

VALUES OF STRUGGLE IN THE NOVEL *SISI TERGELAP SURGA* BY BRIAN KHRISNA

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to describe the values of struggle contained in Brian Khrisna's novel *Sisi Tergelap Surga* (The Darkest Side of Heaven). The research method used in this study is a qualitative descriptive method. The data in this study consists of quotations in the form of words, phrases, or sentences that contain values of struggle. The source of data for this study is the novel *Sisi Tergelap Surga* by Brian Khrisna. The data collection techniques used are reading and note-taking techniques. The data validity technique used in this study is theoretical triangulation. Data analysis was conducted through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results of this study on the novel *Sisi Tergelap Surga* reveal the value of self-sacrifice, as demonstrated by the characters Gofar, Sobirin, Juleha, and Rini. The value of mutual respect is shown by the characters Danang, Esih, Tomi, and Juleha. The value of unity is demonstrated by the characters Pulung, Karyo, the silver-painted boy, Kuncahyo, and the frame maker. The value of cooperation is shown by the characters Tomi, the three teenagers, Danang, and Mr. Syamsuar.

Keywords: *Brian Khrisna; values of struggle; novel Sisi Tergelap Surga (The Darkest Side of Heaven).*

INTRODUCTION

The author adopts a true story into a novel. Nurgiyantoro (2018) states that a novel represents an imaginative world and life. A book is constructed from intrinsic elements: events, plot, characterization, setting, point of view, and others. A book is shaped by the author's experiences in dealing with the social environment. These experiences are then transformed according to the author's imagination (Al Ma'ruf & Nugrahani, 2019).

Additionally, novels narrate various events in life through their characters. The author addresses numerous issues in the book, including social inequality that reflects real-world concerns. These issues give rise to life values. These values are reflected in the struggles they entail.

Struggle is an effort made by someone to achieve something they desire. Struggle involves a process and obstacles faced in the community (Izzuddin, Andri, & Umam, 2023). Struggle is an effort to achieve something difficult to obtain. Human life is not always destined to be good. Circumstances often force people to work harder just to survive each day. Therefore, understanding the values of struggle within oneself is essential to avoid despair and hopelessness.

These values of struggle are reflected in the novel *Sisi Tergelap Surga (The Darkest Side of Paradise)* by Brian Khrisna. This novel tells the other side of life in Jakarta. Many people come to Jakarta in search of a better life. They hope their lives will change, but behind all this lies sadness and despair because their hopes are not fulfilled. The novel *Sisi Tergelap Surga* tells the story of life in a small slum in Jakarta. Each character has their own way of surviving. They struggle to make ends meet day by day. They resort to any means necessary to make a living. They no longer think about sin because they are driven by the urgent need to survive.

This novel features a diverse range of characters from various backgrounds. For example, Rini is forced to become a sex worker to support her mother in their village. She has no other job options. Then, Juleha works as a *lady companion* to care for her son, Ujang. Gofar steals a motorcycle to get money to buy medicine for his mother. Danang, Sobirin, Pulung, and other characters have their struggles to survive from day to day.

The values of struggle have been studied by Nadia et al. (2021). Their research shows that the value of struggle is embodied by the main character, Biru Laut. The values of self-sacrifice, unity, respect, patience, perseverance, and cooperation are also embodied by Biru Laut. Additionally, previous research was conducted by Nizam (2024). The study revealed that the values of self-sacrifice, cooperation, patience and perseverance, unity, and hard work are depicted through the main character. Another study was conducted by Islamiyah et al. (2023). The results of this study showed that the main character in the novel depicts the value of struggle. The value of struggle is the value of sacrifice, the value of respect, the value of unity, the value of perseverance, and the value of cooperation.

These studies suggest that the value of struggle is important to examine. The novel *Sisi Tergelap Surga* by Khrisna (2024) is based on a true story that occurred in society. This novel can serve as a lesson for society. Therefore, this study focuses on the values of struggle in the novel *Sisi Tergelap Surga* by Brian Khrisna.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a qualitative descriptive method. Santosa (2015:16) explains that qualitative research is a type of research that produces descriptive data in the form of written words. This research approach employs a sociological perspective on literature. The data in this study consist of quotations in the form of words, sentences, or phrases that convey values of struggle, sourced from the novel *Sisi Tergelap Surga* by Brian Khrisna, published in 2023 by Gramedia Pustaka Utama.

