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5-6 August 2019

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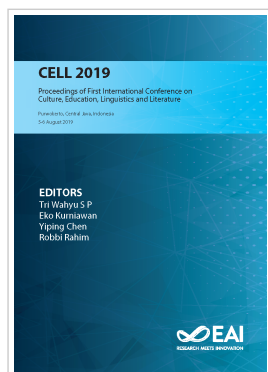
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Research Article

Local Wisdom and Capitalism in the Serial Anak-Anak Mamak by Tere Liye (Burlian, Pukat, Amelia, Eliana)

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Abstract

Serial Anak-Anak Mamak (the Mamak Children Series) of Tere-Liye show how local traditions must fight and survive in maintaining local wisdom against the interests of capital owners who exploit nature by using modern technology to benefit much income. This paper aims to show that culture does not move in empty space, there is always a fight and a struggle for space in it. Literary work as a cultural production records the history of socio-culture in its own way that represents the principles of life of a society. This paper analyzes that even though it is delivered verbally, local wisdom has its own system in managing the order of life of the people and preserving the nature they live in. This paper also analyzes that the development of a region generally does not involve the community of a region so that development aimed at the progress of a society actually destroys the natural and social-cultural order of the community itself. This paper uses the concept of literary ecology or ecocriticism, namely a critique which sees literature in relation to the environment. This research found that local values in Indonesia are eroded because there is a struggling for values, and the local wisdom or values are still trying to survive.

Keywords local wisdom capitalism ecocriticism new historicism

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Local Wisdom and Capitalism in the Serial *Anak-Anak Mamak* by Tere Liye (*Burlian, Pukat, Amelia, Eliana*)

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Abstract. *Serial Anak-Anak Mamak (the Mamak Children Series)* of Tere-Liye show how local traditions must fight and survive in maintaining local wisdom against the interests of capital owners who exploit nature by using modern technology to benefit much income. This paper aims to show that culture does not move in empty space, there is always a fight and a struggle for space in it. Literary work as a cultural production records the history of socio-culture in its own way that represents the principles of life of a society. This paper analyzes that even though it is delivered verbally, local wisdom has its own system in managing the order of life of the people and preserving the nature they live in. This paper also analyzes that the development of a region generally does not involve the community of a region so that development aimed at the progress of a society actually destroys the natural and social-cultural order of the community itself. This paper uses the concept of literary ecology or ecocriticism, namely a critique which sees literature in relation to the environment. This research found that local values in Indonesia are eroded because there is a struggling for values, and the local wisdom or values are still trying to survive.

Keywords. local wisdom, capitalism, ecocriticism, new historicism

1. Introduction

Socio-cultural space is the arena of struggle for value and struggle for influences. When new values emerge that are applied into a social-cultural space, the space becomes the arena of contestation or struggle for values. This event can occur in any socio-cultural space [1], [2], [3], [4]. Novel *Eliana* by Tere-Liye [5], one of the novels in *Serial Anak-anak Mamak (the Mamak Children Series)*, shows how capitalism sprang up in the socio-cultural space of a village at the foot of the Bukit Barisan mountains in Sumatera Island, and tried to undermine the order of village life which were protected from generation to generation by its citizens. This problem is so complicated because the people actually have to deal with government officials whom they entrust to carry out the mandate, voices the adhered values of their lives so that they can maintain the integrity of their life order. In novels *Amelia* [6], and *Pukat* [7], it is described how local knowledge is passed down from generation to generation orally which generally contains advices about the procedures of social life, procedures for treating and managing nature. Local knowledge is often considered too simple so that it cannot improve the level of people's lives to be higher. However, this simple knowledge can actually maintain the balance of nature and the social order inherent in a living society. The embedded values in the community are faced with a fast, concise, and effective modern life, but the modern life is

also vulnerable to the fraud because humans are driven by the desire to be prosper quickly by earning money by all means.

On the contrary, modern knowledge is seen as being able to improve human living standards, facilitate and accelerate human needs, but modern knowledge is also suspected as the cause of natural damage through capital owners. Because modern knowledge has accelerated the pace of technological development, the exploitation of nature by using modern knowledge and technology in order to accelerate and improve the results needed is also growing rapidly. On this side, modern knowledge is thought contributing to the destruction of nature.

