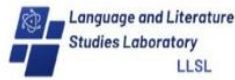
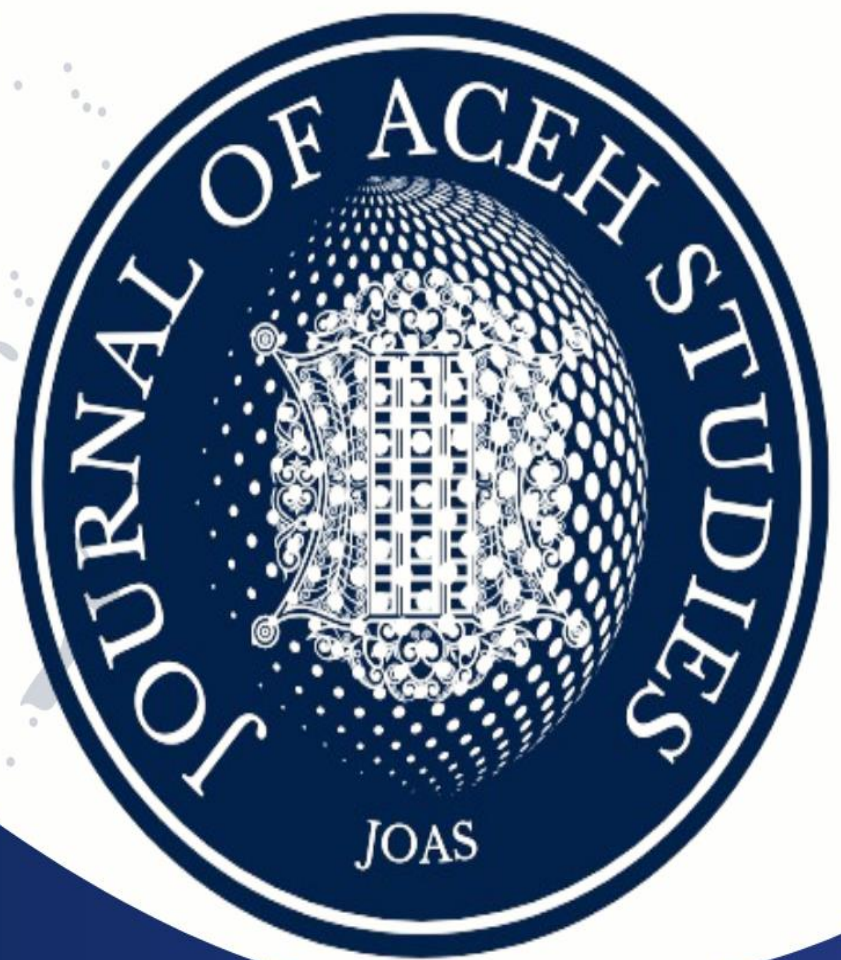


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Reconciling Post-Exile Identities in Leila S. Chudori's novel "Pulang"

Anggreni Agustina Tamba^{1*}

State University of Medan, Indonesia

Rosmawaty Harahap²

State University of Medan, Indonesia

Abstract

Leila S. Chudori's novel *Pulang* recounts the characters' experiences reconciling their identities after returning from political exile abroad. This research aims to analyze the process of post-exile identity reconciliation experienced by the characters in the novel. This research employs a narrative analysis method, incorporating a postcolonial study approach. Data were obtained from the text of the *Pulang* novel and analyzed qualitatively. The results show that the process of reconciling the post-exilic identity experienced by the characters in the novel *Pulang* includes three main aspects: (1) acceptance of the dual identity formed during exile, (2) negotiation of local and global identities, and (3) efforts to rediscover cultural roots and personal history. The post-exile identity reconciliation process depicted in *Pulang* reflects the complexity of individuals' experiences and inner struggles during political exile. We expect the results of this study to offer fresh perspectives on identity dynamics and the effects of political exile within the framework of post-New Order Indonesian society. The findings can also contribute to a broader discussion on the impact of historical events on the formation of individual and collective identities.

