

ANALYSIS OF THE HEROISM OF THE FEMALE CHARACTER IN J.S KHAIREN'S NOVEL *MELANGKAH*

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Abstract

The novel *Melangkah* by J.S. Khairen tells the story of the adventures of four Economics students who vacation in Sumba, East Nusa Tenggara, only to get the order of human lives in their hands. The novel will be reviewed using a literary sociology approach. This study aims to describe and explain the author's worldview, the social and cultural background of the community, and the heroic values contained in the novel *Melangkah*. This research is library research. This study used qualitative methodology. The problem in this study is how the elements of the structure of the novel build literary works and the heroic value of female characters are contained in the novel *Melangkah*. The study consists of three stages, the first of which is data collection. The technique used is the technique of reading notes. After data collection, the next stage is data analysis. Information is analyzed descriptively. The results of the data analysis are then presented in the form of word exposure through the explanation of the novel *Melangkah*. The validation used is theory triangulation with stages of reading, recording, and analyzing documents. The conclusion of this research is that the female character in the novel *Melangkah* reflects all heroic values and their characteristics, namely: courage, confidence, truth-keeping, willingness to endure hardship, and generosity. Patience; Resistant to trials, steadfast, calm, unhurried, and not impetuous. Sacrifice; unyielding and desperate, willing to sacrifice for the benefit of the nation, and a reformer.

Keywords: Novel *Melangkah*, J.S Khairen, Sociology of Literature, Heroism, Social and Cultural

INTRODUCTION

A literary work is a representation of various aspects of human life expressed, such as attitudes, behaviors, thoughts, knowledge, reactions, feelings, and imagination. Literary works arise from deep passion and contemplation, from deep thought about the meaning of life and awareness of its role in the world as it does so. (Nurgiyanto, 2000). Anggriani (2020) agrees with Nurgiyanto that literature can reveal, however piecemeal, the path of life at a particular time and place. Thus, literary works contain values that develop in society. Reading fiction is like reading about the lives of others in a particular



culture. It is possible that literary works originated from true stories, both experienced by authors and others, according to Wellek and Warren (1993).

The social and ethical background of a society can be expressed in literary works, especially novels. Ways of life, customs, attitudes, religious rituals, manners, social kinship, ways of thinking, and ways of looking at things are all examples of backgrounds revealed (Wayan Rismayanti et al., 2020). A novel is a type of literary work that tells complicated problems in human life with an interesting language (Sukma & Mujiyanto, 2019). Novels teach readers the values of life, including the value of struggle. The value of struggle is the result of a person's struggle with life's experiences, difficulties, and problems. The value of struggle can be used as an illustration of the magnitude of one's struggle (Nizam, 2019). The value of struggle includes values such as self-sacrifice, unity, respect, patience, unyielding spirit, and cooperation (Joyomartono, 1990). Literary works that teach the value of life can be said to be good. People can discover the value of life through various means, such as understanding and living literary works. The main purpose of analyzing a literary work, be it a novel, poem, or anything else, is to gain a better understanding of the work in question (Nilawijaya & Awalludin, 2021).

Basically, the emphasis on the concept of literary works is the same as the form of creativity possessed by writers as creators of literary works. According to Wiyatmi (Kartikasari, 2021), The sociology of literature is concerned with the creation of literature, the existence of literature, and the discussion of literary works, no matter the socio-cultural background of the authors and their influence on society as a whole. Sociological theories that can support sociological analysis are theories that can explain social facts and the nature of literature as a communication system, especially in terms of extrinsic aspects. Because the two are interrelated and dependent on each other, the relationship between literature and life is very close and inseparable. Literature helps readers understand and exemplify the positive values found in literary works. There is no denying that the life values conveyed by the author are true, even though the chain of events and characters are imaginative. This conveys the message to the reader that it is good to learn from the values contained in the novel (Sanjaya et al., 2022).

In this study, aspects of heroism in the novel *Melangkah* by J.S. Khairen were studied. The heroism shown by the characters in the novel shows the value of struggle. *Melangkah*, by JS Khairen in 2020, is one of those novels that tells the story of struggle. The

adventures of four economics students who decide to vacation on the island of Sumba, East Nusa Tenggara, are told in the novel *Melangkah*. They hope to gain new experiences and enjoy the natural beauty and rich local culture. On their way, the four students accidentally find a jura containing the jura of human lives. This finding became the center of their attention and became an unexpected challenge in their journey. The jura have mysterious magical powers, and they must find a way to overcome their influence that might harm them.

