have not been widely studied so far.

METHODS

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with text analysis. This approach was chosen because the research object is a theatrical script that requires in-depth, interpretive, and contextual reading to uncover the intertextual relationships contained within it. In literary studies, qualitative methods enable researchers to understand meaning comprehensively through interpretation of the structure, language, and discourse relationships within the text (Octafiona, 2024).

The primary data source in this study is the theatrical script "Regent" by Dede A. Majid. The research data consists of textual units containing indications of intertextuality, including dialogue, monologue, and dramatic narrative. Data collection was carried out through intensive and repeated close reading of the Regent script, identifying sections of the text containing elements of intertextuality, noting and classifying data based on initial categories such as allusions, quotations, transformations, and adaptations.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The discussion of intertextuality in the Regent manuscript not only demonstrates the relationships between texts but also reveals the complex process of transformation of meaning. From Kristeva's perspective, text is a space for dialogue between various discourses, so this analysis encompasses the dimensions of concept, form, and meaning that are simultaneously interwoven within each part of the text.

Novelty of the Study (Novelty) in Object and Approach

This research offers novelty because it examines intertextuality in the Regent manuscript by Dede A. Majid, a text that has not yet been widely analyzed academically. Amidst the dominance of intertextuality studies on canonical literary works, this research presents a relatively new and underexplored object. Furthermore, this research not only identifies

intertextual relations in general but also systematically maps the forms, patterns, and functions of intertextuality, thus making a methodological contribution to literary studies.

The study of intertextuality in literature has developed through various approaches, ranging from dialogical concepts to textual transformation relations. However, most previous research has focused on established and widely studied works. In this context, the Regent manuscript has not been widely studied in intertextual literature, so this research serves as a preliminary study that attempts to fill this gap and broaden the scope of intertextuality studies.

The main gap in previous research lies in the absence of studies that comprehensively integrate the analysis of the forms, patterns, and functions of intertextuality within a coherent framework. Some studies tend to only identify intertextual forms such as allusions or quotations, without examining how these patterns of relationships are formed and the ideological and cultural functions they generate. Therefore, this research aims to fill this gap with a more structured and in-depth approach.

The uniqueness of the Regent manuscript lies in its ability to combine historical elements, local culture, and social criticism within a complex dramatic construction. The representation of a colonial setting, the use of cultural symbols such as the *ronggeng* (traditional music instrument), and the construction of a narrative containing ideological content make this text rich in intertextual potential. This distinguishes it from other works that tend to be more linear and less exploratory in establishing intertextual relationships.

The innovation in this research lies in the use of a systematic and classificatory approach to intertextual analysis. This research develops a categorization of intertextuality into several dimensions, such as form (quotation, allusion, transformation), relational patterns (parallel, opposition, adaptation), and function (aesthetic, ideological, and critical). With this approach, the analysis goes beyond identifying elements but also explains how intertextuality works as a discourse strategy in constructing meaning and social criticism within texts.

Theoretical Contribution to Intertextuality Studies

This research strengthens the application of intertextuality theory by integrating a comprehensive analysis of various forms of textual relations, such as allusion, transformation, and adaptation. With this approach, the research goes beyond identification to explaining the function of intertextuality in constructing meaning. This provides a relevant theoretical contribution to the development of intertextuality studies, particularly in the context of contemporary Indonesian literature.

This research is based on the theory of intertextuality proposed by Kristeva (1980), which views text as a mosaic of quotations and the result of the intersection of various previous texts. From this perspective, a text does not exist autonomously, but is formed through a process of absorption and transformation of other texts, so that meaning is dynamic and open.

This concept was further reinforced by the thinking of Barthes (1992), who emphasized that text is a tissue of signs that does not have a single meaning. In his essay, "The Death of the Author," Barthes asserts that meaning is no longer determined by the author but rather is generated through the interaction between the text and the reader. Thus, text is understood as a space of plural meaning formed from various intertwined cultural references, ideologies, and other texts. This view reinforces intertextuality's position as a primary mechanism in the

production of meaning, where reading a text always involves a relationship with previous texts.

Furthermore, the transformation and hypertextuality approach in this study also refers to the idea (Genette, 1997), which classifies intertextual relationships into several categories, such as intertextuality (the direct presence of another text), hypertextuality (the transformation of a source text into a new text), and architectonicity (the relationship between genre conventions). Through this classification, intertextuality analysis goes beyond identifying the presence of other texts but also enables a more systematic explanation of the forms and mechanisms of these relationships.

