Decentering Subject Antropocentric in East Java Folklore: An Antropo-Posthumanist

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	ABSTRACT
Keywords: Folklore, Posthumanism, Decentring, Subject, Reconstructing.	*The research in this article aims to change and expand the perspective of folklore research in Indonesia, from an anthropocentric to a posthumanist perspective, this is done by using critical posthumanist theory with a focus on 1) how decentering subjects are displayed in folklore in East Java, and 2) Reconstructing relationship subject in folklore in East Java. This research uses a qualitative narrative approach, this helps researchers to describe the structure and explain the meaning of folklore about the role and relationship between non-human subjects and humans. The data source used is folklore in East Java Province, Indonesia. The data were analysed through several stages, 1) identification, 2) classification, and 3) interpretation. This research resulted in the finding that folklore in East Java has an alternative point of view in understanding the relationship between humans and 'non-humans', humans are understood not as a single subject that determines everything, but are understood as subjects connected to 'non-human' subjects.*

INTRODUCTION

The preservation of an anthropocentric perspective in folklore research will ultimately only make folklore research a tool to reinforce a very exploitative subject-object dichotomy relationship between humans and 'non-humans' (Kopnina et al., 2018) . This happens because in an anthropocentric point of view, every folklore research is only centred on efforts to find out the connection of folklore with human life and culture only, without caring about the existence of 'non-humans' who also live and connect with humans in a folklore. Some researchers such as Howard (2022), Swyngedouw (2018) dan Thompson (2019), have voiced the importance of a paradigm shift from anthropocentric to posthumanist in folklore research (and in general in anthropological research), this shift is important to eliminate human domination of the 'non-human', The posthumanist paradigm is based on the recognition that humans and other life forms are highly interconnected, interdependent, and coexist in networks of relationships, rather than networks of exploitation, so the position of humans as anthropocentric subjects no longer applies. The use of a Posthumanist perspective in the study of folklore is what then gave birth to a new form of study, namely Anthropo-Posthumanism.

Against this background, the research in this article aims to change and expand the point of view of folklore research in Indonesia, from an anthropocentric to a posthumanist perspective, this is done by using the Anthropo-Posthumanist approach, which synthesises Bascom's (Bascom, 1954) functional theory with Herbrechter's critical posthumanist theory (2013, 2019, 2022). with a focus on 1) how decentering subjects are displayed in folklore in East Java, and 2) reconstructing relationship subject in folklore in East Java. To explain the novelty in this research, the researcher will explain in depth about 1) the anthropocentric point of view carried by several experts in studying folklore,

2) the style of folkloric research in Indonesia carried out in an anthropocentric point of view and 3) explain the novelty and state of the art of use.

First, the anthropocentric perspective in the study of folklore can be traced from Bascom (1954) thoughts on the theory of folkloric functions. In his theory, Bascom explains that folklore is not just an imaginative story told from generation to generation in a society, more than that, folklore is considered as one of the important components that plays a role in connecting society with a culture. Bascom in his theory formulates in more detail the basic functions of folklore, which he categorises into four functions, 1) entertainment, 2) validating culture, 3) education, and 4) maintaining obedience (Bascom, 1954; Bronner, 2007, 2017). Bascom's view is basically anthropocentric because, the function of folklor is studied and understood as far as it is related to human life as a member of a culture, and completely ignores in-depth discussion of the function of folklor for non-human 'others' (animals, plants, mystical creatures, anthropomorphised beings) who also live and become part of a folklor.

The same thing was also done by Dundes (1965, 1969, 1997) who explained folklore as a reflection of a culture. In Dundes' view, folklore is understood not only as a collection of imaginative stories, but also as an "entrance" to understand the conditions and cultural values of a culture. The study of folklore opens the way for someone to understand a foreign culture from within (the perspective of the people). Dundes' interest in the study of folklore as a reflection of culture has expanded the discussion to the area of psychoanalysis (Dundes, 1997; Bronner, 2017;), this interest then gave birth to Dundes' important in-depth essays on folklore as a reflection of the psychological and social dynamics of a society (Dundes, 1969). In Dundes' view, folklore is a series of symbols that must be studied and interpreted in depth to understand the psychological, social, and cultural conditions of a society associated with a folklor, at this point, Dundes has the same position as Bascom, he studies folklore in an anthropocentric perspective.