Meanwhile, this novel also shows a literary sociology approach that shows the author's worldview, social background, and culture in Sumba society. Through this story, readers will be invited to see and understand the social and cultural aspects that affect the lives of people on the island of Sumba, as well as the values that are firmly held by the local community. Along the way, these four students gradually face various challenges and obstacles. However, the female character in this novel takes center stage because she reflects strong heroic values. He showed courage, confidence, and the ability to nurture the truth. He was able to endure hardship and had a generous spirit.

In addition, this heroine also showed extraordinary patience. He endures trials, is steadfast, and is unhurried in the face of every situation. Sacrifice is another heroic value depicted in the character of this heroine. He never gave up or despaired; he was even willing to sacrifice for the sake of the nation and had a reformer's spirit. Through this obstacle-filled journey and adventure, the four students learn about the heroic values contained in themselves. They also learn to appreciate and understand the culture and values that exist in Sumba society. The novel *Melangkah* offers a story filled with adventure, mystery, and an understanding of important human values.

This study aims to (1) Identify the heroic characteristics displayed by the female character in the novel *Melangkah* by J.S. Khairen. (2) Analyze the role of female characters in influencing the storyline and development of themes in the novel. (3) Examine the role of female characters as symbols or representations of heroism in Sumba society or the wider context. (4) Examine the author's views on the heroic role of female characters in literary works. (5) Evaluate the heroic impact of female characters in novels on readers and society at large.

J.S. Khairen's Analysis of the Heroism of the Female Characters in J.S. Khairen's *Melangkah* Novel is important to study because it has several reasons. (1) Strong female

representation: Seeing the heroism of female characters in this novel can provide insight into the representation of strong and influential women in literature. It can provide inspiration and examples of roles that strengthen women in literary works. (2) Influence on readers: Research on the heroism of the female character in this novel can provide a deeper understanding of how the heroic image and actions of the heroic female character can affect the reader. It can be a source of inspiration, empowerment, or change in society's view of women. (3) Imagery of women in history and culture: This research can provide an overview of how the female characters in this novel reflect and influence views of women in a broader historical and cultural context. It can help reveal the role and contribution of women in society. (4) Appreciation of literary works: Analyzing the heroism of the female characters in this novel is one way to appreciate the literary works and creativity of the author. This kind of research helps analyze important elements in the story, characters, and themes discussed in the novel. (5) The author's contribution to supporting gender equality: Through this research, we can appreciate the author's efforts in promoting gender equality and providing a diverse picture of women. This kind of research can also be part of a broader movement to uplift and appreciate the role of women in literature.

The author uses descriptive research methods in the research process, which aims to collect actual information in detail, describe existing symptoms, and find problems. This descriptive research method explains the facts or characteristics of a particular population, particularly the field, in an actual and careful manner (Nurdin & Hartati, 2019). Meanwhile, the research method used is qualitative. The purpose of this method is to gain an understanding of the phenomena experienced by the subject under study, which includes behavior, actions, and perceptions as a whole, as well as described using various natural methods (Nurdin & Hartati, 2019).

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Novel Structure

Literature as a text cannot be separated from the function of the author and the context in which the literary work is produced (Raharjo et al., 2017). On the other hand, the understanding of the author and the environment in which the literary work is created (extrinsic elements) can be seen through the character of the resulting literary



text (intrinsic elements), so understanding the value of novel literary works is very important. It still requires an understanding of its intrinsic elements, as themes, characters, events, and perspectives can be used to determine its value. The value of a literary work depends on the social community in which the author develops. (Lestari et al., 2017) Social society can have an effect on the personality of the author as he writes. The way the author creates the setting, characters, complications, and point of view represents the author. To discover the heroic traits in the novel *Stepping*, the author first examines its intrinsic elements.