Keyword: Identity reconciliation; Post-exile; Novel *Pulang*; Post-colonial; Leila s. Chudori

* Corresponding author, email: anggreniagustina07@gmail.com

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INTRODUCTION

Research Problem

The main issue to be examined is how the novel portrays the complexity of the experiences and inner struggles of individuals who undergo political exile in post-New Order Indonesian society. An example of this complexity can be seen in the character's internal conflict between their personal beliefs and the societal expectations placed upon them. This conflict is further exacerbated by the political turmoil and power dynamics that shape their exile experience. By delving into these themes, the novel sheds light on the psychological impact of political exile on individuals and the challenges they face in reconciling their past with their present reality. Furthermore, the research will look at how the novel 'Pulang' highlights the negotiation between local and global identities that occurs during the process of post-exile identity reconciliation. This negotiation reflects the broader societal shift towards globalization and the interconnectedness of cultures in the contemporary world (Anwar, 2015; Ardiansyah, 2022; Bhabha, 1994; Chattopadhyay, 2012; Cristina, 2024; Dewi, 2017). Through the characters' interactions with their cultural roots and personal histories, the novel explores the tension between embracing one's heritage and adapting to the influences of a globalized world. One theory that can be applied to this analysis is Homi K. Bhabha's concept of 'third space,' which refers to the hybrid cultural space where new subjects and identities are formed through the merging of different cultures and traditions. Using a postcolonial approach, this research examines the identity reconciliation process experienced by post-exile characters in Leila S. Chudori's novel "Pulang." The main basis of this study is the concept of identity reconciliation developed by Homi K. Bhabha. According to Bhabha, a person's identity is something that is not fixed and continues to change through a process of negotiation, especially in a post-colonial context (Akbar, 2023; Senen, 2024; Azhari, 2023; Qamari; Andryrestu, 2024; Maisari, 2024; Zikrullah, M., & Azhari, A, 2024; Zulkhairi, 2024).

Importance of Research for Field

The novel *Pulang* provides a rich and deep perspective on the experiences of individuals who were involved in political turmoil in the past and had to return to their homeland after exile. This novel's analysis can provide a more comprehensive understanding of identity dynamics and the impact of political exile on contemporary Indonesian society. For instance, the novel's character development illustrates the internal struggles and external challenges encountered by individuals who have experienced political separation from their roots. This mirrors the real-life experiences of many individuals who have had to navigate the complexities of identity in the face of political upheaval (Erikson, 1968; Farida, & Dienputra, 2021; Herman, 1997; Lesmana, 2023; Luxemburg & Henri, 1989).

Furthermore, the novel's themes of reconciliation and post-exile identity reflect the complexities and challenges faced by those returning from exile. Individuals must piece together fragments of their past selves with their present realities to form a coherent sense of self, analogous to the process of reconciling their identity after exile. This struggle for self-discovery and reintegration is a common theme in post-conflict societies, where individuals must navigate the complexities of their past while forging a new path forward. Moreover, the novel highlights the negotiation between local and global identities that occurs in the post-exile context. This negotiation reflects the broader issues of multicultural identity in contemporary society (Cristina, 2024; Munidar, 2024; Paull, 2024; Rahmadani, 2024; Johan, 2024; Ibrahi, 2024).

Research or Theoretical Gap

Research on post-exile identity reconciliation in the novel *Pulang* can address several theoretical gaps. Firstly, Indonesian literary studies' focus on this theme is still limited, creating an opportunity for in-depth analysis of the novel to fill this gap. For example, previous studies have explored the themes of exile and return in *Pulang*, but there is a lack of detailed analysis on the construction of post-exile identities. By delving deeper into this aspect, researchers can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the novel's themes. While some research has touched on the novel *Pulang*, there is a lack of focus on the construction of post-exile identities. This gap presents an opportunity to delve into how the characters in the novel navigate their identities after returning from exile. By examining the intricacies of identity construction in the post-exile context, researchers can shed light on the complexities of the characters' experiences and the challenges they face in reintegrating into society. Contextualizing Post-Exile Experiences in Contemporary Indonesia. Most studies on the impact of political exile and identity reconciliation in contemporary Indonesia focus on the complexities

of the characters' experiences and the challenges they face in reintegrating into society (Maulini, (2021; Misbah, 2019; Munidar, 2024; Mustikawati, 2023).

Novelty of Research

Research on the identity dynamics of individuals returning from political exile rarely explores this perspective in Indonesian literary studies. Many previous studies tended to focus on exile, trauma, and shared memories but neglected to analyze the process of identity reconciliation after exile.

Research Objectives

The aim of this research is to analyze, understand, and provide new insight into the process of identity reconciliation experienced by the characters in the novel *Pulang*. This research also has important implications for the development of literary, historical, and social science studies in Indonesia.

Research Question

We will endeavor to address several primary inquiries in this study by referencing the previously outlined research objectives. How does the novel *Pulang* describe the negotiation process between Dimas Suryo's past identity as a student activist and the new identity he had after returning from exile? Furthermore, how does this novel depict Dimas' efforts to reconcile his conflicting personal history following his 17-year forced exile from his homeland? Next, how does Dimas find the right purpose and role for himself amidst the changes in Indonesian society after the New Order? We will carefully analyze these questions to understand how *Pulang*, the novel, critically examines the impact of political exile on the formation of individual identity and the struggle to find identity after losing cultural and historical roots.

