

Ecological Value In Myths (Review of Community Ecological Wisdom in Traditional Myths)

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Abstract. This research examines the role of myths in ecological wisdom which can provide benefits to society at large and in the long term. Myths have a function as messengers and tools in character education which are held firmly by society as noble values between humans and nature which are interdependent. The method used in this research is a qualitative descriptive method, the data used in this research is in the form of a literature review sourced from published scientific journals. The results of observations in this research show that myths have a role in creating ecological values in the form of the value of natural balance, the value of respecting nature, the value of human dependence on nature, and laws regarding violations of nature.

Keywords: Traditional Myths, Ecological Wisdom, Ecological Values

1. Introduction

Myth is a form of local wisdom that is widely circulated among society. In fact, almost every village in an area has its own myth. These myths developed as a means of regulating the lives of certain communities which were manifested in prohibitions based on mutual agreement. This prohibition is of course firmly held by the community as a personal and group identity. According to (1) mythology generally describes a folk tale in an area that can be believed and has truth values and moral values.

Myths are included in traditional literature, traditional literature includes folk tales, legends, fables, legends, epics (heroic stories), and of course myths. Myths that develop in society usually have themes about gods who are worshiped by the community and have special blessings for their adherents, or myths relating to supernatural powers that exceed the limits of normal human abilities, if in Indonesia itself myths are more synonymous with advice from parents about prohibitions. -prohibitions that form the basis of social rules or prohibitions on things that are considered mystical (occult). In line with the opinion of (2), a myth is something that is believed by a certain society and can regulate the lifestyle and behavior of that society.

Myths are often related to supernatural powers that are believed by certain groups of people to form a noble culture. If we look at the history of traditional myths, myths usually talk about the relationship between humans and gods or between gods. In another sense, supernatural is

something that is miraculous, cannot be accepted by common sense, is magical and supernatural. The truth of the myth is questionable even though the myth is a belief. However, in general, people are still able to accept the truth of this myth according to their own point of view without questioning it again. In fact, believing a myth is not just believing the truth, but rather following the values contained in the myth. These values are noble values that regulate a society so that it becomes an ethical group and is interconnected with other living creatures.

Communication on the development of myths along with the times often does not go well, this is because the millennial generation (Gen Z) tends to view myths as just fictional stories and not sacred. This change in mindset by the younger generation has resulted in the development of myths which will gradually disappear if not maintained, even though myths are actually the basis of social life. As a result, myths become increasingly less meaningful, trivialized, or forgotten. Therefore, learning in the context of understanding local culture must be provided to the community, especially students (3).

The existence of myths that are well maintained by the community also has a positive impact, one of which is as a community identity which is reflected in behavior in everyday life. Ethics formed from myths can vary depending on the myth that is the basis for moral and normative values. The rules that underlie these values can often be related to religion, traditions, morals, beliefs and agreements that underlie social life. Ethics formed in myths usually take the form of utterances in the form of prohibitions which aim to discipline and direct a group of people in accordance with accepted norms, such as explanations (4) that the purpose of mythical expressions in the form of prohibitions functions as a form of ethical teaching by parents to their children.

The study of the value of a work, especially myths which are the result of human creations, previously followed the idea that myths have historical content (5). The belief in the existence of historical elements in a myth is based on the function of myths to preserve cultural values for oral communities (6). The function of myths in the past was used by society as a medium for transmitting history between generations across eras. According to the oral tradition that developed on the island of Java, the preservation of historical values is formulated in "sengkalan" (7). As time goes by, myths have a lot of value that can be explored as a source of learning and character formation for society in general and learning within the scope of formal education. One of the values contained in myth is the ecological value related to nature, because myth and nature are an inseparable unit.

Ecological values refer to values related to the sustainability and balance of ecosystems as well as the relationship between humans and their environment so that they are balanced, ecology itself is more defined as everything related to the principles of living things and their environment (8). These values include an understanding of the importance of maintaining ecosystems, biodiversity and ecology for the survival of humans and other living creatures. Apart from that, ecological values also include an understanding that each species and element in the ecosystem has an important role and function to maintain the balance of the ecosystem as a whole. Ecological value highlights the importance of biodiversity as a genetic resource that can support ecosystem adaptation and sustainability. The relationship between myths and ecological values is more about human environmental ethics, namely views and actions that reflect responsibility for nature and ecosystem sustainability for current and future generations.

Ethics towards nature is a noble heritage that must be possessed by every human being in order to maintain the consistency and survival of all living creatures.

