

From Ghosts up to your Eyes

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Some time ago, around the public spaces in the city of Ciamis there was graffiti that attracted attention, there was the inscription “Ghosts Are Memories”¹ but at several different points it was side by side with anarchy symbols and writing motorcycle gangs.

This of course adds to the long line of records of vandalism in public spaces carried out in the city of Ciamis. If previously it was done at the Ciamis Art Building², various graffiti in public spaces was then scattered at several points.

Why ghosts and why memories? Of course only the scribe understood why the writing was written. Seeing this phenomenon, of course we will roam at various events on how graffiti in public spaces is carried out. If during the struggle for independence, the city walls are filled with graffiti “freedom or death”, then when we jump into the present and juxtapose the phrase “ghost are memories” then we only make it a chain poem, the author does not want to be known but his words we can remember until now.

Freedom or death!

Ghost are memories

During the struggle for independence, the phrase “freedom or death” on any wall will be a heroic sign, a message against colonialism. Graffiti was made as a message, at that time the newspaper of freedom fighters also existed, but graffiti on the wall was a message and a sign that was still needed clearly. “Freedom or death” is still reported today, both through graffiti on the walls, as well as from the cry of freedom fighters, as well as writing on the struggle paper.

On the one hand, in addition to the graffiti “Ghosts Are Memories” that occur at this time also carries the symbol of anarchy. An interesting event is what was written by George Orwell in his book *Homage to Catalonia*, a reportage in the style of writing novels or currently known as

¹ Entah Apa Maksudnya, Ada Tulisan ‘Hantu Adalah Kenangan’ di Tugu Atlet Ciamis. <https://www.harapanrakyat.com/2018/03/entah-apa-maksudnya-ada-tulisan-hantu-adalah-kenangan-di-tugu-atlet->, the inscription “Ghost is Memories” –spread at many points, one that stole attention was the graffiti at the Athlete Monument –threatening Ciamis to fail to get the Adipura award in 2018.

² Gedung Kesenian Ciamis jadi Korban Aksi Vandalisme, <https://www.harapanrakyat.com/2016/07/gedung-kesenian-ciamis-jadi-korban-aksi-vandalisme/>, in the news said that the magnificent building had only been established for one year. Some of the writings that were crossed out are excerpts from Rendra’s poetry ‘niat baik sodara untuk siapa?’, Charles Baudelaire ‘sekarang jamnya mabuk’ and others.

Literary Journalism, which is a reportage about the civil war in Spain, a battle in which anarchy is present in it.

There were so many scribbles carried out by anarchy at that time, so that when Orwell came to Barcelona as a journalist, noted various interesting things. From the start “Viva la Revolucion!” Another graffiti, for example, the phrase “No Pasaran” is a phrase that is very well known by anti-fascist groups to date. Besides screaming loudly, spreading inside the banner, there was also graffiti on the walls. The phrase “No Pasaran” became a very powerful mantra to confront fascist groups on the battlefield at that time. Fascists must not pass, do not let fascism come and rule. “No Pasaran” has so far been used, crossed out, spread against supporters of fascism in city streets in various parts of the world. The past and present always influence each other. Some slogans survived, some were forgotten.

Does the streak on “Ghost is Memories” still exist? Of course, graffiti doesn’t last long, building owners don’t take long to remove graffiti. But of course there is always new graffiti, as seen recently in an old shopping complex near the square, saying: “Ciamis Heurin ku Koruptor” (Ciamis Full/ Tightness by Corruptors). Then another graffiti “May Day Is Come”³ before the May Day 2019 celebration, the action was highlighted because it was done in the same place as the writing “Ghost is Memories” a year earlier.

It was also reported by one of the local Ciamis newspapers, Kabar Priangan (12/12/2018). In the news Tatang Rahman (a Ciamis resident) suspects that the graffiti that suddenly appeared in almost every corner of Ciamis has nothing to do with the actions of young gangs in general. Graffiti is like carrying a message or trying to get attention –more or less.

So many graffiti that are sometimes not only provocative but also very poetic, besides “Ghosts are memories” and some poetry quotes, other poetry scribbles include: “God leaves one hell for my poetry”⁴, “How do I forget you if all days are your name”, “as a memory I want to be forgotten”, “other people is hell”, “to become me start to forget me” and more. The latest act that stole a lot of media attention was the vandalism that read “Kill the Rich”⁵ that occurred in the city of Banjar –a former area in the Ciamis government area –three suspects were arrested for the act, after being tracked, other graffiti written were words “because of black in your eyes is another me”, the writing is once again very poetic.

There are so many out there, in someone’s garage, on the wall of a government building, in a national monument, at the welcome gate of a city, in a run-down alley, or maybe in a mosque toilet, and wherever that is..

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³ Aksi Vandalisme ‘May Day is Come’ Kotori Tugu Atlet di Ciamis, <https://news.detik.com/berita-jawa-barat/d-4532004/aksi-vandalisme-may-day-is-come-kotori-tugu-atlet-di-ci>, The graffiti ‘May Day Is Come’ and ‘Nalammu Merah’ is plastered on the wall below the Torch Sculpture.

⁴ <https://www.instagram.com/p/B7ebtggJkyA/?igshid=v04euqbwo9if>, posted by the account Instagram @tembokruntuh1990 on January 19, 2020, getting 11,213 likes and 17 comments.

⁵ 3 Pelaku Vandalisme ‘Kill The Rich’ di Banjar Dibekuk Polisi, <https://news.detik.com/berita-jawa-barat/d-4974294/3-p>



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