



THE SPIRIT OF NATIONALISM, EDUCATION AND MORAL RELIGION AS NATION CHARACTER BUILDING WHICH PORTRAYED IN *SI BULUS-BULUS SI RUMBUK-RUMBUK* WRITTEN BY WILLEM ISKANDER

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Abstrak

Tulisan ini dibuat berdasarkan penelitian yang berjudul “Semangat Kebangsaan, Pendidikan Dan Moral Agama Yang Membangun Karakter Bangsa Dalam Si Bulus-Bulus Si Rumbuk-Rumbuk Karya Willem Iskander” (Semangat Kebangsaan, Pendidikan dan Moral Agama Sebagai Pembangunan Karakter Bangsa yang Digambarkan dalam Si Bulus-Bulus Si Rumbuk-Rumbuk Ditulis Oleh Willem Iskander). Ada dua masalah yang dianalisis, yang pertama adalah mengungkap ide-ide yang terkandung dalam puisi. Masalah kedua adalah analisis gagasan-gagasan yang mempengaruhi perkembangan kesejahteraan sosial dan ekonomi masyarakat. Tujuan khusus dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengantisipasi dampak negatif dari kekacauan global bagi generasi muda. Mereka diharapkan tidak tercerabut dari tradisi dan budayanya. Kearifan lokal sebagai bagian dari filosofi kehidupan harus dilestarikan sebagai aset nasional kita untuk masa depan kita yang lebih baik. Setidaknya ada tiga puluh orang yang telah diwawancarai. Mereka adalah pemimpin lokal untuk agama, pendidikan, dan kegiatan sosial. Metode yang digunakan adalah deskriptif kualitatif. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan teknik rekam, dokumentasi foto. Teori yang digunakan adalah hermeneutik, sosiologi sastra dan teori budaya. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa sebagian besar generasi muda tidak mengetahui puisi karena tidak mendapatkannya dari sekolah. Beberapa dari mereka tahu dari keluarga yang lebih tua atau dari perpustakaan setempat. Tim peneliti merekomendasikan kepada pemerintah setempat agar siswa diberikan atau diajarkan bahasa dan sastra daerah khususnya untuk SMP dan SMA di Perumahan Muarasoma, Tapanuli Selatan.

Kata kunci: ide Willem Iskander’s, *Si Bulus-Bulus Si Rumbuk-Rumbuk*, nasionalisme, pembentukan karakter bangsa, pelestarian budaya

Abstract

This paper is made based on the research entitled “*Semangat Kebangsaan, Pendidikan Dan Moral Agama Yang Membangun Karakter Bangsa Dalam Si Bulus-Bulus Si Rumbuk-Rumbuk Karya Willem Iskander*” (*The Spirit of Nationalism, Education and Moral Religion as Nation Character Building Which Portrayed in Si Bulus-Bulus Si Rumbuk-Rumbuk Written By Willem Iskander*). Two problems have been analyzed. The first one is to expose the ideas contained in the poems. The second problem is the analyses of the ideas that have influenced society's social and economic welfare. The special purpose of this research is to anticipate the negative impact of global chaos on the young generation. They are expected not to be uprooted from their tradition and culture. Local wisdom as a part of the philosophy of life should be preserved as our national asset for our better

future. There are at least thirty persons who have been interviewed. They are the local leaders for religion, education, and social activities. The method used is descriptive qualitative. The data are collected by using the recorded technique, documentation of photos. The theory used is hermeneutic, sociology of literature and the theory of culture. This research showed that most of the young generation didn't know about the poems because they didn't get them from school. Some of them knew from elderly families or the local library. The team of the researcher recommended the local authorities so that the students are given or taught the local language and literature, especially for junior and senior high school in Muarasoma Residences, South Tapanuli.

Keyword: Willem Iskander's ideas, *Si Bulus-Bulus Si Rumbuk-Rumbuk*, nationalism, nation character building, preservation of culture

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Si Bulus-Bulus Si Rumbuk-Rumbuk was written By Willem Iskander in 1840-1876 when the Indonesian nation was under Dutch colonialization. The collection of poems were written in the local language, that is, Mandailing language. So, it can be regarded as local literature, but the theme and the messages showed the spirit of nationalism and strong unity. It is the greatness of Willem Iskander. He did not talk about the local problems anymore but focus on the problems of independence and nationalism. The poems were expressed in local language to hinder the colonial attention to the people's movement. Willem Iskander encouraged the people to fight for national independence through his poems to repel the colonialists from this beloved country. This idea can be seen in this poem.

