

Heroes in The Resistance to Nature and Environment Destruction In “Dhemit” by Heru Kesawa Murti

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Abstract

The drama entitled Dhemit tells us about the construction of a cluster housing in a particular area in which the environment is sacrificed. Developing an area becomes an excuse that the environment which should be protected are destructed. The notion of environment is mutual. For those who preserve it will get the good but for those who destruct it will get the harm. In order to keep the balance, there should be people who take a good care of the environment. They should struggle with environmental crime. Resistance is another term for the struggle. Environmental crime is something that people should fight for. This should be done as the sustainability and balance are fundamental for the people's better life. Destructing the environment is essentially the same as destructing the future itself because the people's life strongly depends on the environment. In this study, qualitative information was described thoroughly and analytically. The description covers the environmental destruction occurred in the playscript of Dhemit by Heru Kesawa Murti as well as the form of resistance towards the environmental destruction. The approach used in this research was descriptive qualitative. This approach was used to interpret the deep meaning of a literary work on its relation the society. This interpretation was based on the notion that literary work is the resemblance of the real world. The author himself is a part of society who consciously or unconsciously is affected by the society.

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INTRODUCTION

Literary works are commonly classified into three categories namely prose, poem, and play. One of the literary works that is closely related to real life is play. Play is the manifestation or resemblance of phenomena or issues faced by the society. A play itself is the result of a writer's imagination towards the phenomena that happen around him or her. A writer can openly express his or her idea about cultural, religious, social, or environmental issue. The environment incidentally affects the literary works. This is undeniable as people live in a certain environment. The environment affecting the works in natural, cultural, and social environment. Those three environments mutually influence what people do.

In writing literary works, a writer will always have specific reason or aim that he or she wants to achieve. This statement is in line with Jabrohim's (2001) who points out that through literary works, a writer may represent phenomena happening in his or her own life. Literary works are not merely affected society and surrounding but they are also influenced by the society and surrounding themselves. Similar study on Dhemit playscript was analyzed with different method by Rianingsih (2018). It is concluded that there are four out of five elements used by the researcher to do the study. Those elements are expounded by Eliade which cover: (1) Cosmogony, (2) Legend, (3) God & Goddess Myth, (4) Androgynous Myth, and (5) End of the World Myth.

Another related study was conducted by Suwandi, Yunus, and Rahmawati (2016) who concluded that ecological intelligence is people's ability to interact with their environment and their ability to adapt, control, manage, concern, preserve, and take advantage of the environment for their life sustainability. The importance of preserving the nature and environment has already considered years ago by Indonesian writers and poets. Furthermore, the efforts to preserve the natural environment are intensively done by people. They utilize, manage, monitor, preserve, control, and even develop the living

environment. Natural environment should be well managed so that people can get its benefits at its finest now and in the future. One of several ways to preserve the natural environment is by manifesting it in a literary work especially in a playscript.

Based on the given explanation, there are always values in a play that can be applied in the real life as people cannot deny that they live hand in hand with the universe. Thus, the researchers aim to study the playscript by using ecological literary criticism. The playscript analyzed is "Dhemit" by Heru Kesawa Murti. Dhemit in the playscript is illustrated as a hero who cares for territorial integrity. The writer creates the heroic characters; Gendruwo, Egrang, Sawan, Wilwo, and Kuntilanak in his drama as a form of resistance. They are illustrated as a spirit who dwells in prehn tree so that they can preserve the environment. That way, people will not build houses there. They struggle to achieve the goal by haunting people and make people believe that they exist with the intention that people will not cut the prehn tree down. The people believe that kind of mystical thing.

METHODS

This is a descriptive qualitative study defined as a study aiming to illustrate a reality based on concepts and categories not based on numerical data. Descriptive method is a method used to examine a group of people, an object, a state, a way of thinking, or a current phenomenon (Nazir, 2005). The underlying reason that the researchers apply the method is to make more systematic, factual, and accurate description of the analyzed drama. Meanwhile, the approach used is literary ecology.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Valuable literature offers meaningful values and messages for not only one's life but for the life itself. When a literary reading focuses on people, the values are seen as people's must have ideal attitude as individual and social

being, not ecological being. Arbain (2020) elaborates that there is bond between literature and nature. Nature is not only being a setting in a literature but it is a discourse that takes part in the literature's plot and aesthetics.

Literary ecology study involving ecocriticism is found in *Dhemit* by Heru Kesawa Murti. It is illustrated that Forest logging is done for the sake of modern cluster housing so that the economic value is increased. The script engages the readers in order to show the existence of ghosts in their world. They are illustrated as heroic characters that fight for the territorial integrity. The way they show their existence is diverse and sighting is the main way. For them to show their, media are needed. The frequently used media is through wind but it can be through non-living things that suddenly move. Furthermore, they may also make creepy sound. Comparing to people who live in modern era, the people who lived in the past have stronger belief in ghosts. Otherwise, the more modern the era; the more people are interested to study mystical things. Thus, *Dhemit* by Heru Kesawa Murti is interesting to be studied since the characters which are ghosts are illustrated as if they are human beings.