Meanwhile, the novel *Burlian* [8] shows the gap between the physical development of the area and the natural damage due to the development. One side, the government was improving community infrastructure so that the ongoing development showed its benefits to the community. However, at the same time the cost of development which was supported by natural resources destroyed nature itself. Besides that, the people who are taken their natural wealth did not get benefit from the natural wealth owned by their community. Moreover, because of the natural damage the community can no longer use the nature wealth. This shows that infrastructure development on the one hand brings benefits and progress to the society, but at the same time there are parts of nature that are destroyed because there are mountains that must be flatten, for example, which have a large impact on the community's life order. On the other hand, development requires enormous costs so that it requires support from the natural products of a country, which must also be destroyed to get its natural resources [9, p. 106–107].

Natural exploration is carried out in order to obtain natural resources that can sustain the life and development of a nation. The development of the nation's infrastructure derived from natural wealth, however it often destroys the nature itself. The development of an area generally does not involve the traditions, patterns of thinking and local knowledge of a region aimed at the progress of a community, inversely it destroys the nature and social culture of the community itself [9, p.103]. These four novels of *Serial Anak-anak Mamak (the Mamak Children Series)*, each of which describes its own problems, but the themes are displayed almost similar, such as the problem of struggling between traditional local values and values that come from outside. If the problem is pursued, then there will be two fighting values, namely modern values represented with capitalism, namely the ownership of capital, in this sense, is money which can derail people from corrupt practices against traditional values that support life that emphasize life sharing in harmony.

2. Methodology

Since the issue that appears in the series are closely related to the environment in where villagers live near the Bukit Barisan mountains and capitalism, this discussion uses the Ecocriticism concept and approach. According to Ursula K. Heise [10, p.506], the nature of ecocritical studies involving various branches of science makes this study not easy to define, because this study was born from a variety of political and cross-disciplinary influences that surrounded it. Ecocriticism according to Heise [10, p.506] involves three different things, namely the study of Natural Sciences, the study of cultural representations, and ongoing political battles with the aim of being able to occupy a more natural world. With other words Tošić [11, p. 43] states that Ecocriticism focuses its attention on the relation of literary works

to the natural environment, or in other words how literary works show the relationship of humans to the natural surroundings.. The term which is mixed between natural sciences and humanities shows that this study is an interdisciplinary study involving various sciences.

Heise [10, p.507] states that in the beginning ecocriticism made a critique of modernity that have been reasoning to recognize the world of nature scientifically. Modernity does natural manipulation through technology, and also exploits it economically. Thus, it creates a human environment that is separate from nature in the historical process of humanity by labeling it as "progress".

Thus, cultural studies and ecocritical studies in this case are mutually supportive. Both of them direct their attention to how humans organize their lives, so that at certain times these two studies intersect. The differences are, ecocritics focuses on how humans organize their lives related to nature, including how humans use technology to explore the nature. Meanwhile, cultural studies pay attention to how human culture moves which is inseparable from political and economic influences.

Therefore, this paper also does not break away from the concept of cultural studies which observe that space is a field of contestation or battle of various forces [1], [2], [3], [4]. According to Barker [1, p.290-292], modern theory looks at time as a dynamic field for social change, while space is seen as something that is dead, fixed and immovable which is traversed by historical movements. In fact, history fills space, where it talks about history about powers that form authority at the same time. Thus, actually space is also not fixed, in the space there are also movements where values and perspectives are contested and struggled. This paper tries to show how a social order can be damaged when new values are forced into a society that has procedures for building its community.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Struggling for Values: Local Values against External Values

The Novel *Serial Anak-anak Mamak* shows how local values believed by the community must fight over spaces against external values that are trying to penetrate or even infiltrated into the living environment of the village community at the foot of the Bukit Barisan Mountains. The values that come from outside the village environment are prioritizing money. Money is a top priority in life compared to the shared life that is the identity of the village community.

This paper aims to show that culture does not move in an empty space. There is always a fight and struggle for space in it. The story of *Eliana* shows how local traditions and values in maintaining the balance of nature must fight and survive against the interests of capital owners who exploit nature to get a lot of benefit. This paper also analyzes that even though it is delivered verbally, local wisdom has its own system in managing the order of life of the community that is related to the nature they live in. However, because the cultural nature is fluid, not static and always moves based on the era, then local wisdom can be eroded in the struggling for cultural space.

The following events in *Eliana's* novel show how the struggling for values occurred. The values adhered by the local community must fight with values brought from the outside, but the values cannot be entered if they do not use "insiders". "Insiders" here means a part of society that has been influenced by values from outside the region, in this case a negative

connotation. These values are penetrated and infiltrated through a capital owner by trying to influence other communities.

“Ayolah, Syahdan. Sudah berapa lama kau menghabiskan waktu di kampung sejak pulang jadi kuli bandara... Lima belas? Dua puluh tahun? Kehidupan apa yang kau peroleh di kampung?”