Adong alak ruar (There were foreigners)

Na mian di Panyabungan (Who lived in Panyabungan)

Tibu ia aruar (They should be discharged)

Baon ia madung busungan (They had been full)

(Harahap, 1998, *Willem Iskander Si Bulus-Bulus Si Rumbuk-Rumbuk*, hlm. 25.)

Based on the description above, the researcher may consider that Willem Iskander ideas and thoughts are still relevant to be discussed and analyzed in this global era (at present). The spirit of nationhood and nationalism should be revitalized, especially for the young generation who got influences and the negative impact of Western culture through the rapid improvement of knowledge and technology.

The theme and messages exposed in *Si Bulus-Bulus Si Rumbuk-Rumbuk* can be considered the solution for the problems we face nowadays. Willem Iskander had told about education, nationalism and moral, religious teachings a century ago. In this global era, our country is still facing the complicated problems to be solved.

This research focused on the social function of a literary work, especially when the work exposed the institution of the society such as religion, education, tradition and culture, ideology and nationalism. The development of the social economy of the Mandailing ethnic group might have been influenced by the ideas and thoughts of Willem Iskander, which are expressed in *Si Bulus-Bulus Si Rumbuk-Rumbuk*.

In this global era, Willem Iskander's ideas and thoughts are still relevant to reach nation character building for the young generation to anticipate the negative impacts of Western culture. The winning of capitalism had changed the people's lifestyle. They tended to be hedonists, consumerists, and materialists, which made global chaos because people claimed they were right, although they may humiliate other people.

In the field research, the group discussion continued to answer the questions made by the team. The informants (teachers) also asked questions to know more about Willem Iskander and his poems. It was quite surprising to know that only elderly teachers knew about Willem Iskander and his poems. Only about ten teachers (Up to sixty years old) knew about Willem Iskander because they got it from schools or their parents and society.

From the field research, it was found out that most of the informants did not know about it because they did not have the book in the library. There were only ten teachers who knew about Willem Iskander and the poems from thirty teachers who were interviewed. They knew and got the subject from school or informed by older people around them. From the information, it was known that after 1960 the students in Muarasoma and Tanobato didn't study about Willem Iskander and the poems.

All the teachers agreed that if Willem Iskander and his poems were given for the students as the local contents in the school curriculum, the students should study their local language, culture, and tradition. The team had sent thirty copies book about Willem Iskander, and the poems after returned to Medan (USU).

At present, the students should follow the curriculum 1994. No local language was given. Only some folklore from other places were discussed. During the interview, most teachers agreed that Willem Iskander and the poems should be given to the students in Muarasoma and Tanobato. Willem Iskander is so popular in academic issues, but he is forgotten in the place where he was born.

One hundred years before Indonesian independence, Willem Iskander had thought about nationalism, education and people's welfare, especially for the people around him.

He thought for his country by using pen, not by using a weapon like other national heroes who repel the colonial to get independence.

Willem Iskander had raised the local leaders' spirit to think about unity and nationalism, as expressed in this quotation.

Si Bulus-Bulus Si Rumbuk-Rumbuk had inspired the next generation after the period of Willem Iskander it can be seen from the history of movement in the South Tapanuli (Harahap, 1998, *Willem Iskander Si Bulus-Bulus Si Rumbuk-Rumbuk*, hlm. 7.)

His special attention to education showed how his ideas and thoughts. When the Dutch colonialists forbade the people to read and write, people only can speak in their local languages. Getting knowledge through education would open and enlarge the people's thoughts and later claimed freedom, independence and human rights, equal rights for all people worldwide.

Willem Iskander thought that education is the prime way to leave poverty and backwardness. He strongly advised the young generation to go to school to get an education through this poem.

