

THE NOVELTY OF PLOT IN LEILA S. CHUDORI'S *PULANG*

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Abstract

Literary works are built from the harmony of intrinsic elements such as theme, plot, characterization, setting, point of view, style, and mandate. Plot is one of the crucial elements in a story which can combine all the elements in a story to become harmonious. From the plot, we can know the events of the character's characteristics and the conflicts faced by the story. It can clearly describe the storyline that wants to create by the writer. *Pulang* by Leila S Chudori is one of the novels that have a unique plot which is created from the letter's media. The new way of conveying the plot is called novelty. The novelty is created for avoiding monotony in a story. Every stage of plot such as exposition, inciting moment, rising action, conflict/climax, falling action and denonement can be made to make a surprise so that the reader feels interested and curious about the next stage of plot. This is what Leila does to build her plot more interesting and unique. Leila in *Pulang* uses a regressive plot because the sequence of events told in fiction is not chronological, the story starts from the middle stage when Dimas Suryo is already in Paris. Besides the letter media that Leila uses in the story, she also used novelty for the renewal of the written media based on the developments of electronic media from 1965-1998. Through this kind of novelty, Leila succeeds in getting the reader to be influenced by Indonesia's dark history which is written from a different perspective.

Keywords: novelty, plot, letter, *Pulang*, story.

INTRODUCTION

Literary works are built from intrinsic elements such as theme, plot, characterization, setting, point of view, style, and mandate. It strings into a structure which produce meaning relatively. It is stated by Rene Wellek in (Mustika, 2012) that "analisis sastra harus mementingkan segi intrinsic". In line with this opinion Culler views that "literary works are autonomous in that their meaning is not determined by things outside the literary work" (Culler, 1997:127). The structure built by this intrinsic element will affect the reader's reaction so that the yardstick for the success of a literary work is being able to achieve an astonishing effect on the reader. According to Damono in (Sitinjak, 2018) "karya sastra ada untuk dimanfaatkan masyarakat dalam kehidupan dan mampu memberikan pengaruh besar kepada kehidupan masyarakat"

Within the intrinsic elements there is one element that can combine all the elements into an orderly harmony, namely the plot. The plot is one of the important intrinsic elements of the story in both short stories and novels. Plot is a manifestation of



the actions, traits, and attitudes of the story's main character (Nurhidayati, 2017: 494). Nurgiantoro (1995: 113) presents several opinions from experts about the meaning of the plot. (a) Plot is a projection of the characters' inner state in the story. A good plot can clearly describe the events of the character's characteristics and the conflicts faced by the story characters, so that the story feels alive (b) The plot is the events shown in the story that are not simple, because the author arranges the events based on causal links (Kenney, 1966:14)

The plot in its journey has many developments to arouse the feelings of the reader to make it more thrilling. Therefore, a story must also be able to surprise. The plot of a fictional work is said to give a surprise if something that is told or events that are shown deviate or even contradict the expectations of the reader (Abrams, 1981). To create surprises in a story, the writer uses a variety of ways to make the reader unable to guess the storyline or get carried away with the plot being made. Therefore, the writer created novelty to make an unusual plot and make the readers curious about the next storyline as stated in the novel *Pulang* by Leila S Chudori.

Pulang by Leila Chudori is a novel that tells the history of Indonesia in 1965 from the point of view of the fictional character Dimas Suryo who was accused of being a political exile who sympathized with the communists. Leila S Chudori was able to package this novel in an interesting and new way to make readers enjoy the story even though the story presented leads to the dark history that Indonesia was experiencing at that time. The storyline is packed in such an interesting way that it can attract the attention of the reader when reading the novel. There is a new plot development in the novel *Pulang* by Leila S Chudori which uses letter elements to form the plot.

The novelty is included in the freedom of expression in poetic by Horace. Horace says that poetry is like painting in that some works are best viewed up close, some farther away, some in the shadow, and some in the light (Nurrachman, 2017:71). It shows that poetry or literary works have several varieties. That variety of poetry has similarities so Horace thinks in spatial figures. According to Nurrachman (2017: 72) Horace emphasizes decorum, by which he means the adherence to good taste and the relation of parts to wholes. Decorum means appropriateness in creating literary work. The appropriateness in literary works is seen from the freedom of expression which is based on five elements, namely responsibility, novelty, suitability, beautiful, and affecting. Those elements are composed to avoid monotony as Horace stated in (Nurrachman, 2017: 73) that avoiding a fault (in this case attempting to avoid monotony), one may fall into a worse one unless there be real artistic skill.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Leila S Chudori's *Pulang* is a novel that contains novelty in its plot. Letter become the media for Leila serving the plot. As we know, there are two types of plots: progressive and regressive. Leila in *Pulang* uses a regressive plot because the sequence of events told in fiction is not chronological, the story starts from the middle stage when Dimas Suryo

is already in Paris. then at this stage directly presenting scenes of conflict that have sharpened which are conveyed through the media of letters as the quotation below.

