



Sudirman Monuments in Pacitan: Something Behind The Silent

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Abstract. Talking about historical events in Pacitan will always mention Sudirman, the commander of the national army who was based there during the second Dutch military aggression. To this day, Sudirman still exists in monuments built in various places, such as the General Sudirman Monument and the Palagan Tumpak Rinjing Monument in Pacitan. These two monuments were built long after Sudirman died in 1950. Therefore, this research aims to examine the things behind the construction of these two monuments. The research method used is descriptive qualitative through observation, interview, and literature studies. As a result, it was found that the General Sudirman Monument in Nawangan District was inaugurated at the end of 2008, one year before Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono as an incumbent took a part once more in 2009 Election. On the other hand, the Palagan Tumpak Rinjing Monument which was built in 1980 in Pringkuku District did not even have a direct connection with Sudirman. In the end, the construction of monuments with figures displayed in a single dimension, such as Sudirman as a war hero, is often carried out as a political move by the authorities.

Keywords: Sudirman, monument, Pacitan, politic

1 Introduction

Pacitan is one of 38 districts and cities in East Java and located on the south coast region. Its position at the southwest tip of East Java makes it directly bordered by the Central Java region. With an area of 138,987.16 Ha, Pacitan is dominated by hills and karst which are part of The *Seribu* Mountains range [1]. This geographical location and conditions will also be related to the situation of Pacitan in the midst of post-independence chaos. During this period, Pacitan faced many challenges of domestic political instability, such as the PKI Madiun incident in 1948 and two Dutch military aggressions until 1949. So, that's why we can found many statue of Sudirman, and even two big monument about him in Nawangan and Pringkuku District.

When discussing the events of Dutch military aggression in the timeline of national history, especially the second aggression which began at the end of 1948 to mid-1949, the name Pacitan will be found as one of the areas that became a headquarters of General Sudirman and his troops when he carried out a guerrilla war to defend the independence. After the first aggression and the Renville Agreement, the Dutch apparently carried out aggression once again. Quoting Nasution, since December 17th

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1949, the Dutch had delivered an ultimatum note, until then in December 19th at around 06.00 WIB, the Dutch occupied Yogyakarta, the capital city at that time, by carrying out an attack on Maguwo Airport. The president and vice president and other high-ranking officials were arrested and exiled. Sudirman, who at that time was commander in chief of the national army, then started a guerrilla war with his troops [2].

When the second Dutch military aggression occurred, Pacitan was under the regent of Subekti Pusponoto (1948-1950). Pacitan was included in the X Division of the *Tentara Keamanan Rakyat* (TKR) Surakarta, which in 1946 became IV Division/*Panembahan Senopati*. At that time, the condition of the military forces in Pacitan was less favorable because many of its members were assigned to other areas [3]. In line with Pour's statement, several companies from the battalion which were initially based in Pacitan since post-independence, in mid-March 1949 were assigned to Semarang and West Java [4].

Starting in early January 1949, Dutch corvettes were seen entering Pacitan Bay, so the *Tentara Laut Republik Indonesia* (TLRI) blew up the Sentolo Pier and several other important places. However, Dutch troops were still able to land and occupy the former *kawedanan* building, so the civil and military government was moved to Kebonagung District. While occupying the area, Dutch troops repeatedly carried out patrols. In February, General Sudirman entered Sudimoro District, an area of Pacitan which borders Trenggalek Regency [3]. Furthermore, Sudirman's guerrilla troops began to enter Nawangan District in March [5]

Sudirman based in Nawangan when the second Dutch military aggression was a fact that cannot be denied. Both local and national people should know that Pacitan is part of history, especially during the struggle to maintain the independence. All efforts to remember this as history are actually a good step. However, in what form, in what way, when it was carried out, and who carried out this step needs to be studied further. Is it true that this effort is for the sake of history, or is there something else behind it?

The Palagan Tumpak Rinjing monument which shows the figure of Sudirman shaking hands with Slamet Riyadi is located on the side of the Pacitan-Solo highway, precisely in Pringkuku District. What is the connection between this area and Sudirman and Slamet Riyadi, so a monument was inaugurated there in 1980? Why was the Sudirman monument complex built bigger and more magnificent in 2008, around the house that was his headquarter while leading the guerrillas in Nawangan District?

