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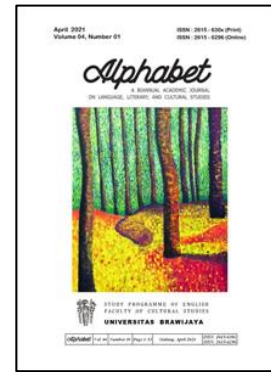
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Philosophical Hierarchy and Deconstruction of Structure in *Bukit Mawar* Short Story

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Abstract

In Derrida's deconstruction regarding the reading of philosophical hierarchy, two things are positioned as "superior" cases and special cases that are "lost/marginalized". Deconstruction occurs when a story changes in terms of its form, where the "superior" consistently dominates the "inferior". Derrida shows how the term "superior" depends on the term "being suppressed" (marginalized) in the process of accumulating its own meaning. He detects true social norms and standards that derive its identity and authority in exclusion measures through differentiation. The steps involved in Derrida's deconstruction analysis of a literary work are; first, to break down the existing hierarchy; the second is the stage of deconstructing and changing the meaning. To deconstruct and replace the hierarchy, Derrida shows how the "superior" depends on the "being suppressed" (marginalized). In Yanusa Nugroho's *Bukit Mawar* short story, the deconstruction of philosophical hierarchy can be found in several character traits and dialogue quotes. The social status and views of society that are presented in the work are also a deconstruction of the structure of social life as it should be.

Keywords:

philosophical hierarchy, deconstruction of structure, *Bukit Mawar*.

Literature is an expression of feelings, emotions, thoughts by humans which are expressed in a literary work. Literature is human expression of experiences, thoughts, feelings, ideas, enthusiasm, beliefs in the form of a real picture that evokes fascination with the language as its tool (Sumardjo and Saini K.M 1988). Literary work is a creation that has been enjoyed by many, both in the form of fiction and non-fiction. These works—either in terms of poetry, rhymes, short stories, novels, dramas, films, and so on—have continued to develop over time (Rainsford, 2014). They certainly do not appear without a process, instead they are born with the products of the society around them. Therefore, writers and lecturers such as Umar Karyam and Sapardi Djoko Damono introduced literary sociology to analyze a literary work by paying attention to the social conditions of the surrounding community (Supriyadi, 2014). In each time and era, literary work places itself according to the issues that exist in a society, region, country, and the world. Based on the Marxist perspective, literary works arise from certain classes, which describe the lives of people in those classes. This theory also showed that literary works are superstructures because they

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are constructing ideologies and ideas. Apart from Marxism, genetic structuralism views literary works as an expression of world views, including ideas, constructs, and ideology (superstructure) and there is a unidirectional relationship between superstructure and infrastructure.

To understand it, we can compare two examples from an old poem which reads *"be-rakit-rakit kita kehulu, berenang-renang ketepian, bersakit-sakit kita dahulu, bersenang-senang kemudian"* and a song by Jamrud which reads *"berakit-rakit kita kehulu, berenang-renang ketepian, bersakit dahulu, senang pun tak datang, malah mati kemudian."* To analyse, these two literary works have different meanings. These different meanings are created as superstructure with different ideologies and ideas. In the old poem, the idea of this work was created based on the social conditions of a society that was dominated by socialist ideology, where the more people work hard, the more they will get. This is different from Jamrud's song. The idea of this song was created based on the conditions of Indonesian society with a capitalist ideology, where the rich will get richer and the poor get poorer.

In brief, each author is free to write about anything they want. Sometimes the author writes a story that is very familiar with the community. In this case, they intend to write stories that are well recognized by the public. The author can also create a story that is not the same as the one already known to the public by changing the plot of the story, or the role of the characters. When the readers read it, they might assume that the author wants to change the story only to make it more interesting. However, if it is examined deeper, there is a hidden intention from the author. Deconstruction in the structure of the story can be analyzed by applying Derrida's theory of deconstruction.

