

NO HERO'S HERE! A Post Colonial Study on Bahurekso Story

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Abstract

Bahurekso, one of Pekalongan's Folktales and local wisdoms, is promoted to be taught in school. However, not all folktales can be taught to students. Like literary work, Folktale needs to be read critically. In this paper, Bahurekso was analyzed from the perspective of post colonialism. The aim of this research was to find colonial values or ideologies contained in the story. The data were collected through library research by collecting supported data from journals, books and other related sources.

The result of the study showed that Bahurekso story contained colonial values in form of representation of Baurekso as coward, traitor, and deceitful hero. In fact, Bahurekso is Mataram commander who died in Battle of Batavia to fight against Dutch Colonial. This false representation created bad figure of Bahurekso and students cannot take him as role model. This was the colonial agenda to stigmatize Indonesian heroes as bad and to maintain this stigma Dutch colonial hired 'dalang' (shadow puppet masters) to use false Bahurekso story in their performance so that people unconsciously accept the story as truth.

Keywords: folktale, Bahurekso, post colonialism, colonial ideologies

Introduction

has an important role in the formation of the identity of a society. Siikala (2001, p. 15) states that folklore has a miraculous power in shaping an identity that is suitable for political purposes. Therefore, not surprisingly, folklore is used to create a sense of unity within a community so that institutions like the government use folklore as a means to determine the identity and unity of society. In the regions of Indonesia, many cities or districts use folklore as the identity and identity of the people, one of them is the residency of Pekalongan that uses the Bahurekso folklore as the identity of the society which includes the Batang, Pekalongan, and Tegal.

In a political effort to unite the community in the same identity, educational institutions such as schools are used in the effort to socialize folklore because one means to teach the value of folklore is through learning in school. According to Bascom (1954, pp. 343-347), folklore has five main functions: first as a form of

entertainment; Both justify the culture, rituals and institutions that support it; The three functions of education; The fourth folktale also serves as a means of control to preserve existing cultural values; Fifth as an acknowledgment or praise for those who adhere to acceptable cultural values.

Nevertheless, folklore as part of literature must be understood critically. Budiman (2012, pp. 131-133) says that not all literary works are dedicated to confirm moral values in society but instead break down existing values so that what is required in reading literature is a critical reading. Not all values in literary works can be taken and applied in the development of identity. The reader needs to think of literary works which have noble values to be taken, how the moral messages in the work are read and how to communicate those values.

Unfortunately, critical awareness of literary works that will be used for school education is lacking. One reason is the lack of awareness of the role of literature in cultural politics. Salam (2008, pp. 3-4) find

that the too formalistic paradigm of literature is still widely found in the selection and discussion of literary works in Indonesian language and literature books in schools. This formalistic literary paradigm leads to dry literature learning and is irrelevant to the life of the students so that the literary work is kept away from its role as one of the agents of the formation of cultural identity.

Folklore as a literary work is considered as a local wisdom that has the potential to be used as teaching materials to establish the school's local cultural identity. However, the folklore to be chosen needs to be read critically because folklore can not be separated from bad values such as colonial values for colonizers often use literature in the form of folklore. Dutch as ruler of the colonial period through the power of institutions and scientists use literature as a means of cultural politics to rule Indonesia. Herawati (2010, p. 200) states that the Dutch use literary works as a medium of hegemony and domination against indigenous people. Colonial Dutch recruited contract workers to take care of Balai Pustaka (Faruk, 2007, p. 50). The social and political controls carried out, not only to the natives as laborers, but also to the authors (literati) as well as the literary works published at the time.

The story of Joko Bahu or Bahurekso is one of the important folklore for 3 regions in Pekalongan Residency that is Kendal, Batang and Pekalongan. This story even be taken into consideration in determining the origin of the town of Kendal. Therefore, this story was chosen in this study.

Methodology

This study is a qualitative research study that relies on other verbal and nonnumeric data as a basis for analysis and problem solving under review, such as content analysis, discourse analysis, and naturalistic research (Farkhan, 2007, pp. 9-10). This research is literature research (library research) Library research is a research that

most of the activities carried out in the library as the main data source (Farkhan, 2007, p. 14). The object of this research is divided into two, namely material objects and formal objects. The material object of this research is the oral story of Bahurekso while the formal object of this study is postcolonial study to search for colonial ideology in the form of representation which was deliberately manipulated in the text to benefit colonial interests as Said in Ascroft (1994, p. 91) states that the representation of the east is cultural as well as political. To search for colonial ideology, it is necessary to map out the power relation between the colonist and the colonized representation and determine which privileges are marginalized.

Findings & Discussion

1. The Absence of Dutch Occupiers

In various versions of the Bahurekso story, the Netherlands is not widely mentioned, because the conflict that is presented is even more between Bahurekso and Sultan Agung. The Netherlands was only called when Bahurekso was assigned Sultan Agung to attack Batavia as a trick of Sultan Agung to kill Bahurekso in secret. In another version of the story, the Dutch were not even present at all because Bahurekso never came to Batavia because Bahurekso already knew about the hidden intentions of Sultan Agung who wanted to kill him by assigning him to Batavia.

However, the absence of representation of the colonists is advantageous because the Dutch are free from representation as colonizers with inappropriate colonialist behavior. Bad representations are more common in Bahureko and Sultan Agung because antagonism is diverted instead of indigenous resistance to colonial colonizers but between natives themselves. The colonial (colonial) and colonized (Native) colonialism was diverted into the inter-native antagonism of Sultan Agung (King) and Bahurekso (subordinate).