Novel *Melangkah* is a fiction book that carries the action fiction genre by writers of Minang descent, Jombang Santani Khairen or often called J.S Khairen. His *Melangkah* Novel has 5 acts and 36 episodes that are able to take readers on an adventure to the easternmost part of Indonesia, namely the island of East Nusa Tenggara and feel the experience of traveling to different cities such as Bandung and Sumba with characters just by reading this novel.

Setting is related to place, time, and atmosphere. The setting in this story is clear, whether described by the author or written directly. The setting in the novel *Stepping* mainly Bandung and Sumba; the time settings vary (morning, afternoon, evening, and night); The background tends to be dramatic and the anxiety of the main character but there is a peaceful and peaceful side to the rural atmosphere of Sumba.

As a story, the chapters summarized in the novel *Melangkah* form a coherent narrative. The events of the story are interconnected and arranged in a pattern: 1) introduction: contains the identification of the characters and the setting situation. Where in the early stages of this novel contains the setting of the Pasola War experienced by Runa. At this stage Aura was also asked to return to the land of Sumba because there was an important message that the spirit of the ancestors would convey to her 2) Conflict generation stage: At this stage Aura was accompanied by her three friends back to Sumba. There they found many irregularities such as no women weaving, electricity failures in every corner of the daeran and messages from ancestral spirits that Aura did not understand. 3) Stage of escalation of conflict: Aura finds the reason for all the irregularities that occur in her village. There are renewable energy producing factories that threaten millions of human lives there. 4) Climax Stage: in this round Runa is defeated by Aura's group and the police and all her inventions can be conquered. From

the pattern of the groove structure, it is clearly visible even though it uses a back-and-forth groove.

The characters involved in each act, in almost every act, are Aura, Siti, Ocha, and Arif. The existence of Aura cannot be separated from the theme and storyline in this novel. The point of view used in this novel is a third-person point of view. Aura is classified into the main protagonist. The protagonist is a character of good character, so it is liked by readers, (Andriana, 2002). As the main character, Aura is dominant and is always told from the beginning to the end of the story. Aura is an Economics student at a university in Bandung. This explanation is corroborated in the following quotation

“senyum Aura buyar. Tidak bisakah dia dianggap menang karena dia memang hebat dan telah berlatih keras? Apalagi sejak kuliah di jurusan ekonomi, membuat Aura berpikir logis dalam banyak hal. Ini malah di kait-kaitkan dengan hal mistis.” (Khairan, 2020:49).

Besides being an Economics student, Aura is also a martial arts athlete.

“Jarang para atlet menggunakan tenun Sumbasebagai kostum tambahan saat tanding pencak silat. Corak pada kain ini, membuat Aura beda sendiri dibanding kontenstan seni pencak silat lainnya.” (p. 41)

Siti and Ocha are positioned as additional female protagonists in the novel. In the novel, Siti is described as a martial arts champion who has a very strict affection for her.

“hebaaaat. Sini atauh ayah cium dulu, hebat pisan euy kamu mah.” Ayah siti mendekap anaknya. “tida puluh empat, tiga puluh lima, tiga puluh enam, tiga puluh tujuh.” Sang Ayah mencium siti seperti anaknya masih seorang bayi mungil nan imut. (p. 52)

At the beginning of this chapter in this novel, Ocha's character is portrayed as an antagonist who only wants to join the gang of rich people on his campus who are notoriously very poor. But in the chapter towards the end of the story, Ocha's strength is also one of the martial artists.

“Aku males temenan sama kalian, karena kalian sok jagoan.” Ocha menghempaskan kembali satu tendangan dan dua pukulan. “dari dulu, dari SD bahkan aku sudah silat. Pernah dengar Silat Harimau? Kalian belum kenal sabuk putih aku sudah sabuk hitam!” Ocha menyelesaikan kalimatnya dengan satu Gerakan cekatan yang mematikan. Menghantam tengkuk dan leher satu musuhnya. (p. 254)

In this novel, the characters are portrayed dramatically. Characterizations based on other characters' actions, dialogues, or descriptions are examples of dramatic characterizations. In addition, through the depiction of the story characters, the series of

events, and circumstances surrounding the conception of the story, the author will conduct an analysis of the heroic values of the story.