In Derrida's deconstruction on the understanding of philosophical hierarchy, two aspects are placed as "superior" cases and special cases that are "lost/marginalized" (Supriyadi, 2014). The superior is usually special-

ized because they are considered good while the inferior is marginalized. The opposition is arranged hierarchically by placing one of the oppositions as special (Faruk, 2015). The terms analyzed are general ones, for example, day/night, good/bad, and so on, and to deconstruct these opposite poles, it is necessary to deconstruct the structure by subverting the existing order and the system of absolute power that has been previously accepted.

Derrida revealed that Deconstruction is a rejection of logocentrism and phonocentrism which as a whole gives birth to binary opposition and other ways of thinking that are dichotomous hierarchical (Ghofur, 2014). Deconstruction occurs when a story changes the form, where the term "superior" always dominates the term "inferior". Derrida shows how the privileged term depends on the term being suppressed (marginalized) in the process of accumulating its own meaning. It detects that it is true social norms and standards that derive its identity and authority in exclusion measures through differentiation.

For the deconstructionist, first of all, he must expose contradictions or paradoxes which can mean showing that the feelings expressed openly in his writings may conflict with the feelings he expresses. Second, pointing to breaks, cracks, and discontinuity is a way of implying that the text lacks cohesiveness and consistency of purpose. Third, linguistic peculiarities or those that can weaken a fixed meaning (Barry, 2010). The aspects that are discussed by Derrida in his deconstruction theory can be found in Yanusa Nugroho's *Bukit Mawar* storyline where the superior character is defeated by the inferior character. Besides, the storyline that does not correspond to the reader's thinking presents an ending beyond the reader's expectations.

METHODS

In the analysis, the first step taken was to select the object of the literary work to be analyzed. In this case, the researchers selected a short story entitled *Bukit Mawar* by Yanusha Nugroho. This short story is selected because

it presents a unique story that shows deconstruction in the storyline.

The approach used in this analysis was using deconstruction by discussing the concept of binary opposition. In addition, the identification of the hierarchy of the opposition in the text will also be carried out, where it can usually be seen which terms are systematically privileged and which are not (Norris, 2008). The method used in this analysis was the qualitative method for textual analysis (Moleong, 1989), in which a method based on textual data. In this case, the data were from Yanusa Nugroho's *Bukit Mawar* short story. Once the data were collected, the analysis was carried out by determining the binary opposition based on Derrida's theory of deconstruction. Thus, it can answer the problems of this study about the meaning of this short story by referring to Jacques Derrida's view.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Forms of Deconstruction of Structure in *Bukit Mawar* Short Story

A form of deconstruction of structure arises when Arjuna, the main character, is asked why he was given the name Arjuna. This indicates a condition that a person named Arjuna must be handsome and manly, and that Arjuna in front of them is not the same as what general people think. It can be seen from this quote below:

> *"When someone was curious about why he was given the name Arjuna, the man just smiled."* (Nugroho, 2012)

According to (Sarup, 2003), Derrida's deconstruction includes reversal and replacement. Before deconstructing a meaning, the first thing to do is to subvert the existing hierarchy. The next stage is the stage of reversing and replacing the meaning. To reverse and replace the hierarchy, Derrida shows how privileged terms depend on the terms being suppressed or marginalized. Derrida himself found both pairs, which are the privileged and marginalized that this pair is not a simple op-

position. The term "privileged" is a term that is considered superior or excellent and is a general case. Meanwhile, the term "marginalized" is a term that is considered inferior and is a special case (Supriyadi, 2014).