By integrating these three theoretical frameworks, this study not only identifies intertextual elements but also analyzes how intertextual relationships operate structurally, semantically, and ideologically within the text. This approach allows for a more comprehensive understanding of intertextuality as both an aesthetic strategy and a medium for social criticism in literary works, particularly in uncovering power relations, historical construction, and the dialogical production of meaning.

The operationalization of the concept of intertextuality in this study was carried out by translating the theoretical framework into concrete, systematic, and measurable analytical indicators. The concept of intertextuality is not only understood as an abstract relationship between texts, but is implemented through three main dimensions: form, pattern, and function.

1. **Intertextuality Form:** Analysis is directed at identifying the manifestations of textual relationships that appear in the manuscript. Indicators used include: allusion, which is an implicit reference to a specific text, character, or event; quotation, which is a direct or indirect reference to another text; transformation, which is a change or reworking of the source text into a new form; and adaptation, which is the adjustment of elements of a previous text to a different context. These indicators are used to initially classify data based on the intertextual manifestations apparent in the text.
2. **Intertextuality Pattern:** Analysis focuses on how these intertextual relationships are structured and operate within the text. Pattern indicators include: parallel patterns, which indicate similarities in structure or meaning between texts; opposition patterns, which show conflict or reversal of meaning from the source text; and modification or adaptation patterns, which indicate creative adjustments to the previous text. Through the analysis of these patterns, research can reveal how intertextual relationships are not random but form a systematic network of meaning.
3. **The function of intertextuality,** analysis is directed at the purpose and role of using intertextual relations in constructing meaning. Function indicators include: aesthetic function, which enriches the artistic value and expression of the text; ideological function, which relates to conveying ideas, social criticism, or certain positions against the dominant discourse; and cultural function, which represents or reconstructs cultural and historical values. Thus, analysis does not only stop at "what" and "how" intertextuality arises, but also "why" and "for what" these relations are used in the text.

Through this operationalization, the research is able to integrate descriptive and analytical approaches in a balanced manner, resulting in a comprehensive reading of intertextuality as a meaning-making strategy in the Regent manuscript.

The dominant patterns and intertextual functions in the manuscript need to be formulated as a result of analytical synthesis that is not merely descriptive but also provides a conceptual contribution to the study of intertextuality. These findings typically indicate tendencies in the text's relational structure while explaining how intertextuality operates as a mechanism for meaning production.

The analysis shows that the Regent manuscript has dominant patterns of transformation, opposition, and critique of colonial discourse. These three patterns do not stand alone but are intertwined and form a complex network of meaning, as Kristeva's concept of intertextuality views text as a space for dialogue between discourses.

Transformation is evident in the shift in the meaning of power from a symbol of glory to a source of crisis, fear, and moral reflection. This is evident in the following quote: "During that time, my power was filled with the shadow of fear. Every gap in my mind was the word guilt, robbery, loneliness..."

This quote shows that power is no longer interpreted as legitimacy or glory, but rather as a psychological burden that haunts the subject. This transformation shows how the text shifts the old paradigm of power into something problematic and full of ambiguity.

Furthermore, the transformation is also evident in the character's awareness of the illusion of power: "How fragile this power is. The hidden suffering finally emerges!"

From Kristeva's perspective, this condition demonstrates a process of re-semantization, namely the change in the meaning of a sign through its relationship with other discourses (in this case, colonial and historical discourses). Thus, power is no longer understood as a stable center, but rather as a construct that can collapse.

The pattern of opposition is evident in the text's attempt to contrast the dominant colonial narrative with the character's subjective experience as part of an oppressed society. This opposition is ideological because it directly challenges the legitimacy of colonialism. "Is colonialism justice? Or humanity?"

This rhetorical question not only serves as an expression of doubt but also as a deconstructive strategy to dismantle the moral claims of colonialism. The text presents a tension between official discourse (colonialism as civilization) and reality (colonialism as oppression).

Opposition is also evident in the critique of historical construction: "My history and Multatulli's were written for the interests and purposes of colonialism."

This quote emphasizes that history is not an objective representation, but rather a product of power. Thus, the text establishes an opposition between official history and subjective experience, a strong characteristic of critical intertextuality.

