

POLITICAL EXILES AND WOMEN IN *PULANG* BY LEILA S. CHUDORI: THE IMPACT OF THE POST-SUHARTO ERA

*(Manusia Politik Terbuang dan Wanita dalam Pulang Karya
Leila S. Chudori: Kesan Zaman Pasca-Suharto)*

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Abstract

The political setting that occurred during the political reformation era after 1998 in Indonesia has influenced the literary writings in Indonesia. Forbidden issues are outwardly spoken and afresh. This new situation is assimilated by Leila S. Chudori the author of the novel *Pulang*. This article discusses his tribulations of the political exile group that lives in exiles in Paris due to Suharto's politic that hound the people that were connected with communism and feminism tendencies as seen in this novel. These two problems may look different, yet in reality are interlinked based on the post-Suharto's era socio-politic setting. This article tries to find the answer to those problems through historical and feminism approach. Leila S. Chudori is an Indonesian female writer that deeply perceives the tribulations of the political exile group. They became the victim of Suharto's government policy that hounds those suspected as the supporters of socialism or leftists group not only in the country but outside of Indonesia such as France. As an exile group the question of identity and relationship becomes significant. After 1998, during the post-Suharto era, with the more open socio-political policy, the Indonesians were given freedom to discuss the problems of the exiles and the opportunity is taken by Leila S. Chudori. The result is the novel *Pulang*,

which talk about the tribulations of the exiles, heightened creatively and more daring compared to during the Suharto's era, which did not give any consideration to even talk about it.

Keywords: Indonesian history; political exiles; supporters of feminism

Abstrak

Latar politik yang berlaku pada zaman reformasi politik selepas 1998 di Indonesia telah mempengaruhi penulisan karya sastera di Indonesia. Hal-hal yang dilarang telah diperkatakan dengan lebih berani dan segar. Keadaan ini dicernakan oleh Leila S. Chudori yang menulis novelnya Pulang. Makalah ini membincangkan persoalan golongan politik terbuang (political exile) yang hidup dalam buangan di Paris akibat politik Suharto yang memburu golongan yang dikaitkan dengan komunisme dan kecenderungan feminisme yang kelihatan dalam novel ini. Dua persoalan ini kelihatan berbeza, namun sebenarnya berhubungan berdasarkan latar sosiopolitik zaman pasca Suharto. Melalui pendekatan sejarah dan feminisme, makalah ini cuba menjawab persoalan tersebut. Leila S. Chudori pengarang wanita Indonesia sangat menjiwai permasalahan golongan politik terbuang. Mereka menjadi mangsa dasar pemerintahan Suharto yang memburu mereka yang disyaki sebagai golongan yang bersimpati dengan sosialisme atau berfahaman kiri yang berada bukan sahaja di dalam dan di luar Indonesia seperti di Paris. Sebagai golongan terbuang sudah pasti persoalan identiti dan perhubungan menjadi perhatian. Selepas 1998, iaitu zaman pasca-Suharto, dengan dasar sosiopolitik yang lebih terbuka, maka rakyat Indonesia diberikan kebebasan untuk membincangkan permasalahan golongan politik terbuang dan kesempatan ini diambil oleh Leila S. Chudori. Hasilnya novel Pulang, yang membincangkan permasalahan golongan politik terbuang, diangkat secara kreatif dan berani berbanding zaman Suharto, yang tidak memberikan ruang untuk memperkatakannya.

Kata kunci: sejarah Indonesia, manusia politik terbuang, kecenderungan feminisme

INTRODUCTION

The background of Indonesian political development before and after 1998 has influenced the writings of *Pulang*. The Indonesian political insurgence in the 1960s has caused the socialist group that were linked with the Indonesian Communist Party (Parti Komunis Indonesia - PKI) to be hounded, imprisoned

and killed. The political bitter rivalry between the communist, the Islamic conservative and the army has caused a coup d'état in 1965 engineered by the PKI. But the attempt was aborted by the Indonesian army. This incident led to the emergence of Suharto as the Indonesian leader replacing Sukarno who was regarded as a leftist, and the role of the Indonesian army in the Indonesian politics expanded. As a consequence PKI was abolished and the group linked with PKI was hounded not only in the country but also abroad. Thus the Indonesian exiles group appears in foreign countries of no return to their homeland for fear of their safety. The exiles undergo a life of isolation in other countries and struggle to maintain their original identity and at the same time were exposed to the strong local influence. The lives of the exiles group are being highlighted in various literary writings such as in *Pulang*. However, as a work of art, the writer's inspiration in designing their literary work is influenced not only by their cultural upbringing and intellectual but also their political background. How do these various settings mold the novel *Pulang*?

