

THE ANALYSIS OF MORAL VALUE IN THE COCKROACH OPERA SCRIPT BY N RIANTIARNO

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ABSTRACT

Drama script is an element that forms theatrical performances. A good quality script certainly has a moral value to be conveyed by the author to the reader or the appreciator of the show when it is staged in a performance. Talking about art nowadays, it can be seen in the expression of human creativity. Art is very difficult to both explain and judge since each artist selects his or her rules and parameters guiding them into their works. It can be inferred that art has three points: a process and product of choosing a medium, a set of rules to use a medium, and a set of values determining what is appropriate to be conveyed by expression through that medium, in order to deliver either a belief, idea, sensation or feeling effectively. Moral value is a message in a story or other works that the author wants to convey to the reader. The message to be conveyed is usually in the form of good values that can be used as an example for the readers. In this study, an analysis of the cockroach opera by N. Riantiarno will be conducted based on the study of moral value.

Keywords: Value, N. Riantiarno, cockroach opera.

INTRODUCTION

The moral value is the message in a story or other works that the author wants to convey to the readers. The message to be conveyed is usually in the form of good values that can be used as an example for the readers. Morality means values, moral traits, and the overall principles related to good and bad morals. Immorality is out of this context and ethics and has no ethical relevance (e.g. shirtless farmers working in the fields). Immoral is associated with immoral behavior and unethical things (e.g. bare-faced farmers working in the fields).

The moral value in the story can be conveyed implicitly or explicitly. Implicitly means indirectly for instance through the development of characters, while explicitly means directly, through conversations among characters. The moral value itself can be associated with various perspectives which can be seen in the context of morality itself.

In theatrical arts, likewise, where performance must be carried out carefully, using symbols to convey ideas is crucial so the message of the performance will be well-received by the audience. However, the choices of symbols or markers themselves become

controversial among the theater devotees because of their relationship with ethics that develops in society. The elements of theater consist of main elements such as a) Drama script, b) Director, c) Artist and d) Audience. Then these elements are equipped with supporting elements such as a) Stage stylist, b) Makeup artist, c) Fashion stylist, d) Lighting stylist, and e) Music stylist.

It requires mature thoughts for researchers in translating the text into visual analysis, namely theater performances, since they are not allowed to ignore the ethical factors in society. The cockroach opera script by Nano Riantiarno sets an example. It is one of his interesting works to be used in research on moral values. This topic was chosen considering that morality gets less attention nowadays although Indonesia is a nation that upholds morals.

Cockroach Opera depicts the story of an urban poor who is represented by transsexuals, prostitutes, homeless people, and bandits looking for a living in the city. They were evicted, being shot at, and their villages burned. It is clear that injustice was theirs as one was a cockroach and another was a

garuda. The poor are on the periphery of a social class marginalized by the state. Discrimination against transsexuals remain to exist in both politically and legally.

According to Suseno (1987: 19), the word 'moral' always refers to the good and bad of humans behavior. It does not only refer to those, for example, a lecturer, cook, badminton player, or preacher but also to human beings who are responsible for their professions. The moral field is a field of human life in terms of its goodness as a human being. While moral norms are the benchmark for determining the right and wrong of human behavior and actions in terms of themselves, not as actors of certain and limited roles.

A concept expressed by Peirce claimed that a symbol is defined as a sign referring to a particular object outside the sign itself. The relationship between symbols and signifiers is conventional. Based on that convention, people also interpret their characteristics in terms of morality explicitly.

This article will reveal how the symbols used in N. Riantiarno's drama, *Cockroach Opera*, are operated and function as media to deliver critical voices so that the ideological meaning behind them is revealed. Based on the background, a research problem was formulated: How to analyze the moral value in the *Cockroach Opera* script by N Riantiarno?

METHODOLOGY

A. Research Method

Research methodology comes from the word "method" which means the right way to do something, and "logos" means science or knowledge. Thus, methodology means "a way of doing something by using the mind carefully to achieve a goal". While research is "an activity to search, record, formulate, analyze, and report the results". In this article, the author employed a qualitative research method to analyze the moral value of the *Cockroach Opera* script by N Riantiarno.

B. Data Collection Technique

The data collection technique in this research was done by using Library Research. It is a technique in which the researcher reads, studies, and records various literature works or other materials that relate to the subject matter. Then, it was filtered and poured into a theoretical framework. This technique was used to strengthen the facts, to compare the differences and/or similarities between theory and analysis of moral value in N Riantiarno's *Cockroach Opera* script.