In this story, Arjuna is known as the youngest son of Kunti and Pandu, whose name means "the shining and glowing one". In Hinduism, Arjuna is a *pandawa* who has a very handsome face and has a strong and muscular body. This is shown by his role as the incarnation of Lord Indra, the God of War. Thus, Arjuna is known as the best knight among the *pandawa*. Meanwhile, in *Bukit Mawar* short story, the reversal and replacement of the hierarchy of Arjuna are shown by the representation of Arjuna as a character who is not handsome and does not have a strong body. This is written in paragraph 1 and paragraph 3 as seen in the following quotation:

> *"His name is Arjuna. Male, skinny, single, 45 years old."* (Nugroho, 2012, paragraph 1)

> *"Arjuna is also not as handsome as many girls imagine; at least that was what he experienced when he was an adolescent. Her face was wilted, especially with her thin straight hair and always messy. Not to mention that there are several pockmarks of smallpox marks when he was a child, so Arjuna is very far from the image of the handsome idol youth."* (Nugroho, 2012: paragraph 3)

In addition, the sentence "The name is too heavy for him, Sir. The name is 'Arjuna,' but how come the body is very skinning,"(Nugroho, 2012) is a sentence that shows how society views the name "Arjuna" as someone who has a manly and muscular body. Min's statement, represents that Arjuna is a representation of a person with good looks and not with ugly faces, as shown in the following quote, *"Especially when I asked him if there was a pockmark of smallpox on his face and Min agreed with a laugh, I'm sure that person must be Arjuna"* (Nugroho, 2012).

Another evidence of the form of deconstruction can be seen in this quote below:

"I want to call him, but as I remember, he never gave me a cellphone number. This primitive man is very special." (Nugroho, 2012, paragraph 10)

In Derrida's view, deconstruction is strongly connected to the binary opposition and examines the existing logic as the basis of that opposition, which is a position that controls others to occupy a higher position. The word "primitive" and the word "special" contained in the above quotation are two words that are in opposition to each other. Primitive in KBBI is defined as "not yet advanced (about civilization; underdeveloped)", while "special" means extraordinary (good). As represented by the character *I*, primitive is something that shows that the person is underdeveloped in terms of civilization, that he has less to be proud of than modern people who have a job and have an established income.

Besides, other oppositional sentences are shown in *"It increasingly makes me feel like I'm nothing dealing with this flower seller's widow's child in this cemetery"*(Nugroho, 2012). A widow is a woman who has lost her spouse by death. In Indonesian culture that holds the concept of patriarchy, a widow is assumed to be a woman who bears a heavier burden than the man himself. McDonald in Sulaeman and Homzah (2010) stated that patriarchal culture provides privileges to the men to access the basic material of power of women. The stigma of society considers that a heavy burden is caused by the absence of a male figure who is deemed the basis of power in an environment, including the family environment. However, the deconstruction of the structure of a widow's child who can do things unexpectedly makes a successful, having family, and well-established character *I* become less special than the stigma of society about children growing up without the presence of a father.

Philosophical Hierarchyin *Bukit Mawar* Short Story

The use of deconstruction theory in researching or understanding the contents of *Bukit Mawar* short story will be based on a philosophical hierarchy and also a reversal of the basic structure (hierarchy) or hierarchical tracing. Derrida's deconstruction includes reversal and replacement. Before reversing a meaning, the first thing to do is to subvert the existing hierarchy (Sarup, 2003). Next is the stage of reversing and changing the meaning. To reverse and replace the hierarchy, Derrida shows how the term "privileged" depends on the term "being suppressed or marginalized".

There are several texts that show the subversion of hierarchy and reversal of meaning in this short story. This can be seen in the character Arjuna and the character *I*. Arjuna depicted in this short story is a protagonist.

"They want to build a mall," he said coldly.

"They forced me to sell this land and build a mall on this land"

"The price is good but I don't want to discharge it anyway." (Nugroho, 2012)

Apart from Arjuna who is the protagonist, there is the character *Aku* who is described as an antagonist character, which is as proven by the sentences as follows:

"Hmm... if the price is good, why not discharge it anyway" (Nugroho, 2012, paragraph 8)

"After I returned from Arjuna's residence, I could not sleep. Strange, that one human. I figured he could pocket at least two billion; with an area and position near the main road, and with that money, he could buy more land… more than enough to plant local roses! Crazy." (Nugroho, 2012, paragraph 10)

From apart of the conversations above, it can be concluded that Arjuna wants to protect his land from people who want to build and expand the construction of the mall. Meanwhile, the character *I* gives the advice to sell it at a fairly high price. The character *I* even thinks that the Arjuna is insane because of the roses he plants. In these two quotes, it can be concluded that Arjuna is in opposition to the character *I*, which is an opposition between the protagonist and antagonist.