Role of Researchers

As a researcher, I will actively study and understand the process in the novel *Pulang* by Leila S. Chudori that is related to the reconciliation of the main character's identity. Using a postcolonial approach, I will try to analyze how Dimas Suryo gave new meaning to his identity as an Indonesian individual who had spent time abroad during his exile.

METHOD

Research Design

This research uses a qualitative method with a text analysis approach. The novel "*Pulang*" by Leila S. Chudori provides the main data. The data analysis process was conducted in several stages. First, researchers conducted a careful and comprehensive reading of the novel text to identify narrative elements related to the exile experience and the reconciliation of the characters' identities. Next, they classified and analyzed the collected data using postcolonial concepts, particularly Homi K. Bhabha's theory of identity reconciliation.

Data Sources

The novel "*Pulang*" by Leila S. Chudori provides the main data. Additionally, we gather supporting data from secondary sources like journal articles, books, and other literature pertinent to the research topic.

Data Collection and Procedure

Data collection in this research is done through a literature study. We carefully and comprehensively studied the novel "*Pulang*" by Leila S. Chudori as the main source of data. The researcher conducted repeated readings of the novel text to identify narrative elements related to the exile experience and the characters' identity reconciliation process. In addition, researchers also collected secondary data in the form of journal articles, books, and other literature relevant to the research topic. Homi K. Bhabha developed the concept of postcolonialism and the theory of identity reconciliation, which we used to strengthen the theoretical foundation. We systematically classified and inventoried the data to streamline the analysis process. The research procedure was carried out in several stages. First, the researcher conducted a careful and comprehensive reading of the text of the novel "*Pulang*" to identify narrative elements related to exiles and identity reconciliation. Next, the researcher classified the collected data based on themes that align with the concept of postcolonialism and Bhabha's theory of identity reconciliation.

Data Analysis

In the analysis stage, the researcher seeks to understand how post-exile characters, such as Dimas Suryo, Nurul, and Lintang, reinterpret their identities between different cultural spaces. The analysis is directed at revealing the process of negotiating the concepts of "home" and "place of origin" carried out by the characters, as well as how this gave birth to hybrid forms of identity. In addition, the researcher also analyzes how narrative elements in the novel, such as point of view, plot, and characterization, contribute to illustrating the complexity of the characters' post-exile identities. Data analysis is supported by postcolonialism theory, particularly Homi K. Bhabha's concept of identity reconciliation, to gain a deeper understanding of identity dynamics in a post-colonial context. The research findings are presented in a descriptive-analytical manner using relevant text quotations to strengthen the argumentation. The data interpretation process is also carried out by considering the socio-cultural and historical context behind the exile experience and identity reconciliation of the characters in the novel "Pulang".

Accuracy

We sought accuracy in this research through several steps. First, the researcher conducted a careful and repeated reading of the text of the novel "Pulang" to ensure a deep understanding of the narrative elements related to exiles and the reconciliation of the characters' identities. Furthermore, the researcher conducted a comprehensive literature review to strengthen the research's theoretical foundation. The researcher carefully reviewed secondary sources, including journal articles, books, and other relevant literature, to establish a robust analytical framework. Homi K. Bhabha's concept of postcolonialism and the theory of identity reconciliation guided the data analysis process. The researcher aimed to interpret the research findings objectively and avoid personal bias in interpreting the characters' exile experience and hybrid identity. To increase accuracy, the researcher also triangulated data by comparing the results of the analysis of the novel text with other secondary sources. This was done to ensure the accuracy of interpretation and prevent misinterpretation.

Trustworthiness

To ensure the trustworthiness of this research's results, the researcher has taken several systematic steps. Firstly, the researcher meticulously and comprehensively studied the main data source, the novel "Pulang" by Leila S. Chudori. The researcher conducted repeated readings of the novel text to deeply understand the narrative elements related to the exile experience and the reconciliation of the characters' identities. In addition, researchers also collected secondary data in the form of journal articles, books, and other literature relevant to the research topic. Homi K. Bhabha developed the concept of postcolonialism and the theory of identity reconciliation, which we used to strengthen the theoretical foundation. We systematically classified and inventoried the data to streamline the analysis process. To increase the credibility of the research results, researchers also triangulated the data by comparing the results of the novel text analysis with other secondary sources. This was done to ensure the accuracy of the interpretation and prevent misinterpretation. We meticulously wrote the research results, ensuring accuracy and credibility through the use of relevant text quotations and clear attribution.

