

Author's Tendency toward Patriarchal Culture in Novels by Khilma Anis

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ABSTRACT

Literature as a cultural product reflects the social conditions of the stories it tells. In the pesantren ecosystem, the existence of the kiai as a central figure, social background and culture that is held for generations, has become the trigger for the roots of patriarchal culture to this day. Literature can be used as a means of conveying the author's ideology so that in literary works the author's tendencies can be identified. This study aims to analyze how the author's tendency towards patriarchal culture is reflected in Khilma Anis' novels. The objects studied were 3 novels by Khilma Anis, namely *Jadilah Purnamaku, Ning* (2016), *Wigati: Lintang Manik Woro* (2018), and *Hati Suhita* (2019). This research is a type of qualitative research. The approach used is feminist literary criticism. Data was collected by heuristic reading technique and then analyzed by hermeneutic technique. The results of the research show that in the novel *Hati Suhita* the author's tendency is the tendency to fight against patriarchal culture.

Keywords: author's tendencies, feminist literary criticism, novels, patriarchy

INTRODUCTION

Authors as members of society must be bound by the prevailing social rules so that according to Damono⁽¹⁾, literature is a social institution that uses language as a means and is an arbitrary social product. Literature contains descriptions of life and life is a social reality. Literature as a reflection of social reality according to Bahtiar⁽²⁾ can be divided into two, namely objective (honest)

and subjective. This subjectivity depends on the tendency of the author when writing literary works. The author's imagination is structured in such a way that literature can realize dreams and ideals.

The development of the times and the differences in the environment in which the author writes his work can influence the writing or ideology in the literary work. In the past, literary works, especially in Indonesia, were dominated by male writers because only the writings of men were taken into account⁽³⁾. Because they were written by men, there are many literary works that favor men. Women are told as number two and often experience gender injustice.

Entering the 21st century, the emergence of women writers in Indonesia began to be reckoned with. The issue of gender and feminism is raised by many female authors as a form of resistance in novels, romances, and short stories⁽⁴⁾. Among these authors are Ayu Utami, Oka Rusmini, Djenaer Maesa Ayu, Laila S. Chudori, and Dewi Lestari. Within the pesantren community, the emergence of the names Najhaty Sarma and Khilma Anis marked the rise of women writers who represented a religion-based feminist ideology.

Post-reformation Indonesian literature gave rise to literary works that explored local themes⁽⁵⁾. Khilma Anis is a female writer who consistently reviews the themes of women, Islamic boarding schools, and Javanese culture in all of her novels. Javanese teachings and wayang culture are

often found in his work as a guide for the lives of the characters. Javanese women are very limited by patriarchal customs and traditions, while the women in her novels are described as modern women. These contradictory findings then encourage researchers to analyze how the author's tendency towards patriarchal culture actually is. This attitude can be identified through the attitude of the characters, the narrative that is built, and all the elements that make up the story.

According to Bahtiar⁽²⁾, the sociological aspect of the author also influences the process of creating literary works, both in terms of form and content. These aspects include the author's background, family economic background, and the author's position in society. Khilma Anis, who was born and raised in a pesantren environment, is proven to have written a novel about pesantren life. Khilma Anis as a woman also always emphasizes female characters by making them the main character and center of the story. This is in line with Shofiani's opinion⁽⁶⁾ which states that life in stories is usually depicted as reality in real life so that the author's tendencies can be represented in novels.

In the pesantren tradition, women must always submit and comply with existing regulations.

The rules that exist in Islamic boarding schools are sourced from the Koran, hadith, and classic books written by scholars who are dominated by male book authors. This allows for gender bias in law making. Arifin⁽⁷⁾ explains that the men in the pesantren (especially the kiai) have absolute truth. Kiai who has full power with ideological symbols and qualified religious knowledge are a big capital to perpetuate patriarchal practices. Bhasin & Khan⁽⁸⁾ explain that at the patriarchal level, the father has full rights over family members including property matters. Fathers also play a role in making important decisions. In the context of Islamic boarding schools, a kiai is a father or foster parent for the family and

students so that his position is highly respected.

The three novels by Khilma Anis, namely *Jadilah Purnamaku*, *Ning*⁽⁹⁾, *Wigati: Lintang Manik Woro*⁽¹⁰⁾, and *Hati Suhita*⁽¹¹⁾, the authors always present the figure of a ruling kiai who cannot be opposed to all his orders. The domination of the kiai in the pesantren has caused the pesantren women in the three novels by Khilma Anis to not have the freedom to determine their own path in life. They were betrothed since childhood, schools were chosen according to their parents' wishes, and they were forbidden to do activities outside the home. However, when viewed from the time span of the publication of the novel, there are differences in the attitudes of women towards patriarchal culture. This study aims to analyze how the author's tendencies towards patriarchal culture. The author's tendencies can be in the form of support for patriarchal culture or even resistance to patriarchal culture.

