

## Book review: *laut bercerita*, the sinking of untold tales

Majid Wajdi<sup>1</sup>, Erma Artajosi Putri<sup>2</sup>, Ni Putu Radha Savitri  
Maheswari Putri<sup>3</sup>, Ni Luh Novia Ariyanti<sup>4</sup>, I Gede Bagus  
Ananda Sinanditha<sup>5</sup>, Anak Agung Radha Regita Maharani<sup>6</sup>, Ni  
Komang Mayang Saptariyasa Dewi<sup>7</sup>, I Gede Maryo Kanka  
Riswana<sup>8</sup>

Politeknik Negeri Bali, Indonesia<sup>1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Email: wajdi@pnb.ac.id

**Abstract** - Leila S. Chudori or full Leila Salikha Chudori (born December 12, 1962) is an Indonesian writer who has written works such as short stories, novels, and television drama scenarios. A few notes about Chudori, who were selected to represent one of the Indonesian writers to receive a scholarship to study at one of the prestigious education places, United World Colleges "Lester B. Pearson College of the Pacific" Victoria Canada. She continued her as a journalist in the news magazine of Indonesia, Tempo. She is also the winner of S.E.A. The Write Award is a tribute to writers and poets in Southeast Asia for her novel *Laut Bercerita*. She felt inspired by kidnapping and enforced disappearance cases that occurred in 1998. In fact, before writing this novel, the author conducted research interviews with one of the activists who had been kidnapped in 1998. Laut (name) is the main character. He told the story of a student activist during the New Order era, who was tortured and slaughtered to give testimony, then drowned along with a story that he had not had the chance to convey to Indonesia. In addition to its advantages, this book also has disadvantages such as a slow storyline that tends to make the reader feel bored. Despite its flaws, this book has epic details; the characters in each character are built strongly, the events that really unfold, the deep meaning in each poem, and the selection of the right diction.

**Keywords:** student activist; political risk; new order era

## I. INTRODUCTION

A book of novel titled *Laut Bercerita* written by Leila S. Chudori shows the struggle of student activists during the New Order era in 1998. The story uses a first-person perspective by taking the point of view of Laut as the main character and telling the plot backward, and Asmara as the main narrator of the plot.

This novel describes the journey of a student activist named Biru Laut and his friends in an organization named Wirasena. Their headquarters were located in Seyegan. The year 1998 was the peak of the New Order period in Indonesia. The policy, which was considered heresy, forced students to participate in the demonstrations. This year, a period of darkness occurred, where those who disappeared were tortured and killed. Laut became one of many students who became prisoners. The first chapter of this novel describes Laut's struggle for his country and organization. Chapter 2 focuses on the book by Chudory. It took nine years to publish the first edition of the book. The idea of writing a book that tells the story of missing people came to me (her) in 2008 when he asked Nezar Patria, who was kidnapped in March 1998. Leila asked Nezar to write with honesty and heartfelt feelings about the painful experience of how young people fear being victimized every day because they need to run Indonesian documents at the time of the New Order, which is almost without democracy.

This novel, especially the writer, is very popular, which is why there are many studies and analyses of this novel from several points of view, since literary works are polyinterpretable. The content analysis of eco-feminism framework done by Azida & Fitri (2021), genetic structuralism analysis (Sembada & Andalas, 2019), psychological analysis of literature and the value of character education (Setiawan, 2018), hierarchy of needs and humanistic psychology studies (Rostanawa, 2019), feminism existentialism analysis (Damyyanus & Hayati, 2023), social criticism and individual moral values (Andani et al, 2022; Wajdi et al, 2023c; Wajdi et al, 2023d), literary sociological analysis (Hotimah & Rosadi, 2022; Khalidatun, 2021), power hegemony (Taufiqi et al, 2021), symbolic violence (Putri et al, 2021), women's existence (Ginting & Yuhdi, 2023), analysis of directive speech acts (Putra & Amir, 2023), social value (Rahma & Anggraini, 2023; Wajdi et al, 2023a; Wajdi et al, 2023b), character education (Syamimie et al, 2023), and translation equivalent (Melliana et al, 2021), discourse analysis (Widyaiswara et al, 2022).