BEFORE AND AFTER 1998

The Republic of Indonesia achieved their independence from the Dutch in 1945. After the independence, Indonesia was governed by their first president, Sukarno, who received the support of the Indonesian army. He was inclined towards socialism as compared to capitalism, as a reason to why Indonesia established relationships with two biggest socialist-communist countries, China and Russia. Having an army background, Suharto and Indonesia National Party (Parti Nasional Indonesia) had established relationships with PKI under the leadership of D.N. Aidit. PKI was the biggest communist political party outside of China and Russia. The relationship with the communist party in China and Russia has enabled many Indonesians to go to these countries for various political activities and for further education. On the other hand the army was not happy with this relationship. The army was very influential in the Indonesian politic and the Islamic elites group. As an Islamic group, they considered the presence of the PKI who practices the policy of socialism, violated their influence in cases such as land reformation in remote areas that the PKI was trying to secure. This threatens the Islamic elites group who were the stronghold land owners for generations in the local society. At the same time the army who played great parts in the Suharto's government administration was threatened by the PKI influence which was growing stronger in the remote areas. When Sukarno tried to balance the

power between the army and PKI, he was accused as a having a tendency towards the lefties.

On 1 October 1965 a coup d'état took place in Indonesia. Six Indonesian army generals and a lieutenant were kidnapped and killed. Suharto, who was a Lieutenant General and was influential in the Indonesian army accused the PKI as being involved in the coup d'état, and Sukarno was said to support the lefties which he denied. However the army managed to overthrow the revolution. Apart from the Indonesian army the coup managed to get the attention of various sectors. Among them was a study view from the Cornell Paper written by two scholars from Cornell University, stating that the 1965 coup was due to the conflicts between the young army officers who were pro-lefties and the senior army officers. Without the support of PKI and other problems such as the economy and his health situation, Suharto's position became weaker. Later Suharto and the army made a large scale onslaught on the PKI and their supporters (Schwarz, 1999:19-23). At last in 1966, with the support of the army and the Islamic group, Suharto took over the control from Sukarno with a new phase in the Indonesian history. In other words, although the coup failed, in the end it gave a big impact to the Indonesian political development.

The coup resulted in the liquidation of the PKI, downfall of Sukarno and the triumph of the Indonesian Army. Suharto emerged as Indonesia's new strongman. He succeeded in maneuvering other groups and, in 1966 became the most influential leader

(Leo, 1997:102)

Suharto accomplished a phase of governing known as the "New Order". He executed a cleanup towards the PKI and their supporters. Hundred thousands of the PKI members were killed and many more scamped to other countries. The PKI members or their supporters abroad were not allowed to return to Indonesia. They were regarded as threats to the safety of Indonesia. Apart from legal actions being taken, various anti-communist programs were organized. PKI members or their supporters abroad who were keen to return felt anxious that they, their families and friends will be persecuted, jailed or killed. Suharto not only managed to abolish the influence and illegalized PKI but put the fear of communism in the hearts of the Indonesians. From then on, Suharto managed to abolish all the elements of lefties in the army and the public services. The actions made by Suharto was said to obscure

the policies of the New Order and its autocratic characteristics. With the support of the army, all powers were concentrated only on the president. Suharto was very powerful. The element of corruptions and nepotism were very conspicuous under the New Order government.

An upheaval by the Indonesian people took place against Suharto's governance. On 21 May 1998, having governed Indonesia autocratically for 31 years, the Indonesian people forced Suharto to step down. As a consequence a post-1998 era appeared different from the year before 1998. Bacharuddin Jusuf Habibie (well-known as B.J. Habibie) took over to replace Suharto, and he tried to bring a new type of ruling which is more open and sincere as desired by the Indonesian people:

Describing himself as a transitional president, Habibie said it would be his legacy to bring Indonesia into a more democratic future. Claiming that his many years in Germany taught him the virtues of democracy, Habibie promised a slew of new laws to upend Indonesia's authoritarian political system. He freed dozens of political prisoners, pledged to remove controls on the media, and annulled the ban on new political parties. Most importantly, he called for new parliamentary elections in mid-1999 and the selection of new president by the end of 1999.