Ethical Review

In this study, the researcher paid attention to important ethical aspects. The researcher, mindful of the sensitive nature of socio-cultural issues, aimed to prevent any potential misuse or negative interpretations of the information. The ethical steps taken include maintaining the confidentiality of the identity of data sources, maintaining objectivity in analysis, and giving clear respect to intellectual copyright. We hope that by adhering to research ethics, the results of this study can contribute positively without causing adverse impacts.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

In Greek, the term 'Katallasso' signifies reconciliation, the removal of enmity, or the nullification of wrongdoing. The results of an in-depth study of the novel "Pulang" by Leila S. Chudori reveal how post-exile characters reinterpret their identities between different cultural spaces. The novel describes the exile experience and the characters' struggle to reconcile their fragmented identities due to migration and displacement. The research shows that the characters' post-exile

identity reconciliation process is characterized by their efforts to connect the past, present, and future. They attempt to rediscover the roots of their self-identity, uprooted by the exile experience, through memories, nostalgia, and cultural negotiations. In this process, the characters utilize liminal spaces, such as homes, restaurants, and the virtual realm, as places to unite fragments of their identities. The process of identity reconciliation depicted in the novel "Pulang" does not take place in a linear and static manner but is an ongoing and dynamic process. Intercultural interactions negotiate the identities of the post-exile characters through encounters, exchanges, and transformations of individual and collective identities (Roh, 2022; Rostanawa, 2025).

In an in-depth study of the novel "Pulang" by Leila S. Chudori, it was found that the post-exile characters' identity reconciliation process is characterized by their efforts to connect the past, present, and future. Through memories, nostalgia, and cultural negotiations, they try to rediscover the roots of self-identity that were uprooted by the exile experience. Of particular importance is the vital role of memories and nostalgia in the process of identity reconciliation. Figures like Dimas, Nurul, and Groups are constantly trying to reconcile memories of their homeland, traditions, and family in the past with the reality of contemporary life in a new place. They try to build a bridge between their past and emerging identities by reflecting on the exile experience (Rostanawa, 2019; Satrio, 2020; Tambunan, 2023; Wibowo, 2018; Wulandari, 2019).

For example, Dimas is obsessed with recovering memories of his childhood in Indonesia. He collects objects from his past, such as family photographs, old books, and traditional food, in an attempt to reconstruct his fragmented identity. Dimas' nostalgia for his homeland and family becomes the driving force for him to continue searching for the roots of his lost identity. The same goes for Nurul, a post-exile woman who devotes her life to preserving traditional Indonesian cuisine in the restaurant she manages in Paris. Through culinary practices, Nurul tries to maintain and convey the cultural heritage of her homeland. Food becomes a medium for her to connect the past, present, and future and assert her identity as an Indonesian in the midst of the reality of life in a foreign country.

In addition to memories and nostalgia, cultural negotiations also play an important role in the reconciliation of the post-exile characters' identities. In facing the cultural differences between their homeland and the country where they sought refuge, the characters engage in a process of bargaining, accommodation, and adaptation. They try to understand and accept aspects of the new culture while maintaining elements of their original culture. This process of cultural negotiation gives birth to hybrid identities that transcend the boundaries of a single culture. For example, the character of Groups, a post-exile political activist, combines Indonesian lifestyles and political perspectives with the Western democratic values he adopted during exile. Groups' identities are no longer fully Indonesian or fully Western, but rather a combination and transcendence of both cultural elements.

Another finding of this research is the utilization of liminal spaces as a place to unite the fragments of the post-exile characters' identities. Houses, restaurants, and the virtual realm become spaces where they can reconstruct and represent their fragmented identities. Home, for example, becomes a place where memories, traditions, and nostalgia meet the reality of contemporary life. Nurul's character interprets her home in Paris as a place to preserve and pass on Indonesian culinary culture to the next generation. Meanwhile, the restaurant and the virtual realm allow for cultural exchange, mixing, and transformation, which in turn affects the process of identity formation for the post-exile characters. Nurul can become a cultural intermediary, introducing traditional Indonesian cuisine to foreign customers through her restaurant. Here, culinary practice negotiates and embodies Nurul's identity as a post-exile woman. The same goes for the virtual realm, such as social media, where the figures can exchange information, build communities, and strengthen the bonds of collective identity as Indonesians abroad (Rahmadani, 2024).