Senyap

“Keliling dunia? Melihat banyak tempat ... Sadarlah, orang sehebat kau terperangkap di kampung, Kawan. Miskin, hidup seadanya, tidak punya masa depan...” [5, p.11–12].

"Come on, Syahdan. How long have you spent your life in the village since coming home as airport coolies ... Fifteen? Twenty years? What life did you get in the village? "

Silent

"Around the world? Seeing many places ... Realize, the best person as you trapped in the village, friend. Poor, rough life, no future ... "[5, p.11–12].

The above citation is a conversation when a capital owner, who is also a local villager, tried to force one of the village representatives to allow the capital owner to dig sand in the village river in *Eliana's* novel. One of the representatives was a figure as Bapak (father). This father figure was named Syahdan, who seemed to know the figure of the capital owner. Obviously, they knew each other.

The capital owner contrasted directly the ideal attitude of Bapak with his poor condition, when Bapak continued to reject sand digging in the village river corresponding with the wishes of the village community. This conversation illustrated the struggling for value. A new value was offered, namely how to become rich quickly, to live comfortably by having a lot of money, but the consequence was the village river digging in massive amount. Moreover, the villagers could not utilize their own river to take the benefit from it because the river became turbid and it lead to extinguish fish inside the river.

The contested values here are three things. **First**, the values of life that are believed and practiced by someone. **Second**, the values of life that are trusted and practiced by the local community. **Third**, the natural environment will be damaged. These three things are contested with new values that prioritize money as capital where prosperity is measured by the amount of money and the ability to buy everything.

The figures of Bapak, or Syahdan, is representation of person who adheres to values that are in harmony with the values adhered by the community. He is ready to be insulted to defend the village community where he lived. Johan, the character as the owner of the capital, insults the life of Bapak who was still poor, but rejected the offer of prosperous life. Bapak figure risked his dignity and life because he refused to excavate sand in the village river that Johan would carry out.

This conflict to self-esteem will not be easily passed by everyone, who certainly makes an inner struggle to the character. However, the figure of Bapak still defended his position. In fact, the story described Bapak is willing to be imprisoned as long as he does not betray the villagers for his own sake. His attitude is supported by his family, his wife and children. This shows that a person's attitude must also be supported by the closest family, because it is not uncommon for the family to make someone fall into failed action. That false action is contrast to the values that are in accordance with the community. The following passage shows how Eliana's character defended her father's attitude.

... Kami memang hidup sederhana. Bapak hanya mampu membelikan kami seragam baru bergantian tiap tahun— tahun ini giliran Amelia. Kami masih beruntung. Tetangga sekitar lebih seadanya lagi. Jangankan seragam, anak-anak mereka tidak sekolah, besok makan apa menjadi beban pikiran tiap hari. Walau sederhana, sungguh, keluarga kami tidak hina. Bapak

tidak pernah mengambil yang bukan haknya, apalagi menghidangkan nafkah busuk itu ke meja makan [5, p.28].

... We surely live in a simple life. Bapak is only able to buy us new uniforms for turns every year— this year it's Amelia's turn. We are still lucky. Our neighbors have more simple live. Not be uniforms, nor their children go to school, even they do not know whether they have food for tomorrow, and it is a burden on the mind every day. Although simple, really, our family is not despicable. Bapak never took what was not his right, moreover he never served the rotten earning on the table (5, p.28).

Eliana, the main character in novel *Eliana*, was the eldest child of Pak Syahdan's family. She was proud of her father even though they lived in a simple life, as in the quote above. Eliana believed her father's actions was right, and she absolutely did not feel despicable of their condition which was considered poor by Johan, the capital owner. Eliana's statement by using of oxymoron, "Bapak never took what was not his right, moreover he he never served the rotten earning on the table". By contrasting between the word "earning" which always has a positive meaning and "rotten" has a negative meaning, the meaning of the sentence becomes sharper. Here we see the values that exist in each person who later will become parents, passed on to the child. Afterwards, each family forms a community, so that the community has a custom and habit that they believe it as a truth.

In this event the practice of bribery and corruption tried to be infiltrated and transmitted to the villagers by the owners of capital with the stakes of the nature they lived in damaged. This struggling of values can also be succeed or not, because there are parts of the community that are affected but some are not. Nevertheless, those who are not affected actually powerless because they have no power and also authority. On the contrary, the part of society is lulled by promises of getting a wealthy and prosperous life, fall into selfishness rather than thinking about the fate of many people due to the damage of their natural environment they live in.