(Schwarz, 1999:371)

Even though B.J. Habibie failed to fulfill all the requests of the Indonesian people towards the Indonesian political transformations such as the prosecuting or taking legal actions against Suharto and his families wrong doings as in corruptions, B.J. Habibie has supplied a better platform towards the Indonesian political climate as in the publications of printed works or literature which are less restricted and more daring. This can be witnessed in the writings by the exiles and the reminder of the PKI abroad, which formerly were banned, were permitted to be published in Indonesia. They are amongst others the works by writers such as Hersiri Setiawan, *Memoir Perempuan Revolusioner* (2006) published by Galang Press, Yogyakarta. The exiles are not small in number; many of them are residing in many countries such as China, Russia, Britain, the Netherlands, Bulgaria, Germany and France. Among the thousands of the exiles are writers, journalists and artists. Most of them live their lives as exiled or isolated people always in fear that their families and friends will be harassed by the government. Many of the exiles died stateless. Their writings tell the story of bitter experiences in isolation. Among them are the work of Utuy Tatang Sontani, Sobron Aidit,

Asahan Aidit, Hersiri Setiawan and J.J. Kusni. The situation became more chaotic when there was a political dispute between Russia and China, for the PKI members were divided between pro-China and pro-Russia. They were pressed between these two great communist powers. The tribulations of being exiled really haunted their emotions:

The exiles were a fractured community, invariably split into political factions, unable to speak with one voice, even as they struggled to find asylum and security. Many were residents at various times initially in China, Vietnam, USSR, Albania and more recently in Sweden, France, Netherland and UK.

(Hill, 2016:6)

The exiles do not possess Indonesian passport since the Indonesian government does not issue them any. They have foreign passports and use them as a bridge for them to return to Indonesia as visitors but not as citizens of Indonesia. Undoubtedly their return will cause pain and insufferable agony.

However during the post-Suharto era, everything has changed since the new Indonesian government uses an open policy. The exiles have the sympathy and attention of the Indonesian people. Their lot of humanity has begun to be preserved, their writings and stories about them started to burgeon in Indonesia. This development also encouraged the Indonesian literary writers, for the tribulations of the exiles are packed with humanity and makes strong literary resources.

The experiences of the exiles had the attention of an Indonesian author by the name of Leila Silica Chudori. She is a well-known journalist cum writer from Indonesia. *Pulang* (2012) by Leila S. Chudori is a novel with the background of Indonesian political history from the year 1965 to 1988. The background which includes several decades is attempted to be packed in 460 pages (including her notes). Indonesian history has become a creative source for Leila S. Chudori to produce *Pulang*. The existence of the exiled group in Europe namely France and the Netherlands gave Leila the inspiration to create *Pulang*. Undergoing their lives for many years in foreign lands do not kill their roots off their homeland for they keep on growing in their hearts. They want to return to Indonesia, their homeland, but were not permitted for their sincerity was still doubted. Consequently, their lives are torn between temporary residence and their definite homeland. In her writing titled "Seeking Identity, Seeking Indonesia" (<http://www.insideindonesia.orang/weekly-articles/seeking-identity-seeking-Indonesia>), Leila stated that:

I was interested to tell the story of political exiles who could not return home. I wanted to dig into their psyche; delve into the minds of those who lived far from their homeland but still felt they were part of Indonesia, no matter what kind of passports they were issued and no matter how the government treated them.

Through *Pulang*, Leila hopes to talk about the stories of the exiles group from Indonesia who were denied of their rights as the citizens of their country. Their passports were invalidated. Their minds and emotions were also tortured, although they were physically free to go anywhere, to return to their homeland is totally prohibited. As a Western (Canada) educated writer, is her sympathy only towards the Indonesian exiles group or is more globalized related to her feminine identity? Based on these questions it will be very interesting to study *Pulang* not only in the context of Indonesia but also the female perspective.

POLITICAL EXILES

In *Pulang*, the reality of the chaotic Indonesian politics in the 1960s is combined with the reality of Indonesian politics in the 1988 through the imagination and creativity of the writer. Thus the creation of the family of Dimas Suryo and his daughter, Lintang Utara. Leila tells the story of the two generations, who were isolated, exiled, discarded and tortured due to the politics in Indonesia in the 1960s. They were represented by Dimas Suryo and his friends who were exiled to the city of Paris. While the second generation, who were present in the wave of political reformation, represented by Lintang and her friends who were involved and also witnessed the days of the downfall of the autocratic regime in 1998.