So far, writings about the two monuments have still discussed the historical side that glorifies Sudirman and the military. Not many of them have explained what was behind the construction of those monuments, especially from a political perspective. Quoting Gusevich and Kabriel, in general the construction of monuments is carried out to tell a story, pay tribute, or attract public attention [6]. Siblon also said that statues and monuments are not just about the presence of figures from the past, but there is a certain significance here for the present [7]. Starting from the questions above, this research then attempts to examine the things behind the construction of the Palagan Tumpak Rinjing Monument and the General Sudirman Monument.

2 Method

This research uses descriptive qualitative methods. Research using qualitative methods according to Cresswell, generally explores a problem and develops a detailed understanding of the central phenomenon. In qualitative research, the researcher is the main research instrument. Therefore, qualitative research is generally carried out using interview methods, observation, and literature studies to support the phenomenon being studied. The data collected is text data, and the results of the analysis are descriptions [8]

In this research, I conducted an interview with *Mbah* Misno, a former head of Dadapan Village who had a relation with the story behind Palagan Tumpak Rinjing Monument. I also did an observation in the General Sudirman Monument and literature study about those two monuments and politics behind the construction of monument in general. Literature studies using books, journal articles, and news also done to obtain information related to the second Dutch military aggression and Sudirman. After conducting interview, observing, and reviewing the literature, I conduct data analysis and create synthesis to answer research questions

3 Behind The Palagan Tumpak Rinjing Monument

The Palagan Tumpak Rinjing monument represents Sudirman with a wooden stick in his left hand while extending the other to shake hands with Ignatius Slamet Riyadi who's next to him. This monument stands in Dadapan Village, Pringkuku District, right on the edge of Pacitan-Solo highway, the main road connecting Pacitan Regency with Central Java Province. If you look closely, you will see an inscription under the statue of Sudirman and Ignatius Slamet Riyadi, that the monument was built to commemorate the local people who died fighting the Dutch troops on June 7 1949. So what is the role of Sudirman and Ignatius Slamet Riyadi in this place and event?

There are several different versions of the battle against the Dutch at this place. The late *Mbah* Misno, former Head of Dadapan Village for the 1982-1993 period who lived in front of the monument, said that the history behind this monument is actually different from what has been circulating in books. He got the story from his father, Kadani, who was a bayan at that time. At that time, a man named Sahid came to Gesingan. He claimed to be a Dutch prisoner in Yogyakarta who had escaped, and said that Dutch troops would come to PETA Pacitan headquarters tomorrow. Sahid then invited Kadani and local residents to block the Dutch troops who were passing through Gesingan. However, people ignored Sahid, so he ended up doing the action himself. Sahid intercepted a convoy of the Dutch trucks by shooting the driver, causing the truck to roll into a ravine. Unfortunately, another truck carrying goods then realized and turned around and shot Sahid until his body was destroyed. Kadani and local residents then took care of Sahid's body, put it in a basket and took it to Yogyakarta. According to him, this event was also the beginning of the name Tumpak Rinjing, where tumpak means get into and rinjing means basket, describing Sahid's body being returned to its place of origin.

On the other hand, in the book titled *Pacitan Berjuang, Pacitan Dilupakan*, it is explained that in June 1949, Pacitan received the help of a platoon of troops led by Lieutenant Sardo Priyoutomo, so they were confident to carry out an attack on the Dutch. Finally, they decided to confront and destroy the Dutch troops which came from Pacitan towards Solo. The republican troops then carried out an ambush near the Tumpak Rinjing hill with the strength of four infantry sections from the Ranuwijaya Company PPS IV/SWK P, a section of the Tentara Pelajar unit, a combined section of the Indonesian Navy and the police, and a unit section under Lieutenant Sardo Priyoutomo. Since June 6, republican troops have begun surveying the area and installing bomb tracks on strategic roads for shooting targets. Then, on June 7, fighting broke out between republican troops assisted by local residents. Meanwhile, on the republican troops there were five soldiers who died, such as Second Lieutenant Kusno, Sergeant Major Imam Asro, Sergeant Major Sarponen, Corporal Jupri, and Corporal Sahid. Apart from that, there were also three local people who also died in the battle [3].

