



THE IMAGE OF JAVANESE WOMEN IN THREE NOVELS OF NANING PRANOTO

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Abstract

This research aims to describe the image, position, and problems of Javanese female characters in the three novels of Naning Pranoto. This research is descriptive qualitative with a feminist analysis approach. The sources of data are the novels entitled *Lupa Singgah di Shizi*, *Wajah Sebuah Vagina*, and *Mei Merah 1998 (Kala Arwah Berkisah)* by Naning Pranoto. The research data are all lingual units in the form of sentences that contain the image, position, and problems of Javanese women in Naning Pranoto's three novels. Data were collected using reading and note-taking techniques. Data analysis was conducted by comparing, categorizing, presenting, and making inferences. The results of this study show that the image of women displayed in the three novels by Naning Pranoto is quite dynamic because of the social contact experienced by the characters. Each character's background also affects the image labeled towards Javanese female characters in the three novels. When viewed from the position of female characters, Javanese women in the novels are depicted as figures who are more dominated by men. This could be Naning Pranoto's intention to protest or show cynicism towards those who marginalize women. Then the next problems shown in the novel mostly start from economic problems that cause other problems to arise such as sexual violence, oppression, and marginalization.

Keywords: *women's image, Javanese women's image, women's position, feminism*

INTRODUCTION

Often, female characters are portrayed in literature in a different way from male characters. Men are portrayed as strong, brave, gallant, and mighty, while women are portrayed as weak, soft, passive, and dependent on men. Many women's issues in literature are always interesting to discuss. Attention to women is mainly related to their marginalized presence in the socio-cultural space, not only because of their attractive physical form (Sungkowati, 2012). Various characteristics of women come from different ethnic groups and cultures. One of them is Javanese women who are considered to have the characteristics of women who must hold *trapsilaning wanita* or manners that must be owned by every woman (Firdausy, 2013).

Women handle life's challenges differently from men. Men use logic to solve problems, while women use feelings, rely on communication, or have a communicative attitude to get responses from others (Septiaji, Zuriyati, & Rahmat, 2020). Some women focus more on family roles, such as being a wife and mother (Setyanto, Andayani, & Wardani, 2021). Women are often the object of image and conversation. The image of women is a representation of the reality of life (Fitriani, Qomariah, & Sumartini, 2018). Sugihastuti (2000) argues that women's image consists of self-image and social image. Women's self-image consists of physical and psychological images.

It is interesting to discuss the image of women because it highlights the figure and existence of women in everyday life, both in the family and society (Rahima, Ana, & Sulfiah, 2019). In some literary works, women are portrayed as strong characters who can fight for their rights as women. However, literary works also show the strong and weak sides of a woman. The female protagonist is portrayed as a strong figure at the same time while she also displays her weak side. Novels are one type of literary work that often uses women as objects.

One writer who often makes women the main character is Naning Pranoto. Some novels by Naning Pranoto that make women, especially Javanese women, as the main characters are the novels *Musim Semi Lupa Singgah di Shizi*, *Wajah Sebuah Vagina*, and *Mei Merah 1998 (Kala Arwah Berkisah)*. The selection of Naning Pranoto's works in this study is because the three novels by Naning Pranoto have in common that both make Javanese women the main characters in the story and each main character has a sad ending. The novel *Musim Semi Lupa Singgah di Shizi* was published in a serial in Tabloid Nova, September 2002-February 2003 edition, which tells the story of a Javanese woman who is mostly set in China (Pranoto, 2003). The novel *Wajah Sebuah Vagina*, apart from being a bestseller, also has a title that seems very bold (Pranoto, 2018). Furthermore, the novel *Mei Merah 1998 (Kala Arwah Berkisah)* discusses the life of a girl with Chinese blood but raised with Javanese norms and culture who became a victim of the 1998 riots (Pranoto, 2018).

Research on the image of women in literary works is interesting to talk about because it is quite dynamic, so many previous studies discuss the image of women. Intan, Handayani, & Som (2019) examined the image of women in novels which showed that, in the tetralogy, (1) the self-image of women is displayed by subjects with TWITS characteristics (female teenagers in their 30s), namely single, independent, working, aged between 24-30 years, beautiful and attractive, living in urban areas, metropolis lifestyle, heterosexual, and has the character of 'The Waif', and has 'weaknesses'. (2) The social image of women is depicted as still being the object of the patriarchal system. Furthermore, Wilda, Hudiyono, & Purwati (2021) examined the image of women in novels using a feminist perspective with the results of the study, namely in terms of psychological image, almost all characters are similar, because they work as sex workers. Unlike the characters of Doctor Niah and Midwife Nunung, they are also characters who struggle with more advanced thinking. In terms of physical image, some of the characters who work as sex workers dress up with menor, shabby, and unkempt.