After the collapse of Sukarno's regime and the emergence of Suharto's regime, the Indonesian political climate did not change. Instead it became worst. Those who were regarded as a threat to the higher power will be hunted wherever they went, as experienced by Dimas' and his friends. Indonesia as his homeland was the setting where the main character Dimas Suryo was born and grew and later became a political exile in Paris, France, accused of being involved with communism through PKI.

Indonesia as part of the scene setting refers to the homeland to Dimas and his friends Nugroho, Tai and Risjaf. The upheaval in Indonesian politic since 1965 has isolated them to Paris, France. Dimas and his friends were thrown to Paris because they were believed by the Indonesian governing

regime to be involved with in PKI, even though Dimas was more interested towards humanism instead of communism (Leila, 2014:31). The Indonesian governing regime was undergoing the abolishment of PKI's influence and all its traces in an operation known as "Bersih Lingkaran" (Surrounding Cleanup) and "Bersih Diri" (Self Cleanup) which were introduced by the government in 1981 (Leila: 332). The hatred of the Indonesian government towards the PKI group is made more concrete by constructing a diorama that blemished the PKI and tried to put fear in the mind of the people who supports them. They will be put in the "lubang buaya" (crocodile hole) (Leila, 2014:287). Was history being manipulated or was there a betrayal by those in power to remain in power. Thus it is not surprising that the Suharto's regime can rule for 32 years.

In Paris, the exiles have started living their new lives. Dimas married a French lady named Vivienne Deveraux and has a daughter, Lintang Utara. Although Dimas is surrounded by his loved ones, his heart is still lonely. The loneliness is a deep mental torture.

In Indonesia emerged the characters such as Hananto Prawiro, Surti Anandari and Aji Suryo. Surti Anandari is a woman affected and hurt from the actions of Suharto's autocratic regime during the Surrounding Cleanup and Self Cleanup operations. She was the wife of a PKI activist, Hananto Prawiro who was later arrested by the government regime and lost trail. The government was also suspicious of the spouses of the men who were inclined towards the communist or PKI believes. The Surrounding Cleanup and Self Cleanup operations has caused Surti and her children to live in fear and tortured emotions, especially within the three years before Hananto was arrested by the government (Leila, 2014:383). Some of the family members of those involved with the lefties politics cannot face the torturing reality that they hide their true identity by discarding their surnames. Such is the case of Rama, the son of Aji Suryo.

POLITICAL IDEOLOGY AND WOMEN

Leila S. Chudori is an Indonesian female writer who took good advantage of the post-Suharto era by expressing her thinking and feelings, issues which were taboo according to the rules and laws created by the autocratic regime. An important aspect often stressed in the critiques found in *Pulang* is its political ideology aspect that criticizes the inhumane autocratic politic. However, there is another aspect that has not been discussed but indirectly

related to her political ideology aspect which is her inclination towards feminism. Leila did not state clearly when she was asked to give her reaction towards the novel *Pulang*. In an interview, Leila said that:

The theme on freedom of speech and expression has been the soul of my writings since I was young. Those who have been following my writings must have been aware that. *Pulang* is only a continuation. In *Malam Terakhir* and *9 dari Nadira* too, the issues are the same: the demands for the freedom of choice, speech expression, but are represented at individual levels. While *Pulang*, the freedom of expression and choice stressed more on the level of ideologies, that maybe the reason it gets the attention from Indonesian readers who were all these while “penalized” from their rights to get reading variation for 32 years.

(<http://www.dw.com/id/leila-yang-selalu-pulang/a-16821309>).

Her inclination towards feminism started to develop in Leila when she was exposed to the Western culture of women freedom while studying abroad. Her feminist inclination developed with the women movement groups to get equal rights as the men. For some time the women were denied their rights of getting equal education by the men. The patriarchal culture dominated by the men has made women as “the other”, and were isolated and exploited. Basically, the moderate feminist struggle to get equal rights as the men were already achieved especially in developed countries. The feminist inclination of Leila is expressed in *Pulang*. The strong spirited female characters having open minds and actions overbearing the males. This inclination is like a support to the emergence of the voices of the isolated not only in the political contexts but also in cultural. In other words the feminist inclination is a form of freedom of expression that can be traced beyond the political ideologies expects which are found very profound in the novel *Pulang*.