The data collection was carried out, using a literature review, to collect the data as a support for data analysis. The existed data that will be verified are those obtained through library research. In line with (Meztika, 2004:1-2), the researcher conducted library research based on strong reasons such as:

1. Since this research can only be answered through library research, it is impossible to expect data from field research. The data were finally obtained through library data contained in the book *Trilogy Opera Cockroaches* as the material for analyzing the moral value.

2. Literature study is needed as a separate stage, called preliminary research, to understand deeper the new symptoms that have developed in the society regarding moral values.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

A. Cockroach Opera Drama Analysis

Symbols in Plot Construction

As for how the classic comedy-dramas map out the analysis of plot structure, Suyatna Anirun divided plot construction into five parts; exposition, conflict, complication, climax (crisis), and resolution. In the exposition, a major description of the involved figures and the setting will be described. Conflict contains the first incidents. Next, complications tell about how new problems appear and the characters develop into more complex problems. Then, the climax is the peak of conflict and resolution is falling action or problem-solving. The plot construction in the Cockroach Opera drama and the symbols that existed are described below:

1) Exposition

The exposition visually depicted another side of the ambiance of a sparkling urban civilization. It was about the lives of cockroaches huddled in dark alleys behind the splendor of the skyscrapers and monuments. Behind the city, there was a lot of suffering, hunger, poverty, and tragedy. One became a cockroach and another was a garuda. The earth shook, a barrage of gunshots. Singing and sobbing.

That is how the background of the situation is introduced in the opening scene. It is in contrast with the figures involved in which Roima carried Julini's corpse, a victim, wrapped in a white cloth. It can be found in Roima's soliloquy.

Roima: *She just wants to live, she does neither bother nor push people. What she has been doing all this time was a way to keep herself from starving. Please show me another way to earn money. Show it, show it. There was not even an answer. There are only endless speeches. Will we be full by only those speeches?*

She works, toils, and sweats. That is how she gets the money.

She is a indeed cabo since she cannot possibly be a secretary. Her only skill is just massaging. She is a indeed cabo, but that does not mean she does not want to be a secretary. Fate throws her into the drain, swarming with fleas and cockroaches. We are grassroots. Our problem is limited to the stomach. But why should she be shot dead? She is indeed a cabo, but a lot of people need her. But she is then chased instead of those who came. If there is a way to be kind, we will follow it. As long as not a way that full of bullets and rifles.

The whole universe responded to the tragedy of Julini and Roima. The earth shook and trembled. The red earth's membrane peeled off violently as Roima and Julini were dragged onto the benches of the monument plaza. Then two contrasting pictures showed up. A city with tall buildings and monuments as the first, and decrepit-cramped spaces-houses, dirty sewers, a

piece of land where children played marbles, and housewives looking for fleas for each other as the second. A nice-ambiance housing and a prostitution place. The construction of the scene in this exposition used a flashback technique. The next scene began with a shift in time and place; after five years of leaving the city, Julini and Roima finally came back.

2) Conflict

The first incident was when Julini and Roima were being chased by the security guards while looking for their old friends, Tarsih, Jumini, and Tarkana. So did the other slum residents who were always under the security guards' supervision. Tarsih fell on his worried. Although the brothel he managed had an official certificate, it was always threatened with eviction and extortion. In the slum housing, a fight broke out between Asnah and a loanshark, and a magician offered his wares, cockroach repellent. The next conflict happened between Tarsih, who had become rich because of her

prostitution complex, did not accept Julini as her old friend. Living in a big city was indeed tough. Tarsih saw that Julini's presence in her life would give her another burden since Julini was seen as unproductive. This conflict then develops into complications.

3) Complication

Based on the previous conflict, the problems keep arising and becoming a rising action in this stage. New problems and characters develop as well. With Tarsih's suspicious feelings towards Julini, Julini and Roima were facing more challenges, from place to live to place to work. As the prostitution tax was getting higher, Tarsih had to protect herself from the threat of eviction by using Tuminah, as one of her loyal customers had a certain power. The magician became more aggressively sold his cockroach repellents. Julini joined a lower-class brothel and a sissy group. Roima got a job as a part of bandits led by Kumis and Bleki with Tuminah's help. The officials were increasingly addicted to having fun at Tarsih's

prostitution with foreign guests, as a service project in the name of development. Roima and Tuminah's relationship was getting more intense making Julini felt that she has lost Roima. Roima rarely came home, he spent time with his work and Tuminah. Julini was very jealous.