Jakarta, Agustus 1968

Mas Dimas, Mas Hananto terjaring oleh empat orang intel bulan April lalu. Kami mendapat kabar ini dari Pak Adi Tjahjono. Kami tak tahu ke mana mereka membawa Mas Hananto. Mungkin dia dibawa ke Guntur. Tapi ada juga yang memberi informasi, dia dibawa ke Gunung Sahari. Kami belum mendengar kabar apa pun dari dia. Mbak Surti yang sejak peristiwa 65 terus-menerus diinterogasi di Guntur, kini juga dibawa, Mas. Dia tidak mau meninggalkan Kenanga, Bulan, dan Alam. Alam adalah putera bungsu Mas Hananto yang baru berusia tiga tahun.

Dan aku hanya bisa berharap jeritan mereka tiba ke telinga Tuhan. Apa yang disaksikan dan didengar Kenanga jauh lebih mengerikan, Mas. Bacalah suratnya dan tolong balas segera. Jakarta sudah menjadi neraka. Doakan kami.

Adikmu, Aji Suryo (Chudori, 2012: 19-20)

Based on quotation above Leila S Chudori want to provide necessary information and explanations related to setting and characterizations. By reading the vivid depictions of the settings, the reader can judge style, foresight, and thoroughness, as well as the author's sensitivity to the circumstances depicted in the setting which is conducted in Jakarta from point of view of Aji Suryo. The initial stage in the form of character recognition will bring the reader to immediately get acquainted with the identities of the story characters (Nurhidayati, 2017: 469). According to the letter above, Dimas Suryo was accused of being sympathetic to the communists so that his family became victims and were interrogated. Apart from that, in the early stages, the conflict was raised bit by bit seen from the letter "Jakarta sudah menjadi neraka". The problems faced by the characters trigger conflicts that will culminate in the middle of the story. This letter started all future conflicts, both Dimas Suryo's inner conflict who always wanted to return to Indonesia and also conflict with his wife because she felt that Dimas did not make her become his "home".

The letter element used by Leila S Chudori to introduce the initial plot of the novel *Pulang* is a novelty, as Horace stated in (Nurrachman, 2017: 73) In addition to using taste and care in arranging words, you will express yourself most effectively if you give novelty to a familiar word by means of a skillful setting. Leila effectively weaves an extraordinary plot. If the elements of this letter were not used as a medium for conveying the plot, the story of this novel would seem ordinary because usually the plot is presented with flashbacks like many other writers have used.

Di tahanan ini, Ibu ditanya terus-menerus. Setiap hari. Sampai capek. Sampai kedua mata Ibu bengkok dan wajahnya kehitaman. Sementara Ibu ditanya dari pagi sampai malam, saya mendapat tugas menyapu, membersihkan beberapa ruangan setiap pagi.

Semoga Om Dimas baik-baik saja. Dulu Bapak pernah berpesan, jika terjadi ada apa-apa saya harus melaporkan pada Om Dimas (Chudori, 2012: 22-23)

The second letter sent from Indonesia by Kenanga initiated the inciting moment in plot development. Like the quote above, Dimas digs up his past in front of Vivienne, causing Vivienne to be stimulated about her position in Dimas' heart. The letter triggers Dimas to flashback to the past so that the plot presented becomes a mix-up between the present and past events.

"jangan pulang koma tunggu sampai tenang titik ibu dan aku baik-baik koma hanya diminta keterangan titik" (Chudori, 2012: 67)

"jangan pulang koma situasi belum cukup aman titik doakan ibu tenang koma kami tahlil terus titik" (Chudori, 2012: 84)

Two quotations above are a telegram from Aji Suryo which is a point of raising action where Dimas Suryo really wants to come back to Solo to make sure his family are fine. This plot stage of raising action in the novel *Pulang* uses a new method besides the letter media, although it is still the same which is written media. It is stated in (Nurrachman, 2017: 74) As the forest changes its leaves at the decline of the year, so, among words, the oldest die; and like all things young, the new ones grow and flourish. Telegram is the latest technology to deliver messages at that time in 1966. Leila uses the telegram to raise the level of conflict within Dimas Suryo. Leila well packaged it and made the main character and readers feel the tragic scene through just a few words delivered by Aji Suryo.