Another significant female character in *Pulang* is Surti. Dimas has a homeland which is Indonesia. A homeland replete all the tangible and intangible aspects of a sovereign nation. The tangible aspects land, water, air, and etc. The intangible includes culture, morals and custom and tradition of the people. The homeland concept is more pristine compared to the concept of a nation for a nation involves its power that directs towards various political ideologies. Apart from Dimas, Surti also has a homeland and which both of them shared. However, politic has caused Dimas to be exiled from his homeland and Surti and her family were tortured by the power of politic.

Dimas and Surti have their experience from the same source. They were the victims of the operations “Surrounding Cleanup” and “Self Cleanup”. Yet prior to that, Dimas and Surti were in love while they were students at the Universitas Indonesia, Jakarta. Dimas had no courage to make a decision to marry Surti (Leila, 2014:61). Dimas longed to return to Indonesia. His umpteen attempts to get an Indonesian passport were of no avail. Was Dimas’ desire due to politic or because of Surti? He often considered himself as the Javanese’s performance character from Maharaja, Ekalaya who was rejected to study under the great teacher of archery, Dorna who later betrayed him, but he still worshiped and cut his thumb and presented it to the teacher (Leila, 2014:192).

Homeland and woman are intertwined and formed a strong inner energy for Dimas to continue his yearning for Indonesia. Dimas realized that he could not have Surti and be involved in politics in Indonesia. In addition to that his health has worsened his situation. Thus only one way remains, that is to return as a corpse to lay to rest in his homeland and to be close to the woman he once loved. Dimas was trapped between the call of his homeland and a woman, Dimas became trapped in them. Dimas’ secret was at last exposed when a letter found by Lintang was given to her mother Vivienne to read. Vivienne’s suspicion of her husband’s love was answered when she read Surti letter to Dimas:

From that point on I knew that I had never and will never have Dimas entirely. Then I understood why he always wanted to return to the place that he really loved. In the nook of his heart, he would always have Surti and all his memories. Which he later keeps safely in the container.

Surti is the symbol of the aromas of saffron and cloves. All those become one in Indonesia. That night, I told Dimas, I want a breakup.

(Leila, 2014:216)

Vivienne was disappointed with Dimas who still have feelings towards Surti. She stressed, Dimas did not only have problems with his homeland but also with Surti his former love. The letter from Surti to Dimas had caused the divorce between Vivienne and Dimas. Every action of Dimas reminiscing on the features of his homeland in terms of food, arts and designs at home and at the restaurant, Restoran Tanah Air in his country were associated with Surti.

Dimas, empowered by these two demands finally realized that it is tough and nearly impossible to accomplish. Considering his deteriorating health condition, Dimas was positively aware that he cannot achieve his wish. In

life only death is certain. Thus Dimas told Lintang that he wanted to return to Karet, a resting place or cemetery in Jakarta. Finally Dimas returned to his homeland and rested in Karet:

At last Father returned to Karet.

At last he is united with the land which according to him “has a different aroma” from the land of Cimetiere du Pere Lachaise. The land of Karet (rubber). His homeland, the yearning of his return.

(Leila, 2014:471)

Dimas died and his body was brought back to his country and rested in peace in Karet. Death succeeded in bringing him back to the homeland he has missed and forgotten Surti who already has a family of her own. The grave could be the real homeland.

Apart from Surti, Lintang is also a female character who plays an important role in the development of the novel. Dimas returned and was buried without any ceremonies, but Lintang was given an assignment by her professor to research her father’s background. The father who has returned to his homeland, as a recording of the voices of the exiles in the column of history established by the government. In Dimas’ last letter to his daughter Lintang, he said:

What you find during more than a month in Jakarta is not enough to clarify the whole factors that formed Indonesia. Your last task has explained a small portion, a part of the voice from Indonesia. Although it is ‘small’, I am sure that it will be big and vocal because your documentary is a different voice, the voices from other side, which has been silent for the past 32 years.

(Leila, 2014:447).

