



HEADING TO ENLIGHTENMENT IN SHARON M. DRAPER'S NOVEL *COPPER SUN*

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ABSTRACT

Skripsi ini merupakan analisis dari novel *Copper Sun* (2006) karya oleh *Sharon M. Draper*. Permasalahan yang dibahas adalah bagaimana usaha karakter untuk keluar dari perbudakan manusia dengan menimbulkan kesadaran, menggali pengetahuan dan kemampuan diri. Permasalahan dari analisis ini adalah sejauh mana karakter mampu mengungkap isu menuju perubahan (*Heading to Enlightenment*), serta seberapa besar fungsi elemen-elemen fiksiseperti karakter, seting, dan konflik berpengaruh untuk memperlihatkan topik tersebut. Tujuan dari analisis ini adalah untuk mengungkapkan sejauh mana karakter mampu menunjukkan isu menuju perubahan, serta untuk mengetahui peran seting, dan plot dalam membantu karakter untuk mencapai tujuannya. Teori yang digunakan dalam analisis ini adalah konsep *knowledge* dari Jiang dan Patricia Collin, dan *The Ego* dari Freud. Metode yang dipakai adalah *text-based interpretation* dan *context-based interpretation*. Hasil dari kajian ini memperlihatkan perubahan dari diri karakter yang dilakukan dengan cara menggali kemampuan diri, dengan kata lain mereka mampu bertahan dan mencari celah untuk melarikan diri dari perbudakan manusia.

Kata kunci: *heading/head to, enlightenment, awareness, knowledge, and skill*

A. INTRODUCTION

In the periods of enslavement, black people were the victims of the system called slavery. Slavery is a legal system to create domestic laborers to work in the plantations and cottons. It is also called racial discrimination, in this case between races; white (superior) and black (inferior). The aim of the slavery is *dehumanization* which means the process of changing human being into a property. The Africans were brought from Africa to be sold to Europe by the hand of the slave traders; they were kidnapped, tortured, forced, and starved. They even had no choice to be treated as human. Moreover, at that time women were the victims who got physical oppression (sexual oppression and harsh treatment) and mental oppressions.

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The reality of slavery was barbaric, violent, and brutal. Furthermore, in the dark period of slavery, the slaves were the owner's property. Many young women were forced to fulfill colonials' desire. They had to endure the physical violence that might kill them. However, there were several women who had awareness and begun to develop their strength. Those women who fought and resisted were the pioneer in bringing good changes of the women slaves' life. Their efforts can be seen as heading the female slaves to enlightenment. Enlightenment is a term also known as *Aufklarung* which means a movement from the dark periods. Thus, by developing their awareness many women began to think the important of knowledge and they seek a chance to escape. They decided to be the survivors in order to change their lives and get freedom.

These days, the term slavery no longer exists, but the acts actually continue to take place up to now. The victims of slavery in the past were mostly African but today the objects of traffickers can be anyone around the world who wants a work instantly and the word 'slave' has been euphemistically changed into laborer. Ima Matul Maesaroh is the leading figure of woman these days who heads to the enlightenment. Ima was the victim of human trafficking and an Indonesian woman laborer in United States. Since 2012 she has become staff in CAST (Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking). In addition, she becomes the representative speaker of American president Barack Obama and one of the speakers who speak up about human trafficking.

Sharon M. Draper tends to talk about history of slaves and the problems African Americans face in a predominantly white society, specifically stereotyping of black males. *Copper Sun* received the 2007 *Coretta Scott King Literature award*, was named as one of the Top Ten Historical Fiction Books for Youth by Booklist was nominated for the 2007 *NAACP Image Award for Literature*, and received the *Ohioana Award for Young Adult Literature*. Her works is not only about an art of writing but also about history of life. She dedicates herself to get the perfect result for her novels and she well-deserved.

