

**MORAL DEPRAVITY OF THE COURT MAGISTRATES
TOWARD THE LAW ENFORCEMENT AS RERECTED
IN UGO BETI'S CORRUPTION IN THE PALACE OF JUSTICE**

- Hadiyanto - *)

Abstract: Moralitas seorang hakim mempunyai peranan yang penting dalam menjalankan mekanisme peradilan. Akan sangat fatal akibatnya, jika para hakim peradilan, yang seharusnya dipercaya untuk menegakkan hukum, memelihara keadilan, dan melawan segala bentuk kejahatan yang bertentangan dengan hukum, justru menjadi kriminal bagi profesi tersebut. Tujuan dari tulisan ini adalah menganalisa kerusakan moral pada tokoh-tokoh yang terdapat pada drama *Corruption in the Pallace of Justice* yang kenyataannya merupakan refleksi kejadian sehari-hari. Metodologi yang digunakan adalah metode pendekatan moral dan metode pendekatan struktural. Tiga tokoh utama dalam drama *Corruption in the Pallace of Justice* yaitu: Vanan, Cust dan Croz digambarkan mempunyai moral yang sangat buruk dalam menjalankan tugas mereka sehari-hari sebagai penegak hukum. Mereka melakukan korupsi terhadap lembaga mereka sehingga kredibilitas dan reputasi lembaga peradilan menjadi sangat rendah dan masyarakat tidak lagi menaruh kepercayaan terhadap lembaga peradilan. Perbuatan buruk yang dilakukan para tokoh dalam menegakkan hukum membuat mereka akhirnya merasa bersalah dan menyesal. Kerusakan moral telah menyebabkan mereka tidak lagi diterima oleh masyarakat karena mereka enggan mengakui kesalahannya. Hanya ada satu yang akhirnya mengakui kesalahannya.

Kata Kunci: kerusakan moral, hakim pengadilan, tidak ada kepercayaan publik, perasaan bersalah, kegelisahan.

Introduction

Court, by nature, is the backbone of law enforcement through which people wish to seek justice and truth. It is, as a matter of fact, an institution in which any crimes against the law have to be put on trial in the face of judges fairly. The existence of court institution is greatly expected to solve a range of lawsuits emerging amidst society and is hopefully a shelter for those who are discriminatively treated in the sight of law.

Credibility and reputation of a court are so much stipulated by the law enforcers themselves. Image of the court, whether it is worth admiring or not, depends

*) Penulis adalah staf pengajar di Fakultas Ilmu Bahasa Universitas Diponegoro Semarang. Email: hadiyanto_smg@yahoo.co.id

completely on the professionalism and moral of the court magistrates, both of which are deemed important to administer work mechanism of the court. Moral, playing a crucial role to sustain the court credibility is undeniably an urgent matter in the framework of selectively recruiting the law enforcers. It will be ironical if the court magistrates are the rogues or criminals for the profession of their own. Court, of course, will terribly be polluted the present time and the upcoming days. In sort, the quality of good moral is the point the court magistrates definitely have to possess. The court magistrates, corrupting in performing the duties and not adhering the supremacy of law, will undermine the reputation of the court itself as well as public's distrust toward the law enforcers. In view of damaging effect on the court reputation and supremacy of law, corrupting doers including the court magistrates deserve to be sentenced pursuant to the crime they have already committed.

It is very necessary to discuss moral depravity of the court magistrates since they are law enforcers who are, as a matter of fact, relied on to resist all crimes, injustice, and untruth in the sight of law. Nevertheless, the fact says differently, they themselves who violate the law. The purpose of the study encompasses a number of points among other things are learning much deeper concerning one great genre of literature, drama, specifically tragedy drama with the purpose of getting a better understanding, analyzing and explaining moral depravity of the characters and the cause of it within the story of drama "Corruption in the Palace of Justice", and at last broadening horizon and knowledge regarding social life through the story which is the reflection of everyday life.

The advantage which can be gained in connection with subject matter the writer will discuss in Betti's play is that readers will have more understanding and insight that anybody can commit a crime including the court magistrates have paradoxical moral against the law.