The next was Jordan and Caro (1986, 1986) who widely introduced gender studies in folklore research. The research conducted by the two researchers expanded the area of folkloric research by utilising a sociological approach, which was previously dominated by functional (Bascom, 1954), structural (Propp, 2009), and psychoanalytical interpretations (Dundes, 1997). Although the scientific contributions made by Jordan and Caro are very important in folkloric research, the approach is still basically built on an anthropocentric point of view, this is because in gender studies, women are placed at the centre of the study, various things related to women in folklore are presented to be examined more deeply, both still do not provide space to talk about non-human subjects.

The three folklorists who have been described have the same point of view in researching folklore, all three of them design their approach based on an anthropocentric perspective, placing humans and their culture at the centre of folkloric research, and ignoring in-depth discussion of the existence of non-human subjects who also live and connect with humans through folklore.

Second, in the context of folklore research in Indonesia, an anthropocentric perspective can be found in research conducted by folklorists such Hutomo (1979, 1987), Suwondo

(1998), and Ahimsa-Putra (2014). Hutomo (1979, 1987) in his research on kentrung stories for example, in his research, he has not touched much on an in-depth explanation of the role and relationship between non-human subjects and humans, Hutomo still places humans and their culture at the centre of folkloric research, this can be seen in one of his conclusions about the function of the kentrung story 'Sarahwulan'. The anthropocentric perspective used by Hutomo in researching folklore can also be found in several researchers such as, 1) Suwondo (1998), in his research on the myth of 'Dewi Sri' in Java, 2) Ahimsa-Putra (2014), on Toh-Manurung in the Bentaeng community, 3) Arps (1992), research on Sri Tanjung, 4) Keeler (2004), research on Wayang Kulit, 5) Wessing (2006), research on Nyai Roro Kidul and Nyai Blorong and 6) Sukmawan (Sukmawan, 2014; Sukmawan et al., 2017), research on ecology and folklore. The similarity of perspectives in researching folklore from the seven researchers is enough to explain that in the last three decades, folkloric research in Indonesia has not experienced changes and expansion of perspectives that lead to a comprehensive study of the relationship between humans and 'non-humans'.

Based on this explanation, it can be formulated that the focus of research in this article is to find out how decentering subject is displayed in folklor in East Java. Based on the background and focus of the research, it can be explained that the state of the art in this research is the use of the posthumanist approach in folkloric research, while the novelty in this research is the use of the posthumanist approach to study folklore in Indonesia.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research method in this study uses a qualitative narrative approach, in this approach, narrative (oral or written text) is understood as an object that provides an explanation of an event or a series of events/actions that can provide information on various phenomena in society (Riessman, 1993; Czarniawska, 2004; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The approach will help researchers to describe the structure and explain the meaning of folklore in depth about the role and relationship between non-human subjects and humans.

The data source used in this research is the existing folklore in East Java Province, Indonesia which has been documented by the national government in 1980 (Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1981), this data was chosen with the main consideration that there is clarity of the identity of the informant chosen as the key informant in the folkloric data collection and its suitability with various external sources. The data is related to several folklore namely 1) myth; Lawu mountain, 2) legend; Rangga Pesu, and 3) panji story; Panji Saputra.

Data validity testing was conducted with member checks (Riessman, 1993; Czarniawska, 2004; Given, 2008a) independent data review involving internal researchers and peer review, data review involving folklorists. The data collected were analysed through several stages, 1) identifying, 2) classifying, and 3) interpreting, the three stages were carried out based on their suitability to the focus of the research, namely to explain the role and relationship between non-human subjects and humans

in the posthuman perspective on folklore in East Java.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Functional Posthumanist Theory

