

**Local Wisdom in Khrisna Pabichara's Novel *Natisha Persembahan Terakhir*:
Magical Realism's Perspective**

Rizky Amelya Furqan
Universitas Gadjah Mada
rizkyamelya5@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the real and the magical narratives and traditions displayed through the *parakang* myths believed by the people of Sulawesi. Real and magical narratives are two contradictory things, but united in a novel by Khrisna Pabichara, *Natisha Persembahan Terakhir*. The purpose of this paper was to describe and explain the characteristics of magical realism related to tradition and modernism concept, and to know how the writer's surrounding influenced the delivery of voice that are considered marginal. This research used Wendy B. Faris theory about the five characteristics of magical realism. The method used in this research was narrative descriptive method obtained through novel or another supporting references. While the technique of data analysis was making the classification of data based on the theoretical concepts used. From this paper was known that the novel *Natisha Persembahan Terakhir* meet the five elements presented by Wendy B. Faris. This novel can be categorized into a group of magical realism and show about local wisdom about *parakang* and marriage tradition of Sulawesi society. The magical elements and traditions that exist in society are made up by the author as things that remain indispensable even though modernity has influenced the lives of societies and traditions that exist in society as an identity.

Keywords: Magical Realism, Local Wisdom, *Parakang*, Tradition, Sulawesi

Introduction

Nowadays' society has reached the modern era, marked by the presence of various technologies that influence the way people's living. It can be said that people in modern era are developed in real things. This kind of circumstances in the society will certainly has impact on the tradition that has been there before, especially the magical tradition. The magical element that existed in pre-modern societies cannot just be detached with life itself. This is influenced by the initial construction that exists in the society, so that the life of modern society that is influenced by real things and always logically acceptable cannot be separated from the life of pre-modern society.

The problem that arises in modern society is that how belief in all things can be explained by the law of universe, as what was expressed by western empiricism so that the movement from the modern to postmodern period was arisen, revives the magical elements of the pre-modern society. The life of people in Indonesia originated from magical things, they are people who live with beliefs in dynamism and animism. The presence of rational ideologies that can be logically accepted is influenced by western empiricism. Magical things not only thrive in social life, but also give a great impact in the development of the literary world, often at the ground of oral literature. Similarly, real things that affect the lives of modern society also affect the development of the literature where realist literary works emerge. Therefore, because the developed society realized that the magical thing cannot be separated from the real thing as described previously, at the end also affect the literary works.

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Wendy B Faris called the presence of real and magic as magical realism. This genre tries to raise the existing rural tradition back. Writers from Sulawesi often write about their tradition, namely Faisal Oddang with his writing about *Rambu Solo* which is Torajan tradition. There are also Dul Abdul Rahman who wrote *perempuan poppo*, Krishna Pabichara who wrote about magical object, *parakang*, and so on. One of Krishna Pabichara's novel that is really interesting is *Natisha Persembahan Terakhir*. This novel is about the magic of *parakang sukkuk* which believed by the society where the person is able to consume dying person's innards, and have to do black magic along that. When seeing the story described by Pabichara in *Natisha*, as if the reader can reread the disconnected parts in short stories anthology, *Gadis Pakarena*.

Magical Realism is how the real things are mingled with magical things, traditional conviction and modern life. Magical realism is considered important in expressing the world, especially in postcolonial culture because magical realism expresses marginalized voices and a latent tradition due to the dominance of western empiricism. Magical realism also contributes in the development of postmodern literature. Wendy B. Faris mentioned that when a straight line is drawn then magical realism will lead to an exact point between postmodernism and post-colonialism (2004:2).

Faris (2004: 7) explained that magical realism has five characteristics. First, the Irreducible Element, which refers to anything that cannot be explained by the laws of the universe. Second, the Phenomenal World, which is the thing that exist in magical realism, it also makes magical realism different from other fantasy and allegory works. A phenomenal world can be seen from the reality based on both history and texts. Third, Unsettling Doubts is a self-induced doubt in a dreamlike event, but not a dream. This doubt can be triggered by the text itself, the property and the object, as well as the cultural background of the reader.

The fourth element proposed by Faris is Merging Realms (merging the two worlds). Merging Realms is when an interaction between things that are real and things that are magical happened, so the distance between the two becomes vague. The last element is Disruption of Time, Space, and Identity. Time Disruption is when the calculation of time is disrupted in general, such as a day that is always Monday or month which is always March. Space Disruption according to Faris is when the real space is not fully able to become a real space because it is considered to be leaked so that the magical space can enter into real space and disrupt it. Then, the Identity Disruption is the understanding which an individual possessing a single entity is no longer occurs in the work because an individual in magical realism can have more than one identity.

A novel which said as belong to the genre of magical realism will fulfill these five traits. The five characteristics are the way to know the function of structure between elements and also the level of magical realism in a literary work. Faris also explained that the original location of the work also becomes an important part that needs to be known, because magical realism will always be related to the socio-cultural context that exists in society.

