



Nationalism Values of Characters in Nh. Dini's Novels

Hana Agustyaningrum*; Herman; J. Waluyo; Sumarwati Sumarwati

Universitas Sebelas Maret, Indonesia
Email: Hanaagustyaningrum@student.uns.ac.id

<http://dx.doi.org/10.18415/ijmmu.v5i6.475>

Abstract

Nationalism values from the attitude of the majority of young people today have declined. Therefore, nationalism is one of the values in strengthening character education which has been intensified so far by the government. This study aimed to describe the nationalism values contained in Nh. Dini's novels. The data in this study were three novels by Nh. Dini entitled *Jepun Negerinya Hiroko* (Japan is Hiroko's Country), *Pada Sebuah Kapal* (on A Ship), and *Keberangkatan* (Departure). Purposive sampling was used in this study as the sampling technique. The data collection technique used was documentation. The data were analysed using the interactive analysis technique. The result obtained from this study is the existence of nationalism in the forms of love for the homeland, willingness to sacrifice, and preserving the richness of the nation's cultures in the three novels of Nh. Dini.

Keywords: Nationalism; Novel; Nh. Dini

Introduction

Reinforcing character education consists of five main characters originating from Pancasila. One of these values is the nationalism value. Nationalism is a feeling of love, obedience, loyalty to the homeland, and wanting to free the country and nation from the control and grip of foreign power (Koentjaraningrat., 1993: 20). Nationalism values are based on the increasing people's awareness towards the country (Zhouxiang., Zhang., and Hong., 2014).

Indonesian nationalism cannot be separated from the fact that Indonesia has a plural and multicultural society with its diversity and cultural complexity (Lan and Manan., 2011: 4). Nationalism awareness and spirit that grows and develops in Indonesia has a background in colonialism. The ethnic groups in Indonesia were united by the same experience when colonized by the Dutch (Amal and Armawi., 1998: 39). Nationalism is rooted in the developing early human nature as it is human intuitive. Nationalism is also one of the ancestor's legacies (Dahua., 2012).

Nationalism values can be found in various literary works such as novels. The study by Djojuroto (2014) examined the nationalism values in a poem entitled *Diponegoro* by Chairil Anwar. The study aimed to reveal the meaning of nationalism in *Diponegoro* poem by Chairil Anwar.

Diponegoro poem is a poem with a fighting spirit, especially Diponegoro's fight against Dutch colonialism.

Musvoto (2017) also used literary works, especially Chenjerai Hove's poetry as an object in seeking nationalism, identity, and history. The researcher made two poems entitled *Up in Arms* and *Red Hills of Home* as the objects of his study. He stated that the two poems represented nationalism in Zimbabwe, not only nationalism but also patriotic attitudes and historical education.

Wellek and Warren (1956: 11) state that literature is a creative activity of an artwork. The literary language used is extraordinarily figurative, often ancient and elusive, and indirect (for example, 'symbolic'). It is not at all like the language we use and meet in everyday life (Hall., 2005: 10). One type of literature we often meet is fiction. Ronen (1994: 1) states that fiction is the characteristic of literary texts and therefore forms a natural topic for literary studies.

Along with the development of the times, nationalism values are difficult to find from the younger generations. The teacher as a facilitator can provide choices of facilities that contain nationalism values. The examples of the easily-obtained media are literary works such as novels. Novel is one of literary works with more complex story elements than other literary works. Novels are more widespread and focus on complexity (Miall., 2006: 6). Bennete and Royle (2009: 38) states that a novel can also be considered as a literary work that tells about a person's life journey.

The novels entitled *Pada Sebuah Kapal* (on A Ship), *Keberangkatan* (Departure), and *Jepun Negerinya Hiroko* (Japan is Hiroko's Country) by Nh. Dini can be used as a means of introducing nationalism values because there are stories that are closely related to it. *Pada Sebuah Kapal* tells the story of an Indonesian dancer named Sri who is married to a foreigner. After marriage, she left Indonesia and lived with her husband in Japan. Her life abroad did not make her forget her own national culture, especially the culture of dance. Every time there was a chance to dance, she would not waste the opportunity. Even some of the clothes and tools she used to dance were also brought to Japan.