The data collection techniques used are reading and note-taking techniques. The researcher carefully and thoroughly reads the novel *Sisi Tergelap Surga*, then records the data findings. The data validity technique used was the theory triangulation technique. Data analysis was conducted using Miles and Huberman's theory (Sugiyono, 2019:324) through three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The researcher selected the data. Subsequently, the data was presented in the form of a description and conclusions were drawn.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study examines the value of struggle presented in the novel *Sisi Tergelap Surga* by Brian Khrisna. The data collected included values such as sacrifice, appreciation, unity, and cooperation. The following are data on the values of struggle in the novel *Sisi Tergelap Surga* by Brian Khrisna, hereinafter abbreviated as (STS).

Value of Self-Sacrifice

According to Joyomartono et al., (1990:5) sacrifice means being willing to give willingly, happily, without expecting anything in return, and being willing to give up something you have even if it causes you suffering. In the novel *Sisi Tergelap Surga*, the value of sacrifice is demonstrated by the character Gofar, who steals a motorcycle to buy medicine for his mother.

- (1) “Aku harus selamat! Aku harus selamat!” batin Gofar sembari memacu motor yang sedang ia kendarai sekencang mungkin.
“Aku nggak boleh mati sekarang!”
Tanpa helm, tanpa jaket dan tanpa penerangan dari lampu motornya sama sekali, Gofar terus tancap gas. Peduli setan dari keselamatan dan neraka

jahanam yang kelak akan ia huni. Yang penting obat buat ibu bulan ini bisa kebeli.

“Tunggu Gofar pulang ya, Bu. Besok kita bisa punya uang buat ke dokter!”
(page 21)

This quote shows that Gofar is a self-sacrificing character. This is demonstrated by Gofar's willingness to do anything to get money. As a dutiful child, Gofar is willing to do anything for his mother's recovery. Even though it causes him suffering, Gofar must accept the consequences if he is caught stealing the motorcycle. In the novel *Sisi Tergelap Surga*, the value of sacrifice is also shown by the character Sobirin when his child suddenly falls ill.

- (2) Demi menyelamatkan nyawa anaknya, seorang bapak bahkan rela untuk berhadapan dengan iblis sekalipun.

“Aku mohon Tomi. Aku mohon.” Sobirin bersujud di kaki Tomi.

Harga diri menjadi terlalu murah jika dibandingkan dengan kesembuhan anaknya.

“Mau apa kau? Lepasin!” Tomi menyentak Sobirin agar melepaskan kakinya.

“Kau kenapa malam-malam begini nangis kaya kuntilanak? Kau diperkosa?”

Sobirin berusaha menjelaskan, anaknya kritis dan butuh uang untuk pengobatan. Tomi bergeming. Ia masuk rumah menutup pintu membiarkan Sobirin menangis.

Tak lama, pintu terbuka lagi. Lima ratus ribu diletakkan Tomi di hadapan Sobirin.

“Aku Cuma ada segitu. Ambil.” (page 37)

This quote illustrates the value of sacrifice in the character of Sobirin. As a father, Sobirin is willing to do anything to get his child to the hospital. This is evident when Sobirin willingly goes to Tomi, the village thug, to borrow money. He doesn't care. He has to beg Tomi. The most important thing is his son's recovery. The novel *Sisi Tergelap Surga* shows the value of parental sacrifice. This value is found in the character Juleha.

- (3) “Mbak Leha pernah nggak ada niatan buat berhenti?”

Empat tahun silam, ada seorang gadis yang baru pertama kali menjadi LC di kamar mandi menangis. Juleha yang kebetulan baru keluar dari salah satu bilik kamar mandi cuma menaikkan alis.