MATERIALS & METHODS

This research is a type of qualitative research. The approach used in this study is an ideological feminist literary criticism approach. The principle of the ideological feminist literary criticism approach is reading as a woman, namely positioning women as readers to dismantle the andocentric or patriarchal prejudices and ideology of male power.

The research data are sentences or paragraphs that reflect the author's tendency towards patriarchal culture. The data comes from Khilma Anis' three novels entitled *Jadilah Purnamaku*, *Ning* (published in 2016), *Wigati: Lintang Manik Woro* (published in 2018), and *Hati Suhita* (published in 2019).

Data is collected by heuristic reading technique. This technique is based on linguistic rules. This reading was carried out in the early stages of the research to obtain data⁽¹²⁾. The steps taken in the process of collecting data using the heuristic reading technique are (1) reading novels by Khilma

Anis, (2) identifying or marking parts that show author's tendencies, (3) coding the data, and finally (4) classify data according to the formulation of the problem under study.

The collected data were then analyzed using hermeneutic techniques. The hermeneutic technique is intended to analyze literary works as signs and conventions of literary works that allow the work to contain meaning. The steps taken in the data analysis process were (1) re-reading novels by Khilma Anis by looking for implied meanings that require language codes, cultural codes, and literary codes. At this stage it allows for the giving of distinctive, varied and in-depth meanings, (2) identifying and classifying all data based on the research focus, namely objects related to cultural values in Islamic boarding schools which reflect patriarchal attitudes. The analysis is carried out thoroughly (comprehensively) based on the research problem formulation that has been determined. The third stage of data analysis (3) is to reinterpret all data that has been identified and classified to find coherence, unity, and relationships between data so that complete knowledge is obtained about the issues that become problems in the research.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

As literature has certain tendencies, authors certainly have tendencies towards the ideology that they want to convey through literary works. Through direct depiction or dialogue between characters, the reader can find out where the author is taking his work. Do you agree with the existence of a patriarchal culture or even against the existence of this patriarchal culture. In this case, the author's tendencies can be identified into two, namely the author's tendency to support patriarchal culture and the author's tendency to oppose patriarchal culture. Both are described as follows.

The Author's Tendency to Support Patriarchal Culture

The author's support for the existence of a patriarchal culture in Islamic boarding schools can be seen in the narratives written in his novels. This attitude is in the form of letting the author treat women in an oppressed condition and do not have power over themselves. The oppression of pesantren women cannot be separated from the masculinity that is built in pesantren. Rangkuti⁽¹³⁾ states that the rules in pesantren, both written and not, are made by pesantren leaders who are dominated by men so there is a high possibility of gender bias. Women are only required to obey and accept, as experienced by female characters in novels by Khilma Anis.

The pesantren tradition which is a form of patriarchy and is still frequently encountered is matchmaking. the character Khuzaimah in the novel *Jadilah Purnamaku, Ning* (2016), the character Wigati in the novel *Wigati: Lintang Manik Woro* (2018), and the character Alina Suhita in the novel *Hati Suhita* (2019), are all subject to an arranged marriage ordered by their father. Not a single fight. Even though they have to feel tormented in their marriage, they still go through with the marriage because they don't want to disappoint their parents. As experienced by Alina Suhita and reflected in the following quote.

... Tapi aku bukan Alina dan Alina bukan aku. Walau jiwanya meranggas dan badannya habis pun, ia tidak akan lapor ke orang tuanya, apalagi mertuanya. Aku paham wataknya. Dia benar-benar seorang *queen*. Di tengah keluarganya, dia bersedia menjadi lilin, habis, leleh, sakit, asal cahaya tidak redup. (Anis, 2019:51)

... *But I'm not Alina and Alina is not me. Even if his soul is withered and his body is exhausted, he will not report it to his parents, let alone his parents-in-law. I understand his character. She really is a queen. In the midst of his family, he is willing to be a candle, exhausted, melted,*

sick, as long as the light is not dim. (Anis, 2019:51)

Alina is described as a weak woman who gives in when her husband, Gus Birru, treats her wrongly. Even the author gives Alina's parable like a candle that sacrifices itself to burn out to light up the surroundings. The quote above shows the author's approval of patriarchal culture where there is no resistance from Alina.

