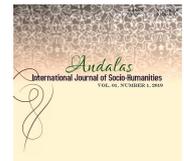




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Article

### Peranakan Chinese's Literature in Doenia Baroe Magazine (1930)

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#### A B S T R A C T

*Doenia Baroe* Magazine (1930) is a press media of Peranakan Chinese that contains a lot of literature from various genre. The purpose of this study is to explain themes, forms and orientation of Peranakan Chinese's literature, so that might explain author's idea of literary works. Literature from *Doenia Baroe* Magazine has become the overview of history of literature that written by Peranakan Chinese that use historical methodology. Chinese literature in *Doenia Baroe* Magazine are influenced by the identity tendency as Chinese people which brings out rendering literary works. Literature from *Doenia Baroe* Magazine are adaptive to the modernity of colonial environment without needed to remove their ancestral heritage. Literary works in *Doenia Baru* Magazine has various genres such as short story, feuilleton and poem that implicitly show the author's new world. Peranakan Chinese's literature has not just become the social reflection but also implies political identity of the era. The result of this study, the beginning of chinese's literature is relevant with mentality of the era that affects the author's idea.

#### INTRODUCTION

Problems of Peranakan Chinese's social communities is a common phenomenon in Indonesia. As a minority, they often described as a group of merchant. That description has been attached to Chinese group in Indonesia. Nevertheless, press media and literature are another important activities that Peranakan Chinese's group did in Indonesia. Peranakan Chinese's literature are relatively rare in Indonesia modern literature studies. Peranakan Chinese's literature in low Malay language has taken part in Indonesia literature from *BalaiPustaka*, *PoejanggaBaroe*, and *Roman Pergaoelan* generations. Previous studies on the development of literature in Indonesia have been written by researchers, Ajip Rosidi, "An Overview of the History of Indonesian Literature". This book describes the history of the development of modern Indonesian literature which is divided into two periods, namely the period of birth and the period of development.

Indonesian modern literature begins with the work of Balai Pustaka genre. Literature, it increasingly develops with the publication of the works of Poejangga Baroe.

Keith Folcher "New Poet: Literature and Nationalism in Indonesia". This book talks about New Poet as a magazine and genre of modern Indonesian literature. Pujangga Baru's works are the embodiment of Indonesian nationalism, and the influence of Western-style literature is exemplified through poetry and romance.

The growth of Indonesian literature was also written by Sudarmoko "Roman Pergaoelan". Sudarmoko explained that the genre of Roman Pergaoelan appeared as part of Indonesian literature. Roman Pergaoelan tells about the situation of the age that was expanded through the romance of young people.

The writing of the growth of Chinese literature in general has been summarized in a book written by Claudine Salmon that focuses on "Early Indonesian Literature: The Contributions of the Chinese". This book describes the literary translation of novels originating from China in the 19th and 20th centuries. Claudine in his book also explained the development of Chinese literary and peranakan Chinese goals in Indonesia.

Marcus A.S and Pax Benedanto "Chinese Malay Literature and Indonesian Nationality". This book wrote works in Malay written by peranakan Chinese writers in the 20th century which were widely read by the Dutch East Indies community at that time.

Peranakan Chinese have a significant role in the history of Indonesia. However, their activity buried as the times change and the Anti-Chinese sentiment evolve between Indonesian people, specifically in West Sumatera. Those sentiment restricted Peranakan Chinese's literature to develop in 20<sup>th</sup> century. So, it leads to a question about what Peranakan Chinese's literature look like in West Sumatera on colonial era ?

This article main focus is Peranakan Chinese's literature from *Doenia Baroe* Magazine in 1930. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, Peranakan Chinese started to involve in press printing. The emergence of newspaper has created a space for Peranakan Chinese to show their life reality and their activity especially in literature. It's been said that they are indeed one of the pioneer of Indonesia modern literature, where their literary works has been arise before *Balai Pustaka* modern literature get published. (Leo Suryadinata: 103).

*Doenia Baroe* Magazine has published a lot of literary works from Peranakan Chinese authors in various genres, such as short story, *feuilleton* and poem. Beside of that, there are also literary works from non Peranakan Chinese authors in the magazine. Through literature, Peranakan Chinese authors describe mentality of the era that they have to face in colonial environment.

The question above outlined how Peranakan Chinese's literature are like in West Sumatera especially Padang on colonial era, so that can explain the orientation of Peranakan Chinese author in literature.

