

Conference Paper

Protagonist's Struggle in Andrea Hirata's Novel *Dwilogi Padang Bulan*

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Abstract

This research is aimed at describing protagonist's struggle in protecting her dignity in economic and educational aspects in the novel *Dwilogi Padang Bulan* written by Andre Hirata. The novel told about sosial issues related with gender injustice which created a struggle for equality performed by the protagonist, Enong. This research was conducted by applying feminist theory pioneered by Virginia Woolf (1929) since feminism prioritizes about struggling value of women. This was a library research. Methods used in collecting the data were heuristics and hermeneutics by Palmer. The results showed that protagonist's struggle in protecting her dignity and herself safe from death, and also being able to show her true identity. The struggle in economic aspect showed that the protagonist was able to fulfil the needs of her family as tin miner. The protagonist afforded to complete the study of her young sisters and to marry her sister to good man. In education aspect, the protagonist's struggle was that she became the fifth runner up of English course competition.

Keywords: struggle, feminism, injustice, equality

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1. Introduction

To create equality in the relation system between men and women in the society always becomes a discussion that never ends to be discussed. A serious attention on this is needed because for long time women's role in many aspects of life is still inferior than men. However, many women also consider that they were not inferior. In Indonesia, society has its own view from generation to generation. Those views have tied as a definite law which states that men in superior than women. Women is considered as minority, limited space, and termed as the second position. The inferior of women is also portrayed in many literary works, one of the in a novel, *Dwilogi Padang Bulan*.

Dwilogi Padang Bulan, is a novel written by Andrea Hirata as a curiosity cure for those who are stil curious about Marhamah Karpov, a character in Tretalogy of *Laskar Pelangi*. The novel portrays about Enong, the protagonist, in protecting her dignity in



her community. Culture teaches every woman to keep her honour to be valued by her husband when she gets married. Every woman fights to protect her virginity. As a woman, Enong does the same thing. For her ability to mine tin, many horde of market thugs were jealous and tried to seize the tin mining of her. She was dropout of school to replace her father position in mining thin after her father died. She did it to provide for her family needs. Actually, Enong is smart. She remains to study English as her pavorite subject and become a champion. Enong also is able to play chest. She learns playing chest in order to defeat her ex-husband, a champion in playing chest in her village.

However, this study is focussed on revealing how the protagonist struggling to protect herself dignity, to fulfil her family needs, and also to have education. The progatonist's struggles opens the other women's mind not to be the inferior than men.

2. Literature Review

Social phenomena about women's struggle in the novel *Dwilogi Padang Bulan* is analyzed using feminism theory. Feminism theory describes about gender as relevant empirical category as a tool in analysing and understanding the relation of global power as same as normative position tu build alternative order of the world (True, 2001: 213).

Fakih (1996: 99) says that Feminism as a movement at the beginning comes from the asumption that women bassically oppressed and exploited, and also the attempts to end the oppression and the exploitation. Although, feminists have different though about what, whay, and how the oppression and exploitation happen, they are in the same view that the core of feminism movement is for equality, dignity, freedom of controlling herself and her life even in the inside of the house or in the outside. Feminism is not only about woman emancipation in front of man, but also about struggle for social transformation in the direction of the creation of structure fundamentally new and better. The core of feminism is an ideological criticism toward inequality in determining the role and social identity based on gender (Karmini, 2011: 124).

Indeed, feminism was very needed in 18 century because at that time confinement and oppression on the women's right happened. Universally, women becomes subordinate in all aspects of life especially in patriarchal society. In social life, job, education, and politics, women's right commonly is inferior than the men's. Besides, traditional society oriented on Agriculture is likely tend to pose the men superior in and out of house. Endraswara (2008: 147-148) states that feminism analysis is be desirable to reveal the oppression aspects of women by the men. Why women politically have the impacts of

patriarchal system so that put the women in inferior position. A stereotype that woman is only a companion for a man will be the core of feminism study.

A study performed based on feminism view, not only to have sociocultural understanding about woman motivation but also to look in the principle of gender equality which has historical relationship with other parts in culture. Sugihastuti (2012: 35) states that struggle which performed by woman is as a struggle to change the hierarcichal structure between man and woman in demanding equal rights, status, chance, and role in society. So, through feminism approach, feminism discourse, identity searching construction, woman motivation in work hard, and breaking about men hegemony can be revealed.

3. Research Method

The method used in this study is descriptive qualitative method using objective approach. Saryono (2011: 1) states that qualitative research is a research used to probe, to find out, to portray, and to describe about the quality or the privilege of undescribable social influences. Data or information analysed in this research is word, frase, sentence or proverb in the novel as source of data that relevant with this research. Moleong (2010: 157) states that data in qualitative research are words and actions as the primary data and the other as document considered as secondary data.

