

The Decline of Human Values in the Short Stories "Kiamat Kecil di Sempadan Pulau" by Fakhrunnas M.A. Jabbar and "Cinta Ibu" by Harry B Kori'un: A Comparative Literary Study

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Abstract

This study compares the decline of human values portrayed in two Indonesian short stories: "Kiamat Kecil di Sempadan Pulau" by Fakhrunnas M.A. Jabbar and "Cinta Ibu" by Harry B. Kori'un. Using a descriptive-comparative method and intertextual analysis, the study examines thematic similarities, characterization, atmosphere, and the narrative construction of human-nature relationships. The findings indicate that both works criticize human greed, environmental exploitation, and the erosion of moral values. However, they differ in setting, narrative focus, and the forms of value degradation presented. This study concludes that literary works can serve as moral reflections that warn society about the consequences of environmental and ethical neglect.

Keywords: human values, short stories, comparative literature, intertextuality.



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INTRODUCTION

Literary works are expressions of personal human feelings, which can take the form of experiences, thoughts, ideas, spirits, and beliefs packaged in the form of depictions of life to bring out the charm of language described in writing. A literary work can be enjoyed by oneself or others who have an interest in literary works (Saragih et al., 2021). Literary works are an art form that contains elements of humanity, so that a literary work certainly has special feelings that are very difficult to apply using scientific methods. A writer has the freedom to use the style of language they want without having to follow the wishes of others.

Literature education in Indonesia is a platform for introducing the values found in literature and encouraging students to appreciate the experiences conveyed in a literary work (Purba, 2009). Literary writers have the freedom to use a language style that suits their preferences. Short stories are works of art that can be considered creative, meaning that they are a work created by humans that produces a work of language. In the short story entitled "Kiamat Kecil di Sempadan Pulau" (Small Apocalypse on the Island Border) by Fakhrunnas M.A. Jabbra and the short story entitled "Cinta Ibu" (Mother's Love) by Harry B Kori'un, which is a short story selected by Riau Pos and published in a collection of short stories entitled "Pipa Air Mata: Cerpen pilihan Riau Pos 2008" (Tears Pipe: Selected Short Stories by Riau Pos 2008) published by the Sanggang Foundation in 2008.

In the short story entitled "Kiamat Kecil di Sempadan Pulau" (Small Apocalypse on the Island Border) by Fakhrunnas M.A. Jabbra and the short story entitled "Cinta Ibu" (Mother's Love) by Harry B Kori'un, which is a short story selected by Riau Pos and published in a collection of short stories entitled "Pipa Air Mata: Cerpen pilihan Riau Pos 2008" (Tears Pipe: Selected Short Stories by Riau Pos 2008) published by the Sanggang Foundation in 2008. Comparative literature is the comparison of two or more works. Literary works are the result of ideas written down or conveyed orally to readers or listeners (Kuliah et al., 2023). Comparative literature is a form of discovering transitions, changes, and developments in differences between two or more literary works (Geofany et al., 2018). Comparative literature enables the systematic analysis of similarities and differences across works. Through intertextual analysis, researchers can identify how themes, characters, settings, and moral messages intersect or diverge. In this study, both short stories are examined to understand how human values deteriorate in different narrative contexts: one through environmental destruction on an island, and the other through forced land conversion that violates cultural and emotional bonds. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to (1) identify the similarities and differences between the two short stories, and (2) analyze how each author portrays the decline of human values.

Short stories are a popular form of literature. A short story tells only one main event, but of course, that event does not stand alone. There are several short stories that do not emphasize the length of the story and there is no agreement between the author and experts (Nurhayati & Soleh, 2022). A short story has its own characteristics, namely (1) a short story is a short tale limited by the number of words or pages; (2) a short story focuses on events and only highlights a few events in life; (3) a short story has one plot; (4) a short story has one theme; (5) the content of a short story comes from everyday life; (6) a short story uses words that can be understood; (7) the characters in a short story are very simple, not deep, and brief. A short story certainly has building elements, namely theme, plot, characters, setting, point of view, and style of language (Aeni & Lestari, 2018). A short story has a value that the author wants to convey. Short stories have values that the author wants to convey. The values obtained within each individual serve as motivators or principles that guide their lives. The value of honesty in short stories provides additional value for readers (Mansyur, 2018).

