

The Modernization Motive as a Breaker for Women and Natural conservation in Popular Indonesian Novels

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Abstract. The research aims at describing the modernization motive of capitalist anthropocentrism toward nature and women in popular Indonesian novels. The research applies qualitative method using Vandana Shiva theory approach. The data includes words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs. The sources of the data are taken from the texts of some popular Indonesian novels, such as *Lemah Tanjung* by Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim and *Tanah Tabu* by Anindita Thayf. The analysis result shows that first, capitalist anthropocentrism character is shown in the civilization development motive through science—modernization motive toward conservatism; second, *ecofeminism* positions the women character (in the two novels) in dualism role—as victim and resistance for capitalist anthropocentrism seeing nature, as women, can be pregnant and deliver life.

Keywords: *modernization motive, capitalist anthropocentrism, ecofeminism, popular Indonesian novels.*

INTRODUCTION

Women and environment are critical areas in the novel of *Lemah Tanjung* and *Tanah Tabu*. The involvement of women in the novels actively can be used in deciding environmental issues at any level. Therefore, it is an action to be focused on some environment management. The women's resistance in the novel of *Lemah Tanjung* by Ratna Indraswari and *Tanah Tabu* by Anindita S Thayf is a mimesis of one of the global crisis faced by every earth inhabitant. In this context, it can be seen from poverty and social hardship threatening human civilization. Another issue is environmental damage. One of the environmental damages is massive degradation of quality and quantity of natural resources all over the world [1]. The damage then negatively influences the world ecosystem and threatens human life quality globally [2], [3].

In line with the previous explanation, as the object of the research, *Lemah Tanjung* and *Tanah Tabu* are inseparable combinations of literature and environment. The novels describe human beings as perfect creatures,

yet in reality, they are inconsistent in performing their duties. In other words, as the only creature capable of managing and dominating, human beings in living their life and performing their duties in the earth are not consistent. Nature and earth where they live in are massively exploited despotically to please their ambition to gain big result and to reach temporary self-satisfaction.

At this point, this study examines how the behavior of capitalist anthropocentrism in the novel under the pretext of development is presented. The presence of anthropocentrism is ordained as the sanctity of the epistemology of science [4]. Basically, apathetic science seeks to get rid of ideologies that uphold conservatives or locality—A progressive theory which is based on modern science and economic development that does not affiliate with environmental wisdom. The two aspects only shift the essence of progress without limits and without awareness of the effects that have been caused. The implication is that it continuously destroys life without an assessment of how fast and how much diversity of life on earth one by one begins to extinct.

The novel of *Tanah Tabu* describes "greedy" human behavior that is in anthropocentrism called as the idea that organizes human greed. In the *Lemah Tanjung* novel, the concept of development mission is categorized as the pretext of the capitalist.

Anthropocentrism [5] sees nature as an object, a tool, and a means for fulfilling human needs and interests. It means that nature is used as a tool to achieve human goals of fulfilling desires that are never enough. The statement can be assumed in the way that nature is circumscribed so that it no longer has self-esteem and does not want to assess its usefulness [6]. It further shows that anthropocentrism is not feasible to be used as an ideology in life. Because humans are social beings, they should realize how unworthy human beings are when living in this world without the universe.

Therefore, the issues in this study are to dismantle the anthropocentrism behavior socially, politically, and economically in the novel of *Lemah Tanjung* and *Tanah Tabu*, and to explain how ecofeminism positions women in *Lemah Tanjung* and *Tanah Tabu* using the ecofeminist theory of Vandana Shiva. Shiva's perspective of ecofeminism is based on two opposing ideologies, namely the principle of femininity and the principle of

masculinity. The opposing ideology influences each other on the whole of life. The principle of femininity is the principle of life that has special characteristics such as peace, safety, compassion, and togetherness. It is paradoxical to the principle of masculinity. The principle of masculinity characterized by competition, exploitation, oppression, and dominance is not necessarily owned by women [7].

In line with the theory above, ecofeminism provides a perspective on modernity, which places nature and women as the object of exploitation [8]. In other opportunities, Shiva through *Stolen Harvest* [9] also questions that the political economy development is introducing the concept of forced trade. This is due to the existence of single standards such as food commodities and seeds that must be chosen if they do not wish to be excluded from the cooperative system. In this case, women who have wisdom in diverse choices as a form of respect to nature are not taken into account. Therefore, on the other hand, ecofeminism also provides space to conduct a struggle for discourse so that the current existing locality remain a source of strength.