4) Climax

From increasingly complex problems and character development, here comes the peak of the conflict, crisis. Julini and Roima had a big fight after she found out that he had an affair with Tuminah. Julini ran away from her until she was shot in the middle of the sissies who were fighting the officers because of the officer's humiliated speech towards them. Julini was shot by a security guard who tried to handle the situation. So did Kumis was killed by Tibal, Tuminah's older sister. It was Tibal's revenge since Kumis had ruined Tuminah's future, making Tuminah become a part of the dark world of prostitution. The scene continued with Tarsih's prostitution complex and the slum area completely

burnt by the fire. Tarsih, in the middle of the fire, ran into her house to save the certificates and important papers. But sadly she was roasted to death. The climax of the Cockroach Opera was when Julini is shot dead, the prostitution complex and slums are burnt, and Tarsih's death. This is what a human tragedy is.

5) Resolution

The resolution was depicted through Roima's action. After Julini's death, Roima demanded the officials to make a Julini's monument to commemorate and appreciate her struggle, and then they granted it. Her statue was then accepted easily by the other statues that have been in the monuments for a while. However, a contrary reaction showed up when Roima complained about the fire which devoured the complex. He brought violent crowds asking the officials to be responsible for the disaster. The group of violent mobs led by Roima, who saw the officials were lined with anti-riot troops and full weapons, chose to retreat and loosen their muscles. The

official and the troops had dared and Roima reassured the crowds not to get caught up in anarchism to avoid more victims. People quietly headed back to the sewers singing "*Jula-Juli Anjing Bringas*".

Next, Nano also implements the symbols in detail in his script so it will not oppose the ethics that spread out in the society and political area. Therefore, the symbols of cockroach in the opera script are chosen as follows:

B. Moral Value

Power and fear become the benchmark of humanism in the moral value of the Cockroach Opera script by N. Riantiarno. This story is not merely about a social critique. It is about the reality of universal humanism which may happen in any country if the hegemony power ignores the meaning of humanity in its civilization.

Some points are missed and even invisible when the politic and economy become a mastodon amid groups engrossed in a democratic party and become a prima donna. The grassroots have neither a sidewalk nor veranda of the mall

though their voices are needed in an open, honest, and fair election. Their fates are embraced again by '*jengki*' pants in colorful costumes clown which becomes the symbol of the magician's role in the Cockroach Opera script. Tells a reflection of himself even though he is the real cockroach.

The fate of the grassroots is needed only as a means of promoting. They are forgotten when the time is over and loved again when they are needed. It is just like Julini's character who is not a sissy. Her character is a mental symbol during the New Order era, when power can change at any time in the form of ambiguity, double-faced between sweet and giant, playing the role of the power. When the press was silenced through a telephone message from the '*Pangkopkamtib*' or on behalf of the Ministry of Information at that time.

Also, when the officials wanted to clean up the street vendors which consist of the poor. They were relocated or evicted somewhere during the New Order era. It was necessary so the hedonic locomotive blast advertisements on billboards in

the glittering and mesmerizing fake love.

High school students, college students, and society in general are the dynamic parts of humanity, at least for the voice of the people. But they remain under suspicion and surveillance, even though the real creators of chaos come from the stealth group that creates scapegoats. N. Riantiarno, wrote those historical events in the New Order era in a humanist format where the lives of small people were loved and needed, for the sake of power. It was narrated in the trilogy of scripts BOM Time (1982), Cockroach Opera(1985), and Julini Opera(1986).

The script for the Cockroach Operatheater by N Riantiarno contains a moral value that can be used as the basis for learning human awareness for its readers. Moreover, if this script is partly read, its strength is certainly in the theatrical performance. Overall, the moral value is trying not to be pessimistic about low job vacancies during the COVID-19 pandemic. Instead, let's struggle over and over again to get what we deserve for ourselves, our families, and our nation.

CONCLUSION

The Cockroach Opera drama, one of Riantiarno's incredible works, is deserved to be used as a standard of moral value in the performing arts drama. With various events and phenomena of the storyline, also some controversies when it is performed in several cities and countries, this work is suitable to be used as a research instrument. By having it, the researcher was able to examine it through the moral value that tells the readers about humanity based on Rohimah and Julini's conflict as the main characters. It is underlined that although living in a slum and dirty poor society, humanity should be upheld as a basic morality of humanism.

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