In another version it is also stated that on June 7 1949, a battle occurred between the Dutch and republican troops led by Captain Ranuwijaya under the battalion of Lieutenant Colonel Slamet Riyadi. The battle occurred because at that time, the Dutch troops were currently hunting for Sudirman. Therefore, Captain Ranuwijaya's troops fought with Dutch troops in the Tumpak Rinjing area with the aim of diverting attention. In this battle, eight people from the republican troops died. Therefore, to commemorate this event, a monument was built at the location where the battle took place [15].

In an interview with the late *Mbah* Misno, it was stated that the construction of the monument was initiated by Lieutenant Colonel Ranuwijaya. The monument, which was later named the Palagan Tumpak Rinjing Monument, was created by Drs. Saptoto, a sculptor assisted by other artists from ASRI Yogyakarta. The Palagan Tumpak Rinjing Monument was inaugurated on May 20th 1980 by the Minister of Information Ali Murtopo, in conjunction with the commemoration of National Resurgence Day as well as commemorating the services of Commander-in-Chief General Sudirman which was centered in Pacitan [15].

Initially, the construction of the Palagan Tumpak Rinjing Monument was carried out by a company with the initials GG, one of the companies in Semarang, which ultimately succeeded in completing the construction of the statues of Sudirman and Ignatius Slamet Riyadi within 17 days before the monument was actually inaugurated. The company name is on the fence at the front of the monument complex. However, when the Sudirman family came to see the construction and inauguration of the monument, there was disagreement regarding the construction of the statue. Therefore, the statue was made again by Drs. Saptoto, then sent to Pacitan before being inaugurated [16]. In the photo published on the Antara Foto, it is explained that the Sudirman and Slamet Riyadi monument in Tumpak Rinjing costing 20 million rupiah was made by sculptors from ASRI Yogyakarta, one of whom was Saptahudaya [17].

4 **The Construction of *Mojensu* (General Sudirman Monument)**

Nasution stated that after Maguwo Airport was attacked by the Dutch, Sudirman sent his aide, Captain Suparjo, to ask about President Sukarno's decision. The President had not stated any decision because at that time, the Dutch were only suspected of deploying paratroopers to seize Maguwo. Dissatisfied with the answers brought by his aide, Sudirman, in an ill condition, went to the president and asked himself to carry out guerrilla warfare. Before actually leaving the capital, Yogyakarta, Sudirman ordered Suparjo to convey the Express Order regarding the implementation of guerrilla warfare through Express Order No.1/P.B/D/48. It stated that the Republic of Indonesia had been attacked and the Netherlands had violated the ceasefire agreement. Therefore, the entire Indonesian army was expected to carry out the plans that had been set to counter the Dutch attack. Sudirman then followed the advice of the Military Strategy Council to leave Yogyakarta for a retreat base in East Java [2].

From Yogyakarta Palace, Sudirman and the troops headed through Bantul to Imogiri. Because attacks from the enemy continue to be launched, traveling by car is no longer possible. Then, from the Kretek area which is in the south side of Yogyakarta, Sudirman and the troops continued their journey by foot. After that, they headed to Pracimantoro. However, the Dutch then succeeded in occupying Sukoharjo, so the troops were then rushed to Kediri through Ponorogo, Trenggalek, and Tulungagung. Kediri was also successfully occupied by the Dutch, so the troops and Sudirman then moved to the slopes of Mount Wilis in Nganjuk. After several days in that place, they then headed to Ponorogo. In February 1949, they began to enter Pacitan, specifically in Sudimoro District. Only at the end of March, they entered and began stopping in Nawangan District [5].

Located in Nawangan District, precisely in Gandrung Hill, Sobo, Pakisbaru Village, Sudirman and the troops stopped and carried out a guerrilla strategy. Sudirman's presence there also made the Dutch troops frequently carry out patrols in various areas. Starting from February 11, 1949, the Dutch carried out an attack on Kasihan Village, Tegalombo District, which had just passed by Sudirman and the troops. The Dutch also attacked the villages of Kalikuning and Tulakan in the south of Kasihan Village. Then, on April 20, they succeeded in occupying the post in Arjosari Village and continued traveling to Temon Village, which is the road to Nawangan District. Knowing this, the soldiers with the help of the local community immediately cut off access by destroying the bridge. On April 28, the Dutch succeeded in carrying out a patrol until they almost approached Nawangan District. However, some people in the Bandar area provided misleading information so that the Dutch failed [3].