An article entitled "The Temple of Torture in the New Order" which appeared in the special issue of Suharto Tempo in February 2008, has been published almost unchanged. Five years have passed since he decided to write a story about the supporters of the abductees who returned and did not return, and about the families who continue to search for answers until now. In 2013, Leila started interviewing various people for her text, such as Waluya Jati, Mugiyanto Sipin, Budiman Sudjatmiko, Wilson Obrigados, Tommy Aryanto, Robertus Robet, Ngarto F, Lilik H.S, Usman Hamid and Harris Azhar. The stories of those at the top about their experiences during this time bring this novel into life. This book will make readers feel the pain and struggle of students or people who became violent during that time.

### (1) Intrinsic Elements

Theme: Students' struggles during the New Order Era

Figures: Biru Laut Wibisono, Asmara Jati, Kasih Kinanti, Father and Mother, Sunu, Alex, Daniel, Gala, Gusti, Ahmad, Coki, Naratama.

Plot/Storyline: This novel uses a backward plot, where the story is a flashback from the story of the laut itself. There is also a forward plot when describing Asmara Jati. Therefore, it can be concluded that the novel has a mixed plot.

Background Scene: East Java, Jakarta, and New York are places where the story takes place.

Time Setting: The time setting used in this study was from 1991 to 2008. Point of View: The point of view contained in the novel is the first-person point of view of two different people, namely Laut Wibisono and Asmara Jati.

Language style: This style of language is easily understood by readers, both teenagers and adults.

Message: Students are not just students; they are the hopes of society, nations' successors, and the future.

## **(2) Extrinsic Elements**

Social value: Social value appears in the novel Laut's attitude, which strives to humanize humans from all aspects. Apart from that, this is a warning to the government that activists who have been deliberately eliminated also deserve justice.

Moral value: How was the Laut's attitude in fighting for the rights of the country's children at that time? Even though they continued to remain silent, it did not ignite their enthusiasm to stand up, even though she had to not go home forever? Plot / Storyline: This novel uses a backward plot, the story is a flashback from the story of the Laut itself. Then there is also a forward plot when telling Asmara Jati. Therefore, it can be concluded that the novel has a mixed plot.

Religious value: This novel teaches us to surrender ourselves to the almighty creator and not forget to continue worship.

Nationalist value: The values of nationalism are when they work together, are loyal in solidarity, and can be trusted in fighting for the rights of the nation's children. Those who are not afraid to face death for the sake of making Indonesia even better in the future.

The moral message

The moral message contained in the novel *Laut Bercerita* is to offend the government about the justice of people who have been forcibly eliminated just because they had the voice to punish the New Order government at that time.

## **II. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The novel *Laut Bercerita* Book must be included in everyone is reading list. Even though it drains tears, this book is perfect to read when you feel riled or need a calming emotional feeling and is very interesting to read. The book has a high emotional level. The choice of a very epic diction makes every situation in question feel alive and easy to imagine. This book will be felt even more when you have experienced how it is organized. The storyline in this book goes back and forth.

This book begins with a prologue of the main character Biru Laut. In this chapter, readers will discuss the real story. When reading this chapter, the reader immediately knows what flow is used in the book. The prologue tells the story of the end of the main character, where the ending of the prologue is the answer to chapter one.

Readers might be confused if they simply read the prologue and the first two subchapters. The part that takes the perspective of the Biru Laut has a plot that is quite complicated to understand. The novel *Laut Bercerita* has ten subchapters, where, if you look at the table of contents, the odd subchapter has a time setting of 1991, 1993, and 1996, the time setting where all these events started, the 1998 incident background, and the background of this book. Even the subchapter has a background in 1998, where it tells how Laut and his friends were kidnapped and detained. The suffering they experience as prisoners is discussed here.