Keberangkatan tells about a woman of Dutch descent who was forced by her family to change her citizenship and return to the Netherlands. However, she remained in Indonesia and worked as a flight attendant for one of the airlines. Her desire to live in Indonesia was also a form of proof to others that she was an Indonesian citizen even though her name and physique was not authentic Indonesian. She also tried to study local cultures from the people who lived around her.

Jepun Negerinya Hiroko is a novel that tells about Nh. Dini's short journey living in Japan. She married a French consulate representative and had to change her Indonesian citizenship to become a French citizen. Even so, Indonesian culture that has taken root in her was not forgotten. Based on the explanation above, this study discusses three attitudes as the existence of nationalism values in the novels entitled *Pada Sebuah Kapal*, *Keberangkatan*, and *Jepun Negerinya Hiroko*. The three attitudes discussed are love of the homeland, willingness to sacrifice, and preserving the richness of the nation's cultures.

Methodology

This study was a qualitative descriptive study that aimed to describe a phenomenon to the surface. The data sources in this study were three novels of Nh. Dini entitled *Pada Sebuah Kapal*, *Keberangkatan*, and *Jepun Negerinya Hiroko*. The sampling technique in this study used Purposive Sampling by selecting the works of Nh. Dini in the form of novels. After that, the novels were read in depth and selected based on the novels that contain nationalism values. The data collection technique used was documentation by obtaining information from various written sources or documents (Agustinova., 2015: 39). The data were

analysed using the interactive analysis technique consisting of three parts, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Miles and Huberman., 1994: 16).

Results and Discussion

The discussion in this study focused on the nationalism values in three novels of Nh. Dini entitled *Pada Sebuah Kapal*, *Keberangkatan*, and *Jepun Negerinya Hiroko*. There are three elements of nationalism that dominate in the three novels, namely the love of the homeland, willingness to sacrifice, and preserving the rich of the nation's culture. The followings are the explanations of the nationalism values in Nh. Dini's novels:

1. Love of the Homeland

Love of the homeland is an attitude and behaviour that reflects pride, loyalty, caring, and respect to the nation (Suyadi., 2013: 8). Love of the homeland is clearly illustrated in the *Keberangkatan* novel. Elisa as a woman of Dutch descent did not want to leave Indonesia and felt that she was a native Indonesian. Elisa liked the time when she had to adapt outside of her family environment, because it was one way to get to know Indonesia better. This can be seen in the following quote:

Not once did the idea cross my head. Since living outside the family environment, I feel more like a real Indonesian, a Jakarta person. The atmosphere and association in the lodging gives genuine Indonesian atmosphere. I am becoming cleverer in using Indonesian ... (Dini., 1977: 31).

Elisa's desire to become an Indonesian was inseparable from the influence of her family. Although their family had the name and physicality of the Dutch people, that did not discourage their intention to change their status to become Indonesian citizens. Years after Indonesia's independence, the government began to take care of the fate of foreign descendants, including the Dutch, which reside in Indonesia. However, that became a rejection for most indigenous people. They did not accept this and still considered that the foreigners were still slaves to the colonials.

Since the formation of a government organization that took care of foreigners, my parents who had Dutch names had also joined as citizens. At that time, there was no obligation to change the name. It was probably a mistake mostly made in a new-born country. The government only distributed proof cards to us, which used poterts and writings that explained the approval of the holders' citizenship (Dini., 1977: 30).

Where there was an opportunity, my family said that they had entered the citizenry. However, the villagers were mostly short-sighted and ignorant. Should we put etiquette on our back with the explanation that we were no longer Dutch, but Indonesians like them? Our skin colour is black, burnt by the sun, which also burns their skin. Our food at home is the same as their food (Dini., 1977: 31).