Ise na ringgas tu sikola (Who ever goes to school)
Tibu marbisukma ibana (He can get knowledge)
Mamboto etonganma i ia (He knows how to calculate)
Pulik malo padalan ata (He would be able to speak better)
Ise na so marsikola (Whoever does not go to school)
Ima na tinggal maoto (He would be stupid)
Hum banuanama di roa (He would know nothing about other country)
Na adong di'njang ni tano (All places in the world)
(Harahap, 1997, *Willem Iskander Si Bulus-Bulus Si Rumbuk-Rumbuk*, hlm. 67.)

Willem Iskander also exposed the urgency of planting moral and religious values, especially for the young generation, as portrayed in the following poems.

Ia, na mambaen panaili ni langit (God the Creator of the sky)
Dohot barang aha na manggulmit (And all which are moving)
Ima sombaonku (God that I worship)
Ringgas au ra sapanjangna (I should be sincere forever)
Mamuji Tuhanku (Praise the lord)
(Harahap, 1997, *Willem Iskander Si Bulus-Bulus Si Rumbuk-Rumbuk*, hlm. 9.)

1.2 Research Problem

1. How did the ideas and thoughts of Willem Iskander portray in *Si Bulus-Bulus Si Rumbuk-Rumbuk*
2. How did the thoughts and ideas of Willem Iskander motivate the improvement of Mandailing Society in education, religion, and nationalism

1.3 Purpose of Research

There are three points emphasized for the purpose a) to describe and analyze the thoughts and ideas of Willem Iskander in the poems *Si Bulus-Bulus Si Rumbuk-Rumbuk*; b) to describe and analyze ideas and thoughts of Willem Iskander which had motivated the improvement in education, religion, and nationalism; c) to make a strategy to socialize this research for the local authority.

1.4 Advantages of Research

Theoretically, this research is expected to enrich literature and culture, especially about local colour, which discussed local language and identity. Practically, it is hoped that readers may understand the valuable ideas that existed in the poems, which may become the character building for the young generation.

2. Method of Research

This research is done based on library and field research. The data are taken from the text of the poems *Si Bulus-Bulus Si Rumbuk-Rumbuk*. Supporting data are taken from any book and information written by people about Willem Iskander and the poems. There are more than thirty people interviewed individually and in Focus Group Discussion (FGD) in the field research. The informants are mostly the teachers in three schools in Muarasoma and Tanobato as the location of this research because Tanobato is where Willem Iskander was born and established his first school. The theory of literature and culture is used to analyze the poems to get the whole meaning.

3. DISCUSSION

The researchers decided to go to three schools to interview the teachers in groups (Focus Group Discussion). From the interview in three schools in Muarasoma, the

researchers found out that only the teachers up to sixty years still knew about the poems *Si Bulus-Bulus Si Rumbuk-Rumbuk*. These old teachers studied the poems when they were still students in Muarasoma. In one school, ten teachers asked for discussion. The team asked ten questions to be answered. Then after that, there happened two ways of communication. The teachers asked some questions about *Si Bulus-Bulus Si Rumbuk-Rumbuk* and the team's purpose to conduct this research. The team answered that Willem Iskander is now so popular in Universities. Basral Hamidy Harahap from Indonesian University even went to Holland to research Willem Iskander's life story (biography). He was so interested in Willem Iskander and his friends, especially in establishing local schools in his hometown in Tanobato Muarasoma. Harahap had translated the poems *Si Bulus-Bulus Si Rumbuk-Rumbuk* into Bahasa Indonesia because Willem Iskander wrote the poems in Mandailing Language.

At the University of North Sumatra, some students and lecturers had analyzed the poems, one of whom is Lubis for his thesis in the Indonesian Language Department, Faculty Of Cultural Sciences. The head of the team, Nasution, also discussed the poems *Si Bulus-Bulus Si Rumbuk-Rumbuk* for the English Department students for Theory of Literature. To explain the Sociology of Literature, Nasution discussed the elements and institutions in society, such as education, religion, and moral teachings. So, when the team conducted the field research in Muarasoma, it was quite surprising that only some of the teachers still knew about the poems.

What a pity to know that in Muarasoma where Willem Iskander was born and established his first local school, almost nobody remembered him and his poems. Even in the schools' library, they did not keep any book about Willem Iskander and the poems *Si Bulus-Bulus Si Rumbuk-Rumbuk*. Finding the realities like this, the team decided to send copies of the poems to the three schools in Muarasoma.