The steep and hilly terrain in Pakisbaru Village makes it a good base and hiding place for guerrilla warfare [9]. Sudirman and the troops stopped there at the house of a *bayan*, Karsosemito, until July 1949. While there, Sudirman was accompanied by his adjutants, Captain Suparjo and Tjokropranolo. He was also assisted by Roto Suwarno who was the son of the Pakisbaru Village Head at that time [10]. Roto Suwarno is often referred to as Sudirman's courier when he stopped in Pakisbaru. He was the one who then initiated the construction of the monument complex in 1981 [11].

The process of building the monument experienced problems, especially after the death of Roto Suwarno in 1993 [11]. Only in 2008, the monument construction project began again after Andi Mallarangeng, spokesperson for President Susilo

Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY) and Edhie Baskoro Yudhoyono visited Pakisbaru. At that time, the Head of Pakisbaru Village submitted a proposal to build a monument to the president, and apparently, SBY quickly responded to the proposal. Andi also said that this development was important considering that this place was the place Sudirman had visited the longest during his guerrilla campaign [12].

SBY planned the restoration and construction of the monument complex in two steps, first the restoration of the former headquarters, then continued with the construction of the monument complex including various supporting facilities. In an interview with Tempo, the Minister of Culture and Tourism at that time, Jero Wacik, also said that the first step of construction had to be completed on December 15th 2008, during Juang Kartika Day or the birthday of the Indonesian National Army. The target was achieved on time, even the president and several civil and military officials were present at the inauguration of General Sudirman Monument complex in Pakisbaru. The project, which consumed a budget of approximately three billion rupiah, continued to the next step a week after the inauguration [12].

The seven to eight meter high monument shows the figure of Sudirman standing holding a wooden stick in his left hand. He is also shown wearing a long coat and headband (blangkon). To get there, there are three levels of stairs, each of which has 45, 8 and 17 steps. There are eight gates displaying Sudirman's messages, also reliefs that tell the story of Sudirman's life journey, totaling 38 panels, starting from birth, studying religion, becoming a teacher, establishing the koperasi, joining the PETA, participating in various battles, leading guerrillas, until his death in 1950. About four kilometers from the location of the monument, there is a house that used to be a residence and headquarters of Sudirman in 1949, currently filled with memorabilia about him.

The statue of Sudirman on the monument was made by Saptoto, an artist from Yogyakarta on the initiative of Roto Suwarno [13]. In the Roto Suwarno family's personal blog, the process of making the Sudirman statue in Saptoto's studio is also shown [14]. This statue is made of bronze and weighs 8 tons and stands facing north [11]. The monument, called the General Sudirman Monument or *Mojensu*, stands on a land complex covering an area of 97,831 M² and is the tallest monument in Pacitan [9].

5 Behind Those Two Monuments: A Political Move?

The question regarding what happened behind these two monuments with the figure of Sudirman in Pacitan arose when it was discovered that the construction of these monuments was carried out in the 1980s. Why in that year? Sudirman had died three decades earlier. What do they want to convey through the construction of these monuments? The construction of the General Sudirman Monument in Pakisbaru Village, Nawangan District, was initiated by Roto Suwarno, who in several articles is referred to as a native who was Sudirman's bodyguard or courier during his stop there. There is not much writing explaining who Roto Suwarno really is and how he was able to initiate the construction of this monument, a monument with a statue that is eight meters high and made by Saptoto, a famous sculptor from Yogyakarta.