The study's final finding is that the reconciliation of the post-exile characters' identities in the novel "Pulang" is a dynamic and non-linear process. Intercultural interactions continuously negotiate their identities. Encounters, exchanges, and transformations of individual and collective identities occur as the characters move beyond cultural boundaries. The identities of the post-exile characters are not formed statically but are constantly negotiated and renegotiated in liminal spaces. This process reflects the complexity and diversity of the exile experience and its implications for identity formation in an era of globalization marked by mobility and intensive cultural exchange. The reconciliation of the post-exile characters' identities in "Pulang" is a dynamic and non-linear process. Intercultural interactions continuously negotiate their

identities. Encounters, exchanges, and transformations of individual and collective identities occur as the characters move beyond cultural boundaries. The post-exile characters' identities are not formed statically but are constantly negotiated and renegotiated in liminal spaces. The findings of this study provide new insights into understanding the experience of exile and identity reconciliation in the context of contemporary Indonesian literature. This study enriches discussions on postcolonial issues and complex cultural hybridity, as well as its implications for identity formation in the era of globalization. The results of this study can make theoretical and practical contributions to postcolonial studies, migration studies, and literary discourse analysis that address similar themes.

Discussion

Leila S. Chudori's novel "Pulang" depicts the process of post-exile identity reconciliation, highlighting the characters' efforts to overcome past trauma and reconstruct their identity, which the exile experience had shaken. One important aspect of the process of identity reconciliation is the recovery of past trauma. As expressed by Judith Herman, trauma can cause "self-fragmentation" and requires a long healing process (Herman, 1997). In the novel "Pulang," the main characters, such as Dimas, Lintang, and Tri Pattirajawane, attempt to forgive their past and find new meaning in life after returning from exile. In addition, the novel also describes the characters' efforts to reconstruct relationships with their families and social environment. Erikson (1968) asserts that interactions with others and the social environment shape an individual's identity. In "Pulang," the process of identity reconciliation also involves efforts to rebuild relationships that were disrupted by the exile experience. Through the process of trauma recovery, relationship reconstruction, and the search for new meaning, the characters in the novel "Pulang" can rediscover their shaken identities. This is in line with Homi Bhabha's view of identity as hybrid and always in the process of negotiation (Bhabha, 1994; Naicker, 2020; Novera, 2017; Nugroho, 2020; Nurfitriani, 2017; Nuryanti, 2019).

Research Significance

Research on post-exile identity reconciliation in the novel "Pulang" by Leila S. Chudori has important significance in several aspects. First, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of the traumatic impact of exile and identity recovery efforts for individuals who experience it. The reconciliation process depicted in this novel can be a model for understanding the psychological and social dynamics faced by victims of exile, especially in the case of the G30S/PKI events in Indonesia. Second, this research can also enrich the theoretical discourse on identity formation, especially in the post-exile context. The analysis of the novel "Pulang" shows that identity is not static but always in the process of negotiation and transformation, as proposed by Homi Bhabha. The findings of this research can provide a new perspective on understanding the dynamics of identity in the context of migration, exile, and recovery. In addition, this research also has practical significance in helping victims of exile and their families understand and overcome the traumatic impact they have experienced. The analysis of the identity reconciliation process depicted in the novel "Pulang" can serve as a reference for rehabilitation and social reintegration programs for victims of exile in Indonesia. Thus, this research is expected to make a positive contribution to post-exile identity recovery and reconciliation efforts at the individual and community levels.

CONCLUSION

An analysis of the novel "Pulang" by Leila S. Chudori shows that the process of post-exile identity reconciliation is a complex endeavor that involves various aspects, including psychological, social, and cultural. Through a fictional narrative, the novel successfully depicts the characters' struggle to recover from the trauma of exile, rebuild fractured interpersonal relationships, and find new meaning in their lives after returning from exile. This process also demonstrates elements of hybridity, where the new identities formed are a blend of the exile experience and life after return. Furthermore, this research shows that literature, especially fiction, can be an effective medium for understanding and reconciling the collective memory of difficult events in a society's history. As such, this research makes an important contribution to a deeper understanding of the impact of exile and the process of post-exile identity reconciliation, as well as its implications in a broader social and cultural context.

Recommendation for Future Research

Based on the study in the journal "Reconciling Post-Exile Identity in the Novel "Pulang" by Leila S. Chudori", some recommendations for future research are: comparative analysis of the novel "Pulang" with other literary works that raise the theme of post-exile identity to broaden perspectives; in-depth exploration of the author's strategy in reconstructing the narrative of the character's identity; interdisciplinary studies that connect literary analysis with other disciplines; reception studies to understand readers' responses to representations of post-exile identity; and exploration of the potential of the novel "Pulang" as a source of inspiration for the development of other creative products. Future researchers can use these recommendations as a foundation to delve deeper and more comprehensively into the topic of post-exile identity in Indonesian literature, particularly in Leila S. Chudori's novel "Pulang".

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DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS

The author declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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