Nature and human life are closely related. Ecology is not only a new meaning as a verb but also as an adjective and verb to describe aspects of human life with nature (Rinahayu &

Kristianto, 2022). The destruction of nature is caused by humans who manage nature excessively, exploit natural resources and the environment without limits, and tend to be indifferent to the survival and welfare of society and other living things (Abdullah et al., 2021). The conversion of land into land plantations which human activities cause damage to nature. The impact of this land conversion can lead to landslides and a reduction in clean water sanitation.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to determine the decline in human values as well as the differences and similarities between the short story entitled "Kiamat Kecil di Sempadan Pulau" (Small Apocalypse on the Island Border) by Fakhrunnas M.A. Jabbar and the short story entitled "Cinta Ibu" (Mother's Love) by Harry B Kori'un.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This study uses a qualitative descriptive–comparative method. The data consist of narrative structures, themes, characters, settings, and textual elements extracted from both short stories. Intertextual analysis is applied to compare intrinsic aspects and identify forms of declining human values

Research Target/Subject

The subjects of this study are native speakers of the Cilacap Javanese dialect. Participants were selected based on criteria such as fluency, active daily use of the dialect, and representation across different age groups and social backgrounds. Informants were identified using purposive sampling, a technique suitable for qualitative research that prioritizes relevance and linguistic richness over numerical representation. The units of analysis consist of everyday vocabulary used by the Cilacap community and their equivalents in Standard Javanese.

Research Procedure

The research procedure was carried out through several sequential stages:

1. Preparation Stage: identifying research needs, determining participant criteria, and developing interview guidelines.
2. Data Collection Stage: conducting semi-structured online interviews via video calls, recording lexical items, and documenting usage contexts through notes and audio recordings.
3. Data Organization Stage: transcribing interview results, classifying vocabulary items, and organizing lexical data into thematic categories.
4. Comparative Analysis Stage: comparing Cilacap Javanese lexical forms with their Standard Javanese equivalents from Yogyakarta–Surakarta, supported by reference materials and expert validation.

Instruments, and Data Collection Techniques

The primary instrument in this qualitative study is the researchers themselves, who function as planners, data collectors, analysts, and interpreters. Supporting instruments include semi-structured interview protocols, audio-recording devices, digital documentation tools, and field notebooks.

Data were collected using several techniques:

- Semi-structured interviews to elicit natural lexical usage from informants.
- Observation and documentation of recorded speech samples and digital media containing distinctive Cilacap vocabulary.
- Verification interviews to recheck meanings, contexts, and pronunciation of key lexical items

Data Analysis Technique

The collected data were analyzed using a qualitative analytical framework consisting of three interconnected stages:

1. Data Reduction: selecting, simplifying, and focusing on relevant lexical items that represent dialectal differences.
2. Data Display: organizing vocabulary comparisons in tabular or descriptive form for clear interpretation.
3. Conclusion Drawing: interpreting the patterns of lexical variation critically and systematically to answer the research objectives. To strengthen the credibility of the findings, triangulation of sources was conducted by comparing lexical data from multiple informants of varied demographic backgrounds and confirming repeated usage across contexts.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Both short stories share similarities in depicting the decline of human values occurring within society. Of course, these two short stories are not interconnected between their authors. Below is a table of similarities and differences between the short story "Kiamat Kecil di Sempadan Pulau" by Fakhrunnas M.A. Jabbar and "Cinta Ibu" by Harry B Kori'un

Table 1. Similarities between the short story "Kiamat Kecil di Sempadan Pulau" by Fakhrunnas M.A. Jabbar and "Mother's Love" by Harry B Kori'un

	Intrinsic Aspect/Element	Short Story The Apocalypse on the Edge of the Island	Mother's Love Short Story
1	Theme	Human Values	Human values
2	Characterization/Character	Human greed towards nature for personal gain	Human greed towards nature for their own interests
3	Atmosphere	Disappointed, Sad	Disappointed, Sad