In contrast to novel *Eliana* which shows how the practice of bribery is transmitted to the lower classes, novel *Amelia* is illustrated how bribery and corruption are rampant in the upper classes. The once glorious rubber company was undermined from the inside with which many employees were corrupt, and it resulted in the bankruptcy of the company. This condition left many problems, not only unemployed people but also rubber farmers were hampered their garden products by the bad management. The following is a quote about the occurrence of corruption in rubber companies.

"... Menurut cerita bapak, zaman itu, truk pengangkut getah karet hilir mudik. Mesin bekerja siang malam. Dan setiap minggu dengan menggunakan kereta api, pabrik itu bisa mengirim puluhan gerbong lembaran karet ke Kota Provinsi. Tapi belakangan pengurusnya banyak yang mencuri, juga sebagian karyawannya. Lama-lama pabriknya bangkrut, ditutup total..." [6, p.126]

"... According to Bapak's story, at that time, rubber latex trucks were transporting back and forth. The machines worked day and night. And every week by using the train, the factory could send dozens of rubber sheet wagons to the Provincial City. But lately many of the managers stole, also some of their employees. After a long time the factory went bankrupt, closed completely..." [6, p.126]

Corruption was seen as a normal thing, even though the impact was very large on the life of the community and the state. Since there were fraudulent people, then there was a large part of the community affected by this actions, and it indeed caused economic rotation to be hampered.

Self-centered actions that justified all means spread in all parts of people's lives, however, there were still a few people who tried to stick on the shared life principles, who

believed that when they cheated they would have negative impacts on the lives of many people and spoiled the order of society, on the contrary many did not care about these principles. As we can see in the quote below, when the figure of Mamak was explaining to Amelia why her uncle decided to stop working because he could not stand with the practices of corruption and bribery in the company where he worked.

".... Sudah jamak, perusahaan kontraktor menyuap pejabat untuk memenangkan tender proyek pembangunan. Misalnya membangun gedung sekolah, perkantoran, jembatan. Juga melakukan cara-cara jahat lainnya." [6, p.292]

"... It is common for contracting companies to bribe officials in order to win a tender for development projects. For example, for building a school, offices, bridges. Also they do other evil ways." [6, p.292]

The above quote shows that corruption is considered as a normal thing, and it spreads from the upper classes to the lower classes. The setting of the time for all novels was in the 1980s during the New Order period when the Indonesian period began to build the country's infrastructure. The great changes were being experienced by Indonesia physically at that time. Nevertheless, at the same time there were something eroded in the values of life in the society. The abundance of money circulating for development projects was not accompanied by the mentality of the nation's people to build their country, in consequence they had developed physical appearance of the country, but not the mentality of the nation's people.

In novel *Burlian*, the struggle for value is illustrated how the role of money in changing human characters. For the sake of money, people can change more selfish than prioritizing living together. This novel shows how exploration of natural resources can produce money for sure. That is because when natural resources are dug up, then prosperity is a promise. However, actually belongs to whom the prosperity, this always becomes a problem when large-scale natural exploration is carried out, as described by the *Burlian* novel.

"Ini kampung kita. Hutan ini juga hutan leluhur kita. Kitalah yang seharusnya memilikinya. Bukan orang-orang kaya dari kota. Sekarang mereka mencari minyak tanah, besok lusa mereka menebangi hutan untuk dijadikan kebun kelapa sawit, sampai habis seluruh hutan, sampai kita mencari sepotong kayu bakar saja tidak bisa lagi, apalagi berburu ayam liar, mengambil rotan, rebung, dan sebagainya. Oi, gara-gara uang berbilang dua ratus ribu saja kalian mau mengizinkan mereka megebom tanah-tanah kita? Picik sekali! [8, p.11].

"This is our village. This forest belongs also to our ancestors. We are the ones who should have it. Not rich people from the city. Now they are looking for kerosene, the day after tomorrow they will cut down the forest to be used as oil palm plantations, until the entire forest runs out, until we can not just look for a piece of firewood, especially hunting wild chickens, taking rattan, bamboo shoots, and so on. Oi, for the sake of the two hundred thousand you want to allow them to bomb our lands? How petty! [8, p.11]

The quotation above is a statement from Bapak who opposed exploration in their village. However, among those who opposed the exploration, there were people who supported it for their own benefit, such as Wak Lihan' character. Wak Lihan sent his men who used to help him in the garden to help the exploration team bombard their forests with the aim at searching for petroleum. For the sake of hundreds of thousands of rupiah, he was willing to destroy the village forest [9, p.109].