Theoretical Framework

Literary works can be analyzed through two approaches, namely intrinsic and extrinsic approach. Intrinsic approach is emphasizing on the study of literature based on the elements which establish literary work from within such as plot, character, setting, theme, language, and so forth. Whereas extrinsic approach is stressing on the study of literature based on the elements that establish literary work from without for instances; sociology, psychology, biography, religion, philosophy, and the like. A number of structural elements in connection with this paper are:

1. Setting

Setting is very important in a play because of its effect on characters. Setting of a play helps explain or emphasize certain aspects of characters' motivation on personality. In line with this, Kenney states:

Everything that happens somewhere at sometime that elements of fiction which reveal to us where and when of events, we call setting. In other words, the term setting refers to the point of time and space at which, the events of the plot occur.

(Kenney, 1996:38)

Setting falls into three categories, among other things are setting of time, setting of place, and setting of social environment. The function of setting itself is giving the background of the events which occur in the story related to time, place, as well as social condition affecting the characters' life.

2. Character

Character is an important element in imaginative literary works without which a literary work can not by means be compiled. Character can be defined as a figure who takes along with the events of the fiction story in order that the events can chronologically compose a story (Aminuddin, 1994:198). Potter reveals that characters are the basic element in much imaginative literature and therefore they want considerable attention to be paid to them.

3. Characterization

Characterisation is the way of how a writer describes characters specifically in imaginative literary works through which a writer expresses characters and. their action. In relation to drama, Reaske gives opinion:

“There is no narration or description in drama, instead all characterization must be presented through dialogue. Characters speak about each other and characters speak about themselves.”

(Reaske, 1966:40)

Literature is a product of life which implies social, philosophy, moral, as well as religious values. The word moral is derived from Roman language “more” in singular form and “mores” in plural form which means habit of behaviour and ethics (Poesprodjo,1983:3). There are a great number of moral rules found in society which are bound to anyone around. Poesprodjo (1983) states that conviction, in terms of moral as well as compulsory in obeying it is, as a matter of fact, reflected in everyday life either individually or collectively.

Moral in scope of philosophy is a concept formulated by society in order to determine goodness and badness. It is a norm about life whose position is very outstanding and specific in activities of community life (Semi: 1993:71). After all, moral needs a responsibility for what to do. Deed and behaviour which are well suited to morality values indicates that the doer is a good person. The violation of morality laws willingly will lead to sense of guilt and feeling of remorse (Poesprodjo, 1988:228). Conscience is the base of subjective morality with which a person can think whether he or she is consciously doing is true or wrong as well as good or bad.

Method of Research

In writing this paper, the writer utilizes eclectic research method which is combination of two or more approaches namely:

a. Method of structural approach

It is method of approach which considers literary works as creative work having special autonomy which separate from without. At this point, literary work can be analyzed through intrinsic aspects such as theme, plot, setting, characterization, character, language, and so on (Semi, 1993:67).

b. Method of moral approach.

Semi states that literary works are written for reader society with the purpose of improving human dignity as a civilized person. With this method, the writer would like to observe whether literary works written imply moral aspects or not.

Discussion

a. Setting of the Story

The function of setting as explained in the preceding chapter is to give the background of the story as well as to affect the characters within the story. The story of tragedy drama "Corruption in the Palace of justice" from the beginning to the end solely takes place in the court. The place in more detailed could be in the room of archives, the hall, records clerk's room, and so forth. This can explicitly be seen based on what Bata says:

Bata : ... There a lot of things need -clearing up in here, we need more light and air in the place. The air in these courts becoming too thick to breathe.

(Betti; 1949:601)

Either act I, act II, or act III is taking place in the court. In this respect, court becomes the central place of an dialogues within the story. The statement about the court as setting can as well implicitly be viewed at the end of the story based on what Cust says:

Cust : (Staring before him with wide open eyes). The Council will nominate me President of the Court?