Methods

There are five elements of magical realism that will be found in the novel. With the existence of those five elements, it will help in finding out the function of structure between elements and also the magical realism of the novel. According to the real and

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magical narratives presented by Khrisna Pabichara in the novel, of course cannot be separated from the social condition of Sulawesi people. This will then uplift the phenomenon of why the writer who came from Sulawesi raise their locality when entering the realm of magical realism. From this hypothesis can be known that the variables in this study consists of real and magical elements as independent variables, and the content of magical realism as the dependent variable.

The material object in this study is a novel entitled *Natisha Persembahan Terakhir* by Khrisna Pabichara and its formal object is the magical realism characteristic based on the thoughts of Wendy B. Faris. The stage of data collecting looked at textual data in the novel and also supporting texts that can provide information about novel's social conditions. Then, the stage of data analysis is to classify the data based on those five characteristics of magical realism, to see how the relationship between the five elements, to know the function of the structure and the content of its magical realism. Next, to see the social and cultural contexts in the novel so the reason for the emergence of tradition in the novel is known.

Result and Analysis

Characteristics of Magical Realism.

The classification in irreducible elements can be seen from three things; characters, events, and objects. There are five characters that can be classified into the groups of irreducible elements. They are Tutu, Rangka, Daeng Saleng, Daeng Manrawa and Daeng Cora. The grouping of these characters based on the events they experienced, for example Tutu as the character who is able to see *parakang* and talk to the dead, Rangka who can summon the spirit and is polishing his black magic to be *parakang*, Daeng Saleng and Daeng Manrawa who have invulnerability, and the character of Daeng Cora who is described as a *parakang*. This grouping cannot be separated from the object, for example is the place where Tutu sees *parakang*, and the place where Rangka performing the perfection ceremony of becoming *parakang*. Then, the object used by Tutu in the fight against Rangka, which is the palm leaves, and the incense used by Rangka in perfecting his black magic. The last object relates to the strange sound that Tutu heard when he is going to see supernatural events.

The second elements deal with the phenomenal world that can be seen from two perspectives. The first is real historical characters, events and objects related to Soeharto who resigned as president in the events of '98 in Jakarta, and the tomb of the Kingdom of Binamu which used as the location where Rangka performing black magic ceremony. The second is related to real characters, events and objects based on texts. For example is Laila who counts the way to the location of captivity to remember where Rangka capturing his victim, and the character of Natisha who is Tutu's lover and being Rangka's victim to be an offering.

The next thing is the doubt that arises on the reader because of the text itself, or because of the cultural background of the reader. The first doubt is related to Tutu who is always doubtful regarding the magical events he faced, or the doubts about places that appear in his inner eye. This doubt occurs because of the text itself, but this is the exact point that makes the event stated as in-between position. Then, the presence of Rangka that can disappear at his fourth ritual of black magic perfection, whereas previously the *parakang* depicted through the character of Daeng Cora is able to change themselves, but that is not happened on Rangka. These events might evoke doubt on readers due to their cultural background which is not Sulawesi origin.

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The fourth element of the magical realism characteristic presented by Wendy B. Faris is the merging of two worlds. This element is a union between the group of irreducible and phenomenal. This can be seen from Tutu, Rangka, Daeng Saleng, and Daeng Manrawa which is the real characters based on the text but experienced magical events, and also the magical events are often occurs in real space. It means that between the characters, event and space where the event occurs is picturing magical and real things at the same time, so that the distance between them is no longer exist.

Lastly, disruption of time, space and identity. Time disruption in *Natisha* can be seen when Daeng Manrawa and Daeng Saleng are moving rapidly from distant places which resulting in confusion over the time required for the mileage. However, the disruption of time in the novel does not happen much because the time described in the novel is generally equated with time calculation in general. Then, the disruption that occurs often is the disruption to space. The real space in the novel is often confused by magical events, such as the presence of Rangka's ancestral spirit at the time of his black magic ceremony, or other spaces seen by Tutu at the time of his quest to find Rangka. Finally, the disruption to identity can be seen in Daeng Cora described as *parakang* and able to transform into banana trees, baskets, wolves and so on.

Relation between Elements

Based on description of elements of magical realism are found six relation between elements. 1) Relation between irreducible element and unsettling doubts; 2) Relation between phenomenal world, irreducible element, merging realms, and disruption of space; 3) Relation between phenomenal world, irreducible element, and merging realms; 4) Relation between phenomenal world, irreducible element, merging realms, and disruption of identity; 5) relation between unsettling doubts, irreducible element, phenomenal world, merging realms, and disruption of space; 6) Relation between phenomenal world, irreducible element, merging realms, and unsettling doubts. Based on this relation, irreducible element as a background element to make other element happened.

The Function of Element's Structure and the Content of Magical Realism

After finding the relationship between elements above, the presence of magical and real can be seen. Furthermore, the step is to find the structure of the story and its function in the novel *Natisha Persembahan Terakhir*. The structure of the story in question is the overall narrative in the novel seen from the real and magical world which narrated in building the story. Later on, the authors' views on both these world are going to be discovered as well as author's position. This whole description will determine the content of magical realism in the novel so that later whether this novel is a work of magical realism, a realist or even only magical can be determined.