If you look at the inscription on Roto Suwarno's tombstone, it is explained that he was the son of Darmowidodo, the Head of Pakisbaru Village who served in the 1940-1967 period. His career began as a member of *Tentara Pelajar* Solo (Surakarta), joining the Commander-in-Chief General Sudirman's Unit in 1949, then joining the Military Police Corps (CPM) in Jakarta, becoming an employee in the Prime Minister's Cabinet in 1951, an employee of the State Secretary, a member of the DPR/MPR 1977-1987, and member of the MPR 1987-1992. He is also the pioneer of development in Pakisbaru Village. From there, it became known that Roto Suwarno was a former member of the military who then became a politician. When the General Sudirman Monument began to be built in 1981, Roto Suwarno had served as a member of the DPR. Construction stopped after Roto Suwarno's death in 1993, before it was finally rebuilt by President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono in 2008, before he ran again in the 2009 Election.

Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono received a proposal to build the monument in 2008, and he planned for the first phase of construction to be completed at the end of the same year. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono did not waste this opportunity, because he was president incumbent, he is preparing to run again in the 2009 Election, participated by several retired generals. After the collapse of the New Order, military figures still had the opportunity to compete for the presidency, so whoever cared most about Sudirman, the great commander-in-chief, would most likely get sympathy from many people. This monument construction project has even become a crash program in the field of history. The inauguration on Juang Kartika Day or the Indonesian Army's birthday implies that all soldiers support the president [18].

In an article published by Tempo, Jero Wacik, the Minister of Culture and Tourism at that time, denied that the construction of the monument was related to politics. At that time, many also questioned why the monument had to be built in Pacitan, an area that was more related to Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono than Sudirman himself, why not Ambarawa, but Jero Wacik only considered such questions as negative thoughts. On the other hand, historian Anhar Gonggong is not too concerned about the place, but rather how the president gave the same appreciation to other figures who during the revolution became symbols of the country. That is, at that time, Sudirman was a symbol of the state on the battlefield, while there was still Syafruddin Prawiranegara who was a symbol of government through the emergency government in Bukittinggi [12].

The Palagan Tumpak Rinjing Monument, on the other hand, is not as big and expansive as the General Sudirman Monument complex in Pakisbaru. It is also not a tourist spot that is visited by many local residents, in fact it tends to be neglected, except in the days leading up to Heroes' Day, where the local government usually organizes the long walk of Palagan Tumpak Rinjing every two years. According to the late Mbah Misno, the construction of this monument on the side of the Pacitan-Solo highway was initiated by Lieutenant Colonel Ranuwijaya. If we refer to Fashihullisan et al and Ronggosaputro, Ranuwijaya was the leader of troops who had been in Pacitan [3, 15]. He is of course a member of the military. The name Ranuwijaya in Pacitan is also found as the name of a street in the Sedeng Village area

The presence of Ignatius Slamet Riyadi accompanying Sudirman at the Palagan Tumpak Rinjing Monument, perhaps because he once led a battalion assigned to the

Pacitan region after the proclamation of independence. He led Battalion II under Division X or Division IV/Panembahan Senopati, whose headquarters was later moved to Pacitan because many of its members were alumni of the former maritime school (Kaigun). They lived in Pacitan from December 1945 to April 1947. After that, they moved to Sumowono, Bandungan, to guard the Semarang-Surakarta border area. When the second military aggression took place, Slamet Riyadi had also returned to Pacitan after defeating the Dutch during his guerrilla campaign in Eromoko. He and his entourage walked through the barren mountains from Pracimantoro through Punung, one of the Pacitan areas, to meet Sudirman in Pakisbaru. However, no one knows what was discussed in their meetings [4]. What is certain is that until now no source has been found which states that Slamet Riyadi and Sudirman were directly involved in the Tumpak Rinjing battle, so their statues on the monument appear quite political.

The construction of these monuments was initiated by parties who had a military background, around the same year, and were made by the same party. The maker of the Sudirman statues in the two monuments, Saptoto, was a sculptor from the Indonesian Academy of Fine Arts (ASRI) which is now the Indonesian Arts Institute (ISI). In the Kompas article, it is stated that Saptoto was once the Director of ASRI (when its name was changed to STSRI) Yogyakarta. He has shown artistic talent since childhood, especially painting, and is active in the Indonesian Painters Association (PTPI) and the Sanggar Pelukis Rakyat. Saptoto is also a member of the military, having served as a member of the Markas Besar Komando Jawa, and was even sent to Ponorogo, Pacitan and Wonogiri as a Liaison Officer [19].