The main theme of the drama however is not the existence, but the heroism. The heroic characters are Genderuwo, Egrang, Wilwo, Sawan, and Kuntilanak shown as the descendant. Meanwhile, the ghosts dwelling in *preh tree* are the ancestors. However, this idea is not based on the age of the ghosts who live hundreds of years. That is why the ghosts in that drama is always be a symbol of youth in the real life. The self-proving is also presented in the beginning diaogues of Rajeg Wesi and his employee, Suli. Rajeg Wesi as a contractor pushes Suli to work better as he thinks that the work is dissatisfying. Suli is considered as a passive consultant who does not play the role.

The playscript of *Dhemit* only represents a small part of life indeed. The representations and ideas are the critics for those who are sensitive enough to comprehend the structure of the dialogues. Moreover, there are the representations of society and bureaucratic

leadership is also illustrated. This becomes the main value of the script. Intellectual values or ideas are illustrated as a whole depiction through the plot and the scheming of the dialogues. Readers are not encouraged to read the playscript separately between human characters and otherworldy characters, since the interpretation will mislead. Each character has their own symbolism. For example, by reading Genderuwo's dialogues who symbolizes youngster, the readers will get confused in interpreting *preh tree dhemit* and the elder, and how to connect the conflicts of the story as a whole with each of the character.

In general, *Dhemit* by Heru Kesawa Murti tells us about confused employees. The head discusses with the employees the way to solve problems. The employees are confused as they should cut the trees down for the construction. Almost all of the trees are already cut down but there is one tree that seems to be too difficult to cut down. Various attempts are already done; either by using saw and even excavator. However, the problem is not solved. The tree does not budge while the tools used to cut it down are all broken. That tree is a big *preh tree*. Logically, that tree should be easily cut down. However, it seems that there are ghosts that guard the tree. They upset and try to preserve the place they dwell in. There is Kiai *Preh* as the leader and the juniors are *kuntilanak*, *jerangkong*, *suster ngesot*, *genderuwo*, *sawan*, *pocong*, and etc.

From the beginning of the playscript of *Dhemit*, social critics on the fast developed construction in this era are being the focus. Many of the constructions do not consider the effects on the environment but only consider the profit. The implied wisdom that readers or audiences may learn is to preserve the environment. There should be a win win solution, the constructions are continued and the environment are preserved. Literary ecology or social critics found in *Dhemit* by Heru Kesawa Murti is proven on the dialogues:

a. Part One

The tree-razing over the hillside had scattered the tree-dwelling dhemit into the four winds. Their dwelling places were no more.

Indeed, there, on that hillside, would be built a modern cluster housing. Thereof, that place had to be clean. Cleaned, and the dhemit finally scattered into the wind while the tractors and chainsaws were relentlessly roaring razing all of the trees ignorantly.

Suli

But just remember Mr. Rajeg, this project is a big one. Pioneer to the others. And Mr. Rajeg as a contractor, you are known as a bona fide one. Me myself as a consultant hope and want this project to achieve a great success.

Rajegwesi

And you have to remember as well that you are my consultant. It means you have to comply with me. Contractor gets the profit, consultant makes the profit.

Suli

But, you have to aware to the consuqences Mr. Rajeg.

Rajegwesi

Consequential matter is for later, now we think about the profitable matter. No more talking, I bring this, a very important matter indeed! A letter from the regent.

(Handing over the letter)

Suli

(After reading the letter) Pak Rajeg, this is the time I've been waiting for so long. If the regent comes here, we have to disclose every single obstacle we are facing.

The dialogue above shows some individuals that from the beginning have a plan to raze the hillside trees to build a modern cluster housing.

b. Part Two

Suddenly heard a roaring sound from the bulldozer, frightening. It was getting closer and

closer. The dhemit scattered. Kuntilanak fled away to preh tree spirit's dwelling, finding a safer place.

Gendruwo, Egrang, Wilwo

(squawking) They're coming... they're coming.... Those humans are coming again, they are going to destroy this place for sure.... ruining this place.

This dialogue depicts the situation when the bulldozer was cleaning the area.

c. Part Three

In the Elder's house inside the forest which was razed for the upcoming cluster housing project, stood the Elder's companions, discussing about the project.

Elder

The contractor is indeed too much. He's so frenetic. I've warned him that logging the trees must be accordingly to the norm, instead he did the contrary. Greedily cutting the trees. And now what? All of the workers collapsed. Got a sudden ill.

Servant

But, it's not our fault.

Elder

Correct. Indeed, it's not our fault. But, the point is that I've warned them before the logging, why didn't they give some offerings first. Good heavens, now they accuse me for making this chaos. It's crazy, isn't it?

