
Book Review: *[R]evolusi Sastra di Era Digital: Perspektif Historis dan Teoretis*

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ABSTRACT

The digital era is a time when almost all areas of life have been assisted by digital technology. It is also interpreted as the emergence of digital technology, which replaces technologies previously used by humans, such as mechanics and electronics analogy. There has been a profusion of digital businesses under the tremendous effect of the internet and digital technology, including cloud computing, virtual reality, mobile devices, and IoTs. The digital age has profound implications for society and the economy since technology is more knowledge-based. In *(R)evolusi Sastra di Era Digital: Perspektif Historis dan Teoretis*, Ida Rochani Adi, the author, captures the lament of a scientific discipline facing the dilemma of technological change. From a theoretical and historical perspective, this book offers a framework for responding to developments in the digital world of literature, which causes the dynamic understanding of literary works depending on the angle from which the literary work is interpreted. Not only explaining views, thoughts, and theories that have previously developed regarding literary works and criticism, social sciences, humanities, cultural studies, and media, but this book also offers thought, reflection, and development of literary works' ideas in the digital world's frenetic development.

Keywords: *digital communication; historical and theoretical perspectives; literary revolution*

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INTRODUCTION

The 21st-century human civilization and culture are going through a number of dynamics changes that involve numerous contestations and upheavals in an attempt to improve the world or identify what is ideal (Adi, 2023, p. vii). Because a better world leads to an ideal, it is based on consensus and shared goals. A manifestation of this is the birth of cultural products from various cultures that contain certain values. Along with the changes and development of human civilization, the values that have been developed are gradually undergoing dynamic reconstruction and reformulation. Adi, referring to the history of revolutions in social systems in world civilization, stated that the era of digital communication as one of the rapidly developing values of civilization is currently in Industrial Revolution 5.0, which can be seen from various digital platforms and applications.

One of the dynamic changes that has been derived from the advancement of technology cannot be denied. It disrupts the existing order within a scientific field (Adi, 2023, p. v). In her book, *(R)evolusi*

Sastra di Era Digital: Perspektif Historis dan Teoretis, Adi attempts to capture the problems that arise from the changes brought by technological development. Using theoretical and historical perspectives, this book provides the readers with a conceptual framework in response to the development of the digital world and its impact on the literary world. This development influences values that must undergo reconstruction. For example, quantity dominates quality, and the brand index replaces value in the ideological contestation for influence through digital media. The massive development of information technology has penetrated various aspects of life, including cultural products including literary works. In this digital era, meaning in literary works becomes more complex depending on which point of view or who gives the meaning. It causes the boundaries of literature and literature to become blurred.

The book was based on previously developed views, thoughts, and theories regarding literary works and criticism, social sciences, humanities, cultural studies, and media. The novelty of this

book is that it offers thought, reflection, and development of new ideas to the phenomenon of literary works in the frenetic development of the digital world. Substantially, this book is presented in four parts, each part related to the other. The first part explains literature as a cultural product and is explained in three sub-chapters. The first sub-chapter describes the relationship between literature and culture. The second sub-chapter presents thoughts and explanations regarding exclusive and inclusive literary issues. The third sub-chapter is entitled "Genealogy of Literary Studies," which explains the development of literary studies from a historical perspective. The second part talks about literature on the disintegration of boundaries. The third part reviews literary authenticity and hybridity. The fourth part discusses literary and digital issues. These four parts are discussed and explained from a historical and theoretical perspective. These two perspectives are intended so that readers understand the context of the discussion and how a thought and perspective correlate with other thoughts.

Reading this book is like reading a timeline of literary development from literary works

first recorded in Greek culture to the emergence of literature in the digital world. The delivery of literature has also changed along with cultural developments concerning media, starting from oral culture-written culture-print culture for the ease of dissemination of literary works because they have been mass-produced. In chapter one, Adi explained much about literature, both in relation to the tradition of studying literature and the difficulties in defining literature. According to Adi, once associated with beautiful language, literature has changed to simple language in the digital world because creativity and productivity no longer prioritize quality. Adi claims that this happens because there is a tendency for literature in the digital world to be popular literature rather than high literature and thus financially profitable. According to her, the existence of the digital world has caused literature, which was previously exclusive, to become more inclusive because everyone can become a writer. At the same time, the digital world also brings a lot of changes in the form of literary works such as dribble, drabble, sketch, film, graphic narrative, hybrid literature, and hypertext, even though the gap between high literature and popular

literature leads to the reluctance towards this new form of works as literature. In this chapter, Adi also provides the readers with an explanation on the theories and literary criticism. She gives examples of criticizing or researching literature, prevalent literature, and digital literature. In this case, Adi emphasizes the vital role of readers in controlling the construction of meaning.