Hundreds of thousands of money in the 1970s were certainly high value, for people who are concerned with material. Money is not only important for those who are poverty-stricken, such as Wak Lihan's men, even for Wak Lihan who lives well. Bapak character represents those who think ideal, prioritize common interests, even though for that idea, the life of Bapak is in common. From the events of exploration for development in this novel, we can see that

the word "development" at that time had such a complicated understanding. In plain view, we saw the characteristic of development, namely physical development which characterizes modernity. Modernity that makes people's lives easier in everything. However, "development" also leaves damage. Natural damage, also mental damage, and socio-cultural order [9, p.109].

Here, we can see that literature is not only recording the social culture situation and condition but also recording how capitalism as a trend in economy was introduced to villagers. There are two reactions of villagers for this condition, resisted and negotiated actions. But, the penetration into all classes makes the village society must choose to defend or to negotiate with the capitalism culture.

3.2 Government Roles and Policies

Eliana and *Burlian's* novel show how the government plays a role in determining policies regarding natural exploration in the 1980s. Natural exploration was permitted by the government in order to obtain natural wealth for the development of the country, but in practice many people abused this permit. The capital owners who got this permit used the given authority to them by exploring the nature without regarding to its impact on the human environment.

The actions of the capital owners had become pro and contra in the community. On the community side they felt disadvantaged, but the local government where they complain about their fate did not take sides with them and defend the community. The quotation below in *Eliana's* novel shows how people fight for their rights through negotiations with government officials, but always find themselves deadlocked because the government apparatus totally did not side with the community.

"[...] *Nah*, Bapak kau bersama tetua lain menjadi wakil kampung. Di sana juga ada pejabat kabupaten menjadi wakil pemerintah. Mereka berembung, bicara, membahas tentang izin truk – truk--" [5, p.8]

"[...] Well, your father and other elders are representatives of the village. There are also district officials who are government representatives. They discuss, talk, discuss about the permits for trucks - "[5, p.8]

The struggle of the people was always in vain, because they were dealing with capital owners who could bribe anyone including government officials to get permission, and if the owners of capital committed violations they could continue just to bribe again and the problem was over. The novel citation below shows how the efforts of village people in vain to prevent the excavation of sand in their rivers.

Bapak menghela napas pelan, "walau seluruh penduduk kampung bilang 'tidak', bukan berarti urusan otomatis selesai. Wak Yati tahu persis soal itu. Johan punya izin lengkap, di tambah lagi bupati, pejabat, semuanya tidak di pihak kita. Mereka bisa kapan saja mengirimkan kembali puluhan truk, dikawal petugas bersenjata. Siapa yang mengganggu, tembak di tempat. Siapa yang menghalangi, langsung penjarakan. Kita semua paham, sungai, hutan, lembah, secara hukum bukan milik kita. Bahkan, tanah dan rumah penduduk saja tidak banyak yang bersertifikat. Urusan ini sungguh bukan sekadar bilang 'tidak'. Kita harus pintar, tahan banting, dan punya daya tahan menghadapi mereka. Hanya dengan itu kita bisa memastikan seluruh warisan hutan dan kebijakan leluhur kampung bertahan puluhan tahun." [5, p.21]

Bapak sighed softly, "even though all the villagers say 'no', it does not mean that the matter is automatically completed. Wak Yati knew exactly about that Johan has complete permission, plus the regent, officials, all of them are not on our side. They could at any time

send back dozens of trucks, escorted by armed officers. Who disturbs, will be shot in place. Anyone hinders, immediately imprisons. We all know, rivers, forests, valleys, are not legally ours. In fact, there are not many land and houses that are certified. This matter isn't really just for saying 'no'. We must be smart, resilient, and have the endurance to face them. Only in that way we can ensure that the all forest inheritance and the village ancestral wisdom survive in decades." [5, p.21]

From the quote above we get the picture that the government apparatus is not on the side of the community. The community actually becomes the guilty party when they protest against the exploitation of the natural environment in which they live. Government officials are on the side of the owners of capital who can arbitrarily manage and exploit nature without taking into account the impact on the environment and surrounding communities. People who defend their rights actually become subject to legal offenses when protesting. Therefore, the development proclaimed by the government becomes ambiguous, one side is doing for the infrastructure development for a "progress", but on the other hand damage the natural environment and human mentality.

3.3 Local Wisdom

Serial Anak-anak Mamak novels shows that capitalism is infiltrated in the life of the people of Bukit Barisan, and it damages mentally some people by instilling that money or capital is everything in life. Capital can guarantee a worthy and prosperous life without having to care for other lives. Simultaneously, the practice of bribery and corruption, as a means of being implemented, runs in order for the capital owner can exploit nature in accordance with his desire to get as much profit as possible. Thus, the inherited local wisdom that is maintained by the people of Bukit Barisan in safeguarding the nature and the traditional social system of the community to be damaged, because the people have been mentally damaged because of greediness.