The dialogue above shows the reality of housing developers who act as they want ignoring the bad effects to the surrounding and who like to blame others instead realizing their fault.

d. Part Four

Gendruwo

You folk just sit and listen. Yesterday I read a book "Gendary", Genderuwo's dairy. My very own dairy you know. It is told in that note a nation named Utaranusia. Utara means "north". "Nusia" means human. Certainly, it's

our nation located to the north of human world. It is told that, in Utaranusia, there is no weather too hot nor too cold, everything is serene.... serene.... serene. The place is not hot nor cold. No darkness no light. Adhem ayem kadyo siniram banyu wayu sewindu lawase. Our nation was once quiet and peaceful. No robbery, no violence, not even eviction. Alas, someday, came a legion of human with their frightening roaring machines like a pack of wolves scattering the dhemit dwelling away. Our nation was wiped out, and our pride was stained.

That time I was a GODA. What's that? GODA stands for General of the Dhemit Army. My soul was called to face againts those greedy aggressors. I stood to raise the vigor of the unmotivated spirits who chose to give up. So, time to time, their motivation raised once again. And I dared to speak out loud to the human: "Yeah, its' all up to you, kekejera kaya manuk branjangan, kopat kapita kaya ula tapak angin, kena nenggalane Gendruwo, ajur dadi sewalang-walang, o all my brothers."

On Genderuwo's dialogue it is obvious that he gives satire towards human who act as they want for their own greed and lust.

It can be concluded based on the above expounding that intellectual value of the Dhemit playscript is on the conflict among Rajeg Wesi, the elder, and the forest dwellers, since they also have the most dialogue. The value is around the portrayal of the rural society with the unique traits of the villagers, lurah together with his staff; as well as the external conflict from the rural society who bring their greediness to the village and stain the rural togetherness.

In rural society, respecting each other has become a norm held firmly by its people, and their mutual cooperation principle defines this perfectly. It is the underlying reason why the elder ask for compensation for his people and still say "yes" to the preh tree dhemit; because this deal gives benefit for the both parties. Meanwhile, Rajeg Wesi with his urban rationality and calculation wants to get profit as much as possible. This is what caused the conflict.

The unbalance brought the urban people is the major conflict. Greediness cannot be assimilated into the rural people who like peaceful life and keep each other's comfortability by living hand in hand. This balanced life is a communal profit for them, not individual. These balance and unbalance aspects are the abstract values we can get from Dhemit playscript, while greediness and lust become the core of the story. It is all about real world and netherworld matters, about position and responsibility (Rajeg Wesi and Suli's dialogue), about cause and effect of the project as well as human towards the dhemit, about sincerity expressed by the preh tree dhemit to his staff, and about how human preserve themselves from greediness by considering the surrounding's socio-economic level.

Independently, Dhemit playscript written by Heru Kesawa Mukti has offered humorous play that can be played as per to the real playscript. This impression comes from the dhemit (genderuwo, engrang, wilwo, and kuntilanak) who looked diplomatic like what educated human being does. They were recognized as the other world heroes to fight againts aggressors who wanted to replace their dwelling with cluster housing. This depiction gives imaginary feeling towards the readers about how funny it would be to witness these ghosts having a discussion seriously and diplomatically, yet innocently at the same time. This sense of contradiction is the humor of this playscript.

The first-time readers read Dhemit playscript, they would think that the character who stands out in this story is Rajeng Wesi since he looks so ambitious and greedy on his dialogues. Yet, thorough reading will make the readers alter their perceptions since they begin to realize that each main character has political motifs in the logging conflict which successfully satirize over the real life.

CONCLUSION

Literary ecology can be found on ecocriticism play script entitled Dhemit by Heru

Kesawa Murti. The story is about forest logging to build a modern cluster housing that is considered having highly economical benefit. This script tries to raise the readers' awareness that ghost and likes to try to show off their existence. These supernatural beings have their own ways to express their existence. Sighting is the main proof of this. They can use the other media to express their existence. Some things moving on their own and sudden chilling wind blow are media that also popular to use. Sometimes, they also make a frightening voice. Dhemit playscript by Heru Kesawa Murti becomes an interesting study since the dhemit is characterized as human-like.

The idea of expressing existence in this story is not as the main value, instead as a heroic value. Genderuwo, Egrang, Wilwo, Sawan and Kuntilanak as dhemit are the descendants of the dhemit. Meanwhile preh tree dhemit is depicted as the ancestor. The dhemit in this story is told as the heroes who fight for their land from the aggressors. The idea of expressing existence is a symbolization of youngster in the real life.

Dhemit playscript is a little resemblance of life. The symbolization and the idea of the story with its scheme is like a criticism towards sensitive readers who can apprehend the construction behind the playscript. The resemblance of society and bureaucracy become the main value of this story. This value is translated through the flow of the story as well as the intrigue among the characters. It is encouraged for the readers to fully read the playscript, rather read it separately, since it will give different interpretation to the readers.

The value is around the portrayal of the rural society with the unique traits of the villagers, lurah together with his staff; as well as the external conflict from the rural society who bring their greediness to the village and stain the rural togetherness.

Greediness and lust become the core of the story. It is all about real world and netherworld, about position and responsibility (Rajeg Wesi and Suli's dialogue), about cause and effect of the project as well as human towards the dhemit, about sincerity expressed by

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