

The Contribution of Myth to Nature Conservation in the Short Story “Queen of Bauxite” by Abdul Kadir Ibrahim: Literary Ecology Review

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Abstrak. The study of the short story “Ratu Bauxit” by Abdul Kadir Ibrahim aims to find out the problems of the natural environment contained in the work, as well as how the relationship between humans and nature as well as the contribution of literature as a human creation to nature conservation. From these short stories, data related to the description of natural problems and their relationship with humans are obtained which are the focus of this study. Data obtained through heuristic reading and recording techniques. Furthermore, the data were analyzed by descriptive qualitative method which refers to ecocritical theory. The results of the analysis show that there is a description of natural damage related to bauxite mining in the Riau Islands region. Environmental damage caused by ongoing bauxite mining also has an impact on the survival of the surrounding community. Thus, there is a need for human awareness to address environmental problems, especially related to the impact of bauxite mining exploitation. Efforts to preserve oral literature in the form of myths related to nature in people's lives can indirectly contribute to the conservation of natural resources.

Keywords: Ecocritic, Myth, Short Story

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INTRODUCTION

Nature is one of the important factors in the survival of human life, and vice versa. The relationship between nature and humans is a form of unity that cannot be separated. Just like in real life, in literary works, the presence of nature as the background of the story can be a reflection that nature can directly or indirectly affect the lives of the characters. This is in accordance with the opinion of Semi (1993:73) that literary works are essentially a form of reflection on the circumstances, values, and lives of the people who live their lives, or at least have influenced the author.

In addition to being an element of background and content in narrative texts, nature can also be a bridge for writers and writers of literary works to convey the ideas and ideologies of the authors. Natural factors in relation to literary works, according to Stanton (2007:35) are something that cannot be avoided in the creative process of creating literary works. The environment in which the author grows will more or less have an influence on the work he writes.

Although the position of nature in literary works is often an object that is neglected compared to the elements that make up other

literary works, however, it is possible that there are some literary works that place nature more than just as a complementary element. In fact, it can also be found several literary works that make nature as the main subject or theme in storytelling. In fact, it is not uncommon for a work to present a problem that really comes from environmental conditions which is a great representation of a story (Taqwim, 2020).

Seeing the development of news in various mass media related to the destruction of nature which is increasingly becoming a global issue, in fact, many Indonesian authors have inspired to produce literary works with the theme of nature. Issues regarding natural damage in the form of environmental pollution, overexploitation of nature, forest fires, illegal logging, conflicts over natural resources, the greenhouse effect, and other contemporary issues related to environmental crises can be found in several works written by the author. - Indonesian author. This is in accordance with the opinion of Wellek and Warren that through writers, literary works are created like a mirror for reality whose creation process is driven by social, climatic, and biological factors (Harsono, 2008).

The emergence of literary works with the theme of nature is certainly also an attraction for readers to obtain information about current

natural conditions, because after all, the natural environment will never be separated from human life. The short story "Queen of Bauxite" written by the author Abdul Kadir Ibrahim is one of the short stories that raises the theme of myths in people's lives in the Riau Islands as well as a description of the natural damage caused by bauxite mining in the region. From this work of fiction, it can also be seen how belief in myths influences people's lives in the Riau Archipelago.

The existence of the relationship between nature and literary works raises a concept of ecological problems in literature by literary critics. The term *ecocritic* (ecocriticism) is used as a term regarding the concept of literary criticism from an environmental point of view. Ecocriticism can help define, explore, and even solve ecological problems in a broader sense. In its function as a medium of representation, views, and public responses to the surrounding environment, literature has the potential to express ideas about the environment, including the values of local wisdom. This is very reasonable because literature grows, develops, and comes from society and the environment (Garrard, 2004).

Ecological discussions in literary works can also consider forms of local wisdom. Local wisdom is all forms of knowledge, belief, understanding or insight as well as customs or ethics that guide human behavior in life in an ecological system (Herbowo, 2020). Local wisdom is also a principle or method adopted and applied by local communities in interacting with their environment and as a result of the production of habits/traditions that live and grow from generation to generation with indigenous peoples (Chairul, 2019).

So far, the study of works written by Abdul Kadir Ibrahim has only been discussed using a sociological approach to literature. Although it is true that the works written by the author are full of descriptions of the life of the Malay community in the Riau Archipelago, it is also possible to study them with a literary ecology approach.