(Betti, 1949:639)

b. Character

Each story has to have characters in order to be able to build up the plot. Plot itself establishes the existence of the story. In connection with this kind of tragedy drama, there are a number of characters who endorse the story. The main characters within the story are Croz, Cust, Vanan, and Erzi. They are all dominating plot of the whole story. Croz is a chief of justice, Cust is a judge, Vanan is the president of the court and Erzi is an investigating counsellor. Whereas the non-central characters within the story are Elena, Bata, Maveri, Persius, Malgai and a nurse.

c. Moral Depravity of the Characters

The existence of the court which becomes a place of justice has been polluted with crime and corruption. There is a lack of moral earnestness towards the criminal; as a result, the law courts have become a rogue's paradise. Many kinds of political crimes committed by the court magistrates are becoming the subject matter of the city folk. One of the cases which is an obvious description in relation to crime within the court is that certain court magistrates have a terrible conspiracy to help some interested parties in order to take along with the important documents away. In fact, the magistrates themselves are the division for major causes of the court. Detailed explanation can be viewed below:

Erzi : Take the case, for example, the day before yesterday, of that prostitute in Panama Street: a little smoke and burnt paper were sufficient to send her to her maker. Was it not this division that had decided in complete secrecy to raid the house in Panama Street and confiscate certain documents?

Croz : Yes

Erzi : But when the police arrived, the place had been blazing for a good ten minutes, so had the documents and so, unfortunately, had a harmless caretaker...

Croz : What do you mean?

Erzi : I mean that someone from here had warned the interested parties. That is only one case among many: but it sums up the situation.

(Betti, 1949:606)

Based on the dialogue above, it implies there is something evil and corrupt blankets the court. Counsellor Erzi comes to investigate all of the judges in the court with the purpose of revealing who the criminals behind all of the corruption are.

c.1. Moral Depravity of Vanan

Vanani is the president of the court whose position is temporarily replaced by a senior judge Croz during his absence. He is a hot-tempered old man. His physical appearance is erect and tall enough. His hair is like white cotton wool (Betti, 1949:609). In his youth, Vanani was fond of women and was a great man in his time. As the court magistrate, Vanani has to deal with the criminals or the suspects. In terms of Ludvi Pol case, Vanani is too much courageous to receive a sum of money. Ludvi Pol himself is the criminal who has in recent years been at the centre of biggest concerns in the city and is willing to safely be out of the death sentence.

Erzi : (Gently) You received a sum of money from Ludvi Pol ?

Vanani : Quite, quite, my dear Erzi, quite. It seems to me that Ludvi Pol was slightly in debt to us, to my family I mean nothing important, old liabilities,... (Betti, 1949:610)

Cust : Vanani did know Ludvi Pol. They had dealings. I think I had had the impression that Ludvi Pol had passed a certain sum of money to president Vanani.

(Betti, 1949:608)

As the president of the court, Vanan is awfully corrupt by receiving bribery from his foe in law, Ludvi Pol. In addition to that, Vanan has been telling lies to the other judges. He denies meeting Ludvi Pol at night before Ludvi Pol is found dead to be killed in the Court. He is not an honest judge by saying something differently. Another fault Vanan has committed is that he changes the evidence of the criminal crimes. He himself ironically breaks the law he should uphold.

Vanana : ... I admit there may have been some little things, when I've been taking evidence that I may have modified a little... Perhaps I've been responsible for a certain amount of confusion ...I don't know ...

(Betti, 1949:623)

The reason for doing such a thing is that Vanan is forced pitilessly by his daughter Elena in order to accuse somebody to listen to Vanan, her father, the old court magistrate.

Cust : What does she want you to do?

Vanana : She wants me ... to ... to... to write to accuse somebody. ...she wants me to make them listen to me... But I'm tired and old, Cust, I am tired ... and now everyone here is so rude and insolent to me the whole time.

(Betti, 1949:623)

c. 2. Moral Depravity of Cust

Cust is a judge who becomes the rising star due to his smartness and successful career (Betti, 1949:602). Compared to another judge, he is the best and the most brilliance. Cust is very frequently getting much admiration and compliment from other judges such as Croz and Maveri.

Maveri : Cust! Our rising star. (Betti, 1949:603)

Croz : Perfect Clever old Cust ... Logic goes to old Cust's head at times, like a drink He is gleaming with sweat!