METHOD

The method used in this study is qualitative textual with the technique of reading note-taking. The stages are (1) reading two texts of Lemah Tanjung and Tanah Tabu comprehensively by focusing on showing the behavior of capitalist anthropocentrism in two novels, and (2) identifying the behavior of women character as victims and resistance.

RESULT

The Behavior of Capitalist Anthropocentrism in the Novel of Lemah Tanjung and Tanah Tabu

Anthropocentrism sees nature as an object, tool, and means for fulfilling human needs and interests. It means that nature is used as a tool to achieve human goals of fulfilling desires that are never enough. This statement can be proven in the Lemah Tanjung novel of how anthropocentrism works. Anthropocentrism in the Lemah Tanjung novel is a developer named PT Bangun Kerta who successfully won a tender for Lemah Tanjung. In the plot, PT Bangun Kerta won a land swap and sought land compensation in Randu Agung. The trace of capitalist anthropocentrism does not see that Lemah Tanjung has many rare plants and various types of birds.

Seeing the traces of the anthropocentrism behavior, PT Bangun Kerta packs his desires by raising reasons for the development. The form of anthropocentrism motive in Lemah Tanjung is seeking for "prosperity" because the desire is unable to satisfy the person, so he looks for ways to make the Lemah Tanjung a "field" of fulfilling desires as seen in the following quote:

Having a feeling that they had paid and completed the requirements for the land swap, the developers fence the area with iron sheeting even though they knew there were residents there; Ibu Indri, Pak Rahmat, and Pak Samin. To one of the reporters, the developer said, "I

have fulfilled what the country wants to compensate for this loss. It is crap if someone bid this area higher than mine. Even if there is, it is better for him to come here and change my money. I will sincerely not do the land swap again. I think a good home and environment are the will of the era. Those who sue are making it up. They like to make a noise. There were no people protesting around the land. Later we can employ residents around here as security guards or gardeners." [10]

Based on the explanation above, the land eviction was carried out by an individual in the development in the name of various kinds of development project missions causing women life support in Lemah Tanjung is increasingly threatened. PT Bangun Kerta positions capitalist anthropocentrism as an action to control power. Developers are figures that rape the Lemah Tanjung's nature and the actor who impoverished and oppressively perpetrated the weak, especially women, as the following quote:

Once, along with the APP community, we visited Lemah Tanjung. I, Mbak Syarifah, Ibu Indri, and young activists in this commodity cried. What we saw were only trees that have blackened. Burnt leaves and twigs scattered on bare ground. The scent of the burning things was still smelled. Half running, we followed Ibu In who suddenly rushed to her house. The woman fell in the yard, sobbing [10].

The quotation above indicates that the green Lemah Tanjung land is burned by irresponsible individuals. The female figure named Ibu In was a woman who became the object as well as the subject controlled by the hands of the developer, so the victory did not be with Ibu In.

Developers in modernization are categorized as a development motive. It shows that developers are very easily 'seducing' the surrounding communities of the Lemah Tanjung to join development work. Ecofeminism views development as one of the causes of anthropocentrism towards nature.

Tanah Tabu novel describes Dani the women wrapped with Dani tribal violence conflicts and various forms of suffering they experience. What interesting in Tabu Land are the tribal woman and her life synergizing with the nature of the Baliem Valley even though Dani male has silenced women's movement so that the position of men is in the power of all activities and household decision making. Beside the masculinity of men in Dani tribe, Freeport also occupies a masculine figure in another form in Tabu Land who is the perpetrator of impoverishment and oppression of the lives of Dani tribe and its women as seen in the following quote:

"It was at that place that I first realized that there were certain people who were very passionate about rivaling God. They made a small world where they were very powerful. Their words were orders. Their weapons were the whip of the devil as well as the kiss of death that could make you disabled for life or even lose your life. While their uniforms were samara robes that are very good for hiding their rot. The decay behind the valor. That place is truly a hell in the world" [11].

The above quote shows the magnificence of the Freeport mining area from Mabel's point of view as a form of hell in the world. Mabel considers people of

Freeport are acting as devils that brought disaster or death of the Nagi Dani tribe. From ecofeminism's view, the success of Freeport is inseparable from the help of modern science, which constructs modernization as something that brings benefit to people, especially the Dani tribe.

With the help of science, Freeport made the Baliem Valley an object of exploration. From the perspective Shiva, modern knowledge and science have reduced human ability, which rejects the possibility of other ways of producing knowledge and other people's knowledge [7].