4	Point of View	Disappointed , Sad	Third person
5	Plot	Third person	Forward and backward

The short stories titled "Kiamat Kecil di Sempadan Pulau" (Small Apocalypse on the Island Border) by Fakhrunna M.A. Jabbar and "Cinta Ibu" (Mother's Love) by Harry B Kori'un. There are six similarities between the two short stories studied. Both short stories have the same plot, which is forward and backward, where both short stories tell of an event that occurred in the past and the present. The theme of these two short stories is the fading or decline of human values due to the endless greed of humans who destroy nature for their own interests without considering the side effects. The decline in human values takes the form of environmental destruction, which occurs when humans irresponsibly damage the environment and natural ecosystems. This is often caused by indifference to the impact on nature and human life itself. Environmental pollution causes death to humans and other living creatures. The atmosphere described in these short stories conveys the disappointment and sadness of each character.

The disappointment experienced by a figure named Sayed Sobri in the short story "Kiamat Kecil di Sempadan Pulau" (The Little Apocalypse on the Island Border), where he fights for morality and religion to gain wealth, but the response from the newcomers destroys the small island. The disappointment and sadness experienced by a character named Cah Bagus in the short story "Cinta Ibu" (Mother's Love), where the public cemetery where his mother was buried was forcibly turned into a palm oil plantation by a company without considering the other impacts.

Similarities in the decline of human values in the short story "Kiamat Kecil di Sempadan Pulau" by Fakhrunnas M.A Jabbar and the short story "Cinta Ibu" by Harry B Kori'un

The results of the table above show the similarities between the short story "Kiamat Kecil di Sempadan Pulau" by Fakhrunna M.A. Jabbar and the short story "Cinta Ibu" by Harry B Kori'un. The short story "Kiamat Kecil di Sempadan Pulau" by Fakhrunnas M.A. Jabbar tells the story of the greed of migrants who engage in large-scale sea and land sand mining. This greedy act is carried out by selling sand to Singapore and Johor. The sale of sand is believed by the local community of Riau to be the dignity of the Riau Malays. This exploitation of nature has caused devastating natural disasters such as tsunamis. The people on the island were completely destroyed by the forces of nature that no longer favor humanity.

"If you had witnessed the events of ten years ago on that island, a small apocalypse had indeed come. The waves of the Malacca Strait suddenly surged. A tornado struck the port city on the island. Hundreds of stilt houses were lifted into the sky and then crashed back to earth. The people who were engrossed in worldly pleasures were scattered, most of them swept away by the backwash, carried by the strong currents of the Malacca Strait, which had suddenly become fierce."

The above sentence informs the reader that 10 years ago, a natural disaster occurred on that small island due to the exploitation of nature by outsiders. Traditionally, the local community would not exploit nature excessively. Humans are allowed to take or utilize nature, but they must also consider the balance in managing these natural resources. Humans and nature certainly are interconnected, connected; humans and other living creatures need a place and sources of life to fulfill their existence (Aritonang et al., 2023 n.d.). Natural disasters that destroy islands also destroy the communities living on those islands. Natural disasters in this story are likened to a small apocalypse that strikes human life.

In the short story "Cinta Ibu" (Mother's Love) by Harry B Kori'un, it tells of the conversion of residents' land and public cemeteries into palm oil plantations. The local

community did not agree with the program carried out by wealthy entrepreneurs who were assisted by government officials. The wealthy entrepreneurs asked the local community to give up their land, and they did not even care about the community's refusal. Large companies forcibly seized the community's land to achieve their own interests. Not only land, but public cemeteries were also leveled to be turned into palm oil plantations. The forced leveling of land shows that wealthy entrepreneurs are selfish creatures, because they do not consider the natural conditions that are familiar to the local residents. "However, once again, hopes did not necessarily meet reality. After arriving at his mother's village, what happened? His mother's grave had been leveled to the ground. All that remained was a vast expanse bulldozed by bulldozers, with young palm trees growing on top of it. The cemetery was bulldozed at night, so no one in the village had time to move their family graves. "Forgive us. We also didn't have time to move your mother's grave, nor your grandfather and grandmother's," said Uncle Maksum.