The first sentence in chapter one is directly related to the final sentence in the prologue. This chapter uses the Biru Laut's first point of view as the main character. This is where the initial story answers the readers' questions regarding the previous prologue. The subchapter of Biru Laut, namely Seyegan (1991), describes Biru Laut's story as an activist from the Wirasena organization. This chapter also explains how Laut met his fellow activists, who were also victims of kidnapping in 1998. The introduction to the characters in this chapter was very nicely wrapped. Starting from Laut, his organizational friends moved to new headquarters. He describes the characteristics of each character neatly becoming a friend.

After finishing with the subchapter Seyegan (1991), Leila takes readers to a story where the sea is captured. This subchapter, *Di Sebuah Tempat dan di Dalam Gelap* (1998), describes how cruel the security forces were to kidnap activists in order to find information on who was the leader of each student action. Starting with the capture of the Biru Laut in the Klender flat. In the third subchapter, *Ciputat* (1991), readers are brought back to the story's beginnings (continuation of the first subchapter). This subchapter focuses on Laut and his family, on the tradition of eating together with his family every Sunday, and telling the little story of Laut and Asmara-his sister. There is an important detail in this section, namely, the part where Asmara says "Laut is missing and kidnapped" when Laut tells how he hid from Asmara while playing hide and seek. Unknowingly, what Asmara said as a child will come true, where the Laut is missing and kidnapped by the authorities for being an activist.

Next, in subchapter four, *Di Sebuah Tempat, di Dalam Keji*, 1998. The kidnapping experienced by Laut and his friends raises a question: who leaked the location of their hideout? The name Naratama, one of his colleagues in Wirasena, came to mind. According to Laut, Naratama often does not get involved when they are in a precarious situation. Laut's suspicion of Natama has increased since he felt that Naratama was also trying to get close to Anjani – the girl he liked at the time-has now become his girlfriend. This section describes the disgraceful treatment of the authorities to obtain information about the location of Kinan, the leader of Wirasena.

Their umpteenth action to defend the people who will be evicted is outlined in the *Blanguan* chapter 1993. This time, their actions are called *Tanam Jagung Blanguan*. This chapter describes how Laut and his friends escape from being targeted by intelligence and the soldiers who guard their actions. The suffering of Laut and his friends continued in Chapter 6, *Di Sebuah Tempat, di Dalam Laknat*, 1998. The Laut has been tortured countless times by the military. When his hope for life is dashed, he is reunited with his friends, Sunu, Alex, Daniel, Julius, and Dana. It continued with the *Terminal Bungurasih* chapter, 1993. Continuing the story of Laut and his friends when they avoided intelligence and soldiers. This chapter describes how Laut and his friends were first detained and tortured by the local authorities. Their escape and hiding abilities are discussed in this chapter.

*Di Sebuah Tempat, di Dalam Khianat*, 1998. As the title suggests, "Khianat," the answer to the question of who is a spy in their organization will be answered. The torture of Laut and his friends continued until the end. Then, chapter 9, *Rumah Susun Klender*, Jakarta. 1996. This section can be said to be the end of the Laut hideout. And the last chapter of Biru Laut, *Di Sebuah Tempat, di Dalam Kelam*, 1998. The seconds before entering the prologue is the continuation of the previous subchapter in a place. This is the end of the Biru Laut's perspective.

Continuing backward flow from the viewpoint of the Biru Laut. In Chapter II, Asmara Jati uses the current setting or setting after Laut and his friends are arrested. This chapter uses a forward plot, with Asmara Jati as the main character. This chapter has 4 subchapters. Each chapter describes how Asmara and other activist families who were left behind struggled to

find answers. How are their children, husbands, brothers, sisters, and friends now? Are they alive or dead? They did everything they could, from newspapers to Pulau Seribu to New York. In the end, they, especially the mothers and wives who were left behind, took action in front of the State Palace. They just stood wearing black clothes shaded by hundreds of black umbrellas. They did not make a sound, did not scream, and stood there in silence.