4. Result And Discussion

Dwilogi Padang Bulan shows the relationship between the author, literary work, and the society. Literary work as a form of cultural creativity, ideological superstructure, and social phemonema consists of information system. On one side, genetically literary work is the responses of social interaction, those are social phenomenon as the result of interconnection with the author and the society. On the other side, out of its relevance of autorial intens, literary works provides the structuralization of imaginary word for the readers (Ratna, 2012: 137). Those phenomenon are offered by the protagonist, Enong with her ability to hard work, independent, responsible and also symbolic resistance on the patriarchal hegemony. The result and discussion below clearly describe the protagonist's struggle in the novel.

4.1. Protagonist's struggle in protecting her dignity

The most precious thing for woman is her virginity. *Dwilogi Padang Bulan* shows the relationship among the author, the literary work, and the society itself. Culture teaches the woman to protect her dignity to be honoured by her future husband. Enong does the same thing. Because of her ability to find out about the area of tin mining, many horge of market thugs plan something bad to her to seizi the place where enong mines tin. The quotation show about it.

Barking dog roared. Enong was hunted like a mouse deer. She runs as she can because she was appraid to be raped and to be killed. She ignored her bloody bare feet because of the sharp thorns and stems of wood. Unfortunately, she couldn't run farther because in front of him was a steep cliff. Underneath the cliff flowed the river that rafted. Enong looked back. The hunting dogs are near. She ran towards the cliff and without hesitation he jumped. Her small body floated, then banged on the surface of the river. He sank like a rock, no longer appeared. (Hirata, 2011: 71)

Enong prefers to throw herself into the river rather than having to be raped by a gang of the thugs. This action portrays how a woman must protect her dignity against male incitement. Women's physical weakness does not make Enong gives up on death because it is better than having to bear a very painful disgrace. This can be seen in the following snippet.

Her head slammed on the riverbed. He fainted. A swift current swirls and makes her escapes from the crocodile's eye. She jumped downstream. She is still breathing. When she realized, she found herself caught in mangrove roots. Dark rays reflected off the murky river. She rose with difficulty, ragged. Her head was injured and bleeding, she struggled to leave the estuary. (Hirata, 2011: 71-72)

4.2. Protagonist's struggle in economics

Enong is a woman who dares to challenge the bitterness she experienced with capital of faith and enthusiasm so she can replace her father's position as a breadwinner to meet the family need. Her nature as a woman does not become a barrier for her to achieve her dreams even though in the Malay community this has violated the rules in a customary manner. These violations occur because the Malay community still adheres

to the patriarchal culture and the stereotype has emerged for women. Harmonization of men and women has a negative impact on women. Mozaik 6 entitled *Tanjong Pandan*, describes how Enong struggled to find and apply for a job but still refused. This can be seen from the following quotation.

However, it is not as easy as her thought, the skipper told her to go home and go back to school. Many who drove her harshly. When she asked for a diploma, she could only answer that she almost finished elementary school. She was also shown for housework or factory because he looked very thin and weak. This rejection she experienced many times, for days cracker factory, excess employees. The grass jelly factory, lacks orders so it does not need employees. Grated coconut business, reject it. Boiled noodle restaurant, refused. Boiled noodle stalls, refused also. Office of Shah Bandar, reject it because they need scholars. (Hirata, 2011: 32)

In Malay culture, panning for tin is a job of men even Belitung people assume that tin is a symbol of men. Enong's courage undermined this assumption making it an insinuating material and ended up being an insult in the community. However, Enong's enthusiasm and sacrifice enabled her to survive and be able to do work that should be intended for men. The force of fate he faced requires Enong to work on all means. This can be seen from the following quotation.

Arriving home, she took his father's hoe and tray for panning first, then immediately returned to the lake. She rolled up his sleeves, went down to the bank and began digging mud. He continued to dig many times. She was like a possessed person. Her sweat ran down, her body was muddy. She collected the excavation into the bone, filled it with water, and sifted it. That afternoon, the world's first female tin miner was born. (Hirata, 2011: 49)

4.3. Protagonist's struggle in education

The story experienced by Enong is the image of a society with a low economy. Poverty in the Belitung community makes many children unable to go to school or continue their education. She could not finish elementary school because of the situation. However, Enong continued to study her favorite lesson, namely English. Enong learned from easy things by reading and recording every new term that she read. Thus the English language vocabulary she knew was increasing. This can be seen from the following quotation.

Enong likes catalogs so much, especially those which contain English words. She collected, read it, no matter what the media was. Then, she shows a catalog that offers English language courses (Hirata, 2011: 199)

Eventhough Enong had not been in school for a long time, her enthusiasm for learning English still emanated from her face. When Enong learned of a place for an English language course, an idea came to mind, namely he wanted to take the course. At an old age, Enong is likely to feel embarrassed to join the students who also attend the course. But her love of English is greater than her shame. This can be seen in the following quotation.

Enong was very happy. Her long dream for an English language course would finally come true. That day she showed her progress in English by explaining that through the One Billion Dictionary. She said she had known the meaning of all English words in used milk cans because she knew at least that milk came from cattle. (Hirata, 2011: 132)

Enong became the fifth best graduate. This can be seen in the following quotation.