“Tahan aja. Kalau bukan karena anak, gue juga nggak mau kerja begini” (page 70)

Based on the excerpt above, the character Juleha demonstrates the value of sacrifice. As a single mother, Juleha is willing to work at any job as long as she can earn money. For Juleha, the most important thing is to fulfill the needs of her only son, Ujang. In the novel *Sisi Tergelap Surga*, the value of self-sacrifice is demonstrated by the character Rini. She sacrifices herself by becoming a sex worker. She does this to take care of her mother in the village.

- (4) Ponselnya bergetar lagi.

“Ya, Bu?” Rini terpaksa menjawab dengan nada lembut yang dibuat-buat.

“Gimana Nak? Sudah ada? Obat Ibu buat bulan ini habis”

Rini memejamkan mata, ingin rasanya mengumpat berteriak “NGGAK ADA!”

Tapi ia tidak bisa

“Aku usahain transfer minggu ini ya Bu”

...

Dengan berat ia membuka aplikasi itu lagi.

"Malam ini lelaki mana lagi yang mesti kupuaskan?" katanya sambil membaca chat tawaran yang masuk (pages 210-211)

This data shows that Rini is a character willing to sacrifice herself. This is evident from Rini's actions. She voluntarily undertakes various jobs without regard for societal norms. She resorts to any means necessary to give her mother money every month. Rini sacrifices herself. She brings suffering, both physical and emotional. She sells her body to men of ill repute. Through this, she can obtain money quickly.

Value of Respect

According to Joyomartono et al. (1990:6), the value of appreciation is viewing various types of differences without hatred or resentment. This value reflects the importance of respecting others regardless of their background. The value of appreciation is demonstrated in the novel *Sisi Tergelap Surga* through the characters Danang and Esih.

- (5) "How long has it been, Yey Hamidun?"

Esih did not answer. She remained seated stiffly, clutching her clothes tightly.

...

"Don't act so surprised. And stop pretending to be the holiest person around."

Esih stammered.

"It's up to you what you want to see. But I'm not the kind of person who would spread someone else's shame. I've known about you for a long time, but I've kept quiet and never said a word." (page 131)

Based on the quote above, Danang is a character who values Esih. Esih is the daughter of a Kyai. Esih was educated at a pesantren by her parents, while Danang is transgender. However, when Danang found out that Esih was pregnant out of wedlock, he respected Esih by not caring about her. The difference in educational backgrounds between the two characters leads Danang to intend to spread the scandal to others to make himself look better. The characters Juleha and Tomi also demonstrate interactions that align with the value of respect.

- (6) "Kunci supaya biasa saja menghadapi semua hal aneh di kota ini ya dengan membiasakan diri dengan hal-hal yang nggak biasa. Jadi, jangan hakimi cara bertahan hidup orang-orang ya, Tom," pesan Juleha.

Tomi hanya mengangguk.

Malam itu mereka pulang ke dunianya masing-masing. Dalam diam, mereka sepakat untuk menghapus kenangan tentang siapa mereka sebelum hidup di kota ini. Dan secara mufakat, mereka juga mulai menerima siapa diri mereka yang sekarang. (page 55)

The data above shows the value of respect between the characters Juleha and Tomi. In their conversation, Juleha says not to judge how others survive. This is because people are too busy judging what is good, bad, or sinful. People tend to judge someone based on their profession without considering other factors. The big city is the harshest place to shape them. Therefore, various jobs can be done to survive. Tomi agrees with Juleha's advice.

The Value of Unity

Joyomartono et al., (1990:6) explain that the value of unity is a continuation of the value of self-sacrifice. The value of unity is the unification of diversity. The value of unity in the novel *Sisi Tergelap Surga* is demonstrated by the character Pulung.

(7) “Udah makan?”

Pulung menatap anak remaja dengan cat silver di seluruh tubuhnya yang saat itu sedang berlindung di halte pinggir jalan ketika hujan besar mengguyur kota.

Pulung yang duduk di lantai halte menawarkan nasi kotak yang ia miliki.

“Mau makan? Gue nggak habis kalau makan ini sendirian.”