Book's Strength: (1) The choice of words and sentences can make the reader feel the emotions of each character being told, (2) the choice of words and sentences can make the reader feel the emotions of each character being told, (3) every character has a strong character so that the reader can feel every character; (4) the circumstances and setting are based on the realities of that era; (5) the poems contained in this novel have a deep meaning that can add more value to the novel, and (6) choosing the right diction makes the reader feel included in the story.

Book's weakness: The plot presented in this novel runs slowly so that sometimes it makes readers feel bored.

### III. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the review, we can conclude that: first, the form of the characters' inner conflict in the novel, and second, the cause of the inner conflict of the characters in the novel. As seen in the novel, the forms of internal conflict are depression, anxiety, fear, and inadequacy. The dominant form of conflict is fear. The Marine Corps characters and sailors are worried as they face problems being held hostage by the government. The causes of internal conflict in the novel are predisposing, reinforcing, and underlying.

For connoisseurs of literature, the results of this research can add to their knowledge and understanding of literature and the science of inner conflict. For writers, the results of this study can add to the knowledge and insight in analyzing literary works. For future research, the results of this study can be used as a reference or guideline for literary research.

### REFERENCES

- Andani, NS; Raharjo, RP; & Indarti, T. (2022). Kritik sosial dan nilai moral individu tokoh utama dalam novel laut bercerita karya leila s. Chudori. *Enggang: Jurnal Pendidikan, Bahasa, Sastra, Seni, Dan Budaya*, 3(1), 21-32. <https://doi.org/10.37304/enggang.v3i1.7832>.
- Azida, M., & Fitri, A.N. (2021). Analisis Isi Novel "Laut Bercerita" dalam Bingkai Ekofeminisme. *Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi*, 11(2), 153-169. <https://doi.org/10.15642/jik.2021.11.2.153-169>
- Chudori, Leila S. (2017). *Laut Bercerita*. Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka.
- Damyyanus, Tarigan, & Hayati, S. (2023). Analisis eksistensialisme feminisme dalam novel laut bercerita karya leila salikha chudori. *Enggang: Jurnal Pendidikan, Bahasa, Sastra, Seni, Dan Budaya*, 3(2), 290-299. <https://doi.org/10.37304/enggang.v3i2.9141>.
- Ginting, DA; & Yuhdi, A. (2023). Eksistensi Perempuan dalam Novel Laut Bercerita Karya Leila S. Chudori: Kajian Feminisme Eksistensial dan Relevansinya sebagai Materi Ajar Sastra Indonesia di SMA. *Protasis: Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra, Budaya, Dan Pengajarannya*, 2(1), 112-127. <https://doi.org/10.55606/protasis.v2i1.79>.
- Hartley, J. (2006), "Reading and writing book reviews across the disciplines, *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, Vol. 57 No. 9, pp. 1194-1207.
- Hotimah, Dinda Husnul and Rosadi, Mimi. (2022). Analisis Sosiologi Sastra Tokoh Utama Dalam Novel Laut Bercerita Karya Leila S. Chudori Dan Implementasinya Dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia Di SMA. *Alacrity, Journal of Education*, Vol. 2/2.
- Khalidatun. (2021). Analisis sosiologi sastra dan nilai pendidikan karakter dalam novel laut bercerita karya Leila S. Chudori. *Prosiding seminar nasional bahasa dan sastra (senabatra)* Vol. 1/1.
- Melliana, Fitriani, N., & Pratama, Y. (2021). Translation Equivalence And Strategies In "Laut Bercerita (The Sea Speaks His Name)" Novel By Leila S. Chudori. *Getsempena English Education Journal*, 8(2). <https://doi.org/10.46244/geej.v8i2.1356>.