Likewise with the arranged marriage experienced by Wigati, shortly after Abah hinted at the arranged marriage between Wigati and Kang Jati, Wigati was silent and cried. Not refuse. Whereas Wigati knows that Kang Jati plans to marry Manik, her best friend. Wigati's helplessness in front of her father's power shows the tendency of the author who also supports the culture of arranged marriages in Islamic boarding schools.

In addition to the quotes mentioned above, other evidence that shows the author's support for arranged marriage culture is the married life of arranged marriages which is described as happy. Even though they didn't know each other at first, they were able to adapt and build a household until they had children and grandchildren. Like the marriage between Kiai Hannan and his wife. The harmony of their household can last until they are no longer young.

Author's Tendency Against Patriarchal Culture

Narratives that show the author's tendency to oppose or oppose patriarchal culture in his novels are reflected in various attitudes, namely (a) rejection of polygamy, (b) rejection of acts of domestic violence, and (c) rejection of the subordination of women. The three are described as follows.

a. Rejection of Polygamy

The narrative about polygamy is only found in the first novel, *Jadilah Purnamaku, Ning* (2016). The existence of this act of polygamy can be known when Kiai Abu Dardah asked Damayanti to become his third wife, but Damayanti refused. Even

when Damayanti was already married to Zulfikar and could not live up to Zulfikar's family's expectations, her father ordered Zulfikar to divorce Damayanti and marry another woman who came from the same boarding school. This shows that the author does not support polygamy, even though Zulfikar could have been ordered to remarry without divorcing Damayanti.

Ayah Alfin itu pernah meminta ibu untuk menjadi istri ketiganya. Tentu saja ibu menolak. Karena di samping Abu Dardah sudah mempunyai keluarga besar, ia juga saingan berat Zulfikar sejak muda. Barangkali karena penolakan itu, tumbuh dendam dalam hatinya pada ibu. (Anis, 2016:109)

Alfin's father once asked his mother to be his third wife. Of course mother refused. Because besides Abu Dardah already having a large family, he was also Zulfikar's arch rival since he was young. Perhaps because of that rejection, he grew a grudge against his mother. (Anis, 2016:109)

Apart from the novel *Jadilah Purnamaku, Ning* (2016), there is no narrative explaining the existence of polygamy. In the second novel, Kiai Ali Muqoddas is also told to have only one wife. Although culturally and materially, Kiai Ali was very capable of polygamy. In the third novel, even all of the marriages described in the novel are monogamous marriages. Among them were the marriage between Kiai Hannan and his wife, the marriage between Mbah Kakung and Mbah Putri, and the marriage between Alina Suhita's biological parents. As for the marriage of Gus Birru and Alina himself, there was mention of polygamy in which Rengganis would become his second wife because Gus Birru had not been able to forget her. But at the end of the story, the author makes Rengganis leave Indonesia in an attempt to forget Gus Birru and make Gus Birru realize that Alina Suhita is indeed his soul mate.

From the various data findings above, it can be concluded that the author's tendency is to oppose or reject the culture of polygamy in Islamic boarding schools. Evidence of the

author's resistance is Damayanti's rejection of Kiai Abu Dardah's request for polygamy and monogamous marriage in her three novels which are described as happy.

b. Rejection of Domestic Violence

The pesantren culture always requires women to submit and obey their husbands and fathers. If you fight, you will be confronted with religious arguments which will lead to threats of going to hell. This is what makes violence, both sexual, physical, psychological, and economic violence can occur in Islamic boarding schools. In the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 23 of 2004 concerning the Elimination of Domestic Violence it is explained that domestic violence is any act against someone, especially women, which results in physical, sexual, psychological misery or suffering, and/or neglect of the household including threats to commit acts, coercion, or unlawful deprivation of liberty within the household sphere.

The most common form of domestic violence experienced by women is sexual violence. Sexual violence is often experienced by women, especially in marriages that originate from arranged marriages. Women who are forced to marry certainly do not have a sense of love in them, so they are sometimes forced to serve their husbands. In addition, men always assume that women's bodies are the full rights of their husbands and force them to have intimate relationships without asking the wife's approval or willingness.

Khilma Anis' resistance to this act of sexual violence can be seen through the depiction of Gus Birru's cold attitude towards Alina. During the seven months of their marriage, Gus Birru did not touch Alina at all. Even Gus Birru prefers to sleep on the couch. Alina had tried to get Gus Birru's attention by wearing revealing lingerie, changing the sheets, and turning on the aromatherapy room, but all these efforts were in vain because Gus Birru was still cold and didn't want to. At the end of the novel, the reasons

for Gus Birru's attitude are explained as follows.