People in Tanobato and Muarasoma also cared about youth education. That is why they help and support Willem Iskander to open the first school in Tanobato called Kweekschool for the native people. Poems about education are the most popular in *Si Bulus-Bulus Si Rumbuk-Rumbuk*. Willem Iskander strongly emphasized that the youth not be lazy to improve their knowledge and skill if they wanted to reach a bright future. During the struggle, the youth should be strong, experiencing miseries and backwardness should sacrificed their time for a better future.

The following poems showed us Willem Iskander ideas for education.

Ise na ringgas tu sikola (Who ever goes to school)
Tibu marbisukma ibana (He can get knowledge)
Mamboto etonganma i ia (He knows how to calculate)
Pulik malo padalan ata (He would be able to speak well)
Ise na so marsikola (Whoever does not go to school)
Ima na tinggal maoto (He would be stupid)
Hum banuanama di roa (He will only know about his country)
Na adong di'njang ni tano (That only exist in this world)
(Harahap, 1997, *Willem Iskander Si Bulus-Bulus Si Rumbuk-Rumbuk*, hlm. 67.)

Ise alak na mandokon (Whoever says)
Hum di banua na alak na akal (Only people in his country are smart)
Tola ma ita tudoskon (We can say)
Dohot touk di toru takar (That he is just like parrot)
(Harahap, 1997, *Willem Iskander Si Bulus-Bulus Si Rumbuk-Rumbuk*, hlm. 67.)

Ima le daganak dongan (For all the young generation)
Tu sikola amu kehe (You should go to school)
Sipaingot ku di amu dongan (It is really urgent)
Ulang dengganang manggabe keke (Don't be just like parrot)
Ia na songon keke (If you become parrot)
On ma le da pintasanna (It will be like)
Mamasai songon na marende (Reading is just like singing)
Tai da binoto antusanna (Knowing nothing about the meaning)
(Harahap, 1997, *Willem Iskander Si Bulus-Bulus Si Rumbuk-Rumbuk*, hlm. 68.)

Advice from Father to the Son
Labo ale amang sinuan tunas (Oh my beloved son)
Langka ma ho amang marguru tu sikola (You should go to school to study)
Ulang hum baen songon luas-luas (Do not go to have fun)
Tai ringgas ko amang marsipoda (But to study hard to get knowledge)
Anggo panganon dohot abit (I will try hard to fulfil your needs)
Uparkancitkon manjalaisa (I will provide your food and cloth)

Inda au nian makikit, dio mangalehensa (I'll give all your necessities)

Muda langka au manjala (When I go fishing)

Dapot au dua mera (I get two big fishes)

Ugadisma i sada (The one will be sold)

Anso adong dio panabusi sira (To provide for your needs)

Dapot au dohot inangmu (I and your mother)

Muda adong tuor ni kopi (When Harvesting coffee from our field)

Deba do i upajopi (I will keep some profit)

Deba ambaen dio abit matomu (And the rest is for your future)

Imale nian amang (Oh my beloved son)

Por ni roangku ho marbisuk (I hope you to be smart)

Ampot sogot madok-dokma ulala pamatang (When I become old)

Anso ho doma ubaen usuk (I hope you will be my the backbone)

(Harahap, 1997, *Willem Iskander Si Bulus-Bulus Si Rumbuk-Rumbuk*, hlm. 69.)

3.1 The spirit of nationalism

When *Si Bulus-Bulus Si Rumbuk-Rumbuk* was written, Indonesia was still in Dutch colonialization. People lived in poverty and misery. Willem Iskander expressed his anger through his poems to repel the colonialist from this beloved country. He said some foreigners were full enough robing our natural resources. Through his poem entitled Mandailing he inculcated the spirit of nationalism, the struggle for independence. Willem Iskander tried hard to burn the spirit of freedom, to get the basic rights for humans to pursue happiness for life. This is the poem.

O Mandailing Godang (O the great Mandailing)

Tano inganku sorang (The land of my country)

Na niatir ni dolok na lampas (The land where I was born)

Na nijoling ni dolok na martimbus (Flanked between the high mountains)

Ipulna na laing bubus (Smoke billowing for a long time)

(Harahap, 1997, *Willem Iskander Si Bulus-Bulus Si Rumbuk-Rumbuk*, hlm. 72.)