(Betti, 1949:609)

His deprived moral is the ironical personality. He himself who tries hard to disclose the mastermind of the corruption within the court, but he himself is the person all judges are looking for. He always rejects to be called the criminal even though he has been caught in the act in seeking the documents in the room of archives. He conversely says to Croz that he is looking for the real criminal who has corrupted in the court. At last, he concedes the crime he has already committed to Croz who is falling down severely on the ground.

Cust : ... You are going to sleep for a long time now, I think. Listen, it's true that...It's true, I have been a lucky man. Yes, Croz I was the man we're all looking for you're going & that it's all over, and

there is no more danger, then I may tell you and I really needed, needed to say to somebody. I could not bear any longer. I was the leper. You were looking for me, weren't you?

Cust : I would see it hiding in the record clerk's trolley, or disappearing among the book shelves and the papers, in the most ridiculous places, and I would be after it ... always after it... trying to grab hold of it, sometimes I managed to cut it, with a knife cut it up in hundreds pieces...

(Betti, 1949:635)

Based on what Cust says above, he is actually cunning and corrupt. He purposely destroys the documents in order that documents can not be an evidence of criminal's crime he handles. The reason for doing so is that he is expecting to be president of the court which is the highest career for his life. Such an interest motivates Cust to corrupt.

c. 3. Moral Depravity of Croz

As a chief of justice, Croz is the person who is at most taking all responsibilities for anything occurs in the court. Physically, he is very weak due to his severe sickness for months (Betti, 1949:603). He always takes along with his cane and is accompanied by his maid servants wherever he goes. Nevertheless, his appearance at certain moments reveals malignant energy. Similar to Cust, he commits an evil deed in order to get the career promotion. He has the same purpose like Con cheat and eradicate the documents of the criminal's crime he is defending. Being known in the room of archives by Cust, he accuses Cust as the criminal all judges are looking for and in reverse to Cust.

Cust : Rubbing his hands) But Im not guilty. It's you.

Croz : (Shouting) Yes! Yes! Yes! I too, I've also been a cheat! Bah... I've never taken much trouble to hide it I'd go being one.

(Betti, 1949:636)

Croz concedes that he is also a criminal for not being honest becoming a judge to enforce the law. He says that all judges are hypocrites to be bribed easily with something pleasant or money which eventually produces corruption in the court

Croz :... That 's why we judges are all hypocrites, all of us stuffed with stale rancid sausage meat. That's the real corruption in these court is, the whole place sticks terribly of it ...

(Betti, 1949:636)

At the end of the story, owing, to his unbearable psychological burden and severe sickness, Croz dies. He can not stand being responsible for moral depravity of judges as well as the corruption which occur in the court.

Erzi : ... Yes gentleman, your colleagues Croz has disclosed at the point of death that the person responsible for the corruption in these courts was himself... (Betti,1949:639)

Croz, one the depraved court magistrates, is finally dead. Whereas Cust and Vanan have not got any punishment yet, they are still living a freely, unimprisoned life, but deep inside their heart, the feeling of guilt and sinful feeling upon society remain haunting their sleepless night from day to day although nobody else knows.

Conclusion

Due to the fact that court is in principle an institution for the law enforcement, anybody who commits a crime against the law has to be sought, investigated and punished fairly. No one is out of law. All are equal in the sight of law. Moral depravity of the court magistrates must earnestly be eradicated and be dumped away since it undermines credibility of the court as well as people's trust toward the whole law enforcers in general. The worse work mechanism of the court indicates the terrible moral depravity of the men behind the court.

Cust, Croz and Vanan are symbol of the corrupt characters within tragedy drama 'Corruption in the Palace of Justice'. The three of them are doing something evil which results in polluting the existence of the court for which they are working. It is absolutely ironical because they are, as a matter of fact, the law enforcers, but they themselves break the pillar of law which they are every day dealing with. As a consequence, public's trust corrodes drastically and the court institution itself is also no longer credible, particularly for those who are willing to search truth and justice as wen as those who have a great expectation of getting low shelter from the court. However, eventually moral depravity of the court magistrates for violating the human norm and the existing law will lead the doers to sinful feeling upon society which is day after day hunting down their lives as the law enforcers.

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