Ethics is daily living behavior that is applied in society and organizations. Ethics does not only apply between humans, but ethics is also the basis for human behavior towards other creatures, such as ethics towards nature or the environment and ethics towards animals. According to (9) environmental ethics is a critical reflection of norms and values in the form of morals towards the environment and a way of thinking about oneself and nature which need each other. If every human being has noble ethics and has a high awareness of the environment, then environmental damage such as rubbish that is everywhere and has an impact on environmental damage and flooding, cutting down trees for industry which can cause landslides and floods, the use of dangerous substances that can damage soil fertility, exploitation of water resources which can damage the ecosystem of living creatures in water, and there are many examples of damage to nature by people who have no ethics.

In relation to ethics towards nature, in research (10) it is stated that the Balinese people have the principle of respecting the environment which is stated in the teachings of Hinduism called *Three hit karana*, this local wisdom is used as a philosophical basis by the Balinese people in their social and community life. It is this philosophical framework that apparently forms the personality that creatures live side by side and look after each other. Despite the fact that myths were created by previous societies as certain prohibitions and influenced thought patterns and behavior in protecting and caring for the environment.

If viewed from mythology, myths have a social control function in society, namely relating to ecological sustainability, myths have greater social control power than law (11). The ecological value of a myth refers to the teachings or messages contained in mythical stories which highlight the importance of maintaining natural balance, ecosystem sustainability, and the harmonious relationship between humans and their natural environment. Often myths carry values that teach wisdom about how humans should interact with nature and the creatures around them. In some myths, nature or natural elements are considered sacred, and deviation from the balance of nature is considered a violation of the majesty of nature.

Based on this presentation, the researcher referred to several studies related to ecological wisdom and its impact on the balance of nature which the researcher used as study material and as a basis for carrying out deeper research. As research (12) confirms that local wisdom contained in the kupatan and earth alms traditions in Colo Village, Kudus Regency is able to maintain the sustainability of the natural environment. This is also supported by the results of research (13) which examined the environmental conservation efforts of the Baduy community based on local wisdom in Banten and the findings were that the life of the Baduy community was still very dependent on nature. Likewise research by (14) a respectful attitude towards nature is based on human awareness that nature has things to respect because human life depends on nature, if nature is damaged it will also be difficult for humans to survive.

This research aims to examine the ecological values in a myth through a literature review of various sources that can strengthen the findings. The focus in this research is ecological values which can be used as a reference source for learning community ethics regarding the harmonious balance of nature, as well as maintaining local wisdom in the form of myths so that they do not disappear with the times and lose noble values which can be used as a basis for social life.

2. Methodology

The research method applied in this paper is a literature study sourced from various references. Researchers also elaborate from empirical observations and experiences. Literature study also means a data collection technique by reviewing books, literature, notes and various reports related to the problem you want to solve. The aim of this research is to find out the values of ecological wisdom contained in myths and their benefits for the sustainability of all living creatures on earth, especially for mankind.

3. Discussion

3.1 The Value of Natural Balance

The value of natural balance in the context of myths that have developed among society reflects the belief and concept that the universe, including natural elements such as earth, water, air and fire, as well as all living creatures in it, are interconnected and form a harmony that needs to be maintained. . Basically, myths often describe that all elements in nature are interrelated and form a harmony. Not only between humans and nature, but also between elements of nature itself. Natural balance is considered a manifestation of harmony that must be maintained so that life can continue well. The negative impact if the natural balance cannot be maintained is that it can result in disaster, disease or even destruction. Therefore, maintaining natural balance is considered an important task that must be carried out by every human being as a creature who also enjoys the universe.

Research (11) with the research title Ecological Awareness in the Myth of Telaga Rambut Monte, Krisik Village, Gandusari District, Blitar Regency, with the research results that there is an ecological value in the myth of Telaga Rambut Monte, namely in the form of natural preservation which is very well maintained around the lake as seen from several water sources nearby. Apart from that, it was also explained that the ecosystem chain in this area is very well maintained and supported by a clean environment free from rubbish. This ecological value cannot be separated from the myth which has the function of controlling social norms as well as an educational tool. By respecting nature and protecting it, nature will have a greater impact on humans, including maintaining a balance in life. In other research (15), in the form of a myth, the traditional Manggarai community believes that springs have spirits and ancestors who guard them, as well as forests and the contents of the earth which are believed to be the daughters of the earth resulting from the marriage of heaven and earth and forests as children of the earth, so that Manggarai people have high ecological awareness so that natural balance can occur because traditional agriculture applies the concept of intercropping and maintains forest functions that can be utilized for common needs.