A novel entitled *Copper sun* (2006) written by Sharon M. Draper reflects the ways characters heading to enlightenment. Heading to enlightenment means the efforts done by the human with all their ability in order to achieve their own pretension and goals. It is represented by three characters, Amari, Afi and Polly. The first character, Amari, is a black teenage girl who has been captured and sold by the slave trader. The second character, Afi, is an African woman who has been enslaved for such a long time. As the enslaved African woman, both of them must to face the tortures and despairing conditions. Third, Polly, is a white girl who works to pay the debt of her family. The misery of life triggers her to work harder to get a better life and an equal status. They aware of the conditions they face. It is the reason they decide to resist and struggle. In this analysis they are heading to enlightenment by developing their awareness, excavating knowledge and skills.

There are two indications that the characters do to arouse their awareness. First, it can be seen in their spirit and optimism. The first and the second character believe in efforts and they think more about struggle rather than pain. They believe of the decision they make. They have confidence to see freedom as their future. Second is bravery. They show their desire to learn to gain their strength.

They choose to survive rather than surrender. Furthermore, third character realizes her own condition that is the reason of her effort to change her life. Thus, they decide to do the real escaping action from the owner.

There are two other tools are needed in heading to enlightenment, they are knowledge and skills. First character, she excavates her knowledge by learning. She observes people and the language. Second she learns how to trick the slave buyers. She steals information that might help her to find the way to escape. Second character uses her knowledge and skills to help the new comer slaves and motivates them to survive. However, third character uses her skills as a servant to get a good impression. She uses strategies to reach her purpose to get social status. She collaborates with others. She approaches valuable people to get good connection.

The analysis of *Copper Sun (2006)* that focused on analyzing about heading to the enlightenment has not been found yet. However, there are some studies that relate to this analysis and give contribution and inspiration in analyzing this novel. The first analysis by Nanda Silima (2013) entitled "*Subjugation: A study of the women characters in Khalid Hosseini's and Arundhati Roy's novels*". The analysis is about the exploitation and discrimination of women in the patriarchal social systems of the Afghan society and the Indian subcontinent as delineated in the novels of Khalid Hosseini *A Thousand Splendid Suns* and Arundhati Roy *The God of Small Things*. The focus of the study is the female characters share the common bond of subjugation and miserably struggle for their survival. Her analysis is related to the concept hierarchy of sexes by Beauvoir (1997) shows that sex and gender are two different things. The result of the analysis is the characters struggle and search for their identities through acts of transgression even though both the characters did not success bring tangible change in society.

On the other hand, Ezenwanebe (2010) entitled *Issues in Women's Liberation Struggles in Contemporary Nigeria: A Study of Ezeigbo's Hands that Crush Stone*. This analysis focuses on reconstructing the image of women characters in the hope of freeing them from the bonds of social oppression, making them visible and powerful enough in modern, democratic Nigeria. This analysis used the concepts from Marxist and feminist perspectives by Laily Philip (2006) that is the critical perspective and social movement that revolves around the eradication of sexism, the dismantling of patriarchy and the elimination of violence against women. The result of the analysis is female protagonists seek emancipation outside the confines of traditional culture, dismantling both man and oppressive cultural traditions on their way to freedom.

The study reveals how the characters (women) struggle to free themselves from slavery. In this analysis, that actions are called heading to enlightenment. The term Enlightenment itself is usually related to the era of Enlightenment which means the symbol of movement. The correlation between the term enlightenment in this analysis can be seen in the use of knowledge as the essential requirement. Moreover, the purpose is *liberal* or in this analysis use word freedom.