METHODS

This study uses a literary ecology approach. This approach is used to uncover how ecocriticism is about the exploitation of natural resources in the short story written by Abdul Kadir Ibrahim (AKIB). Based on the characteristics of the research, the research

design used in this study is qualitative. Qualitative research design combined with a literary ecology approach is used in an effort to reveal the role of nature and how the role of literature in nature is.

This research is focused on the material object in the form of written literature, namely the short story "Ratu Bauxit" by Abdul Kadir Ibrahim. The selection of these objects is based on considerations of the quality and quantity of the writer's activity in producing works of fiction that also represent the current environmental conditions. The data used are in the form of sentences, paragraphs, and fragments of discourse that are thought to represent a picture of local wisdom in the form of myths and representations of nature contained in the work. Data collection techniques used in this study include heuristic reading techniques followed by note-taking techniques.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the life of the people in the Riau Islands, there are several myths related to nature. One of them is about the "bauxite queen" who is believed by the community to be a supernatural being that coexists with ordinary human life. The bauxite queen can be present or reveal herself to people who are daydreaming or people sitting on the steps. This can be seen in the following quote.

Aman Abdul Ali. Teenagers drop out of school. That evening, he was resting on the steps of his parents' house on stilts, in Senggarang Besar. His younger siblings and the neighboring slaves were playing ball in the yard. His parents were going to Tanjung Sebauk beach. The husband and wife were fishing for nine fish and looking for barks. And, the boy-who dropped out of school when he was in the fifth grade of elementary school-was engrossed in watching the great "match" in the courtyard. Suddenly, about two fathoms in front of him, stood a "Queen"!

In addition, the attitude of contemplating and sitting on the steps is also believed by the community to bring bad luck. This myth can be seen in the following quote.

"Sister Aman, why are you sitting contemplating on the steps? What doesn't touch the heart? The elders said it was not good. Wrong, got hit by a ghost throw with a taik."

The myth about the Bauxite Queen in the life of the Malay community was originally believed to have originated from the Malay kingdom led

by King Sang Nila Utama and his wife Ratu Wan Sri Benai. During his leadership, the King who was also called Pameswara, showed his prowess in leading the Malay kingdom. This can be seen in the following quote.

Ha?! Bintan Island?! Yes, Bintan Island. Sahdan, in the past, in Bintan there was a Malay kingdom, namely the Bintan kingdom. This kingdom is so well known because in the 11th century it was ruled by a famous female king by the name of Ratu Wan Sri Benai. He married into the Sriwijaya Royal Family. His name, Sang Nila Utama, is always called Pameswara, who comes from Siguntang Hill, Palembang. The Queen of Bintan, is very famous. Because of its prowess, the Malay Kingdom of Bintan is widely known to various corners of the world and has a strong influence among the Malay kingdoms across the country.

In the development stage of the royal territory, the King and Queen of Bintan did not stay in one place, but began to shift to other areas not far from the center of the Bintan kingdom, which was originally in the Carang River area. So, before moving to the Temasik area, which is now better known as an area called Singapore, the King and Queen entrusted all of Bintan's nature and territory to the entire community to be well protected. This can be seen in the following quote.

"A few years after that, Queen Bintan and her husband, Pameswara, who had become the King of Bintan, wanted to move to an island, namely Temasik. Before leaving, he gave a message to Datuk Minister and Datuk Hulubalang that the treasures of the palace of the Bintan Kingdom and its natural surroundings had been handed over to the Unseen Lord to be loyal and trustworthy to guard them. Even the Queen of Bintan argued that specifically for the natural wealth called bauxite, it was preordained by the Almighty to have the Owner and Guardian Queen with all her guards and soldiers.

In the past, in the myths that developed in the life of the Malay community, even Indonesia in general, people believed in the existence of supernatural beings other than humans. Between humans and supernatural beings also sometimes establish a communication and form a relationship that is side by side. Connecting with supernatural beings can usually only be done by people who are believed to have psychic powers or holy people.

In the short story "Ratu Bauxite", it appears that the queen and king who wanted to leave the

country of Bintan also involved supernatural beings to guard the country of Bintan as long as they left the royal land they had occupied for a long time. The supernatural creature was named by the king's wife as "Queen of Bauxite". This can be seen in the following quote.

"That Queen, I give the title Queen Bauxite. He laughs. Beautiful, clean, glowing skin, fragrant and full of charm. The Queen also has supernatural powers and can incarnate anyone she wants. He will give help to anyone who likes at the same time or at any time. I will bequeath and inherit the land of the land in its cities, the Kingdom of Bintan to all of you servants of the land.