Krishna Pabichara began composing the story in the novel by using a real narrative about the traditions of the people of Sulawesi, which is to bring back the tradition of *abbate*¹. However, it is also the beginning of the emergence of a magical narrative so that Tutu who initially resides in the real narrative moves toward the magical narrative. In the middle of the story, Krishna Pabichara begins to balance the presence between real and magical narratives.

¹Martial arts, normally held in circumcision celebration ritual or wedding party. Nowadays *abbate* often held as free fight.

Still, the magical narrative looks more dominating at the end of the story. Thus, it can be seen that the author wants to represent traditional narratives in the midst of modernism, especially in Jenepono community. If related to the postcolonial context, the presence of magical things in the novel is associated with the colonized and the real things to the colonizer. Wendy B. Faris called the simultaneous presence of these two things in one event as narrative devocalization.

The next thing is to determine the content of magical realism in the novel. The narrations of real and magic are described by the author in stable extent because the reader still in doubts, triggered by the text in seeing the event whether it's a dream or not. This, of course, fills the space of third characteristic that makes literary works of magical realism in a balanced position. The author does not abandon either the real narrative or the magical narrative so there is no dominance by one of the narration.

Local Wisdom In The Novel.

Location becomes an important part that is also described by Faris, so that in analyzing the magical realism literary work is not only to know the characteristics, the relation between elements and content of magical realism, but also to find out the conditions of social-cultural where the work is originated from. Wendy B. Faris conveyed that magical and fantastical things often come from different cultural traditions. Basically a literary work is based on social conditions of the community, although the author will add imagination of their own.

The people of Sulawesi were originally constructed by magical narrations, for example is the presence of *taumanurung*² which also impacted in the establishment of caste system in Sulawesi due to the presence of *taumanurung* who married with the members of local elite. It is also shown in the novel when Tutu is described as a member of different caste with Natisha who is from Karaeng caste. Besides impacted in the power system of Sulawesi, it also affects society's point of view regarding the tradition. The existing traditions in Sulawesi society are often written in *lontara* so that the people of Sulawesi always use *lontara* as a guide. However, the traditions that exist in society begin to fade as time goes by in current development. Communities often accept all the changes so that the traditional values are eroded. Traditional things are often marginalized and considered incompatible with the changing of time.

The presence of tradition also describes the existing identity in society, for example *Rambu Solo* ceremony is identified with Torajan society or the mention of *parakang* as described in the novel is identified with the people of Sulawesi. This thing will be different in attribution with other areas, for example in Sumatera Barat society where there is *palasik* who suck baby's blood. It means that every society has their own tradition that distinguish them with other societies. This is the reason why Krishna Pabichara brought a tradition in his work, because he did not want the traditions that exist in his society is going to fade because of the time.

Magical thing presented into the real space is part of the decolonization effort. The developing realism society is a discourse emerged by colonizer or colonials in postcolonial context, whereas magical refers to the strategy of opposition and resistance used by colonized peoples (Razmi & Jamali, 2012: 112). From the above opinion can be seen that magical realism is the agent of decolonization. Magical tradition which presented in a real space is the instrument used to fill the barriers so that there is no gap

²The incarnation of God that come from the sky to build a kingdom.

between them. This is called devocalization discourse that forms an unexplained narrative space because the event cannot be explained, only experienced.

Conclusions

Based on the above description can be concluded that Khrisna Pabichara's work entitled *Natisha Persembahan Terakhir* can be classified into a novel with magical realism genre because the presence of narratives that can fill the element of unresolved doubts. Tutu's ability to see magical things and the presence of the Rangka as *parakang* fills the position of the irreducible element. Of course there is also a connection between one element and the other. The presence of irreducible element forms the appearance of another element, such as the occurrence of Tutu's doubt regarding what he saw. It certainly takes the position of unsettling doubts, where hesitations often arise because it is influenced by the text itself.

It has been mentioned previously that these five elements cannot stand alone. However there are connections of the elements that happened each other. After the classification of each event in the novel into the five elements, six forms of relations are found. These six relations always occur with non-reducing elements. From this point, we can see that the occurrence of reduced element is the source of the emergence of other elements. The relation between existing elements will be an opening to know about the function of element structure so that the position of real and magical world will be discovered. The author tries to build the point of view which magical or traditional things cannot be simply removed from the real world or modern things.

In relation to the social context, Krishna Pabichara as the author not only presents community tradition in a form of a magical narrative related to the *parakang* and rituals performed by Rangka in polishing his black magic as *parakang sukkuk*, but also exposing the traditional real narrative of Sulawesi society. The traditions that exist in the society, especially those related to the magical things may fade away from the interaction with people from the outside of community, or the development of the area. This is associated with the postcolonial context, which is when the existing traditions in society are considered colonized and the changes that exist within the community are the influence of the *colonizer*. However, both become inseparable in the post-colonial context so that there is a new space that appears, which Faris called as *decolonized space*.

References

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