Some myths believe that natural balance is the result of divine power or the presence of a supernatural entity that regulates life in this universe. Humans are expected to respect and understand their role in maintaining the balance that has been established by this divine power. Myths often illustrate that human actions can affect the balance of nature, in this case good or bad human actions can have a direct impact on the balance of the ecosystem. Therefore, moral and ethical values are often applied in myths as a guide to maintaining this balance. One example of a myth that is related to the value of natural balance is the myth of Situ Gede and Situ

Cibeureum in Tasikmalaya, namely the lake as an environmental preserver (16). This research revealed that the lake is a source of life for the community which must be maintained so that the community's survival can be guaranteed. Protecting lakes with ecological wisdom cannot be separated from the role of myth as a conservation medium that makes a lake sacred so that society has noble values that must be maintained. This is the case with the beliefs of the Manggarai people, who believe that springs have spirits or that there are ancestors who guard and provide water for humans, if the springs are damaged then the ancestral spirits will be angry and result in the loss of the springs that have given life to the community (15).

Nature depicted in myths is often seen as a teacher who provides noble life lessons for mankind. The balance of nature is considered an example of reflection for humans on how to live life with full awareness and responsibility for the environment. The concept of natural balance in myth teaches humans to respect nature as an integral part of life. By respecting the existence and balance of nature, humans can prevent actions that damage the environment and harm their own survival. Myths that emphasize the value of natural balance show that humans are not separated from nature, but are part of an interconnected system. Awareness of human dependence on nature can inspire actions that support environmental sustainability.

Values such as responsibility, justice and ethics which are often contained in myths about the balance of nature can form the basis of character education. Humans are taught to be responsible for their actions towards nature and each other, thereby creating a better society.

Myths containing the value of natural balance teach humans to understand that their actions have an impact on the environment and life around them. This can stimulate self-reflection and moral consideration before carrying out actions that might harm the balance of nature. By understanding and applying the value of natural balance, humans can play a role in preventing environmental crises. Awareness of the balance of nature can encourage sustainable behavior, protect natural resources, and reduce negative impacts on the ecosystem.

3.2 The Value of Respecting Nature

The value of respecting nature refers to human attitudes, beliefs and behavior that show appreciation and concern for the natural environment. In line with the opinion of (15) that the value of respecting nature is related to ethics towards the environment, understanding human moral responsibility towards nature, and understanding the rights of nature itself. A respectful attitude towards nature includes an understanding that nature has intrinsic value and plays an important role in supporting human life and all living creatures.

In the study of myths, they often teach about the importance of maintaining balance and harmony in nature. Humans are taught to respect and not disturb the natural balance that has been created by the Almighty. Respect is a realm of ethics in humans, if humans have positive ethics towards nature then nature will be well maintained and nature will also have a positive impact on human life. Environmental ethics talks about human behavior towards nature and also the relationships between all life in the universe (17).

The connection with myth, an attitude of respect for nature can be seen in (18) who studied the Gesing river in Paitan district with the results of research that an attitude of respect for nature is represented by the community's attitude of simplicity in life and being one with

nature, namely by taking care of each other's environment. An attitude of respect for nature is also expressed in the beliefs of the people who believe that there are trees around the Gesing river inhabited by supernatural beings, namely dhoyo trees, bendo trees, bamboo trees and kepil trees. By believing in the existence of supernatural beings who guard these trees, the community together respects the environment in the Gesing River area. In another study (15) it was also explained that people show respect for nature, especially forests, in cultural ceremonial rituals such as barong wae tekui, barong lodok and barong boa, roko molas poco and congko lokap. The community's attitude towards the forest based on this ritual is in the form of a symbolic meaning of prohibition and taboo in cutting down trees.

Respecting nature also means using natural resources wisely and responsibly. Wisdom is the attitude of humans who have reason and can solve problems well, while responsibility is serious behavior in every job. The context of ecological values in myth is that living creatures look after each other, especially human behavior which is greedy without considering the long-term impacts. This includes sustainable practices, replanting and efforts to minimize negative impacts on the environment. Respect for nature involves the development of environmental ethics, that is, the moral norms and principles that guide human behavior in relation to nature. Environmental ethics includes responsibility towards future generations and other living things.

3.3 The Value of Human Dependence on Nature

The community's wisdom in dealing with the mythical issue of human dependence on nature is reflected in the ways they understand, respect and interact with the surrounding environment. They understand that nature is the source of life that provides various resources, including water, land and forests. Therefore, they try to protect and care for nature as a sign of gratitude and appreciation for the gifts given. (19) explains that humans have never been able to let go of their dependence on nature in their lives for a long time, on the other hand, nature also has a dependence on humans, although not too big.

Many myths depict that humans come from nature or are even created by natural forces or gods who control natural elements. This shows that humans have deep roots and a close connection with nature as the source of life. In this myth, nature is considered as the giver of life and also as a place of return after death. This shows that humans not only live in nature, but also return to it as part of the cycle of life. Myths often describe how nature influences human health and well-being. Human dependence on natural resources such as clean water, fertile land, and sustainable forests is reflected in humans' need for nature for their survival and well-being. In research (20) it is explained that the cultural value that stands out in the relationship between humans and nature is the value of unifying and utilizing natural resources, humans use nature (land, water, forests, animals, etc.) as a source. life.