In subsequent developments, the land of Bintan until now seems to be destination for certain parties to mine bauxite on a large scale. Mining companies are seriously trying to negotiate with residents to get residential lands that are actually very rich in bauxite content. This can be seen in the following quote.

Many people know that bauxite mining will work the land. Negotiations are ongoing. Residents who own land, are paid according to the agreement. Meanwhile, residents who do not own land but are located or live in the vicinity of the mining site will be affected by mining activities, either mud or dust, so they will receive compensation funds.

However, what has been done by the company people to continue to exploit natural resources of bauxite is really contrary to what has been mandated by the king and queen of the kingdom of Bintan before they left for Temasik. So there was a disaster for the people of Bintan, especially those who were unable to protect the country 'segantang lada'. This can be seen in the following quote.

Tanjungpinang and several areas on Bintan Island are excited! Many geckos died suddenly of heart attacks! The people who had been laughing and having fun in the "gardens" or "fields" of bauxite mining turned pale! They were anxious and struck with great fear! Feel as if death soon strikes! Death is very close to the jugular vein! Seriously! Really precarious! Scary!

As a result of continuous bauxite mining, the disasters that occurred in Bintan have become increasingly frightening disasters. This can be seen in the following quote.

The next time, it was even more exciting because it was discovered that tagbouts or motor boats as tows and barges milling about in the sea

around the Riau Islands transporting bauxite to Singapore were reportedly lying on the sandy beaches of a number of islands in the Bintan and Batam areas. The ships were destroyed by fire. The barges were shattered. Meanwhile, bauxite as the cargo disappeared without a trace! While the crew is known no one survived. Their bodies were not found. They are presumed dead! Great disaster! The government declared the event a National Disaster!

In public life in general, those who still ignore these myths are people who are considered from the lower classes, people who are not capable, and people who are not highly educated. However, in the short story "Queen of Bauxite" it is depicted that the survivors from the threat of disaster are people who come from forgotten and even oppressed families. This can be seen in the following quote.

"We are countrymen. I have a big task, inherited by Tuanku Putri Raja Bintan, Wan Sri Benai to protect this area from all disturbances and inappropriate temperaments, such as greed and greed. I know exactly that you are a forgotten and oppressed family. Therefore, as the Bauxite queen in this area, I need to protect and elevate your life," said the woman who gave her name as the Bauxite Queen.

In addition, the story also tells that the queen of bauxite entrusted a bauxite to the family of Aman Abdul Ali. A bauxite is given as a reminder to our children and grandchildren that Bintan was once rich in mining resources in the form of bauxite. The story told by the author in his short story indirectly reminds all readers that in reality not many people in Bintan are familiar with the form of bauxite itself. Bauxite mining continues to destroy nature and leaves no bauxite residue, but only leaves mine pits that are rarely backfilled.

Do not get damaged, let alone lost. This is very important so that in the future, your children and grandchildren can also see how the actual forms of bauxite that once existed and were mined on Bintan Island. That is the real bauxite stone that is evidence of history on this Bintan Island.

The main thing that is seen in this paper is about the existence of myths in people's lives which in fact support the protection and preservation of nature. In analyzing this short story in literary ecology by looking at local wisdom, it is about people's understanding that the universe is also guarded by supernatural beings. So if people violate myths and do

damage to the earth, be prepared for disasters and disasters to occur everywhere.

Myths as beliefs that are hereditary are currently experiencing a lot of opposition by the community. Myths that are considered no longer appropriate to their time or not in accordance with the latest scientific discoveries are threatened with being ignored by the adherents of the community. However, local wisdom from the myth of the queen of bauxite is still able to perform with its own function, namely as a conservation or preservation of natural resources that need to be maintained by the community.

CONCLUSION

By reading the short story "Ratu Bauxit" by Abdul Kadir Ibrahim, it can be understood that the presence of a literary work in the midst of readers can be a tool to guide society towards goodness. One of them is to renew the reader's awareness of natural conditions and also nature conservation. The myth about the bauxite queen told by the author in the short story reveals that people who still "heed" the myth will always be protected from bad things, and vice versa, can function as part of nature conservation and preservation.

As it is known that nature was created to be used by humans to meet their needs, but humans are not necessarily free just to overexploit nature. In the short story, the author also indirectly reminds the reader that this life will continue, so humans who live today should preserve natural resources as a provision for life for their children and grandchildren in the future.

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