In this context, the people behavior in the Baliem Valley that has been tabooed by the Dani tribe is deliberately destroyed by science with the development of the reductionist mindset. In addition, the construction of the mining area is supported by modern buildings with technological facilities. However, this situation became a paradox when the existence of the Baliem Valley, which was transformed into an urban area, the poverty of Dani's life increased. Freeport, which acts as capitalist anthropocentrism, has made Dani's life more lame and neglected so that Freeport can seek maximum profits without considering natural conservatism and women in the pretext of development.

The Reaction of Female Figures in the Novel of Lemah Tanjung and Tanah Tabu

Tanah Tabu and Lemah Tanjung show inequality experienced by female figures so that there are resistances and struggles against the capitalist anthropocentrism behavior. The resistance grew when the destruction of the environment and natural exclusion initially synergized with women became damaged under the pretext of development. As a consequence, women experience double roles as victims and resistance, as seen in the following data:

Ibu In's eyes glazed for a while. "When the developers would swap the land of this campus, I felt shocked and can't sleep. I tried to send a letter to the Ministry of Agriculture, postal box 5000 so that they would stop the land swap process. ... I was so busy. Even though my husband had been ill for a long time, he kept supporting my struggle. He said, "I know you want to maintain this beautiful environment, but you must take care of your health. I don't want both of us to get sick." My breath was choked up when he said that, even though the land swap had been won by PT Bangun Kerta. As a result of the negotiation, they would find compensation for land in Randu Agung. I told him that they would not be able to tell me to move from this place. There are many rare plants and various types of birds" [10].

The data of the reactions of the ecofeminism figures above is an explanation to show the injustice evoking resistance. Ibu In is a picture of women's struggle to defend for their environment. Ibu In's fighting tool is unique and interesting. Although the land has been burnt, Ibu In is at the front line to plant tree seeds on the Lemah Tanjung land. Ibu In defends the land against capitalist

anthropocentrism which continuously destroys Lemah Tanjung.

Bu In has been struggling to defend the land since 1995. At that time she was a lecturer at APP. Capitalist anthropocentrism offers prizes by swapping the land to the area of Randu Agung by using motives in the name of "development." The injustice evokes resistance to capitalist anthropocentrism actors. A resistance from the perspective of ecofeminism is a cooperative act of women in synergizing principles and ecology. This can be seen from the reaction of Ibu In when she faced the injustice. She was forced to get out of the Lemah Tanjung neighborhood unfairly so that it arouses Bu In's resistance against the capitalist anthropocentric actors. In this context, Bu In was forced to accept the land swap decision as a victim, as well as positioned as an anthropocentrism resistance at Lemah Tanjung.

The reaction of the female figure in Tabu Land is the behavior of a character named Mabel who fought for the Baliem Valley proper use and preservation. The wise act toward nature can be seen in the following data:

Of course, Mace also takes part to help; works on Mabel's vegetable garden and field from morning until noon then vend in the market until the late afternoon. Whereas Mabel sells whiting and areca which he made and collected himself, but he was not the one who took the betel nut from the tree, after previously clearing the housework [11].

Mabel's wisdom behavior towards the diversity of ecosystems and the natural wealth of the Baliem Valley is her dependence on nature. Mabel is a woman who has an attitude of environmental justice as a concept of balance. This concept of balance provides space for marginalized groups to fight for their human rights on natural resources. Mabel's idea shifted into an action which was a demonstration against Freeport. Mabel's courage was caused by her awareness of addressing the social inequality of the apprehensive Dani tribe. The deprivation of the rights to the ownership of the Baliem Valley taken fully by Freeport was evoking Mabel to struggle and fight, which is also arising the courage of the Dani tribe to demonstrate.

CONCLUSION

The behavior of capitalist anthropocentrism in Lemah Tanjung and Tanah Tabu destroys the ecology, and it was assumed that the character of the developer and Freeport (anthropocentrism behavior) has a motive known as "the pretext of development." Therefore, the actors of anthropocentrism do not have an approach or concept of environmental justice in their development goals.

As a resistance, Bu In and Mabel have high management integrity in caring for the Lemah Tanjung and Baliem Valley. Even though there is an imbalance in maintaining the Lemah Tanjung and Baliem Valley, Bu In and Mabel have a reaction strategy which is to fight against anthropocentrism under the pretext of the development in their area.

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