This can be illustrated as follows:

Protagonist X Antagonist

Forcing X Discharging

Doesn't want to discharge X Discharging

The main character *I* is the center or what is called the representation of this story. The character *I* is described as a character who is basically dynamic with his inner conflicts and worries over Arjuna.

> *"But, for some reason, I was beset by anxiety. There is such a pure, stupid—maybe—and genuine love, when he asked where to plant the rose."* (Nugroho, 2012, paragraph 11)

The position of character *I* as the representation and essence of the story makes him presenting the storyline from exposition, complications, climax, to resolution. In the exposition, it is expressed in the conflict between the meeting of Arjuna and the character *I* leads to a small debate, thus indicating that the two are different characters.

The complication occurs in problems between the office and household of the character *I,* as portrayed in the quote below:

> *"Meanwhile, my own problem with Andin - my wife - appeared again. The problems were predictable and easy to solve, but, once again, our emotions and energy were used up. Day and night are just a matter of light and darkness. Bedroom house with air conditioner, not even a coolness in our house. We are two people who have trouble secretly and hiding themselves behind laptops or BB, to get to each other…. Never mind."* (Nugroho, 2012, paragraph 15)

In the plot for the climax category, it is depicted in the situation when the character *I* suddenly defends Arjuna in front of the boss, who is an investor in a mall that will be built on the land of his playmate. This makes the character *I* have a big fight with his wife and finally makes the boss angry with him. This can be seen in these conversations below:

> *"I am sorry, I will not sell the land..."* I don't know why, I suddenly felt like I was being pushed by a strange force, just jumping out of my mouth. (Nugroho, 2012, paragraph 21)

> *"Mmmmm...that's not the answer that I expected, especially from you. But,….mm… please let me understand the 'stupidity' that…"*, he stared his eyes then laughed, followed by the crowd at the table. I saw Andin was embarrassed. (Nugroho, 2012, paragraph 22)

> *On the way home, I was speechless. Andin froze. Somehow, I became a threat to Arjuna. For some reason, Andin suddenly opened the conversation which made me feel even more stupid. Starting from her reproach about why I suddenly commented on a question that wasn't even for me, to a relationship between my office and Arjuna that I had been completely unaware of.* (Nugroho, 2012, paragraph 23)

The resolution of this short story is still dominated by the character *I*. In this case, the character *I* chooses not to continue working with the boss, and chooses to defend his friend, Arjuna. He meets Arjuna to see the craziness he is doing, which is digging the ground around the mall building that has approached his land even before the court has finished with its decision. He sees the excavation that forms a hill of red soil filled with Arjuna's roses.

> *"… also when the boss offered me another position at one of his other companies—to remove the thorn in his flesh, I refused gently. I chose to sit beside Arjuna who calmly made simple containers of coconut husks and banana midribs."* (Nugroho, 2012, paragraph 25)

> *"And that building was not destroyed by Arjuna on purpose. This crazy person is always weird. He even dug the ground around the unfinished building and scratched the whole building until it became a hill."* (Nugroho, 2012, paragraph 27)

It can be concluded that textually the character *I* is an antagonist, but conceptually he is a protagonist. He gives kind advice to Arjuna, defending him even though he is fired from his job. Meanwhile, Arjuna is textually a protagonist, but conceptually he is an antagonist. This is proven by Arjuna's position who completely ignores his friend's advice and remains

firm in his stance. On the other side, his friend, the character *I,* defended him, which caused him to be hated by his boss.