The Heroic Value of the Female Character in J.S Khairen's *Melangkah* Novel

Tanamal (dalam Pidrawan, 2022) explain that a hero is a person who meritoriously or struggles with all his body, even to the last drop of blood; fight to defend rights that some consider to be the truth. Heroes fight for the common good without seeking rewards for their efforts. Budiyo (dalam Pidrawan, 2022) explained that heroic values are noble values that are good for each individual and are passed down from generation to generation, such as example, the value of being willing to sacrifice, the value of love for the motherland, the value of togetherness, the value of independence, the value of equality, the value of nationalism, and the value of patriotism.

If you reflect the concept above, it is very much in line with this novel. Because this novel discusses the adventures and struggles of friends in the land of Sumba. They have to fight against cavalry that can throw electricity. Moreover, the leader of the cavalry is a high-level fugitive and masked like a hero who has a terrible plan to destroy the country. The fate of hundreds of millions of people is in their hands, but with the brave nature of the Companions and sincere and sincere hearts, they are ready to face obstacles to save the land of Sumba and Nusantara.

Based on the results of data analysis on the novel *Melangkah* by J.S Khairen contains heroic values:

Brave

According to KBBI (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan., n.d.), Courage is to have a steady heart and great self-confidence when faced with danger, obstacles, etc. Brave are very brave individuals; People who have courage. From this, it follows that a Brave is a person with a calm disposition and extraordinary self-confidence in the face of danger, obstacles, etc. The brave is a moral relationship between man and himself consisting of an attitude of unyielding courage.

The brave nature of the female character in the novel *Melangkah* by J.S Khairen is shown in Runa, Mama Raja, Aura, Siti and Ocha. Although Runa has an antagonist in the story, at the beginning of the chapter in this novel, Runa is a brave protagonist. This brave heroic gesture she showed when Runa participated in the Pasola Horse Festival with her father and the men in her village. In addition, Runa's courage was shown when her

father's horse pasuka suffered defeat and required her to wander into the forest alone. In the middle of the forest, Runa met a group of crocodiles ready to pounce on him. Instead of saving the Black One, Runa's horse was pounced on by three crocodiles. At that moment, Runa heard that the enemy troops chasing her were going to Runa's village. Runa's courage is shown in the following quote:

Lembah sabana dan hutan-hutan ia lewati. Runa harus mengabarkan orang-orang di kampungnya yang sekarang hanya tinggal perempuan dan anak-anak, juga beberapa laki-laki yang masih kecil. Bahaya besar mengintai mereka! (p. 13)

Tengah malam, dengan keadaan tubuh luka-luka, Runa mencapai kampungnya. Dari kejauhan terdengar suara-suara nyanyian dan gong yang menanti kedatangan para penunggang kuda yang pulang dari Pasola. Mereka semua berkumpul di Uma Mbakul, sudah dari tadi menyambut kedatangan para pejuang dari kampung mereka. Namun, yang mereka dapatkan hanyalah seorang anak yang pulang dengan wajah lesu dan kotor oleh darah. Runa melewati tatapan kecewa, takut, dan tanya-tanya orang sekampungnya dengan kepala tertunduk. (p. 14)

In this first act, Runa is a village girl who is at stake to be a prize in the Pasola Horse Festival and must see the death of her father and the men in her village are killed by the enemy's horse troops. But it is also on this side that Runa's courage is shown.

The brave nature possessed by the next female character is Aura. Aura embodies the main character in this novel, Aura's brave nature is seen in almost every episode in this novel. Aura's courage is evidenced by the following quote:

Aura kembali pasang kuda-kuda. Meski ia adalah atlet seni, ia punya kemampuan bertarung walau sedikit. Lagi pula, sejak di Sumba dan bertemu berbagai musuh, ia mau tidak mau harus bertarung. (p. 236)

In the quote above, Aura dares to fight her own enemies, even though Aura is an art alet who incidentally is not trained to fight. In this episode, the machete that the Traditional Elders Father gave him could not shine. Aura can only rely on his martial skills alone.