Heading to enlightenment refers to the changing process of human being with all their ability and will to achieve their own pretension and goals. Awareness, knowledge, and skills are the requirements in heading to the enlightenment. First,

the concept of knowledge based on feminist perspective is considered in this analysis. Jiang (2005, p 56) says that knowledge claims are made from no particular time, location, circumstance, and perspective, and therefore they are true in all situations and from all perspectives. In addition, Collins in her book entitled *Black Feminist Thought* (2002, p 9), knowledge is essential to Black women's survival, they constructed knowledge of self emerges from the struggle to replace controlling images with self-defined knowledge deemed personally important. Second, skill is an attempt to explain a large part of the psychological transformation. It focuses primarily on cognition and intelligence, and it deals with aspect of learning and problem solving Fischer (1980; 477).

An action in heading the enlightenment by personal are related to *The Ego* by Freud, one of the three abstract categories of mind. According to Freud in BarbaraEngler(2013,p,284) states that the ego operates according to the reality principle;that is, it attempts to help the id get what it wants by judging the differencebetween real and imaginary. In addition, Wicklund (2001) says when people focus attention on the self (aware), they compare the self with standards, try harder to meet standards, and show stronger emotional responses to meeting or failing to meet a standard. Thus, the ego and awareness are correlated each other in constructing the courage of someone to step forward in heading to enlightenment. While the awareness is the capacity to take oneself as the object of thought, the ego helps the person satisfy needs through reality.

There are two components related to self-awareness, there are self control and motivation. According to Craighead (2004), *self control* is the essential component of philosophy related to classic terms such as choice, free will, determinism, and self. In addition, Freud in Engler (2013 p, 309) says that motivations are driven by survival needs; it refers to what moves us to act a particular way.

B. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The analysis of novel *Copper Sun* is done through text and context-based interpretation. It is done by analyzing fictional devices, such as; character, plot (conflicts) and setting. Characters and conflicts are used to evoke the way of heading to enlightenment by analyzing character's reactions toward the conflict. Then, the setting deals with the circumstances and atmosphere. These elements are analyzed based on how characters are struggling and heading to enlightenment. In addition, the Feminist perspective of knowledge and Freud's concept about the ego are giving contribution in analyzing the *Copper Sun* novel.

C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

spoke it. Because at that time she are not able to produce to words to showed the adjective This section reveals the issue of *Heading to Enlightenment* by analyzing the fictional devices such as character, plot (conflict) and setting. There are three characters in this analysis; Amari, Afi and Polly. They are the victims of the slave trader; they are forced to live as slaves. They are heading to enlightenment which means they decide to survive and struggle by developing their awareness, excavating knowledge and skills.

1. Developing the Awareness

The awareness is the key to increase characters' power. Optimism, bravery, faith and determination are the requirement the characters need to develop their awareness. There are several indications the characters do related to the actions to prove the signs. The characters think more about struggle rather than pain. They trust the efforts and decision they make. They seek a chance rather than surrendered. They have confidence to see freedom as their future even though they are haunted by the tortures and miseries. They decide to take the real action to escape from the owner.

First character, Amari, is an optimistic person. She has lots of hope during despairing situations. She believes in efforts and refuses to give up. It is shown in the following quotation:

One night she whispered, "I cannot live like this, Amari. My parents, my sisters—all whom I love—are dead. I would rather die than be enslaved like this."

"Tirza, stop talking like that!" Amari whispered back. "We must live!"

"Why?" she asked dully.

"Because as long as we have life, we have hope!" Amari said fervently.

"Hope of what?"

"Escape, perhaps."

"You are a dreamer, Amari," Tirza told her quietly. "I have no dreams left." (p, 12)

The text above shows that the protagonist has awareness. She cannot let herself lose without doing any efforts. The setting of the text refers to the tense condition. The tense condition here means the miseries of the black women. They become the victims of the slave trader; they have to face the tortures, shackles, sorrows, and humiliation. The inhuman treatment can cause the death of the slave. The external conflict of being slave, then, causes internal conflict to the character. She begins to think what she is going to do and find ways to survive. By motivating others, she aims to convince herself that the decision she makes is the right things to do. The pain motivates her that she cannot let the tortures continues forever. She has strong intention to see freedom as a purpose so that she tries harder to achieve it. The optimism of the protagonist can be seen in her sentence "*Because as long as we have life, we have hope!*". The utterance shows that she sees the pain as a challenge, when the protagonist talks she show her strong confidence, the sentence with an exclamation (!) shows the rising tone which means she is optimist that she can escape and seek a chance to be the survivor.