Not only does Elisa love Indonesia so much that she doesn't want to leave the country, but he same thing also happened to Rama Beick, a priest who is also a native Dutchman. Rama Beick has lived in Indonesia for decades and feels that he is an Indonesian. In fact, he was once imprisoned and became a slave in the forced labour during the Japanese colonialism.

"I have truly been an Indonesian," he said later. "I know the regional languages more than the native Indonesians do. Therefore, why should I go to the Netherlands? God gives me

friends, everywhere. Where there are believers, both Muslims and Christians, there I live. All humans are God's creatures. All countries are God's earth" (Dini., 1977: 84).

Love of the homeland is not only found in *Keberangkatan* but also in *Jepun Negerinya Hiroko*. The character of Dini, as a native Indonesian woman who married a French consulate representative, required her to change her citizenship status. Although she was no longer an Indonesian citizen, Dini remained in the principle that she was an Indonesian native, especially the Javanese.

My love for the country is rooted more in its humanity. By changing the administration paper in the form of a passport, it does not mean I forget that I am a Javanese, a part of the *Nusantara* people. I still love my bloodshed land and Indonesian people. Dini., 2005: 71).

Dini had to leave Indonesia and lived in Japan because of her husband's job as a consulate representative. Her move to the country made her grateful for God's gift for allowing her to live in another country. Even though she was happy, she still could not forget her native land. She also stated that natural and cultural richness in Indonesia could not be defeated by any country.

Leaving the land further opens up my understanding that Indonesia has a richness of earth and culture that has no equal in this world. This understanding was accompanied by her solemnity. I recognized the greatness of God. Thanks to my marriage, I got the chance to get to know the northern part of the earth (Dini., 2005: 11).

The love of the homeland contained in the novels illustrates the pride for being an Indonesian and having lived in Indonesia like the two characters in *Keberangkatan*. Even though the physical body is not like a native Indonesian even the status of citizenship is no longer Indonesian, it does not make the characters in the novel forget about Indonesia. Pride with Indonesia and its ins and outs have taken root in each of the characters in the novels.

2. Willingness to Sacrifice

Nationalism values can be demonstrated by an attitude that is willing to sacrifice for the sake of people and country. Willingness to sacrifice is the feeling to sacrifice energy, time, wealth, soul, and body without feeling forced. This willingness to sacrifice is contained in *Pada Sebuah Kapal* novel. Sri who is a dancer must leave Indonesia and live in Japan after marrying her husband from France. One time she was invited by a group of Indonesian people in Japan to dance to collect donations. The donation was used to help the victims from the eruption of a volcano in Bali. The following quotes are contained in the novel.

Sometime later, I was busy preparing two students who would dance for a charity night held by representatives of my country. A vital mountain in Bali erupted and damaged two-thirds of its natural wealth. We tried to raise money by holding art evenings. Darti called me to ask if I wanted to dance. I answered and hesitated that I was ready to do two dances (Dini., 1991: 208).

The willingness to sacrifice is also reflected in a character named Michel. He was a ship commander who was once one of the French state soldiers and was active in efforts to make his beloved country independent. The effort was carried out by participating in training to find ways to be able to free his homeland.

I was in training for one year. In a few months, we will move to the north west end to follow stronger and heavier exercises. The German attacked on the allied country were getting

more crowded. Even Paris had fallen. The requirements for landing into the European continent were increasingly strengthened every day. Just waiting for a decent time. I had bound a sacred promise to reach out for my land acquisition. And the unity of my country that had fled to a neighbouring country had placed absolute trust in us young people (Dini., 1991: 276).

The two characters in *Pada Sebuah Kapal* described their willingness to sacrifice for their people and country. Sri gave up her time to raise donations to help the victims of the volcano eruption in Bali. Although she no longer resides in Indonesia, she has a high sense of humanity to help her fellow countrymen who have difficulty. Michel is willing to bet his life to see his country free from colonials and immediately reach independence. He is also willing not to meet his family for months in order to take part in the training and arrange a mission so that the goal can be achieved. Life is at stake in order to get the independence that Michel has always wanted.