- Putra, F. D. N., & Amir, A. (2023). Tindak Tutur Direktif Tokoh Utama dalam Novel Laut Bercerita Karya Leila S. Chudori. *Educaniora: Journal of Education and Humanities*, 1(1), 49-55.  
<https://doi.org/10.59687/educaniora.v1i2.8>.
- Putri, MK; Darni,, and Setiawan. (2021). “Kekerasan Simbolik Dalam Novel Pulang dan Laut Bercerita Karya Leila S. Chudori”, *Jurnal Education And Development*, vol. 9, no. 4, pp. 262-270, Nov. 2021.
- Rahma, Yadia and Anggraini, Dewi. (2023). Nilai Sosial Dalam Novel Laut Bercerita Karya Leila S. Chudori. *SIMPATI: Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan dan Bahasa* Vol.1, No.1 Januari 2023.
- Rostanawa, Gaby. (2019). Hirarki Kebutuhan Tokoh Utama dalam Novel Pulang dan Laut Bercerita Karya Leila S. Chudori (Kajian Psikologi Humanistik Abraham Maslow). *Elite Journal: International Journal of Education, Language, and Literature*.
- Sembada, Ema Zuliyani and Andalas, Maharani Intan. (2019). Realitas Sosial dalam Novel Laut Bercerita Karya Leila S. Chudori: Analisis Strukturalisme Genetik. *Jurnal Sastra Indonesia*, Vol 8 No 2 (2019): Juli.  
<https://journal.unnes.ac.id/sju/index.php/jsi/article/view/27824>.
- Setiawan, Andy Rachmat. (2018). *Analisis Psikologi Sastra dan Nilai Pendidikan Karakter Novel Laut Bercerita Karya Leila S. Chudori Serta Relevansinya Sebagai Bahan Ajar Apresiasi Sastra di SMA*. Surakarta: Fak. KIP.
- Syamimie, Nur; Purnamasari, Hetty; and Amrullah, Imron. (2023). Pendidikan karakter dan nasionalis pada novel laut bercerita karya Leila S. Chudori: sosiologi sastra. *Kalusa: Kajian Linguistik, Pembelajaran Bahasa dan Sastra*, Vol. 7/1.
- Taufiqi, AR; Kasnadi; Astuti, CW. (2021). Hegemoni Kekuasaan Dalam Novel Laut Bercerita Karya Leila S. Chudori. *Jurnal Bahasa dan Sastra*, Vol. 8/1.
- Wajdi, M., Adnyana, I. K. P., Dewi, K. A. T., Dewi, K. B. S., Arini, K. P., Artini, N. K., Prathivi, P. P. G. S., & Ariani, N. L. P. Y. (2023a). The novel of “my idiot brother” by Agnes Danovar (book review). *Journal of Language, Literature, Social and Cultural Studies*, 1(1), 8-15. Retrieved from <https://ympn.co.id/index.php/JLLSCS/article/view/24>
- Wajdi, M., Susanto, B., Nirmala, N. K. W. D., Dewi, A. P. L. P., Kumbhayoni, P. D. K., Putri, K. H., & Yuniartari, N. P. I. (2023b). Book review: the novel “Teluk Alaska”. *Journal of Language, Literature, Social and Cultural Studies*, 1(1), 32-36. Retrieved from <https://ympn.co.id/index.php/JLLSCS/article/view/23> (Original work published January 27, 2023)
- Wajdi, M., Dewi, I. A. M. W. S., Riama, P., Anwar, N. L. G. I. A., Dynata, K. T., Widarwan, K. C. W., & Setyowati, R. (2023c). A film review: the story behind miracle in cell no. 7. *Journal of Language and Pragmatics Studies*, 2(1), 11-18. <https://doi.org/10.58881/jlps.v2i1.11>
- Wajdi, M., Pratiwi, N. K. A. P., Putra, I. K. A. J. S., Amanah, F. M., Muhamadiaz, N., & Amandari, N. K. P. A. (2023d). Book review: this is me! whatever you say. *Journal of Language and Pragmatics Studies*, 2(1), 53-57. <https://doi.org/10.58881/jlps.v2i1.10>
- Widyaiswara, T., Setyaningrum, R.R., & Affandy, A.N. (2022). Discourse analysis in sequence novels by Leila S. Chudori (2012, 2017). *Journal of Applied Studies in Language*, 6(1), 100-107.