In this section, the researcher will analyse 3 folklores in East Java, 1) myth; Mount Lawu, 2) legend; Rangga Pesu, and 3) panji story; Panji Saputra. The analysis is done based on the stages. The three folklores were analysed using the Anthropo-Posthumanist approach, which synthesises Bascom's functional theory (Bascom, 1954) with Herbrechter's critical posthumanist theory (2013, 2019, 2022). The synthesis between the two theories resulted in the Functional Posthumanist Theory, with the main concepts being 1) decentring subject position and 2) reconstructing subject relationship. The synthesis between the two theories was carried out with the main purpose of producing a reading of the function of folklore in a posthumanist perspective. The following is the theoretical framework;
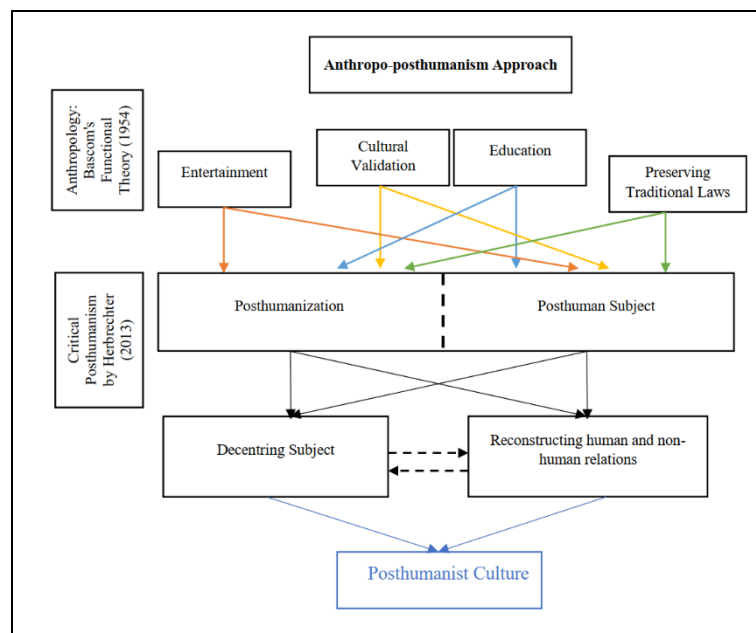

Fig 1. Functional Posthumanist Theory

Decentering subject position is a term used to explain the criticism of the position of humans as determinant subjects towards posthumanist subjectivity. In decentering subject, the formation of posthumanist subjectivity begins with the recognition that what defines humans as autonomous subjects is not only rationality as constructed by Descartes (which then continues to be reproduced in the development of modern thought), but the autonomy of influence that is actualised through relational ties with 'the non-human' (Braidotti, 2019; Kopnina, 2019; Swyngedouw & Ernstson, 2018). Decentering subject is related to posthumanisation, which is contextually often associated with the 'technologisation of the human' (attempts to increase the integration of the

human physique with electronic systems, the expansion of interaction and reliance on robots and artificial intelligence), however posthumanisation does not inherently require the use of modern technology: works of mythology or literature featuring pseudo-figures such as monsters, ghosts, and demigod heroes that challenge the boundaries of the concept of humanity can also be categorised as posthumanisation (Gladden, 2018; Haraway, 2008, 2016). This perspective is basically enough to explain that posthuman studies are not only contextually related to the relationship between humans and technology, but also related to mythological creatures that are commonly found in folklore.

Reconstructing relationship subject is a concept used to show criticism of the relationship between humans and non-humans in a folktale. Criticism is carried out by first showing the dominant form of relations shown in a folktale, and followed by criticising these relations from a posthumanist perspective. In the perception of posthumanism, human existence is no longer interpreted as a single subject, but as an entity that is equal to other entities such as plants, animals, microbiological, etc (Haraway, 2008; Raber, 2022). This view is based on the fact that human existence is basically very dependent on them, and cannot live without the existence of these other entities. In this section, the researcher will explain how decentering subject position and Reconstructing relationship subject is presented in the three folklores studied by starting with the legend of Rangga Pesu, the myth of Mount Lawu, and the story of Panji Saputra.

Decentering Subject and Reconstructing Relation in the Legend of Rangga Pesu

Rangga Pesu is a legend that exists in Trenggalek, East Java, this legend is widely believed to be true by the people in Dsn. Pesu, Ds. Pesangrahan, Trenggalek, East Java. The story of the legend was taken from the national government archives, with the key informant named Supriyadi (1981). The following data were collected by the researcher on the legend:

Table 1. Data analysis of Rangga Pesu Legend

No	Data of Rangga Pesu legend	Explanation
1	Embok Rondo's sympathy grew, so he borrowed the angel's clothes, cloth and other things, and offered her to stay with him. In the end, the angel wanted to come with her, and Embok Rondo adopted her as his daughter. Then she met Raden Wasita, who eventually became her mate.	- This data explains the physical integration between humans and the 'non-human'. - The integration is symbolised through the marriage between Raden Wasita as a human being and his wife as a superhuman being.