The strength of the female roles such as Surti and Lintang compared to the male in the development of *Pulang* is very distant. Leila tries to put the females at a much higher position than the males. The spiritual strength of Lintang’s character is clearly felt when she tried to defend Restoran Tanah Air from being ridiculed by Priasmoro (Leila, 2014:357-58). Aji Suryo praised Lintang for being brave to defend her family openly. At a dinner event in Priasmoro’s house, Lintang defended Restoran Tanah Air which was founded by her father in Paris, from being disparaged by Priasmoro. Aji Suryo commended Lintang’s audaciousness:

But Lintang's boldness has reopened the dark path to light, Rama, with all the pains, will learn to be honest and brave to stand up. Aji had never felt relieved as that night. He has more respect for his brother that has raised a bright princess and possessed hard fists.

(Leila, 2014:360)

The young Lintang did not stop him to defend his character from being scorned by others older than him and this character was not found in the man named Rama who has a weak personality. Lintang has a strong personality compared to Rama the son Aji Suryo who has no confidence in carrying out the family name.

Apart from the strength of the female characters, the feminism shown by Leila in *Pulang* can be more concrete when the readers find the elements of sexuality in it. Leila daringly describes the sexual activities of the characters of either the men or women. There is no restriction or taboo set by the male in the female sexuality. She describes the sexual experience of the characters clearly in several erotic scenes in a few chapters in the novel.

In Indonesian context, this kind of feminism started to sprout and thrive after the fall of the Suharto's regime in 1998. Before the phase of Suharto's regime falling, feminism in the Indonesia literature was not as daring. The problems related to women existed long before in Indonesian novels such as Siti Nurbaya (1922) by *Marah Rusli*, *Layar Terkembang* (1937) by Sutan Takdir Alisyahbana, and *Belenggu* (1940) by Armijn Pane. The same is also found in contemporary new novels such as *Burung-Burung Mayar* (1981) by Y.B Manguwija, *Bukan Rumahku* (1986) by Titis Basino, *Pertemuan Dua Hati* (1986) by Nh. Dini, and *Semburat Merah* (1989) by Nina Pane. The female troubles in these novels circulates around the predicament faced by the women fixed with stereotype questions such as household problems and their own selves where their surrounding in the form of moral and religion controls their way of thinking and actions. The women were forced to give in to the demands of the situation and do not object much towards the powers assumed by the men. They were depicted as not having much choice in directing their fates and the objectives of their lives. Many discriminations and suppressions by the powerful regime are by males. According to Umar Junus (1984), in the decade of 1970s, the women in the Indonesian novels were trapped by the male behavior that denied the females voices. This situation continued in the Indonesian novels in the 1980s. However, the situation of the women in the Indonesian novels in the decade of 1990s started

to see changes. According to Leila S. Chudori (Chudori, 1991, in Armini Arbain, 2007.), starting from the year 1990s, there appeared the voices in the Indonesian novels showing the tendency to free the women from the stereotype image whereby they have their own choice to be independent in the society that support the mythos of female power (*kodrat wanita*).

The fall of the regime has opened up large spaces to the reformation movements in many aspects such as the freedom of woman movement and cultural liberalism. Among the cultural liberalism is freedom in literary work including the freedom of writing about sexuality. Consequently, there appears a stream of “fragrant literature” discussing sexuality openly and boldly as the author Ayu Utami did in her novels *Larung and Saman* (Sohaimi, 2014). Leila who has long been influenced by the cultural liberalization since studying in Canada takes the opportunity of the post-Suharto era.

How is the cultural liberalization presented? It is showed when the morals upheld and practiced by the main characters in the novel are not obliged to religious values. Freedom in social milieu becomes a social situation upheld as a setting adapted with the chaotic political situation and expanded towards one objective only i.e. humanism. Erotic scenes are exposed descriptively in context of the relationship between Dimas and Surti (Leila, 2014:61), Dimas and Vivienne (Leila, 2014:27), Lintang and Alam (406-07,431).

... We are unable to finish undressing each other, for all the desire that has long been captive and draped by the feelings of shame and morality. And as I have imagined, or more than what I had dreamt every night, the explosive power belongs to the universe. How he knows the sensitive points on my body, is beyond my knowledge. The morning that is still black and dark suddenly is like the Paris sky on the 14th of July, blooming fire.