Saptoto was once sent to Pakisbaru, Sudirman's headquarters during the revolution, to deliver a letter. He was even said to have wanted to be part of Sudirman's troops, but Sudirman asked him to remain an artist. Saptoto then became a student at ASRI, the first graduate majoring in painting and sculpture. He continued his education there and served as a teaching staff until he became director and dean. Saptoto was the great architect under the New Order who produced several monumental works, such as the Serangan Umum 1 Maret monument in Yogyakarta, the Sudirman statue at the Brawijaya Museum Malang, several monuments in Kalimantan, Lampung and North Sumatra [19], including also statues of Sudirman in two monuments in Pacitan. From this, it is known that the construction of Sudirman monuments in Pacitan is closely related to the role of the military. This seems to be in line with what Sakaja and Stanic say, that there is a long history of political authority that builds spaces of memory and monuments to assert their sovereignty over a territory and population, strengthen a cult of personality, and shape a collective identity about us and others [20].

If we look further, in that year, Indonesia was under the rule of the New Order which tended to be militaristic. Quoting McGregor, even since the 1970s, the number of Sudirman monuments has continued to increase in various regions in Indonesia. Efforts to raise the military's prestige in history ultimately made Sudirman a hero, a military leader who bravely fought the Dutch on the battlefield, compared to civilian leaders who were considered traitors because they preferred diplomacy. Therefore, raising Sudirman's image is becoming increasingly important as a symbol of military leadership [21].

Furthermore, it was also explained that the guerrilla war led by Sudirman during the revolution was deliberately put forward because the military wanted to emphasize the

magnitude of their role in national politics. One of the ways this is socialized is through the Napak Tilas which is usually carried out by military cadets. Napak Tilas means tracing back and following Sudirman's guerrilla route which was inaugurated by President Suharto in 1974. Not only instill the values of struggle, Napak Tilas is also a means of internalizing the belief that the military has close ties with civilians, so that they have the right to a political role. For example, before doing the Napak Tilas, the cadets at Gedung Agung Yogyakarta were given a briefing about how Sudirman decided to lead his troops using guerrilla campaign, compared to the passive Sukarno, and if Sudirman had not done that then history today would not be the same [21]. Sudirman himself, in Said's view, accepted the continued role of the military in politics for the sake of national interests, so that the presence of the military in Indonesian politics was legitimate [22].

In his book, Aswi Warman Adam even revealed that there was no Indonesian leader who did not take advantage of Sudirman. Sukarno, when Sudirman returned to Yogyakarta after the end of the second aggression, took advantage by taking a photo of him hugging Sudirman, implying the meaning of the embrace between civilians and the military. Continuing into the New Order era, Sudirman was clearly very much needed by the authorities, so he appeared on the 1968 money series and was appointed a five-star Great General along with A. H Nasution and President Suharto. Even in the reformation, he is still being exploited through the construction of monuments such as what happened in 2008 [18]. Indeed, throughout history, the process of de-commemoration will be accompanied by re-commemoration, because a social group or political group is always involved in a struggle over what memories and values should take priority in the public sphere, and those in power often create memory landscapes to immortalize their legacies [23].

Monuments are not just inanimate objects that cannot speak or historical relics that are innocent and harmless. Monuments matter [24]. Such monumental commemorations have often been made by the military in history. Usually, what is displayed is the leaders to instill a sense of pride, to honor those who make great sacrifices and inspire the organization to achieve excellence, as well as provide a sense of family and unity. However, since the two world wars occurred in the 20th century, a new paradigm has emerged for recognizing and presenting ordinary individuals in monumental commemorations [25]. In fact, in Indonesia, the construction of monuments is still quite a cult of the big man, as we saw in the case of Sudirman. Superficially, Sudirman's monuments may indeed be a reminder of historical events. However, such a narrative seems to be just a shadow of the truth that the monuments are more of a political vehicle.

6 Conclusion

The existence of the Sudirman monuments in Pacitan can be a reminder of historical events in the region. This can also be a trigger for the internalization of the values of struggle and nationalism for the younger generation, for character formation. However, the younger generation and society in general must not stop thinking critically, so it is also important to know that the construction of these monuments is

full of political interests. Such monument buildings are often used as a medium for forming collective memory and strengthening the cult of figures.

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