How globalization and the digital world impact literature is discussed in chapter two. Because of globalization and the rapid development of the digital world, people can easily interact, and identity becomes more challenging to define (Adi, 2015). Globalization and the digital world provide an infinite space for new forms of literary works. Furthermore, literary studies develop into interdisciplinary studies under the influence of globalization. Adi gives an example of research in American Studies that grows more liberated, and a wider variety of material objects are available. The variety of research also appears in the kinds of research in which digital humanism tries to combine literature and digital worlds. It enables us to quantitatively conduct

literary research using a program, like Voyant (Adi, 2023). Moreover, research in digimodernism leads to a broader scope of literary criticism in relation to the dissemination, distribution, and accessibility of digital literary texts.

DISCUSSION

Discussing the idea of authenticity and literary hybridity, readers are taken to Immanuel Kant's statement, as viewed by Loudon (2011), which mentions the humanization of humans through literary works. Because of humanity's never-ending relationship with space-time, vulnerability, and fragility arise in humans, and literature ultimately re-integrates human feelings that have already fallen into fragmentation and fragmentation. It becomes why humans find their wholeness after listening to or enjoying literary works. It is because literature is a portrait of human life which is represented by the author's thoughts and represents a certain situation or era. The authenticity of a work arises from the author and the reader. It is not only the process of writing literature that goes through a process of reading and meaning or interpretation. However, reading is also an activity

that involves meaning or understanding of the text.

Information technology causes cultural transformation to form a global culture. Information technology raises pros and cons for the development of literature. Cultural products called local genius (local wisdom) are increasingly rare, including art and literature. Classical literature is no longer experienced as an orientation toward the values of the great past but is considered a cultural artifact (Noor, 2020). For modern literature, when an author recognizes new conventions and values in his mind, he has created hybrid literature when he perceives and creates them into literary works. Modern literature is hybrid literature, the result of crossing various languages and cultures, although hybrid literature is still rooted in the ethnic culture of its creators.

This thought is one of the foundations of the author of the book. Adi agrees that cultural hybridity, or the emergence of new identities and cultures, also impacts the development of literature. However, going further than that, this book presents a form of literary text resulting from technological developments and societal tastes. It leads to an

exciting thing stated by the author, from the idea of the evolution of literature due to the flow of mobility, transnationality, and digital communication, as an intriguing statement arises. Therefore, whether authentic or hybrid, literary texts also have increasingly unclear boundaries. The author then interprets that authenticity and hybridity constitute a dialogue of multiple interpretations in this global perspective. In this case, the authenticity and hybridity of a literary work complement and color each other.

It is the reader who has a role that is main and significant in this hybridization process. When literary texts have become a market commodity, then the text becomes open and spread. Therefore, the terms authenticity and hybridity in literary works will always be discourse. Barker (2002, p. 16) states that "cultures are not pure, authentic and locally bounded; Rather, they are syncretic and hybridized products of interactions across space". In this book, Adi also emphasizes how technology plays an important role in hybridity since it influences the offline and online markets. Talking about the market means talking about capital. Therefore, the

process of hybridizing literary texts clearly shows the encouragement of economic, psychological, social, technological, and globalization factors in the form and themes raised.

Although in the previous discussion, it has been mentioned that there are unclear borders among literary products, this book bravely outlines the differences and similarities between popular literature and traditional literature and their forms of hybridity. In its journey from noble or high-class literary texts, usually called serious literature or conventional literary texts, a literary text can be considered noble because of its literary elements, which are therefore considered to be of high quality. In contrast, popular literary works, which were previously regarded as lowly works because they were not of high quality, it turns out that many popular literary works are quality because popular literature written to meet people's tastes can contain high literary values—likewise, digital literature. Even though many literary researchers argue that this literary work is of low quality, this type of literature can fulfill literary rules and is also popular. The success of popular literature

is seen from its sales, and noble literature is seen from its literary awards. In contrast, the success of digital literature is seen from its success in reaching the number of people who access it.

Talking more about digital literature, this book offers more than just about its difference from noble and popular literature, but also contemporary ways to understand genres such as graphic narrative film, hybrid literature, hypertext, literature, television series, short films, sketches, cybertext, dribble and drabble literature along with their characterization. To be more specific, this book also explains what digital media is the platform for each genre. By reading this book, readers are introduced to contemporary literary products, especially digital literature. Interesting fact like how fanfiction with fanfiction.net, which is connected to anti-mainstream narrative and limited to specific communities, ranks first on the world's top websites in the arts and entertainment category.