In addition to transformation and opposition, the text also exhibits patterns of symbolic adaptation, namely the reuse of common symbols with new, more contextual and critical meanings.

"History is never truly a lesson, only wounds that persist and take root..."

The symbol "history" here is no longer interpreted as a source of normative learning, but as a collective trauma that continues to be inherited. This adaptation demonstrates that the text reinterprets established cultural symbols.

Thus, the symbols in the Regent manuscript function as an intertextual medium connecting the past and the present, while also opening up space for critical reflection on social reality.

Intertextuality in the Regent manuscript not only serves as a connection between texts, but also has a strategic function in constructing meaning, conveying criticism, and strengthening the work's aesthetic value.

Intertextuality enriches the artistic quality of the manuscript through the use of metaphorical, symbolic, and poetic language. This is evident in the quote:

"The wound became a small fire, burning behind the name..."

This quote demonstrates how the text transforms historical experience into imaginative aesthetic expression. This aesthetic function not only beautifies the language but also creates emotional depth that enhances the reader's or viewer's experience.

Intertextuality plays a role in shaping meaning, which is not singular but layered and open to multiple interpretations.

"I am a citizen... part of history written by the powerful."

This quote demonstrates that the characters' identities are not autonomous but are shaped by power relations and historical narratives. Thus, meaning in the text emerges from the interaction between various interconnected discourses.

In this context, intertextuality functions as a dynamic mechanism for the production of meaning, in line with Kristeva's view that meaning is always in process.

One of its most dominant functions is as a tool for criticizing colonialism and social injustice. "Our nation has been robbed, oppressed, and exploited by colonialism!"

This quote explicitly demonstrates the text's position as a form of resistance against oppressive power structures. Intertextuality allows the text to connect local experiences with global discourses on colonialism.

Intertextuality also serves as a means to convey and dismantle certain ideologies, particularly those related to power and history.

"The rulers have full control over the narrative..."

This quote demonstrates that historical narratives are not neutral, but rather influenced by ideological interests. Thus, the text attempts to reveal how power operates through language and discourse.

Contextual Contribution to the Development of Banten Literature

This research has strong local urgency because it directly contributes to the development of literary studies in Banten, which has so far been minimal in academic research. By utilizing the Regent manuscript as the object of study, this research helps document and elevate regional literary works to a broader and more scholarly realm. This contribution is important not only for enriching the regional literary heritage but also as an effort to strengthen cultural identity and develop locally-based literary studies.

This research's contribution to the development of Bantenese literature lies not only in its constructive efforts to build an epistemological framework for locally-based literary studies. To date, literary studies in Banten have tended to be marginalized within the national literary research landscape, both in terms of quantity and depth of theoretical analysis. Therefore, the study of Dede A. Majid's "Regent" manuscript is significant as a strategic step to fill this gap through a systematic, scientific approach based on intertextuality theory.

This research serves as a medium for articulating Bantenese cultural identity within the context of contemporary literature. By uncovering intertextual relationships within the manuscript, we can identify how local values, history, and sociocultural constructions are interwoven within dramatic texts. This aligns with Julia Kristeva's view that places texts as dialogical spaces that are never separated from their preceding contexts, thus enabling regional literary works to interact dynamically with other texts within a broader context.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis, it can be confirmed that Dede A. Majid's "Regent" utilizes intertextuality as a primary tool in constructing deeper meaning. Drawing on the ideas of Julia Kristeva and supported by Roland Barthes and Gerard Genette, it is clear that this text does not stand alone but is interwoven in a dynamic relationship with colonial historical discourse. Structurally, intertextuality appears in various forms, such as allusion, quotation, transformation, and adaptation. However, the most prominent are the patterns of transformation and opposition, where the text shifts the meaning of the concept of power while simultaneously presenting resistance to the dominant colonial narrative. Furthermore, symbolic adaptation demonstrates the author's efforts to give new meaning to historical symbols to make them more relevant to today's critical context.

Functionally, intertextuality not only enriches aesthetic value through symbolic and expressive language but also produces layered meanings, opens up opportunities for interpretation, and serves as a means of social and ideological critique. Through this strategy, the text is able to uncover the power relations behind historical constructions and question their objectivity. Thus, Regent can be understood as a work that actively reinterprets history, not merely represents it. This research confirms that intertextuality plays a crucial role in constructing a critique of colonialism while also contributing to the development of literary studies, particularly in the context of strengthening Banten regional literature.

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