The transfer of colonized and colonized subjects resulted in the properties of colonizers being transferred to the colonized. The greedy, sneaky, selfish and traitorous nature of the colonists was diverted to the natives (Sultan Agung and Bahurekso). Therefore, the representation of both figures of the archipelago became ugly and questioned his heroism. In reality monopolize the trade of the archipelago, exploiting natural resources and human archipelago for the benefit of its own group. Bahurekso as a traitor.

Bahurekso is represented as a child who descends supernatural powers and proximity to the Mataram kingdom as his father. However, unlike his father, Bahurekso is a traitor who uses his supernatural powers and proximity to the Mataram kingdom to gain power and women for personal interest. In another version, Bahurekso is the same as his father who is also betrayed so dumped in the area of Kesesi which in Javanese means *Kesisih* (discarded)

Bahurekso is the son of Ki Bahu or Ki Ageng Cempaluk who is famous for his powerful and loyal to Mataram. He is a close friend or a man trusted by Prince Benowo. Jaka Bahu accompanies Prince Benowo from Pajang, then moves to Jipang and then wanders up to Kendal and Parakan. By Prince Benowo, Ki Bahu was handed over to Panembahan Senopati in Mataram in exchange or representation and on behalf of the loyal Prince of Benowo and close to Mataram.

Bahurekso is told as a powerful character. Like his father, Bahurekso is also known as a powerful figure and dedicates his supernatural power to serve Mataram. Bahurekso credited in the opening of Roban and Gambiran forests to be used as rice fields and settlements as well as expansion of Mataram region. Bahurekso with his supernatural power overcame Drubikso and the figure of the White Eels to open the jungle Gambiran and block the Sambong time. With this service, Bahurekso got

closer to the Mataram government like his father.

However, the power and closeness with Mataram is actually used for personal interests and betray Mataram. The first betrayal was when Bahurekso was ordered to pick up Dewi Ramtamsari for the Sultan Agung's sake. Bahurekso actually married Dewi Rantamsari and sent Endang Wuranti, Serabi seller from Kalibeluk Village, as her replacement to Sultan Agung.

The second betrayal was when Bahurekso was ordered to attack the Dutch in Batavia. He withdrew from the war and hid and established a duchy in the south of Wiradesa. This story shows that Bahuresko is a coward who does not recognize defeat and withdraw from the Batavian war. In addition, Bahurekso was also considered a traitor because he established his own duchy without the blessing of Sultan Agung as the Ruler of Java.

2. Sultan Agung as Greedy, Cunning and Authoritarian King

Sultan Agung is one of the pre-independence heroes of Indonesia who recognized his services in the fight against Dutch colonialism. But in this story, Sultan Agung is represented as a lust for women, cunning, and authoritarian figure.

In this story, Sultan Agung governs Joko Bahu to pick up a beautiful girl named Rantamsari from Kalisalak to be married. Although Sultan Agung as a king already has many beautiful wives and queen, but still Sultan Agung married a beautiful woman who is in the countryside. Just as the colonial image of the eastern kings is described as a lustful figure so never enough to have one wife. To obtain Dewi Rantamsari, Sultan Agung does not care whether or not she likes it. Although Dewi Rantamsari refused, Sultan Agung was told to order in any way even violence if necessary to fetch Dewi Rantamsari to Mataram. The kingdom in the east is always associated with the image of power and pleasure towards women (Said, 1994, p 111). In another version of the story, the

forcible retreat of Dewi Rantamsari is one of the tests for Joko Bahu to be accepted as a Mataram warrior. This shows the cruelty of Sultan Agung as the king who placed the women as an object of proof of soldiers' allegiance.

Sultan Agung is also described as a cunning King. He ordered Joko Bahu to attack the Dutch in Batavia in order to kill Joko Bahu without having to dirty his hands. Sultan Agung killed Joko Bahu for tricking him with Endang Kalibeluk instead of Dewi Rantamsari.

Sultan Agung's order to Joko Bahu to attack Batavia was not only an excuse against the colonizing Dutch but as a means of disposing of people he disliked especially those who disobeyed his orders. The orders of Sultan Agung in the case of Joko Bahu, especially the forced pick-up of Dewi Rantamsari, are full of personal interests. Thus, the struggle of Sultan Agung against Dutch invaders is not only for the benefit of his people but for his own sake that he becomes an authoritarian king whose orders are only based on self-interest.

Conclusion

In Bahurekso's story, power relations between colonizers and colonized are not balanced. There is nothing to be proud of Bahurekso and Sultan Agung as heroes whose primary task is against Dutch colonialism. Both are represented as figures filled with personal interest desires that defeat the common good against the Dutch colonialists.

The Dutch who were supposed to be the enemy instead became an innocent party and used by Sultan Agung to fulfill his personal interest in killing Bahurekso. In other words Sultan Agung did not fight for the community but instead fought for his personal interests. Dutch absence in this narrative actually benefits the Netherlands.

Thus, the heroism of Bahurekso and Sultan Agung could be questioned. These two figures who in the history books are told as a figure of resistance to the Dutch atrocities monopolizing the trade of the

archipelago is described as a fighter of self-interest. In other words, there is no heroic value described in Bahurekso's story. The two main characters are described as greedy and selfish characters that should be the nature of the invaders. Thus, Bahurekso and Sultan Agung are not heroes and are not worthy of being modeled by later generations

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