Sebenarnya aku bisa saja menggaulinya malam itu juga. Dia toh sudah hakku. Tubuhnya juga. Tapi aku tak mungkin megoyak tubuh perempuan tanpa rasa cinta. Aku tidak senaif itu. Aku tahu keberlangsungan keturunan dinasti ini bergantung pada benihku. Aku akan memberinya dengan kesadaran penuh, bukan dengan keterpaksaan. Aku pasti akan memberikannya dengan penuh keikhlasan dan rasa cinta. (Anis, 2019:135)

Actually, I could have fucked him that night too. He already has my right. Her body too. But I can not tear a woman's body without love. I'm not that naive. I know the continuation of this dynasty depends on my seed. I will give it with full awareness, not with compulsion. I will definitely give it with full sincerity and love. (Anis, 2019:135)

From the quotation above, it is known that the author did not allow Alina to experience sexual violence. The author presents the character Gus Birru who respects women so that Gus Birru is not selfish with Alina, even though he could have done that since the first night. The picture presented by the author shows women in an honorable position that can only be touched with full awareness. Not many male characters have thoughts like Gus Birru.

Apart from not allowing female characters to be weak, another narrative that shows the author's tendency to fight patriarchal culture is an act of escape from domestic violence. Like the decisive action of Damayanti who chose to remain a humanitarian activist when her husband's extended family opposed it because she knew the reality on the ground that many people needed protection. Alina's courage to leave the house is also a form of resistance to the psychological violence perpetrated by Gus Birru. So that from Alina's absence at home, all matters became chaotic and finally made Gus Birru realize that Alina was the spirit in his house and Islamic boarding school.

c. Rejection of Women's Subordination

In her three novels, Khilma Anis always emphasizes the role of women. This can be seen from the selection of the main characters in the novel who are all women. Apart from that, the background of the women leaders who come from Islamic boarding schools has made it even more eye-catching that the role of women in Islamic boarding schools is increasingly being accepted in the outside world. First, the presence of Nawang Wulan as an activist and journalist. Through the character of Nawang Wulan, the author wants to show that Islamic boarding school women can also speak and express opinions freely. This method is conveyed through writing. This is in line with the results of research conducted by Fitriyah⁽¹⁴⁾ which explains that the character Nawang Wulan is aware of gender so that she is able to fight for her rights as a woman. Damayanti also rejected this subordination when she learned that women got lower jobs than men, so Damayanti initiated the establishment of a cooperative that accommodated the economic sector around the Islamic boarding (pesantren).

Second, the character of Wigati is described as a pesantren woman who likes and studies keris. From this we can see the ideological direction of the author who wants to introduce Javanese culture to readers through the character Wigati. The selection of female characters is different from the stereotype that has been developing so far, that only men should like keris and own them. Women are considered taboo and insidious.

In Wigati's novel, the character Bu Nyai Zulfah is also presented, who is moderate and gives space for female students to develop. Bu Nyai allowed the students to appear in public as preachers. In the middle of the muhadharah event, the students are also allowed to displaying works of art such as Islamic drama. Not only that, Bu Nyai even allows female students to trade in the pesantren as quoted in the following quote.

Apalagi, pada momen ini Bu Nyai Zulfah membolehkan santri-santri untuk belajar berdagang. Ada yang jual kacang godog, pisang godog, atau sekadar kerupuk buatan santri, yang bisa dinikmati sambil menonton temannya yang tampil. (Anis, 2018:105)

Moreover, at this moment Mrs. Nyai Zulfah allowed the students to learn to trade. Some sell godog peanuts, godog bananas, or just crackers made by the santri, which can be enjoyed while watching their friends perform. (Anis, 2018:105)

In Hati Suhita, the female characters are described as having the same roles as the men. Bu Nyai is described as being able to provide many innovations for the development of Islamic boarding schools, Aruna is described as a smart businessman, Rengganis is a reliable and knowledgeable journalist and trainer, and Alina Suhita is described as having complex abilities. Alina even became the head of the madrasah diniyah, meeting leader, and head of the girls' boarding school. This shows that work that is usually identical to men, can also be done by women. These findings are in line with the research conducted by Pratama, Kamidjan, & Raharjo⁽¹⁵⁾ on the novel Hati Suhita, although there are gender problems in the form of stereotypes, subordination, and marginalization. However, this does not affect the difference between the roles and positions of women and men.