The second character, Afi, has faith within her. It can be seen in her belief. Bravery and determination come as long as they believe. A faithful person will think neat and rational. It is shown in this quotation below:

“Do you think they were killed?”

“No. They had value. They did not die. At least not physically,” she added.

“Why were you not sold?” Amari asked her.

“I caught the attention of the leader of the guards.” She paused. “He sends for me to come to him at night.”

At first Amari didn’t understand, but suddenly she realized what the woman meant. Amari looked at her in horror. “You mean he . . . ?”

“Yes, child. It is terrible. But I am allowed to bathe. I get extra food rations. I do not allow myself to think while I am with him. I hate him. But I will live. My spirit is too strong to die in a place like this.”
(p, 16)

The quotation above shows the terrible condition of the women who become the victims of the slave traders. The word *value* means the slaves are no longer human but they are things that have price. They are sold to the white who wanted to use them to work at the plantation. They are treated like commodity. They have to obey the owner, follow the order and the rules. They are treated like object; a thing that they can control and play, a thing that can satisfy them. If they are not obedient they will get tortures even worse. They have to face physical violence such as starvation, illness, weakness, shackle, force and sexual oppression. However, the sentence “*But I will live. My spirit is too strong to die in a place like this*” reflects the character’s spirit. Her spirit restrains her anger to reckless and it gains her power not to lose to inhuman people called the captors.

Third character is white girl, Polly. She has different way in showing her awareness. She has shown her optimism in working hard to change her life. She tries to hide her pain. She makes decision be equal like others. It can be seen in this quotation:

After the deaths of her parents she’d lived almost like a prisoner in the rat-infested attic of a dirt farmer named Jeremy Carton. He rarely spoke to her except to give her orders. He had a wife and a daughter, both of them thick of mind and body, who’d ignored her as well, except when the pigsty had to be cleaned or the manure from the horses needed to be collected for fertilizer. Polly longed for a kind word, a loving touch, but she kept a stony distance from everyone. The Carton family never saw her cry, not even when her parents died, never heard a word of complaint from her. She knew they thought her to be cold and unfeeling. (p, 51)

The quotation above shows the strong side of the character in heading her goals. She is mature enough to think about life. She is taking the responsibility to lead her family. Moreover, she knows herself better than others. She develops herself to be a better person. The internal conflict shows the complicated problem she has faced during her youth life. She has to face the poverty which makes her becomes hard thinking person. She has been endured that problems all the time to make her realize the reality of life. She is not even cares about the pain that she has been faced but it motivates her to do anything to change her life. The reason she endures the pain alone is because she realizes her condition. She tries hard to get good impression from the owner and it is the opportunity to get close to her goal. She is straight forward to her goal and it is the indication of the awareness she has.

2. Excavating Knowledge and skills

The way characters excavate their knowledge and skills are different. First character, Amari, learns English. She learns the language of the captors. She uses that language to find information. She observes people around her to find fissure to escape. The second character, Afi, learns how to save herself in the pressure condition; she tricks the buyers. She tries to get the owner's attention to save herself. She separates her pain and her desire to resist which means she knows how to endure the pain while keeps the spirit within. Third character, Polly, tries her best to make good impression in order to get attention from the authority to get what she wants. She uses strategies to reach her purpose that is getting social status. She approaches valuable people to get profit and good connection.

