

Noble savage dalam The Last of Tic Mohicans Karya James Fenimore Cooper dan Hobomok karya Maria Lydia Child

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Abstrak

Pada abad ke-19, semangat romantisisme sangat berpengaruh terhadap sebagian besar penulis Amerika. Unsur-unsur primitivisme yang berhubungan dengan konsep 'natural goodness' nampak banyak terlihat dalam karya-karya mereka. Pemikiran Rousseau tentang pentingnya manusia kembali ke tengah-tengah alam berpengaruh sangat kuat dalam mengangkat citra orang Indian sebagai 'noble savage'. Citra 'noble savage' Indian kemudian banyak mengilhami penulis Amerika untuk mengangkat karya sastra dengan menggali sumber dari negeri sendiri, yaitu yang berciri khusus Amerika, Mereka menampilkan orang Indian yang ideal, yang luhur dan agung. Di antara sebagian besar karya-karya tersebut adalah The Last of The Mohicans yang ditulis oleh James F.Cooper dan Hobomok yang ditulis oleh Maria Lydia Child yang dibahas dalam tesis ini.

Dari hasil penelitian yang dilakukan atas kedua novel ini, pengidealan orang Indian tidak hanya terbatas pada penggambaran bentuk fisik, perilaku dan kehidupan moral mereka, namun juga bagaimana orang Indian bersikap terhadap orang kulit putih. Semakin ia (orang Indian) loyal, mau menerima kerangka pola pikir orang kulit putih, dan banyak membantu mereka, semakin ia (orang Indian tersebut) diidealkan. Namun demikian, nampak bahwa keluhuran yang disandangkan kepadanya, tidak bisa membantu mengangkat kehidupan orang Indian. Orang Indian tetap saja bernasib tragis. Dalam The Last of The Mohicans kedua tokoh 'noble savage' Chingachgook dan Uncas mengalami nasib yang mengenaskan. Chingachgook harus hidup sendirian sebatang kara setelah anak satu-satunya yang diharapkan sebagai pewaris terakhir sukunya harus tewas dalam perkelaian dengan Maguwa, seorang Indian dari suku yang lain, dalam membela kepentingan orang kulit putih. Demikian pula halnya dengan Hobomok, tokoh 'noble savage' dalam Hobomok. Setelah kehidupannya dicurahkan untuk kebahagiaan Mary, tokoh kulit putih dalam novel ini, ia harus memupus begitu saja cintanya yang telah melekat pada gadis kulit putih tersebut hanya karena tunangan Mary, seorang pria kulit putih yang telah dikabarkan meninggal dunia, ternyata masih hidup. Hobomok menghilang ke tengah hutan, mengorbankan hidupnya demi kebahagiaan kedua orang kulit putih. Nasibnya tidak diketahui.

Secara garis besar kedua novel memberikan gambaran, bagaimana kebudayaan, untuk segala kebesaran dan kebaikan yang dimilikinya, dengan tak dapat dihindarkan telah merusak kehidupan orang Indian. Sekalipun orang Indian tersebut sebagai orang Indian yang 'noble' ia hancur, tak mampu menahan arus kebudayaan orang kulit putih.

.....In the nineteenth century the spirit of romanticism deeply influenced American writers. The elements of primitivism which related to the concept of natural goodness could be perceived in their works. The thought of Rosseau concerning the necessity of men coming back to the nature deeply influenced the improvement of Indian image as noble savage. This noble savage Indian image then inspired American writers for the publication of the American stylist literatures. They performed the ideal, noble and glorious Indian. Among the literature which presented the Indian was The Last of the Mohicans that was written by James F.Cooper

and Hobomok that was written by Maria Lydia Child, which this thesis discusses.

The research taken on these two novels shows that the Indian idealization was not only shown by the illustration of their physical, behavior and moral acts, but also shown by the Indian behavior toward White people. The more loyalty they (the Indians) were, by accepting the frame of thinking of the White people and by very much helping them, the more they (the Indians) were idealized. Even then, it seemed that the solemnity which was put on them did not help improving the Indians livings.

In *The Last of the Mohicans* the two noble savage characters, Chingachgook and Uncas experienced bad fates. Chingachgook must live by himself after his only son who was expected to be his tribe's last inheritance died in his fighting with Magua, the Indian from another tribe. In defending the White people's interests. The same happened with Hobomok, the noble character of the Hobomok. After he bestowed his life for the well-being of Mary, the white character in this novel, he had to exterminate his love stuck to this White girl just because Mary's fiancée, a White man who had been reported dead, was actually still alive. Hobomok disappeared in the jungle, sacrificed his life for the sake of two White people's happiness. His fate was unknown.

The idealization of the Indians in these two novels is seemed not for the interest of the Indians, but more to fulfill the interest of the White men in that New World. Noble savage was presented as the medium of the White people in entering the wilderness world of America. After all knowledge's, skills, and their way of livings were absorbed, the Indian were then thrown, left without etiquette.

These novels' mainstream presented the picture on how culture, in all its glory and goodness, has unavoidably destroyed the livings of the Indians. Even though the Indians had been presented as noble Indians, they were destroyed, without the ability to stop the White people's stream of culture which physically had more power.