## **METHOD**

Literature from *Doenia Baroe* Magazine has become the overview of history of literature that written by Peranakan Chinese that use the four stages of historical methodology. First stage, heuristic which means to collect data from archive or interview. The second stage is source criticism. Criticism is used to criticize the data collected. The criticism will provide authenticity through comparison of information on research topics. Third is interpretation this stage is used

to interpret the information obtained and classify it into valid sources, so as to obtain imagination about Chinese literature in the colonial period in *Doenia Baroe* magazine which will then be written in the form of writing at the Historiography stage, and forth is historiography. this stage will be carried out the writing of the results of research on Chinese literature in West Sumatra that can be useful for the study of Chinese literature, especially for the science of history.

## DISCUSSION

Peranakan Chinese often described as the minority of merchant. It can't be denied that Chinese came to Indonesia to trade at the dealers here. In general they came from Southern China, such as Fujien, Amoy, Kanton, etc. It was grouped by their dialect that is Hokkian, Hakka, Kwangtung, etc (Melly G. Tan: 12). Some of the merchant settled down and had children in Indonesia.

In West Sumatera, Chinese has been trading in Pariaman since 13<sup>th</sup> century (freek Colombijn: 39), they started to stay here while VOC began their trading activity in West Sumatera. The number of Peranakan Chinese increased when colonial government occupied West Sumatera. Dutch East Indies government grouped Chinese with eastern foreign people such as Arabian and Indian.

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, Chinese began to publish their own newspaper. This were supported by a lot of Chinese that has their own printing machine. Tjoa Tjoan Lok as an example, he had the biggest publishing company in Surabaya. The printing machine was purchased from European publishing company. Beside Tjoa ,Lie Kim Hok, Tjoe Toei Ijang, Oeij Thaij Hin, etc also had their own printing machine (Ahmad Adam 1986: 54).

In West Sumatera, some of the publishers print newspaper of the Chinese themself. For example, De Volharding publisher owned by Lim Ang Kam, Lie Djoe Soean, and Lie Tjeng Djit that had been bought from European. There were also Ien Soe Kiok, Nieuw Drukkerij Tan Giok Lan publishers. Those publishing company were located in Padang. There was also Djiet Sen publishing company in Padang (*ibid*: 86). This company was the one that published *Doenia Baroe* Magazine.

In early 20<sup>th</sup> century, newspaper that use Malay language were developed and published by social communitiess such as The Colonial, Peranakan Chinese and local people. The Peranakan Chinese's newspaper that published either by themself or by collaboration with the natives had became the media's editor to declare the importance of the circulated newspaper. In general, Peranakan Chinese press were published for commercial or socioculture importance, eventhough some of it published for the sake of nationalism and literary world (Salmon, 2010: 87-89).

Peranakan Chinese's literature growth in newspaper that they had, enabling various genres in various orientations. This thing happened because local genre such as *Balai Pustaka*, *Poejangga Baroe*, *Roman Pergaoelan* shut Peranakan Chinese opportunities to make literary works. *Balai Pustaka* is the first genre of Indonesian modern literature created by the Dutch to overcome the "wild" and uncontrollable reading that can disorganize governmental system (Ajip Rosidi,1986:8-9). *Poejangga Baroe* used by the native to strive for literature's sake of local people as a form of nationalism (Keith Foulcher:5). Meanwhile *Roman Pergaoelan* contained story for the local youngsters at that time being.

Peranakan Chinese's literature development affected by the authors orientation in literature. On the early period of 18<sup>th</sup> century, literary works mostly came from the rendering literature of classic Chinese stories. On the second and third decade of 20<sup>th</sup> century, Peranakan Chinese's

literature dominated with authors that open up to non-Mainland Chinese ideas and culture, especially local and western cultures. These authors are from the moderate and adaptive group. They accept elements from non-Mainland China, especially locality as the part of new culture and identity creation. Besides, they refused western elements, but they receive technological advancement of The westerns.

Kwe Tek Hoay as one of the moderate and adaptive Peranakan Chinese author, has taken part the role in Indonesian literature development with his original and rendering literary works. He created a blending literature. Novels, dramas, and poem that he made describe the reality from people around his environment. Although most of his ideas accentuate Chinese culture, Kwee Tek Hoay still adapt his story with Dutch East Indies people (Ensiklopedia, 2003: 61). Those idea also written by Peranakan Chinese authors on *Doenia Baroe* Magazine published in West Sumatera.