3. Preserving the Richness of the Nation's Cultures

Preserving the richness of the nation's cultures is an attitude to preserve local culture which is often overlooked (Karmadi., 2007). Efforts to prevent this from happening can be done in various ways, such as knowing one's own culture, studying the culture, participating in activities related to culture, and introducing the culture to other countries. *Pada Sebuah Kapal* and *Jepun Negerinya Hiroko*, which are the data in this study, also tell the story of the main characters from each novel who always strive to preserve the richness of the nation's cultures.

Pada Sebuah Kapal is a novel with the main character who acts as a dancer. Not only does Sri as the main character in front of Indonesian citizens, she is also often invited to dance in front of the guests from other countries. The following is the excerpt from *Pada Sebuah Kapal* novel.

I dance more and more in the palace, except for historical days, also for the guests who come from abroad (Dini., 1991: 55).

Sri's moving to Japan did not discourage her intention to dance and introduce Indonesian dances to foreign countries. Her free time was used to dance and teach dancing for students there. Dancing was used as a medicine when she was bored with her husband's annoying attitude and behaviour. Therefore, when the Indonesian consulate's wife offered her to dance, she immediately accepted without thinking.

One day, Darti, the Indonesian consulate's wife replied to me.

"There is a daughter of our statesman in Tokyo who can also dance. We will bring her here to do one dance. If you want to do one more dance, we will be very grateful. This means that our dishes are complete, with Javanese and Balinese dances. There are some people who say you can also do other dances from Sumatra or Sulawesi. If there is time, will you teach it to our children?" (Dini., 1991: 133).

Not only *Pada Sebuah Kapal* but *Jepun Negerinya Hiroko* also contains an attitude to keep the nation's cultural richness. Dini, a woman married to a French consulate representative, had to be willing to change her citizenship and move from Indonesia. Even so, the blood of Indonesia, especially the Javanese, continues to flow in her. Her efforts in introducing Indonesian local cultures can be seen from the selection of display items in her house. She displays puppets and *rebabs* in one corner of her house.

A week or two I replace the flowers arrange them as well I can in porcelain vases. And down there, we put in turns the leather puppet characters I bought in Yogya. I also occasionally put Javanese dance costumes or *rebab*, the only *gamelan* instrument that I have (Dini., 2005: 21).

Her status as a consulate's wife requires Dini to often attend official events and be well-dressed. Therefore, Dini's appearance looks neat. She buns her hair with an object called *cundhuk* (hairpin). It turns out that the hair ornaments originating from Java are liked by many people including foreigners or her husband's colleagues. They praise that the object is very beautiful.

I cut my hair at that time a little, but it was still too long for the size of practicality. To official and semi-official activities outside, I made a bun as neat as possible and then cured it with *cundhuk* from the horn made in Klaten or Yogya. The shapes and carvings vary. Most French and Japanese people who saw my *cundhuks* asked where they could buy it (Dini., 2005: 151-152).

Dini's love of Indonesian local cultures made her husband, Yves, also enthusiastic about knowing other customs and cultures. The Javanese beliefs and customs Dini embraced were also practised in daily life in Japan. When she had children, she remembered her mother's story that the time of change from day to night was a vulnerable time for humans, known as a *cande ala* (bad dusk). She also practised Javanese customs and cultures after marriage. She made red porridge for her wedding *slametan* (Javanese ritual).

Yves did not mock or criticize me again when I told him the Javanese custom about *cande ala*. He is like that. He is very concerned about matters relating to customs and cultures. After officially getting married, for our wedding *slametan* I made some red porridge (Dini., 2005: 172).