In this short story, the decline in human values is not shown through natural disasters caused by human selfishness, but through the conversion of land into palm oil plantations. In previous studies related to the conversion of rice fields into fisheries, it was found to cause significant changes to the lives of local communities (Hidayah & Malik, 2021). This land conversion certainly has a negative impact on the lives of the community and the natural ecosystem. This shows that there is a lack of awareness and responsibility among the community towards environmental and nature conservation. It is important for us to change our behavior and prioritize nature conservation so that maintain the balance of the ecosystem and the quality of human life in the future (Nur Fuadah et al., 2021). This is certainly related to the short story "Cinta Ibu" (Mother's Love), in which wealthy businessmen and the government force the local community to surrender their land even though the local community has rejected the program. This causes anger among the local community and one of the characters in the story.

There are six similarities between the two short stories studied. Both short stories have the same plot, which is forward and backward. The theme of both short stories is the fading or decline of human values due to the endless greed of humans who destroy nature for their own interests without thinking about the side effects. The atmosphere described in these short stories conveys the disappointment and sadness of each character.

The difference between the short story "Kiamat Kecil di Sempadan Pulau" by Fakhrunnas by M.A. Jabbar and the short story "Mother's Love" by Harry B. Kori'un

The differences between the short stories "Kiamat Kecil di Sempadan Pulau" by Fakhrunnas M.A. Jabbar and "Cinta Ibu" Harry B Kori's work is found in the setting used in the short story. The short story "Kiamat Kecil di Sempadan Pulau" (Small Apocalypse on the Island Border) by Fakhrunnas M.A. Jabbar tells the story of a setting on an island in Riau (Dr Junaidi SS MHum, 2009 n.d.).

Table 2. Differences between the short story "Kiamat Kecil di Sempadan Pulau" by Fakhrunnas M.A. Jabbar and "Mother's Love" by Harry B Kori'un

Where many migrants come to the island and recklessly exploit nature through large-scale sea and land sand mining. This has caused natural disasters that have devastated the local

No	Intrinsic Aspect/Element	Short Story "Kiamat Kecil di Sempadan Pulau"	Mother's Love Short Story "A"
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		Sempadan Pulau”	Mother’s Love”
1	Setting	Island and mainland	Public cemetery and palm oil plantation

community. All of this shows a decline in human values, as people often prioritize economic gain and personal interests

personal without considering the long-term impacts on nature and human life. It is crucial for us to change our way of thinking and acting in such a way that we respect and preserve nature for our own well-being and that of future generations.

The short story "Cinta Ibu" (Mother's Love) by Harry B Kori'un uses a public cemetery and palm oil plantation as its setting. A program initiated by a wealthy businessman, assisted by the government, aims to open up palm oil plantations by converting the public cemetery into palm oil plantations. This causes the character in the short story, named "Cah Bagus," to lose his mother's grave. Of course, this is very disrespectful to someone who has passed away, and the local community has already rejected the program that the wealthy businessman plans to implement.

CONCLUSION

The comparative analysis shows that both short stories portray the deterioration of human values driven by greed and environmental exploitation. Although differing in setting and narrative focus, both texts highlight the consequences of ignoring moral and ecological responsibilities. “*Kiamat Kecil di Sempadan Pulau*” criticizes environmental destruction, while “*Cinta Ibu*” focuses on social injustice and the violation of cultural values.

These findings confirm that literature can function as a medium of moral reflection, urging readers to maintain ethical behavior and protect the natural and social environment.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Look this example below:

Author 1: Conceptualization; Conceptualization; Data Curation; Formal analysis; Investigation; Writing – original draft preparation.

Author 2: Methodology; Data Curation; Formal analysis; Visualization; Writing – review & editing.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest. The funders had no role in the design of the study, in the collection, analysis, or interpretation of data in the writing of the manuscript or in the decision to publish the results.

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