Aku membuka email. Ternyata banyak hal yang belakangan ini kubiarkan terbengkalai. Ada email seorang redaktur yang menagih tulisanku tentang Nefertiti, Ratu Mesir yang terkenal setelah Cleopatra. Ada email yang meminta naskah drama tentang Batsyeba, Ratu Israel. Ada juga email dari anak Lembaga Pers Mahasiswa yang minta catatan singkat tentang jurnalisme investigasi. (Anis, 2019:183)

I opened the e-mail. It turns out that a lot of things have been neglected lately. There is an email from an editor who collects my writing about Nefertiti, the famous Queen of Egypt after Cleopatra. Got an email asking for a play about Bathsheba, Queen of Israel. There was also an email from the Student

Press Institute asking for a brief note on investigative journalism. (Anis, 2019:183)

Apart from depicting powerful female characters, in her three novels, Khilma Anis also always presents narratives about great women from time to time. Like when presenting the Rengganis figure as a journalist, the writings reviewed by Rengganis will always be related to women. For example, about the Estri Soldiers of the Sultanate of Yogyakarta or about the queen of Egypt, as quoted above. So indirectly the author also builds a narrative that always favors women. Placing women in positions that are important, respectable, and needed by men. Both from real characters that exist in the real world and fiction in novels. From this it can be concluded that in his three novels, the author tries to fight patriarchal culture.

When viewed as a whole, there is a significant shift in the author's tendencies from the first novel to the third novel. The first novel, *Jadilah Purnamaku, Ning* (2016), shows the attitude of women who openly and passionately reject patriarchy. If it is related to the author's psychological condition when writing the novel, at that time the author was still an undergraduate student at Sunan Kalijaga Islamic State University Yogyakarta, so his idealism was still high. The way of looking at things is still black and white. This attitude is also prominent in the character of the female character in the novel. In addition, at that time Khilma Anis was not married so the argument about the household did not originate from the author's personal life, but from observations of the surrounding environment.

In the second and third novels, the resistance shown by the women is carried out with a lot of careful consideration, the author shows caution in choosing a storyline so as to minimize the pain of other characters due to this resistance. The maturity of thought that can be seen in the two novels coincides with Khilma Anis's age and is also accompanied by maturity in thinking. The author realizes that arranged

marriages in Islamic boarding schools cannot be avoided because they are related to the interests of Islamic boarding schools. This was expressed by the author directly in a review of the novel *Hati Suhita* (2022). The author says that pesantren have the right to maintain a dynasty, one of which is by arranged marriages.

The novel *Hati Suhita* is the result of the process and growth of Khilma Anis, which can be seen from the strong character of all the characters in the novel. The author does not present the main character in the novel because all characters have the same main role. They strengthen each other and both have weapons to fight against their respective conflicts.

This author's tendency is related to the theory put forward by Yoesoef⁽¹⁶⁾ which states that author's tendencies can change according to the social conditions when the work was written. The author's tendency can be used as a lens (worldview) to find out what the situation was like at that time. There are two dimensions presented by the author in his three novels, namely the Indonesian dimension (local) and the global dimension (global). The local dimension is seen in the content of the novel which is full of traditional cultural riches. The global dimension is shown through the works of world literature which are adapted to the Indonesian situation. For example, the transformation of wayang stories from the Mahabharata and Ramayana epics from Hindu religious traditions and teachings to Islamic traditions and teachings.

CONCLUSION

The author's tendency towards patriarchal culture which is reflected in the three novels by Khilma Anis is divided into two, namely attitudes that (1) support patriarchal culture and attitudes that (2) oppose patriarchal culture. From the data found, it can be seen the ideology that the author wants to convey through his works. The author's tendency to show support for patriarchal culture is marked by narratives that tell of women in an oppressed condition and are powerless to

resist in terms of arranged marriages. Marriages that start from arranged marriages are described as happy and even normalized as an Islamic boarding tradition. The author's tendency to show resistance to patriarchal culture is shown by the presence of resistance when women are oppressed. Women are also described as having intelligent character and occupying important roles in various fields. The dependence of men on women in a number of ways also shows that women cannot be underestimated. By looking at the comparison of the amount of data between the author's tendency to support patriarchal culture less than the attitude against patriarchal culture, it can be concluded that the author's tendency in his three novels is against patriarchal culture. This conclusion is also based on changes in the contents of the novel seen from the year of publication. The first novel entitled *Jadilah Purnamaku, Ning* (2016) contains more depictions of patriarchal culture in Islamic boarding schools, while in the second and third novels entitled *Wigati: Lintang Manik Woro* (2018) and *Hati Suhita* (2019) more attitudes are found against patriarchal culture.

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