"The fifth best graduate," said Mrs. Indri. She postponed mentioning the name, maybe because it was very special. Her face tenses with joy. "Maryamah binti Zamzami!" Enong closed her mouth with hand because the surprise. Mrs. Indri gave her a chance to give a speech. Maryamah looked doubtful. She never gave a speech, never even spoke in front of a microphone, but then she approached the microphone, paused for a moment, then said, "Sacrifice, honesty, freedom." That's all, then she backed away. The entire audience stood up and clapped for her. Very long applause, never stop. (Hirata, 2011: 28-30)

Besides his persistence in learning English, Enong also learned to play chess. Chess is a type of mental play that is played by two people, while chess players are people who play chess, both in one-on-one and one-match matches against many people (in informal circumstances). From Enong's failure in fostering a household, she tried to find a way to overthrow Matarom's arrogance and mischief towards Enong, one of the ways that the revenge could be realized was through a chess match against Matarom. This can be seen in the following quotation.

"I want to learn to play chess. I want to compete on August 17. I want to challenge Matarom. "We were stunned" Yes, I want to fight them," She

said again, while pointed at the men who burst out laughing around the chessboard. She said it lightly, as if to say he wanted to pump a flat tire, while we were struck by lightning (Hirata, 2011: 41)

The quotation above shows that Enong is truly willing to be able to play chess. Her strong reason is to defeat her ex-husband, Matarom who has betrayed her. She challenges Matarom in the chess game in the Independence day of Indonesia, 17 August. Moreover, she was not only playing chess against Matarom, but also playing chess against the persons that have more or less helped and tormented her in her past life.

4.4. Positive implications of the women's struggle in the *Dwilogi Padang Bulan*

4.4.1. Hardworking and responsible women

The value of local wisdom of hardworking is behavior that shows genuine effort in overcoming various obstacles to learning and assignments and completing tasks as well as possible (Sibarani, 2012: 143). Local wisdom itself is human intelligence owned by certain ethnic group obtained through experiences in society (Rahyono in Pardi and Siregar (2018: 654).

The portrayal of hard work seen in the novel *Dwilogi Padang Bulan* is played by Enong. The hard work ethic that is carried out by women is the search for her identity in society. They try to compensate for male domination and fight for community issues that are aimed at equal opportunities and equal rights for individuals and women. Women's attitudes like this are in accordance with Fromm's view, namely humans are homo esperans, human beings who hope. It means that everything that is done is related to an hope, namely the hope of a better life, the hope of having what is considered more meaningful for their life, and hope of being free from boredom (Atmadja, 2005: 111).

4.4.2. Courageous women

As the oldest child, Enong shows a responsibility for family survival. She tries her best to meet her family need even she has to work hard in the muddy place. She never thinks about her beautiful face, dress and body covered by mud, as shown in the following quotation.

Her passion is passionate. She is ready to accept all responsibilities. She was willing to do anything for the sake of her mother and younger siblings, but all were deadlocked. Her sweat poured, her body was muddy. He collects the excavation into the bone, fills it with water, and sifts it. That afternoon, the world's first female tin miner, was born. (Hirata, 2011: 48-49)

4.4.3. Women as agents of change

Being a miner of tin is not Enong's will, but a condition that forces her to do the hard work. This can be seen in the following quotation.

However, the little daughter of the Shalimah was happy not to play a new job as a pioneer of tin because the job did not require polishing her lips, powdering her cheek, dressing beautifully, and not needing to dress her in layers, and especially, because she had no other choice. (Hirata, 2011: 50)

Enong's success in showing heavy work inspired other women to work as miner of tin also. Enong's spirit stimulates and influences other people to do work that is initially impossible for a woman. Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that Enong as the first female tin miner has succeeded in providing positive energy for women to think more broadly and have the spirit to move forward to fight for the dignity and value as human beings who have the same rights as men.

5. Conclusion

The novel *Dwilogi Padang Bulan* by Andre Hirata in the perspective of feminism has been analyzed on how the society positioned women as subordinate class citizens. Novel *Dwilogi Padang Bulan* provides an overview of women's struggles over the marginalization and victims of various social events that occur in the community. The treatment of women who are not appreciative in their social interactions with a community has become a trend in the text. The involvement of women outside the home signifies that women have tried to reconstruct the history of their lives, which have been under the shadow of patriarchal hegemony by building a new identity for themselves, not only acting as wives and housewives but also acting as hardworking, responsible and brave women in dealing with situations and conditions. Enong was able to prove the people who demeaned her that she was not just an ordinary woman who looked at fate without doing anything to change that fate. The Protagonist struggles in protecting

her dignity and herself safe from death, and also being able to show her true identity; in fulfilling the economics needs of her family as tin miner; in completing the study of her young sisters and to marry her sister to good man; and, in winning the English competition as the fifth runner up of English course.

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