Every region anywhere in the world generally has local wisdom in the form of a tradition of preserving the social system and its natural environment. Local wisdom is delivered verbally through advices per generation. The four novels of *Serial Anak-anak Mamak* reveal how the lives of the people at the foot of Bukit Barisan mountains tried to keep the values of their ancestors still alive.

Cultural experts generally refer to inheritance passed down orally as local knowledge, or local genius. This is explained by Muhammad Shubhi [12, p.93] who cites the description of Kartawinata from an anthropological perspective, local wisdom can be referred to as local knowledge or also local genius, which can show a cultural identity somewhere. The term local wisdom, local knowledge, and local genius are often used with overlapping meanings. According to Permana [13, p.50] local wisdom is the attitude, views, and ability of a community in managing its spiritual and physical environment. More details are stated by Sedyawati [14, p.31], local wisdom is a term that should be interpreted as "wisdom in traditional culture" with a note that what is meant in this case is the traditional culture of ethnic groups. The word "wisdom" should also be understood in a broad sense, that is not only in the form of cultural norms and values, but also all elements of ideas, including those that have implications for technology, handling health, and aesthetics. With this understanding, those that include in local wisdom, besides proverbs and all other expressions of language, also patterns of action, the production of material culture and cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible.

With a concise and detailed understanding of the local wisdom above, we can conclude that local wisdom includes local knowledge, and local genius so that why the three terms overlap in their use. Local genius and local knowledge are generally used in local traditions containing of knowledge which applied locally, used for generations, for example how to build traditional houses, to use traditional medicine, and also how to preserve nature, but all of them are referred as local wisdom when they are discussed in general.

This paper discusses local wisdom in protecting the natural environment narrated in the novels *Series of Anak-anak Mamak* where local wisdom here collides with values that come from outside. *Eliana's* novel reveals that the damaging of natural environment has no affection on the owners of capital. The owners of capital even get wealth from digging river sand or destroying nature. Johan tried to influence Bapak that thinking of self-interest is needed if we want to improve our destiny. Moreover, exploiting natural products, not only will provide the impact of prosperity on someone, but also for the life of the village which has natural resources. It will enjoy the results of development. It can be seen here the differences in orientation between the capital owners and the community. Development is seen by the owners of capital solely as physical development without regard to contours and parts of nature that were damaged, and in fact it has a very bad impact on the local community. They can no longer use the nature where they earn for living. The quote below confirms the way investors think.

“ Kami justru datang menawarkan kehidupan yang lebih baik. Kami bisa memperbaiki sekolah kalian yang hampir roboh. Membangun balai desa yang lebih baik. Memberikan puluhan lapangan pekerjaan. Dan di atas segalanya, kami bisa memberikan kesempatan untuk kau sendiri, menjadikan seseorang yang penting, Syahdan...” [5, p.12]

"We actually came to offer a better life. We can build your school which is almost about to fall down. Building a better village hall. Provides dozens of jobs. And above all, we can provide opportunities for yourself, making you as someone important, Syahdan "[5, p.12]

In contrast, the villagers at the foot of the Bukit Barisan mountains believe that when they destroy nature, nature will be hostile to them. In fact, they live depending on nature, so they endure desperately when the nature in which they live is disturbed. The river where they are looking for fish will be turbid if the sand is taken continuously, which causes the fish to die and the water can no longer be used.

Novel *Burlian* shows how the villagers in this area of South Sumatra maintain their society system, including their relationship with nature. Those people have rules that are common similar in other regions of Indonesia, namely there are things that are considered taboo to be violated. In fact, in certain cases this prohibition or taboo seems absurd. These rules maintain the society life system, both the social system in the society as well as the relationship of the community with the Creator, also with the nature in which they live [9, p.107].

Strict rules are passed down orally for generations to protect nature. The rule is flourished with scary stories, a typical way that was generally done by Indonesian people in ancient times. Moreover, the stories often belong to the community becoming legends that were believed to have really happened, so that the people do not dare to break them. Therefore, the nature of the community's environment can be maintained in balance. People who believe more in superstition things, stories like this are more easily accepted, so ancestors in the past created stories that were in accordance with the local way of thinking in protecting nature [9, p.107–108].