The first character trusts that knowledge can help her in the way of heading to enlightenment. She carries black women thought about knowledge as the essential thing to keep survives. One of her ways to excavate her knowledge is by learning the language that used by white people. It is shown in this quotation below:

“Knowledge of the language of the white men was a powerful weapon that she could possibly use one day to her advantage. Coldly and thoughtfully, she listened and learned.” (p, 31)

The quotation above shows that she is thoughtful person. She has eagerness and intention to learn new thing. Moreover, knowledge is measuring to know the level of awareness the person has. Knowledge changes the mindset or the way a person thinks. Language is a tool to communicate and it gives the speaker prestige. Language helps people to interact with others. She sees a chance in language. Even though slaves are forced to speak in English but the character sees it is an opportunity to learn. She has willing to learn it before she is forced to use it. There is behavioral and custom in language. She learns the way people speak and use that language. She thinks that she knows the pattern of the way people thinking if she knows the language. In other words, knowledge is a weapon and it is the key to get information. Learning about language to her means learning about her struggle; she knows what she is going to face and do. She describes knowledge as an advantage weapon to get out from the terrible miseries.

The second character, Afi, uses her skills as her defense from the tortures that can be seen in the quotation:

“I caught the attention of the leader of the guards.” She paused. “He sends for me to come to him at night.”

At first Amari didn't understand, but suddenly she realized what the woman meant. Amari looked at her in horror. “You mean he . . . ?”

“Yes, child. It is terrible. But I am allowed to bathe. I get extra food rations. I do not allow myself to think while I am with him. I hate him. But I will live. My spirit is too strong to die in a place like this.” (p, 16)

The quotation above shows the sexual harshness they get. The setting here refers to the inhuman treatment, tortures are even worse at the jail of slaves where they are brutally forced to serve the slave trader. She is forced to obey the order. However, she uses her skills by trying to get attention of the leader in order to maintain herself from the weakness condition. She is not afraid to sacrifice herself to keep her faith live even though she has been treated like an object. Woman has to behave like toys while the buyers come. If she is not obeying the orders she will get hurt even more. Moreover, she is being shackled and sold but the traders still use her to fulfill their wild desire. The internal conflict refers to the battle of the humiliation as woman. She suffers herself to the authority while she has to think how to survive from these terrible miseries.

The third character, Polly, uses her knowledge and skills to get the good impression from the owner. It can be seen in the following quotation:

“Well,” Polly said with a look of amazement on her face. “I'm just going to talk to you as if you understand and teach you new words as we get to them. I imagine the sooner I complete this task, the sooner I can be assigned some more respectable duties, like sewing or serving the lady of the house.” (p, 55)

The text shows she is trying to impress the owner (Mr. Derby). The setting here refers to the different way of life between high status and low status. She uses her knowledge to teach another woman (Amari) English like the owner said. She is doing her responsibility as a teacher to teach an African slave in order to make the owner impressed. She sees the chance to get closer to her goals to get a better place. She uses her knowledge and skills to teach to get promotion to serve the owner. This is also the indication that the character seeks an opportunity to change her life..

D. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The novel entitled *Copper Sun* (2006) by Sharon M. Draper reveals the issue of heading to Enlightenment. Heading to Enlightenment means the way characters decide to struggle with their abilities in order to reach their goals. It is

exposed through text-based and context-based interpretation by focusing on fictional devices such as character, setting and conflicts. The dominant setting refers to the tense and painful condition of the enslaved people in the period of the slavery. They decide to struggle their life to survive even though they are living in the atmosphere of terror and horror. Meanwhile, the dominant conflict here is external conflict. For them, the tortures are a whip to survive, which is the reason they are never thought about surrendered. The key in heading to enlightenment is awareness. By having awareness, they can improve their knowledge and skills. Every human being is able to decide the right way to run a life. Races, religions, and status are not obstacles to surrender easily. As human being, we are able to choose our own way, develop our self to be better. No matter what we have and what we face as long as the spirit and power are surroundings we can change the future. In conclusion, every human being is able to head to enlightenment as long as they have awareness and willingness to learn.

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