(Leila, 2014:405-06)

The erotic scene is rather sensational since the portrayal is very descriptive. They represent the post-New Order generation who do not have the feeling of shame and morality as Lintang stated. Lintang as a female character commented on the sensitive part of the woman to sex stimulation such as the breast nipples (Leila: 431) - (Dimas agrees that the woman's breast nipples stimulate his sex desire - Leila: 27 and 61). Leila the author of *Pulang* is rather frank in this matter. The wave of feminism brought by Leila is a radical wave of feminism who is not seeking equality but differentiation in her writing by separating it from patriarchal. As Lintang mentions, only

the women are able to explain which parts of the body that are sensitive to the men's touch to stimulate the sex desire.

Actually sexuality in feminism has a connection with the thinking of the radical feminist in contradiction with the liberal feminist. In the liberal feminist, it is believed that although the male and female have differences in terms of their roles, they were born the same. Thus, the male and female have the same right such as in politics and economy. The question of equality becomes the foundation of the diverse struggle of liberal feminism. However the capability of the liberal feminist to obtain their rights is not an easy task because the male regime in power does not easily accept women having the equal right as the men. The women are given many labels. Hirschman (1999: 28):

The extreme difficulty that women have had in obtaining equality in liberal terms in the workplace, public policy, and the courts has justified many feminists in their rejection of liberalism as an inherently classists, racists, and sexist ideology.

In other words, the liberal feminism style still cannot fill the women struggles against the male power. Thus the radical feminism style emerged.

In the radical feminism, the woman finds that the patriarchal power is still tough on the woman. The male power is always above the female. Thus the feminist group suggested that there is an effort made for "feminist separation" i.e. to eliminate patriarchy and abolish the power of male domination. Thus the radical feminist is asking for the separation of men from the institution, relationship, roles and activities defined by men. Thus, the women are required to connect with the women such as shown in "lesbian feminism" and "cultural feminism." Through "cultural feminism", the stress is given to the dimension of creativeness of the women and the development of her culture. One of the aspects of the woman's experience is the female body concerning her sexuality or anything that is connected with sex, whether her feelings or activities. From the radical feminist point of view this is the male control over the female sexuality and regarded as a form of repression and exploitation on women. For examples, heterosexism symbolizes men hegemony over women. The radical feminist point of view:

Radical feminists believe women will always be subordinate to men unless sexuality is reconceived and reconstructed in the image and likeness of women. Only then will the power and spirit of the female body be able to

emerge and allow the development of women's reproductive and sexual powers in new ways.

(Ellit and Mandell, 1995:16)

In the context of *Pulang* and feminist inclination, Leila can be considered as a radical female author but not as radical as Ayu Utami in her novel *Saman and Larung* where her feminine sexuality is very clear. Thus, the strength of the characters in *Pulang* and together with the elements of its sexuality strengthens the feminist inclination and the inclination gives a difference to *Pulang*. The male characters are defeated by the situation and the beneficiaries are the women who have new and tough spirit to undertake a new era that requires new players that were isolated by the autocratic politic power dominated by men. The defeat of the men in the novel is in conjunction with the downfall of Suharto's politic regime and the emergence of women denotes the appearance of new progressive voices whose existence had been denied or suppressed before. The exiled men were replaced by women who were braver to test not only the constricted politic ideology but also get rid of the constricting patriarchal culture and celebrate the culture of liberalization.

CONCLUSION

Pulang bring about the history of Indonesia in two situations, i.e. before and after 1998. Before 1998, Indonesia underwent an era of the New Order that has control in all the segments of life such as politic and writing. However, after 1998 or post-“New Order” everything is more open and daring including discussing the weakness of politic and the freedom in writing. This situation is emphasized in *Pulang* that talks about the lives of the group exiled and tortured mentally due to the voracity of politic. Before 1998, the literary works of the politic exiles were not allowed to be marketed since they were said to be a threat to the safety of the country. *Pulang* denoted that the restriction has been overcome with the permission of the Indonesian government post-Suharto. Following the compact technique of show and tell about the tribulations and the audaciousness of the exiles in facing the politic suppression, Leila develops the female power in designing the schemes of their lives. The manifestation of feminism i.e., feminine struggle for the women against men are proven through the roles of female characters such as Surti and Lintang. They not only influence the decision made the men but also took their places, as what Lintang did towards her father and her

cousin, Rama. The setting of the post-downfall of Suharto's regime 1998 in the novel and also outside of the novel becomes a setting to release the political clutch on the exiles group and the emergence of dominant female roles in confronting the tough politic ideology and celebrate the liberal and courageous feminist culture.

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