*Doenia Baroe* written by Chinese, natives and Europeans that came from Java Island such as Surabaya, Batavia (Jakarta), Rengas Dengklok, Cirebon, Sumatera Island such as Padang and European based in Padang. This is consistent with the aim of *Doenia Baroe* “ada bersifat Liberaal, dengan halamannya terboeka goena golongan partij dan bangsa, teroetama boeat goenanja bangsa Asia rata-rata” (have the liberal quality, with the pages open for partij and races, especially for average Asian race ( *Doenia Baroe*, 1930: 1). This newspaper open for all parties who wanted to write in *Doenia Baroe*.

The readers of literary works in *Doenia Baroe* are mostly Chinese, we can see it from the subscription payment of this magazine. The readers from natives and Europeans are relatively low. The marketing networks of this magazine include Java, Sumatera and Singapore. This networks shown from advertisement published in every edition of *Doenia Baroe* magazine. The newspaper published for Chinese people’s interest in colonial government system.

It can be said that *Doenia Baroe* was a literature magazine, because literary works has a relatively greater portion than another discourse and advertisement. Literary works in *Doenia Baroe* implicitly exposed the authors view about the mentality of their era.

Literary works in feuilleton, short story, novel, and poem forms, became one of the media to reflect the social mentality, culture and politics from a group. Study of Indonesian social history search for the prove of Indonesian mentality through literary works. That literary works show the mentality condition and the response of society to the change around them.

*Doenia Baroe* magazine published every month and to provide literary works not only written by Peranakan Chinese but also by another community. There are 15 Chinese authors with 16 literary works in a form of *feuilletons*, short stories, *rechauffes* and poems.

**Table 1. Chinese authors**

No	Title	Genre	Storyline
1	Sam Tauw Bong (One Grave of the Three Heads)	Feuilleton (adaptations)	The story tells of an era in China, about revenge of a hermit child to a greedy king who had killed his father.
2	Achirnja Toch Beroentoeng	Feuilleton	An educated girl trapped by modern European societies that made her fall to the lowest point of her life.
3	Tjinta jang tida terbalas	Feuilleton	Set in the life of Europeans who are full of fun and modernity

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4	Kaloe Tida Djodo Atawa Menjesal Kemudian Tida Genanja	Feuilleton	Tells about education obtained by a Chinese through Western schools
5.	Kiang Thaij Kong Kiang Tjoe Ge Toeroen dari Koen Loen San	Feuilleton	The story of Kiang Tjoe Ge who failed to become a god and lived like a normal human.
6	Badjingan Bertopeng	Short Story	A Chinese girl who easily believes in someone's kindness, but she is not lucky.
7	Siapa Lebih Tjerdik	Short Story	Tells about a European who likes to swindle, but eventually arrested by detectives.
8	Djangan Poetoes Harapan	Poetry	A person's feelings for the world he faces
9	Oh Nasib	Short Story	A young Javanese Chinese student studying in Singapore to pursue knowledge at a better place
10	Gadis Cordelia Dengen Itoe Bangsat	Short Story	The story of a girl with a person who was visited by someone thought to be stealing her family's valuables
11	Kauw The Thian Tjoet Sie	Feullteon (adaptations)	The story of a monkey king who escorted the holy monk to the west
12	Sair Petasan	Poetry	The meaningless vanity of a luxurious life but not used for more meaningful good as if firecrackers after being burned and being thrown away
13	Varia	Poetry	The importance of Dutch language education
14	Pergaoelan dan Kedjoejoeran	Poetry	Honesty is the key to a better life
15	The Beauty of Padang	Short Story	Tells the life of Chinese people who live in the city of Padang
16	Boengahkoe	Poetry	A woman's dream

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From the standpoint of content written by Peranakan Chinese writers themselves were preferred to modernity in the 1930s especially in their community's education and style at the time. The importance of education for Chinese people can be seen in opinions about schools provided by the *Tiong Hoa Hwe Koan* (THHK) community (Ibid: 24) reviewing the Philosophy of Education (Ibid: 8) written by Huang Tsei Lung, and Dutch schools illustrated in the literary works published in the *Doenia Baroe* magazine, such as *Kalaoe Tida Djodo* written by Ong Kim Tiat & Jo Boen Ek, and others.

*Doenia Baroe* magazine is influenced by the spirit of Chinese nationalism. This spirit is summarized in their published discourse, such as *Orang Tiong Hoa Dengan Pembesarnja*, *Hak Di Pertoean Di Tiongkok* and *Sui Tsi Jiu Shen*. All three discourses describe China's struggle for independence and the immense role of Dr. Sun Yat Sen in Kuo Min Tang. They also uphold the noble values of konghuchu which are explained in *Pokok Keadjikan* on published edition.