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2	One night, Rangga Pesu and his wife are sitting together. This good opportunity was used by his wife to say goodbye to return to heaven. Rangga Pesu actually did not allow it, considering that his three children still needed care. Then the wife said to her husband. 'My smallest child, you just embrace it every morning. In short, whether you allow it or not, I will return to the heaven'.	- This data explains the objectification by humans of the 'non-human'. - This objectification is symbolised through Raden Wasita wanting his wife, who is a human being, to stay behind to take care of him and his children.
3	Rangga Pesu heard rumours that in the south, at the Ngerit cave, a princess was meditating. According to the stories passed down from mouth to mouth, she was an angel who had descended to earth. 'I think she is the mother of these children who are meditating there. There is a possibility that she was not accepted in heaven so she went to meditate there,' he aid.	- This data explains the human desire to continuously try to objectify the 'non-human', this shows an attempt to maintain anthropocentricity, and reject decentering subject. - This objectifying desire is symbolised by Raden Wasita's desire to find his wife who said goodbye to return to heaven just so she could help him take care of himself and his children.

In the data, it can be seen that the human subject represented by Raden Wasita tries to maintain human determination over the 'non-human' subject, represented by his wife. Raden Wasita views the existence of his wife, who is a 'non-human' subject, solely as an object to fulfil all his needs.

The objectification carried out by the human subject towards the 'non-human' subject ultimately results in a fractured relationship, and the separation of the two. This can be seen from the wife's action to leave her husband, Raden Wasita. In the legend of Rangga Pesu, the decentering subject is displayed by showing the inability of the human subject to fulfil its needs independently without involving the involvement of the 'non-human' subject. The separation between Raden Wasita and his wife resulted in an imbalance in Raden Wasita's life, as he could not independently fulfil his needs and those of his young children. Raden Wasita's inability to fulfil his and his children's needs independently also emphasises that humans as subjects are very dependent on the existence of 'non-human' subjects, which is in line with the posthumanist perspective in understanding the relationship between humans and 'non-humans'.

Decentering Subject and Reconstructing Relation in the Myth of Mount Lawu

The myth of Mount Lawu is believed to be true by the people around the foothill of Mount Lawu, which is located along Karanganyar Regency and Ngawi Regency. The belief in the myth of Mount Lawu gave birth to several forms of rituals such as the ritual of Night 1 Suro (the name of the month in the Javanese calendar) at Hargo Dalem, the

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place where King Brawijaya V disappeared and also the prohibition for people from Cepu and Blora districts to climb Mount Lawu. The following is the data collected by the researcher in the myths associated with Mount Lawu, these mythical stories were taken from the National document archives, which data collection involved a key informant named Atmoredjo (Atmoredjo, 1981):

Table 2. Data analysis of Gunung Lawu Myth

No	Data of Mount Lawu Myth	Explanation
1	After the Bhagavan had finished teaching his knowledge, he said, 'Bondan Gugur, you should understand that I have passed down all my knowledge to you. The Almighty has decreed that I cannot be with you any longer. Therefore, please allow me to merge with you, to melt into your soul. Therefore, beforehand, whatever I am about to tellyou, you should take heed.'	- This data explains the physical integration between humans and the 'non-human'. - The integration is symbolised by Bhagavan Jamba Loka's desire to become one into Prince Bondan Gugur's body.
2	The queen is none other than the incarnation of the late princess who founded the Majapahit Kingdom, often referred to as Dewi Angin-angin. She is now known as Nyai Rara kidul, who rules the southern sea. She will be the consort of Hyang Sunan Lawu.	- This data explains the physical integration between humans and the 'non-human' - The integration is symbolised by the marriage between Prince Bondan Gugur and Nyai Roro Kidul, who is a superhuman being.
3	In addition, the Queen remained and ruled in the South Sea, a kingdom in the ethereal realm. The Empress was always ready to come to the top of Mount Lawu at any time if Bondan Gugur really needed her. Especially if there was danger or something that Hyang Sunan Lawu could not personally handle.	- This data explains the acceptance of the decentering subject, the relationship between humans and 'non-humans' is presented not as a subject-object relationship, but as interdependent fellow subjects. - Decentering subject is shown by showing the dependence of Prince Bondan Gugur on his wife who is a human being in maintaining the security of the kingdom he leads.