“Burlian, Pukat, leluhur kita bersisian dengan alam lebih dari ratusan tahun. Mereka hidup dari kasih sayang hutan yang memberikan segalanya. Maka sudah sepatutnyalah mereka membalas kebaikan itu dengan menjaga hutan dan seluruh isinya.” [8, p. 260]

"Burlian, Pukat, our ancestors lived side by side with nature for more than hundreds of years. They lived from the love of the forest that gave everything. Then, it is appropriate for them to repay that kindness by protecting the forest and all its contents." [8, p. 260]

The important thing for local people is loving the nature where they live in is, because they live from the gift of nature. The community really understands the consequences of natural damage. Maintaining the balance of nature is very important for human survival. However, maintaining the balance with the nature is inseparable from maintaining human relations, namely by prioritizing living together. As seen in Pak Bin's message, the teacher figure in the Serial story.

“Ratusan tahun leluhur kita hidup di sini, di tengah hutan lebat yang indah, ratusan tahun mereka menjaga harmoni dengan alam, termasuk dengan siklus air hujan. Kalian pasti pernah mendengar kebijakan tetua ini: Jangan pernah mengambil semua rebung tanpa menyisakan tunasnya untuk tumbuh lagi. Jangan pernah menebar racun atau menjulurkan kawat setrum di sungai yang akan membuat telur dan ikan-ikan kecil juga mati. Padahal, esok lusa dari merekalah sungai akan terus dipenuhi ikan-ikan. Jangan pernah menebas umbut rotan semuanya. Kita selalu berusaha menjaga keseimbangan. Jangan pernah melewati batas, atau hutan tidak lagi bersahabat. [5, p.156-157]

Hundreds of years our ancestors lived here, in the midst of beautiful dense forests, hundreds of years they maintain the harmony with nature, including the rainwater cycle. You must have ever heard of this wisdom of our forefathers: Never take all bamboo shoots without leaving the shoots to grow again. Never spread poison or stick out electric current wires in a river. It will make fish seeds and small fish die. For this reason, in the future those seeds will continue to fill the river. Never slash all the rattan sticks. We always try to maintain balance. Never goes beyond the limit, or the forest is no longer friendly. [5, p.156-157]

Although character of Pak Bin here was being a teacher, he inserted local wisdom in his lessons related to nature. The virtue of living in harmony with nature will also maintain harmony and togetherness with other humans. The importance of not living greedy, taking as enough as we need from nature, the life will be balanced between nature and humans if we mind with all of those things.

Living in harmony with nature is inseparable from our appreciating in valuing environment. The villagers prioritize living together in any case. This is seen when the harvest season comes. Before the yields is sold, the first thing the villagers do is sharing the yields with the neighbors, then sell the rest. Even in selling yields, in this sense is related to earn money, villagers have their own ways. The applied principle is, the merchandises must be sold out immediately, and does not break the fraternity among the villagers. These events are described in the *Pukat* novel, when Pukat and his brother Burlian were engaged by Mamak to trade in local traditional community market. They saw their Mamak sold duku fruit at cheap prices with a large amount dosage. If those buyers had family ties with their family, Mamak would increase the duku fruit's doses. Accordingly, their merchandises were sold out quickly. Mamak's actions were confusing for Pukat, because the principle of selling of Mamak did not indicate that the buying and selling process is to get a profit, more accurately her action referred as selling in a stupid way.

Since Pukat always protested, Mamak asked Pukat and his brother Burlian to sell on the market at their own price at the other day. As a result, their merchandises did not sell out because they set too high prices for selling fruits. They earned only a little money, they must

bring back home the duku fruit that did not sell out well. This event illustrates the meaning of buying and selling for the villagers. The Mamak figure is a representation of the villagers who accentuates the importance for living in togetherness. These events also show the values adhered by rural communities. They need money but the more important thing is keeping sharing life together. Below is a citation when Bapak explained the actions of Mamak when made selling in the market.

"Banyak sekali contoh kebaikan sederhana di dunia ini yang semakin pudar, Pukat. Besok lusa, saat kau melihat dunia, pindah dari kampung ini, kau akan melihat lebih banyak lagi kebaikan-kebaikan kecil yang hilang, digantikan dengan kesombongan dan keserakahan hidup."

"Pasar misalnya. Jika kau memprotes cara Mamak kau berjualan tadi pagi, itu karena kau masih memahami pasar sebagai tempat jual-beli. Untung-rugi. Mahal-murah. Kau belum memahami pasar sebagai bagian kehidupan kita, tempat untuk berbuat kebaikan, menebalkan rasa jujur dan prasangka baik. Oi, bukankah kau tahu, agama kita meneladani begitu banyak adab bertransaksi yang indah di pasar. [7, p. 237]

"There are many examples of modest kindness faded in this increasingly world, Pukat. The day after tomorrow, when you look at the world, you move from this village, you will see more little good things disappearing, replaced by pride and greed." ...