Saat itu Pulung lapar luar biasa, tapi ia tahu manusia silver di depannya juga kelaparan. Bocah perak itu mengambil beberapa lembar uang dari kardus yang ia selalu bawa untuk mengemis.

“Aku ganti,” katanya, menyodorkan empat ribu rupiah. Pulung mengangguk.

(page 110)

The data shows that there is a value of unity. This value is characterized as kindness between two individuals who are not acquainted with each other. Even though they do not know each other, they understand each other's conditions. This is shown by the character Pulung. When he sees a teenager with silver paint on his body, Pulung offers him a box of rice. Even though he is also hungry.

Meanwhile, the silver-skinned boy felt the need to exchange that kindness for money, even though he only had a little. This interaction carries the message that a sense of unity is important. Pulung also shows the value of unity to his friend.

(8) “Tidur di sini lagi kita?” Karyo mengelus perutnya yang begah.

“Masih ada sisa kardus nggak, Lung?”

Pulung menengok ke isi karungnya yang ia letakan bersandar di sebelah pos ronda, lalu mengangguk mengiyakan. Lumayan, ada alas buat tidur. Tidak harus bergelut dengan dinginnya ubin pos ronda saat nanti menjelang subuh. Bagi mereka, selama masih ada atap, tidur di mana pun tak jadi masalah. Ketimbang setan, mereka lebih terganggu dengan nyamuk, pemabuk, dan pemadat yang seliweran setiap malam. (page 105)

This data shows the unity between the characters Karyo and Pulung. This is proven when they are forced to sleep at the guard post. Pulung gives Karyo a mat to sleep on. Pulung shows unity because they have been friends for a long time. They believe they must stay together. In book, unity is also shown between the character Kuncahyo.

The Value of Cooperation

Joyomartono et al., (1990:7) explain that the value of cooperation is the foundation of Indonesian people's daily activities. They enjoy working together based on a spirit of family. Cooperation is a joint effort between several parties or groups to achieve a specific goal. In the novel *Sisi Tergelap Surga*, the value of cooperation is demonstrated by Tomi, three teenagers, and Danang. They work together to help with Juleha's funeral procession.

(9) Tomi meminta tiga remaja pos ronda untuk membantu prosesi pemakaman Juleha. Meski kerap menjadi manusia yang tak ada harganya, ketika terjadi situasi genting seperti ini, mereka bertiga adalah manusia yang paling bisa diandalkan. Mereka selalu ada, selalu mampu mengerjakan apa pun, dan selalu bisa dipercaya. Meski sering mengundang cibiran warga, tetapi di waktu yang tepat, tiga remaja itu akan bisa menjelma para wali yang bekerja tanpa

mengharap imbalan sama sekali. Jawa kebagian mengurus batu nisan dan menghubungi tukang gali kubur. Pulung mengatur prosesi penyalatan jenazah, sementara Karyo memanggil Danang untuk memimpin salat itu. Warga sempat terkejut dengan keputusan Tomi itu, tapi tidak ada yang berani mengganggu gugat apabila Tomi sudah bertitah. Meski keadaan lukanya belum cukup baik, Danang hadir dengan pakaian yang bersih. Ia mengenakan baju koko, lengkap dengan celana hitam dan peci. Di tangannya ada buku yasin. (page 264)

The data illustrates the value of cooperation demonstrated by Tomi, Danang, and three neighborhood watch teenagers (Jawa, Pulung, and Karyo). They worked together by dividing tasks to help with Juleha's funeral. The three teenagers were assigned to take care of the gravestone, contact the gravedigger, and organize the funeral prayer procession. Danang was assigned by Tomi to lead the funeral prayer. Tomi, Danang, and the three teenagers worked together effectively. They assisted without expecting any reward, ensuring that Juleha's funeral proceeded smoothly. The value of cooperation was also demonstrated by Tomi and Mr. Syamsuar.

CONCLUSION

The characters in Brian Khrisna's novel *Sisi Tergelap Surga (The Darkest Side of Heaven)* illustrate the values of struggle. The values of struggle found in the novel include self-sacrifice, respect, unity, and cooperation. These values can be applied in society. This novel can be a reference for teachers in shaping students' character.

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