In the myth of Mount Lawu, the existence of non-human subjects (nature and non-human creatures) is told to have a central role for human survival, however, the existence is not interpreted as an object that can be exploited freely by humans, but is understood as a subject that has the same position as humans. This can be seen from the acceptance shown by Prince Bondan Gugur to integrate with the 'non-human' subject without showing any desire to make it an object to fulfil its needs.

In the myth of Mount Lawu, the integration of the human subject with the 'non-human' subject occurs in two forms, the first involving the integration of Prince Bondan Gugur with Bhagavan Jamba Loka, and the second involving Nyai Roro Kidul. This integration is said to have occurred after the prince experienced a crisis in his life, which resulted from losing a war against the Demak kingdom led by Raden Pattah, who was none other than his brother. In the myth of Mount Lawu, this integration leads to the creation of balance for Prince Bondan Gugur in his personal life, as well as in running his kingdom. This can be shown through the willingness of the 'non-human subject' to help fulfil the needs and maintain the kingdom led by Prince Bondan Gugur. Decentering subject in the myth of Mount Lawu also confirms that humans as subjects are very dependent on the existence of 'non-human' subjects, the dependence is not based on subject-object relations, but relations between subjects, this is in accordance with the posthumanist point of view in understanding the relationship between humans and 'non-humans'.

Decentering Subject and Reconstructing Relation in the Myth of Mount Lawu

The Panji Saputra story is basically part of one version of the Panji story, the story is generally believed to be true by the people of East Java at large, however, the Panji story takes a lot of story settings set in the kingdom of Kediri and Jenggal, which location stretches from Kediri Regency to Sidoarjo Regency. The following data was collected by researchers related to the Panji Saputra story, the Panji story was taken from the National document archive, whose data collection involved a key informant named Sutjipto (1981):

Table 3 Data analysis of Panji Saputra

No	Data of Panji Saputra	Explanation
1	It is said that, according to the storyteller, the carcass of Dewi Anggraini that he was carrying always oozed blood. The Panji rubbed the blood on the Sana (*Sono*) tree. That is why the sap is red.	- This data explains the integration of humans with 'non-humans'. - The integration is shown through the integration of the blood of Dewi Anggraini which is attached to the tree, changing the condition of the tree.
2	So Dewi Anggraini's hair started to fall out. The hair that fell out was attached to a tree that was making up, affected by Panji Seputra's magic words, it became a Spruce tree.	- This data explains the integration of humans with the 'non-human'. - The integration is shown through the integration of Dewi Anggraini's hair which is attached to a tree, which then becomes a Spruce tree tree.
3	Then changing Dewi Anggraini's cheek, he put that cheek, because of Panji Seputra's magic words, then it became a tobacco tree, later the Tobacco will be kissed by people who like it.	- This data explains the integration of humans with the 'non-human'. - The integration is shown through the integration of Dewi Anggraini's cheek being attached to a leaf,

which then becomes Tobacco.

In Panji Saputra's story, the integration of the human subject with the 'non-human' is shown through the integration of Dewi Anggraini's blood and limbs with various forms of plants. This was done by Panji Saputra when he brought back the body of his lover Dewi Anggraenni along the way to the kingdom of Kediri. This can basically be interpreted as the fusion of Dewi Anggraeni's body as a human subject with the 'non-human' subject. The integration between Dewi Anggraini's body and the plants eventually resulted in the change of form for the plants integrated with the blood and body of Dewi Anggraenni, Sana (Sono) tree has red coloured sap, Spruce tree has leaves that resemble hair, and Tobacco leaves resemble human cheeks.

This integration is basically not based on Panji Saputra's desire to make the plant an object, but as an expression of his grief over his dead lover, as well as his anger towards Dewi Anggraini's murderer. Symbolically, this shows the most primordial role of nature as the place where the cycle of human life takes place, from birth to death. Decentering subject in Panji Saputra's story basically clarifies the form of human relationship with nature, the relationship is not constructed as subject-object, but as fellow subjects who depend on each other, and not subjects who subjugate each other.

CONCLUSIONS
The three folklores have an alternative point of view in understanding the relationship between humans and 'non-humans', all three understand humans not as a single subject who determines everything, as perceived in an anthropocentric point of view, but is understood as a subject that is connected to the subject of 'non-humans', this is in accordance with the concept of the subject conceived in the posthumanist view, so that 'non-humans' are no longer solely seen as objects for humans, but as fellow subjects who are interrelated with each other.

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