This is what Derrida calls the subversion of the hierarchy. The hierarchy is indicated by the special character Arjuna that is reversed and replaced so that the special meaning becomes marginalized. The character *I* who is marginalized becomes special and is superior based on Derrida's theory of deconstruction.

The subversion of hierarchy can also be seen in several parts of the short story, one of which is the binary opposition between anthurium and rose. *"Rose. Why not anthurium, or black orchid, maybe?"* (Nugroho, 2012)

In the quote above, we can see a superior form appearing in the words "anthurium or black orchid" and an inferior form appearing in the word "rose". Anthurium and black orchid are exclusive and elegant flowers. Meanwhile, roses are ordinary flowers. However, anthurium which is considered special, is only used for profit by Arjuna.

> *"Rose. Why not anthurium, or black orchid, for example?"*
>
> *"I did and when anthurium was popular in the market, I could buy this land, this wide,"* he said flatly. (Nugroho, 2012, paragraph 6)

Anthurium was only sold for a short time and the profit was used to buy a plot of land, while the local rose was special. Anthurium is seen by the character *I* as a special flower but it turns out not to be special for Arjuna. Roses are special flowers even though they are only local flowers for Arjuna. Anthurium is not special because it is only used as a profit-seeking material to buy a plot of land. Then the land is occupied again by roses.

The form of deconstruction of hierarchy can also be seen in the relationship between Arjuna and the character *I.* The character *I* is described as having everything and can act what he wants because of the good job and house he has but otherwise, he cannot do anything, even in his household and work. The character *I* who is considered to be able to do anything turns out to be unable to do any-

thing. Otherwise, Arjuna who has nothing but a piece of land can do anything.

> *"Meanwhile, my own problem with Andin— my wife—appeared again. The problems were predictable and easy to solve, but, once again, our emotions and energy were used up. Day and night were just a matter of light and darkness. A house with a bedroom, furnished with air conditioner, not even a coolness in our house. We are two people who are enemies secretly and hide behind laptops or BB, to reciprocally … I don't know. I even lost all my vocabulary, and strangely she who was once was nagging—and that's what made me fall in love with her—is now mute than a rock.* (Nugroho, 2012, paragraph 14)

Based on a part of the short story above, it can be seen that the character *I* has domestic problems with his wife. He does not have any strength to fix his problems with his wife.

> *"Andin followed me? And I saw Andin happy, her laughter was free, like a magpie singing in the morning, she was also nagging and nagging. I was locked in my own confusion. I like this. I'm glad someone could break the ice chain. 'And I'm proud, you did that too, 'she said with her face, which—ah, why is she so beautiful?* (Nugroho, 2012, paragraph 25)

Based on the quote, it can be seen that the character *I* who is considered superior because he has a good house and job is inferior to an ordinary person. Then, the character *I* chose to quit his job which made him unemployed and it turned out that it made his wife happy and laughed again as before. It can be seen that there is a deconstruction of hierarchy, where the character *I* who is superior because he has a good job and a luxurious house textually experiences a deconstruction of hierarchy to become someone who looks weak and does not have a job but is happy because he is back at peace with his wife.

CONCLUSION

In analyzing Yanusa Nugroho's *Bukit Mawar* short story, it is found that the deconstruction of structure and philosophical hier-

archy is very obvious. This theory shows changes to the existing order. Things that are impossible or unexpected can happen. This story shows that society should not only stick to old stories and this story teaches that the inferior is not minor as long as they can do something.

Superior and inferior do not have a fixed meaning; the superior can be inferior, and vice versa, the inferior can be superior. The subversion or deconstruction of the hierarchy in this short story shows that one word in the text can have many meanings. This is what Derrida said as a deconstruction when a story changes its form. In people's minds, Arjuna is handsome, manly, and dignified. On the contrary, in the short story, Arjuna is portrayed differently from what people generally think. The extraordinary thing happened when Arjuna who looked weak in the short story did not show his weakness to powerful people. Arjuna can turn things around and experience changes. Arjuna, who was originally inferior, became special because he could defeat people in power in his own way.

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