Aku juga merasa beruntung pernah mengenalmu sebagai seorang lelaki yang paling baik dan paling menghormati perempuan. Aku tak akan melupakan segala kebaikanmu, hati - mu yang tulus. Kenangan dan pemberian dirimu sepenuhnya padaku, akan tetap kusimpan selamanya menjadi milikku tanpa bisa kuhapus atau kuralat, karena sesungguhnya kau selalu ada di mana-mana. Bukan hanya ada di dapur, atau di dalam warna kuning kunyit, atau di antara aroma cengkih, tetapi kau mengalir di mana-mana. Terus. Selama-lamanya. (Chudori, 2012: 218)

The quotation above is a fragment of a letter from Surti which made the letter the climax of the conflict. Climax according to Stanton (in Nurgiyanto, 1995: 127) is a conflict to reach the highest level of identity, and something that cannot be avoided. Dimas Suryo and Vivienne divorced after the letter was read by Vivienne. This rarely happens in a story because usually the climax of the conflict is shown by direct dialogue between the characters or with the surrounding setting.

The next chapter is "Surat-Surat Berdarah" which contains a series of letters received by Dimas Suryo since settling in Paris. Those letters are from Aji Suryo, Surti Anandari, Kenanga Prawiro, and Moh. Amir Jayadi.

Dimas, saya menulis ini hanya ingin berbagi dan sekaligus berterima kasih kau masih menyempatkan diri mengirim bantuan meski kalian pun juga dalam kesulitan menjadi pengelana tanpa tujuan pasti. Apa pun kesulitan yang kami hadapi, kami semua tahu dan sadar kau dan juga Aji sangat membantu menopang jiwa kami. Saya ingin berterima kasih sedalam-dalamnya, dari lubuk hati yang paling dalam. Pada saat ini, saya menyadari, engkau kawan sejati. (Chudori, 2012: 248)

Based on the quotation above, it is the letter that brings this scene into a plot complication. After the joy of Dimas and Vivienne, his daughter, Lintang Utara, who is experiencing an identity crisis because she never knew her homeland, Indonesia. The series of letters read by Lintang became a tremendous upheaval for her that want to know more about Indonesia.

*Ayah yang saya cintai,
Saya bersyukur Ayah akhirnya bersedia diantar Maman ke rumah sakit. Tolong segera sampaikan pada Maman untuk meneleponku. Saya ingin tahu apa diagnose dokter, karena aku tahu Ayah tak akan mau berbicara soal kesehatan. Satu permintaanku, apapun kata dokter, turutilah. Demi saya. Demi kita semua. Jakarta tak seperti yang saya bayangkan. Begitu padat, panas, dan lembab. Jauh dari yang Ayah bayangkan karena Jakarta kini sudah melebar ke suburban: Bekasi, Bintaro, Pamulang. Banyak tol dan jalan layang yang letaknya malang melintang ke sana kemari hingga aku merasa kasihan kepada siapa pun yang ditugaskan membuat peta Jakarta. (Chudori, 2012: 394)*

The quotation above no longer talks about conflict because this has entered the falling action stage where all conflicts begin to subside. Different from the two previous written media which are letters and telegrams, at this stage Lintang was already using electronic mail to share his messages with his father so that messages would be received quickly. According to Horace in (Nurrachman, 2017:74) Many words that have lapsed in use will be reborn, and many now in high repute will die, if custom wills it, within whose power lie the judgement, rule, and standard of speech. Leila no longer uses letters and telegrams because there is a novelty in the world's technology for conveying messages, namely electronic mail.

Keakraban Subagio Sastrowardoyo dengan kematian terpancar dalam "Sajak yang Tak Pernah Mati". Bagiku puisi ini memperlihatkan sebuah kewajaran. Karena itu, anggap saja kematianku yang sudah sangat dekat ini sebagai sesuatu yang biasa. Yang casual. Tak perlu diratapi. Tetapi aku minta maaf jika aku memaksa Maman untuk merahasiakan hasil kesehatan Ayah. Mendengar nama cirrhosis saja Ayah sudah tak tertarik. Tidak ada daya estetika dan tidak menggairahkan untuk didiskusikan. Dokter dan suster memang diciptakan untuk membantu memetakan situasi organ tubuh kita. Celakanya, gaya mereka selalu lebih sering seperti

penguasa. Akibatnya, emosi kita sering tergantung pada apa yang mereka ungkapkan. Dan aku keberatan jika kau (dan aku) menggantungkan hidup-mati kita pada dokter. (Chudori, 2012: 444-445)

The statement above is the end of all scenarios made by the author, in this case Leila conveyed the denial by Dimas Suryo, who sent an electronic letter to Lintang before his death. *Pulang* by Leila S Chudori ends with a sad ending because the main character dies before he can return to Indonesia alive.

CONCLUSION

The *Pulang* novel written by Leila S Chudori manages to provide novelty in the plot. Leila uses written media to convey the plot. The written media also experienced renewal based on the development of electronic media from 1965-1998. Begins with a letter, then develops into a telegram and ends with an electronic mail. The plot presented in this written media element gives a deep impression to the reader because it is packaged in a unique way. Leila S Chudori succeeds in getting the reader to be influenced by stories of Indonesia's dark history which are written from a different perspective, unlike most historical stories.

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