The sense of attachment of peranakan Chinese to their ancestral lands can also be seen in some translated literary works published in *Doenia Baroe* magazine, such as *Sam Taw Bong* by Chiang, *Kiang Taij Kong* and *Kauw Tjhe Thian Tjoet Sie* by *Saiuw Erl Thong*. Through the discourse and literature in *Doenia Baroe*, Chinese writers try to introduce Chinese culture to Peranakan Chinese communities in Indonesia.

Literary works in the *Doenia Baroe* magazine illustrate the mentality of times that occurred in the environment of the Dutch East Indies community. Modernity in the importance of education, the development of the city structure, and the progress of thought are contained in the literary genre published in the *Doenia Baroe* magazine. Literary genre contained in *Doenia Baroe* magazine is short story, feuilleton, and poetry. Works such as *Kaloe Tida Djodo Atawa Menjesal Kemudian Tida Goenanja* feuilleton, tells the story of education obtained by a Chinese through Western schools. Because at that time the Dutch language was very important to keep up with the modernity of the times. In the *Varia* poem, it is explained the importance of learning Dutch to interact daily.

Know the wider world in the following verse

“Varia”

By: Lentjiakang

*Berbahasa Balanda dengan Kenalan*

*Zeg, vrien it is nu terang boelan*

*Ik rasa prettig met jij als mijn toean*

*Trowen volgens dahoeleoe masa*

*Papa en mama jang poenja koeasa*

*Ouderwestche adat kita soeda roeba*

*Gadis and boedjang, nona & baba boleh berdansa*

*Antwoord si boedjang tjap kaoem moeda*

*Ik bitjacara Hollandsch, bahasa Blanda*

*Mij ontwikkild Koerang tiada*

*Met European tiada berbeda.* ( 8<sup>th</sup> edition, p.19)

The importance of education in 1930 is shown in the *Oh Nasib* short story which tells the story of Javanese youth who studied in Singapore to pursue more advanced knowledge than in Java. Aside from education, the progress of the city structure as part of modernity is told in *The Beauty of Padang* short story which tells places that are often visited by young people, such as the cinema and playgrounds. Furthermore, society is also a form of modernity in which everyone is free to interact.

The thoughts of the Peranakan Chinese authors in the *Doenia Baroe* magazine is also moderately adaptive, although they accept western modernity, they do not diminish the values and teachings of their ancestors. Their sense of attachment to their ancestors in China still exists. In the *Doenia Baroe* magazine published the adaptation and translation stories such as *Sam Tauw Bong* (One Grave of the Three Heads) that tells of an era in China, when the revenge of a hermit child to a greedy king who had killed his father. There was also *Radja Mendjelma* feuilleton that tells a story of a monkey who escorted the monk to the west to take the holy book.

In addition to Chinese works there are also works outside their community. There are 8 authors for literary works outside from Peranakan authors, consists of 2 feuilleton such as *Korban Boedy* by Fakir kaja, and *Perempuan Toerkey Dalam Harem* by Sadibey. A short story titled *Si Nona Eilok and Si Tar-Tar Djelek*. 7 parts of the poem such as *Kerontjong Sumatra* by Firdaus, *Apa Yang Akoe Pikir* by A. True Love, *Nina-nina Bobok Sumatra* by Firdaus, *Nasehatnja Satoe Saoedaraby* Biang Lala, *Doeloe Sekarang* by L. Van F.D.K, *Seroeanby* Firdaus, *kalau Kau Kajaby* S.F.D.K, *Oh Itoe Seritiby* Mariano F.D.K. and a fairytale titled *Raiko Memboenoeh Siloeman Djahat* by Ta'anama.

## CONCLUSIONS

Peranakan Chinese in West Sumatra created a space for themselves to show their existence. They formed a distinctive character. The press that they published either in collaboration with local or colonial communities was another way for them to blend in with the social life environment of the Dutch East Indies. Literature became a new world for the Peranakan Chinese community to show their existence in dilemmatic self-identification. Literature genre which has various orientations becomes a reflection of the world desired by Peranakan Chinese in one living entity in the same area The *Doenia Baroe* magazine became a literary magazine that published literary works to illustrate the modernity of society in 1930. The publication of these literary works became a forum for authors to express their thoughts to the general public. Through literature they show how the Chinese lived in a colonial environment but did not forget the cultural identity of their ancestors. Literature became a new path for Peranakan Chinese to show their identity.

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