Siti is one of the female characters in the novel. Although Siti is a child who is very spoiled by her father, Siti has a myriad of achievements in the field of Pencak Silat sports. Siti's courage in this novel is also quite a lot. Here is an example of Siti's courage:

"Mau aku? Mau aku gak dikekang sama Ayah." Siti makin menangis di pelukan ibunya (p. 94)

Although the quote above does not show a fight. The quote above describes one of Siti's brave qualities. Where Siti can express her desire that she has been harboring for a very long time. Siti's courage to express her wish was fruitful, Siti received

permission from her father to take a vacation with her best friend to Sumba, Aura's hometown.

Willing to Sacrifice

Willing to sacrifice is an attitude or behavior characterized by the willingness to give and devote everything without expecting anything in return, even if it is self-defeating (Pidrawan, 2022). The self-sacrificing attitude of the female characters in J.S *Khairen's Melangkah* novel can be seen from the following quotes:

*"Semua siapkan senjata dan apapun yang bisa dibawa!"
"sejak kita semua berada dalam Rahim, Tuhan telah menen hidup dan mati kita!" ... "seperti kain Sumba yang indah. Hari ini, Runa tidak akan mati! Semua yang tersisa di kampung ini, tidak akan mati! Tenun itu masih terus dirajut dan diwarnai oleh Tuhan! Mama Raja ber ultimatum (p. 15)*

Mama Raja shows her self-sacrificing nature in the quote above. He mobilized all the remaining villagers to join the fight to save Runa and defend the pride of his village. Because Mama Raja believes taakdir has been written by God and it is not time for them to die. Mama Raja also told Umbu Tari, Runa's mother, to take Runa away to the sea so that the enemy horsemen could not follow them anymore.

Aura as the main character in this novel also shows her self-sacrificing nature at the end of the chapter in this novel.

*Tepat saat itu Aura menarik panel kecil dari computer yang ia rebut tadi.
...
...
Untuk sesaat Aura merasa lega meski nafasnya sesak. Tepat saat ia berbalik badan, Runa menemukannya dengan parang. Sementara parang Aura terjatuh. (p. 339)*

From the quote above, Aura is willing to sacrifice to turn off the electrical panel which will cause power failures in Java and Bali. Miskun he had to be stabbed by Runa.

Care

Ocha, a Jakarta boy studying in Bnadung who really wants to enter GTR (geng tajir rempong) also has great courage in this novel. Where the figure of Ocha who was initially seen as a weak female character but she turned out to be a martial arts warrior just like her other friends. Ocha's courage in this novel is shown in the following quote:

ternyata di kota mati lampu juga. Seluruhnya mati. Aku kemudian bergegas ke kampungmu, sambil berharap tidak ada yang menyergap. Kamu harus tahu, aku naik Truk Disko lainnya. (p. 253)

The quote above contains the nature of the feeling because Ocha dared to come to Aura's village because she realized something was wrong. Although he was very afraid if at any time someone attacked him. But thankfully, in the middle of the trip, Ocha met Si Miskol or Umbu Daniel, Aura's younger brother who works as a Disco Truck driver.

Although Mama Raja only appears at the beginning and end of the chapter in this novel, Mama Raja has a brave nature that is shown in the quote.

"Jika kalian hendak menerakkannya, langkahi semua kuburan batu para leluhur kita!" Mama Raja meludah, mengeluarkan sirih pinang yang ia kunyah. Warnanya merah pekaat! (p. 15)

In the quote above, Mama Raja has the courage to protect Runa from handing Runa over to the enemy horsemen who are chasing Runa to her village.

The novel *Melangkah* derives its heroic value from the social symbols shown by the characters through their attitudes and actions. The value of heroism comes from self-sacrifice, compassion and courage. The novel *Melangkah* by J.S. Khairen gives birth to the value of heroism, which is willing to sacrifice to defend the family, cultural traditions, and national unity. Consider the environment and have the courage to stand up for the truth.

CONCLUSION

The main theme in this novel is the value of heroism in upholding the character of courage, self-sacrifice and care. Although trials, temptations and threats always come, the female character in this novel is able to overcome the problems that exist in her, namely following the original principles while maintaining the truth she believes in. Another theme is friendship and kinship between characters.

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Through this conclusion, it can be suggested to the reader that the novel *Melangkah* along with the works of other authors should be appreciated because it

provides ideal values/attitudes that can be applied in everyday life, including heroic values.

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