Beside elaborating on genre and platform of literary genre in digital literature, the process of producing literary works is also explain by Adi in

this book. The process is not easy. The discussion of the modes of production of literary texts, especially digital texts, become one strong element in this book. What is interesting here is the struggle between literary texts, writers and publishers, especially when all three are intertwined with market tastes because after all production has an interest in the market. It seems complex, but the author of this book explains nicely the role of the market or reader in the production of literary works. Readers whose initial function was consumers, can then also change their role as producers who help build market tastes, and even act as literary critics or assessors of the quality of literary texts. Because quality assessment is determined subjectively and the assessment is based on entertainment factors, likes or dislikes, then if the assessment is first carried out imposed by literary critics, now ordinary people can judge the quality of literature based on literary standards constructed by themselves subjectively.

In discussing the mode of production further, Adi also talks about the mechanism of power in this book. Butler, Laclau, and Zizek (2000, p. 14) say, "power ... is remade at

various junctures within everyday life, [constituting] our tenuous sense of common sense" and Ruddock. Communication technologies are implicated in power struggles on two fronts: between the household and the outside world and within the household in differences between family members. General economic and political trends do create forces that households are ultimately powerless to resist (164). Zakaria (2008) summarizes power distribution into three periods in the last five hundred years. The first period of change in the distribution of power (political, economic and cultural) was marked by the emergence of the Western world as the holder of power and continued and even strengthened dramatically at the end of the 18th century. The second period was from the end of the 19th century, marked by the strengthening influence of the United States, which made it the world power holder, and the third period is the modern era, which he calls 'the rise of the rest' (2023, 1-2). Literature traditionally brings people with humanistic values, while power will bring people to certain interests which can be contrary to the essence of literature. However, it agrees that literature can be positioned as a soft power that

can influence its readers. The author carefully raises this problem of how the power mechanism works in digital literature. It is through language that power mechanisms are built in digital literary texts. It then connects with taste, self-actualization, and distribution to the market. Another thing underlined regarding this power is the author's observation of how readers or audiences are moved by power that they do not feel dominated by. In this case, readers are moved beyond their consciousness to agree or disagree with certain circumstances or situations designed by the party that has power.

The final chapter in this book discusses "Literature and Digital Space: Dulce Et Utile?". In noble literary criticism or serious literature, what is generally done is looking at philosophical values, moral values and cultural values, while popular literary criticism is done by looking at entertainment values. In relation to digital literary texts, any value can be studied, although political, moral, and historical values are more dominant. Digital technology frees everyone to participate in building and instilling values that far

exceed local values and threaten values considered outdated. This book explains how values, ideologies, and values in society depend on power mechanisms working due to social, economic, and political conditions. Adi underlines two major ideas about digital literature. First, digital literary texts place more emphasis on consumption patterns; in other words, readers play a central role in the existence of texts, especially interactive literary texts, so whatever the approach, reader factors must be considered in interpreting meaning. Second, digital literary texts are not produced because of their quality or originality but because their existence is not through their quality selection. Therefore, the function of the text becomes more important than the text itself.

The last part of the book talks about the beauty of literature. Adi reminds readers that literary works can also be said to be beautiful if they touch the reader's spirituality, humanity, and morality. The critical question is whether the more modern society becomes, the more subjective the rules of literary beauty become. In relation to digital literature, which is often associated with

capitalism, beauty is usually constructed by those in power. This book raises binary oppositions regarding the power relations in digital literature, namely, broad but shallow, democratic but colonized, strong but powerless.

CONCLUSION

This book is easy to read since it provides a methodical explanation that is easy to follow and is supported by specific historical trends and instances. In addition, this book does an excellent job of piquing the reader's interest by highlighting issues emerging in literary studies. The topics are presented and addressed objectively by weighing the pros and cons of each option. This book is rich in ideas, discourse, crystallization of understanding, and new thoughts on how literature evolved. The word [R]evolution in the title represents an evolution regarding the meaning of literature from a historical perspective and the theories that follow it. No appropriate words express how interesting and valuable this book is. This book clearly reflects the author's critical thinking on literature's position, role, and function in the digital era.

COMPETING INTEREST STATEMENT

Herewith the author declares that this article is totally free from any conflict of interest regarding the assessment, review and revision, and publication process in general.

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