"The market, for example. If you protested the way your Mamak selling this morning, because you still perceived that the market as a place of sale. Profit and loss. Expensive and cheap. It means that you don't understand the function of market as a part of your life, a place to do good, to thicken honest and good prejudice, Oi, don't you know, our religion exemplifies so many elegant transactions on the market. [7, p. 237]

From the quote above, we can see that the figures of Bapak and Mamak are representations of villagers who continue to maintain the wisdom of the village community. They have their own principles about the meaning of money and profits that can not be separated from the basics of life sharing together for better and worse.

Serial Anak-anak Mamak novels show how the contestation for space between local wisdom and capitalism was occurring in an area of village in Sumatera. The villagers tried to defend their local wisdom received from their ancestors for protecting the nature, but they also could not deny the penetration of capitalism which came simultaneously with the development project of Indonesia. Here, we see the power of capitalism which comes along with development bringing positive side and negative side. The positive side, the infrastructure of the village was developed, but the negative side is their nature environment at the same time was also destroyed as the role of capitalism which exploit the nature all over.

The villagers did not refuse the infrastructure development of their village, but they wanted to see the benefit of the development. As Tania Murray Li [15, p.2–12] in her book *The Will to Improve* states that the desire to improve that was proclaimed by the Indonesian government from time to time, which uses the word "development", in fact it actually raises new problems at the moment. The magic word "development" is used throughout the country, but development directed at improvement is not finished. Until now these improvement plans have continued to be implemented. Although not all improvement plans are bad, the meaning is in accordance with the wishes of the community; such as good road and bridge repairs, flood control, waste management, as well as corruption eradication; however, new problems arise instead. The plan and reality do not match. These new problems arise because the government did not observe the local wisdom as cultural identity of an area. The people were never asked about how to develop their village or their area so that there occurred a struggling

for defending an area that actually it is defending their culture all at once. Their living and their environment were determined by the power.

4 Conclusions

Even though literary works are a fiction work or imaginary works, literature can record the joints of life that take place in a culture, because a fiction work must still be described in a certain place, space, and time. Accordingly, literary works can also be used as a socio-cultural historical document, because the author cannot release the socio-cultural situation and cultural history which is being revealed in the setting of a story and narration.

The *Serial Anak-anak Mamak* are actually children's story series, however the background displayed how the social, political, and economic situation of the time was. Although the characters and stories revolve around on children characters, but by doing research we can reveal that these fiction works has recorded the social and cultural agitation of the past. The socio-cultural agitation's descriptions spread throughout the surface of the text, therefore the meaning was implicitly conveyed and could be revealed when the researcher connects and relates the entire structure of the text.

The struggle for the socio-cultural space shown by the *Serial Anak-anak Mamak* novels indicates that Indonesia's physical development is a sign that the struggling of socio-cultural values in the community began to occur or perhaps the struggle for value had happened long time before, it might be before Indonesian independence. This series uncovered that the values of capitalism bring at the same time the ways of bribery and corruption. Those practices were common in the upper classes. Nevertheless, this series bring up that these values were being offered among the lower classes. Meanwhile, the setting of this series stories have a time background around the 1970s, about almost fifty years ago. Therefore, we can see whether the practices of bribery and corruption after almost fifty years have disappeared or have actually strengthened, due to its spread to all circles and level of society.

The Serial novels show the local wisdom of the community, namely the importance of living together. The principles of sharing life is transmitted to all sides of life, in the relationship between humans and humans, and also human beings with nature. In the Serial, it appears that the relationship among humans, also humans with nature are eroded because there is a change in perspective of perceiving life. The human way or system of life shifts when viewpoints and appraisments about human life also have replaced. The shift occurs when humans want to be driven by their desire to be looked more than others, and the aims in this context is money and prosperity.

In the economic principles of the village community, they still prioritize living together. Nevertheless, this principle tried to be shifted by the owners of capital. The economic principle of capitalism is to get as much profit as possible by using as little capital as possible. This principle is inversely proportional to the principle of the village community at the foot of Bukit Barisan, the profit is not everything for them, if the shared life becomes damaged. On the pretext of the word "development", we Indonesians see that there had been massive development in the year of 80's, even until now this country is still developing. Nonetheless, at the same time the natural environment we live in is damaged. More than that, there is something eroded from our lives, namely local wisdom. By the declaration for the Industrial 4.0 era, maintaining local wisdom is a big question, if it does not want to be called a very big job, because the grinding of local wisdom had begun since almost fifty years ago, maybe even

more. We can see the manifest local wisdom, but local wisdom that is rooted in the values of society may have been eroded.

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