Not only hair ornaments, Dini also wore Javanese batik motif clothes. She wore these clothes often when travelling or meeting someone. The goal to wear batik is to make Japanese people or foreigners she meets recognize that she is an Indonesian. Sometimes Japanese people think she is a native Japanese woman

Because the sun is shining brightly, *Lintang* (star) is not covered. She looks bigger and more adorable because her legs and arms are always moving. The aura of a healthy and smart baby captivates everyone even though it's not uncommon for me to be a Japanese *okaasan* (mother). However, that day I intentionally wore a classic patterned batik blouse as a sign of my origin to make indigenous people pay more attention to my face and my eyes that aren't slanted (Dini., 2005: 203).

The efforts to preserve the culture carried out by the two characters in the novels are almost the same. Both of them tried not to abandon their cultures and customs even though they no longer lived in Indonesia. They also did not change the habits that were previously carried out in their home country, Indonesia. If they were asked for help from the Indonesian consulate to show one of the local cultures, they would be happy to do so. They want other countries to recognize the richness of Indonesian cultures through dance, food, clothing, and other things.

Conclusion

The conclusion from the description above is that the characters from the three novels written by Nh. Dini can be used as a reference in understanding nationalism values. The difference in problems experienced by each character does not make them forget their identity. These characters teach us that physical appearance or written information such as a passport is not an obstacle to keep having a spirit of nationalism. Even though Indonesia is no longer their place of residence, they continue to maintain and carry out the local customs and cultures of Indonesia. The three novels contain three nationalism attitudes,

namely the love of the homeland, willingness to sacrifice, and preserving the richness of the nation's cultures.

References

- Agustinova, D. E. (2015). *Memahami Metode Penelitian Kualitatif: Teori dan Praktik (Understanding Qualitative Research Method: Theory and Practice)*. Yogyakarta: Calpulis.
- Amal, I dan Armawi, A. (1998). *Regionalisme, Nasionalismeme, dan Ketahanan Nasional (Regionalism, Nationalism, and National Defence)*. Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press.
- Bennet, A and Royle, N. (2009). *An Introduction of Literature, Criticism, and Theory*. London: Pearson.
- Dahua, Z. (2012). On Modern Chinese Nationalism and its Conceptualizations. *Journal of Modern Chinese History*, 6(2): 217-234.
- Dini, Nh. (2005). *Jepun Negerinya Hiroko (Japan is Hiroko's Country)*. Jakarta: Gramedia.
- _____. (1977). *Keberangkatan (Departure)*. Jakarta: Pustaka Jaya.
- _____. (1991). *Pada Sebuah Kapal (On A Ship)*. Jakarta: Gramedia.
- Djojuroto, K. (2014). Nationalism Inside the Poem of "Diponegoro" by Chairil Anwar Historical Study. *Jurnal Lingua*, 9(2): 99-106.
- Hall, G. (2005). *Literature in Language Education*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Karmadi, A. D. (2007). *Budaya Lokal sebagai Warisan Budaya dan Upaya Pelestariannya (Local Culture as Cultural Heritage and Preservation Effort)*. <http://www.yayasankertagama.org/article/article1.pdf>. Accessed on May 6, 2017.
- Koentjaraningrat. (1993). *Masalah Kesukubangsaan dan Integrasi Nasional (Problems on Race, Nationality, and National Integration)*. Jakarta: UI Press.
- Lan, T. J and Manan Azzam (ed). (2011). *Nasionalismeme dan Ketahanan Budaya di Indonesia (Nationalism and Cultural Resilience in Indonesia)*. Jakarta: Lipi Press.
- Miall, D. (2006). *Literary Reading: Empirical and Theoretical Studies*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Miles, M. B and Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis*. London: Sage Publications.
- Musvoto, R. A. (2017). Representation of Identity, History, and Nationalism in Chenjerai Hove's Selected Poetry. *Journal of Literary Studies*, 33(2): 128-145.
- Ronen, R. (1994). *Possible Worlds in Literary Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wellek, R, and Waren, A. (1956). *Theory of Literature*. New York: A Harvest Book.
- Zhouxiang, L, Zhang, Q, and Hong, F. (2014). Projecting the 'Chineseness': Nationalism, Identity, and Chinese Martial Arts Films. *Journal of the History of Sport*, 31(3): 320-335.

Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).