The collection of these poems showed the beauty of Mandailing land with the clean rivers, mountains and fertile land to grow rice. Our land is really rich with natural resources

to become a great country. Implicit in the local language, Willem Iskander encouraged the local leaders for our independence. In fact that it was quite successful to use this poem to spread the spirit to fight against the imperialist. A local leader like Buyung Siregar and the group were sent to prison in Digul by the Dutch government because evidently against the colonial government. At the same time, *Si Bulus-Bulus Si Rumbuk-Rumbuk* was forbidden to read. People may have the book secretly.

The spirit of nationalism was also exposed in the poem *Marburu Di Bagasan Bilik* (Hunting in his room). This poem is still relevant to be discussed at present because it talked about a corrupt leader who lived comfortably by accepting bribery from the Dutch government. He spent the money dissipated until one day he realized that he fell bankrupt. He was isolated from his social life because of his bad behaviour and attitude. He was living alone without power, dominated by the Dutch Colonialist.

3.2 Education

The focus of Willem Iskander's struggle is education because, during Dutch colonialization, it was forbidden for *bumiputera* (native people) to learn reading and writing. It was a threat for the colonial if the native people get knowledge from reading some books. It might open their mind about freedom and basic rights for humans. Willem Iskander understood about this. In *pengajian* (local meeting), people communicate in Arabic, a local language, they learn the teaching of Al-Qur'an and Hadist.

They discussed the local problems and the solution, managing *Lubuk Larangan* (growing and keeping the local fish) to build the small mosque and open new roads to the newly established villages. The Indonesian language is known as Melayu Language. Only a few people spoke this language (the people who got experiences working outside Muarasoma and Panyabungan). Willem Iskander suggested that the young generation strongly to go to school to study reading, writing, mathematics and other knowledge. Education is the prime way to leave poverty and stupidity. The students may learn about other countries' history to compare and adopt the policy and management to improve their local condition. One of the local wisdom of the society is helping and caring for each other. They regard themselves as a big family. In Mandailing ethnic group, there is a family system called Dalihan Natolu. Mora, Kahanggi, and Anak Boru have different functions and responsibilities within their society. Mora is the prime group responsible for managing and caring for the big family's social activities. Kahanggi is just like the brother of Mora,

who agreed and followed Mora's advices and suggestions. The third one is called Anak Boru, who executed all the works and activities of one event.

3.3 Religion

The Other theme exposed in *Si Bulus-Bulus Si Rumbuk-Rumbuk* is about religion. Willem Iskander emphasized the greatness of the Creator that is God for all human beings. God may bless people who obey the religious teachings. People should pray to God and did not break the law of religion. Human beings are considered small compared to the greatness of the Creator.

The poems about religion are as follows.

O Na Lobi Denggan Roa (O the most merciful God)

Na umbege na upardokon on (Who may learn all my prayer)

Mangido au di Ita (I beg you)

Ita patorang pangaroai ni danak on (To illuminate the kid's heart)

(Harahap, 1987, *Willem Iskander Si Bulus-Bulus Si Rumbuk-Rumbuk* , hlm. 78.)

Ia, na mambaen panaili ni langit (O the creator of heaven)

Dohot barang aha na manggulmit (And all which moved)

Ima sombaonku ringgas au ra (That I worshiped sincerely)

Sapanjangna, Mamuji Tuhanku (And I pray forever)

(Harahap, 1987, *Willem Iskander Si Bulus-Bulus Si Rumbuk-Rumbuk* , hal. 9.)

4. CONCLUSION

From the analyses, it is found out that there are three valuable ideas portrayed in *Si Bulus-Bulus Si Rumbuk-Rumbuk*, they are education, religion, and the spirit of nationalism. These three points are still relevant to be discussed in this global era because Indonesia is still facing the complicated problems. These ideas can be made as anticipation of the negative impact of western culture and imperialism on the young generation.

The ideas and thoughts of Willem Iskander had motivated people in Muarasoma and Tanobato and the readers to reach success in society and economy. Willem Iskander ideas and thoughts can be made the character-building, especially for the young generation.

The model or strategy is made in the form of a recommendation for the local authority to give the students the subjects of Willem Iskander and the poems to be studied in schools. The books about Willem Iskander and the poems had been distributed to the schools in Muarasoma and Tanobato.

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