The concept of natural balance is reflected in myth as the main key to human life. The balance between natural elements is considered the basis for a harmonious life. Humans are reminded that their actions can affect this balance and, as a result, their own well-being. Myths can also contain the value of human responsibility towards the environment. Humans are considered as guardians or custodians of nature, and they have the responsibility to care for and protect natural resources so that they remain sustainable.

Wise people understand the principle of balance in myth and see it as a guide for living everyday life. They believe that maintaining a balance between humans and nature is the key to sustainable life and a harmonious life. The wisdom of the community is reflected in the continuation of their traditional practices. They may have traditions of natural resource conservation, such as customary laws or local regulations that establish how to use natural resources wisely and sustainably.

Some societies have rituals and ceremonies related to nature. Through these ceremonies, they express appreciation, gratitude and hope to maintain harmony with nature. These ceremonies may include prayers, dancing, or offerings as a form of respect. The wisdom of the people is reflected in their traditional knowledge about local ecology, seasons, and natural patterns. This knowledge is often passed down from generation to generation and helps them adapt to natural changes and manage resources wisely.

3.4 Law for Violations Against Nature

In mythical norms, violations of nature are often connected with the concept of laws implemented by supernatural forces or supernatural entities that control nature. Although each myth has different variants and nuances, several general characteristics in the legal context of violations of nature are in the values of mythical norms. In many myths, nature is considered a realm controlled by certain gods or supernatural forces. Violation of nature can be considered an act against divine law or the will of that god. Breaking myths or violating provisions that have been agreed upon by a group of people are not only things that are beyond reason, but can also be interpreted in a scientific framework, just as the punishments applied can be in the form of natural disasters, disease, or other calamities.

Research (10) with the research title *The Value of Ecological Wisdom in the Myth of Lelipi Selahan Bukit for the Community of Tenganan Pegringsingan Village, Karangasem Regency, Bali*. The results of the research are the value of ecological wisdom in the Llipi Selahan Bukit myth, if the forest area is converted into a residential area then the impact of the natural balance will be disturbed because the quality of the environment that is maintained can cause disasters such as landslides. Likewise with the myth of Telaga Lindur in North Lombok, in research (21), it is believed that the earthquake that occurred in 2018 was because there was an area that was considered "holy", namely an ancient mosque which was then littered with modern buildings in the form of toilets which caused damage. environment so that people believe that natural disasters, earthquakes, are the cause and effect of destroying mythological beliefs. The myth about houses collapsing and burning in research (22) with the research title *Environmental Wisdom in Planning and Forest Management in Wonosadi, Ngawen District, Gunung Kidul Regency*, is that houses collapsed and burned because they used wood from the Wonosadi forest. This myth states that if people take wood from the Wonosadi forest, they will experience disaster, thus having a positive impact on preserving nature without interference from people's greed.

In many mythological stories, there are elements that describe the relationship between humans and nature, as well as the consequences of violating mythological rules or values related to nature. Punishments for violating nature in mythological stories often reflect earlier societal beliefs about ecological balance and the importance of maintaining harmony with nature. In some myths, violations of nature can result in transformation or curse. A person who commits

an environmentally destructive act may transform into an animal or experience a life-altering curse. It reflects an understanding of balance and the negative consequences of human actions that do not conform to the will of nature.

Violations of mythological customs, especially those relating to ecology, can have significant ecological impacts. In many cultures, indigenous myths and traditions often reflect a deep understanding of natural balance and the relationship between humans and the environment. Violation of this indigenous mythology can have serious consequences for ecosystems and environmental sustainability. Indigenous myths often include values that encourage sustainable management of natural resources. Violations of this mythology can result in overexploitation or misuse of natural resources, such as water, land, or forests, which in turn can harm humans and other creatures. Apart from the ecological impact, violations of mythological customs can also cause damage to the spiritual and cultural heritage of society. Losing traditional values and a special relationship with nature can damage cultural identity and community well-being.

4. Conclusion

Traditional myths not only function as cultural heritage or origin stories, but also contain ecological wisdom that provides an overview of the relationship between humans and nature and the values that encourage sustainability and ecological balance. By understanding and caring for traditional myths, society can maintain and develop policies and actions that support the preservation of the natural environment. These ecological values can be reflected in the attitude of the community which maintains behavior to care for the environment in accordance with beliefs so that it is maintained and has high beneficial value for society at large. These ecological values are in the form of the value of natural balance, the value of human dependence on nature, and the legal value of violations of nature. All of these values form a strong foundation in cultivating character as a form of connection between humans and other creatures and for a better survival.

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