Purnamasari & Indiatmoko (2019) examined the image of Javanese women in the novel which shows that the image of Javanese women in the novel shows *nglaras rasa* and *angon rasa*, *welas asih*, *nrima* and *rasa rumangsa*, *kanthong bolong* and *gangsir ngenthir*, *kridha grahita*, *ngelmu begja*, a sense of belonging and jealousy, fear, and humility, and the representation of the image of Javanese women in this novel can be seen from the social aspect, including ethics towards humans, higher social strata people, and society in it. Maghfiroh (2018), in her research on the image of Javanese women in the novels *Canting* by Arswendo Atmowiloto and *Amba* by Laksmi Pamuntjak, shows that both *Canting* and *Amba* still have negative stereotypes that women are sidelined when in the public sector and are not given the same education rights as men. However, in the economic aspect, the positive role of Javanese women who have been recognized for their ability to drive the community's economy is shown in the novel *Canting*.

Based on the explanation above regarding relevant research, it can be understood that most of the previous studies raised the issue of women's image in general. Meanwhile, this research focuses more on the image, position, and problems faced by Javanese women in three novels by Naning Pranoto. This research aims to describe the image, position, and problems of Javanese female characters in three novels by Naning Pranoto. This research needs to be done to provide more encouragement or awareness for Javanese women to fight for their rights as women because the three novels make women the main object in the story who still experience a lot of oppression and sexual violence.

METHOD

This research is a descriptive qualitative research that uses feminism theory because there are marginalized or underrepresented populations and it is hoped that this research can bring changes to people's perspectives on the image of a Javanese woman. The objects of this research are three novels by Naning Pranoto entitled *Musim Semi Lupa Singgah di Shizi*, *Wajah Sebuah Vagina*, and *Mei Merah 1998 (Kala Arwah Berkisah)*. The data in this

study are sentences that describe the image, position, and problems of Javanese women in three novels by Naning Pranoto.

The data collection techniques used were reading and note-taking techniques. The reading technique was carried out by reading carefully and thoroughly the data sources to find the image of women depicted, the position of women, and the oppression of women contained in the three novels. The data obtained was then recorded in a table and classified based on the categories of image, position, and problems of Javanese women found in the three novels. Through this recording activity, the data source code was also included to double-check the data source when needed in the context of data analysis. The data analysis technique used is a qualitative descriptive analysis technique based on the theory of feminism. The data analysis technique used in the qualitative analysis has three stages, namely data condensation, data display, and conclusion Miles, Huberman, & Saldana (2014) which are carried out by comparing data categorization, presenting data, and making inferences.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

This research covers three important points, namely the depiction of the self and social image, position, and problems of Javanese women in three novels by Naning Pranoto based on a feminist perspective. The following is a presentation of the research findings presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Images of Javanese Women in Three Novels by Naning Pranoto

No.	Indicator	Aspects	Novel Title and Main Character		
			<i>Musim Semi Lupa Singgah di Shizi Lasiyem</i>	<i>Wajah Sebuah Vagina Sumirah</i>	<i>Mei Merah 1998 (Kala Arwah Berkisah) Humaira</i>
1.	Javanese Women's Image	Physical	Thin, graceful, fair complexion, straight hair, big eyes, short, and snub nose	Slim, beautiful, fair skin, short curly hair, rounded, red lips, rough nails, prominent muscles, large fingers, and thick hand skin.	Beautiful, tall, long hair, fair skin, and slanted eyes
		Psychic	Strong-willed, caring, wise, well-mannered, smart, independent, and hardworking	Emotional, big-hearted, resigned, easily seduced by men, respectful of others, resilient, creative, and powerful	Emotional, worried or easily agitated, grateful, independent, religious, kind, polite, gentle, wise, smart, confident, respectful of parents, and altruism.
		Social	Carrier, village girl, poor, married woman who loves another man, and the woman Teddy loves	A prostitute, a beer seller, a Javanese woman, a source of trouble, an insane woman, not a good woman, and Mulder's lover.	A crazy woman, an unwanted child, a rape victim, Mrs. Inten's adopted daughter, a spirit, a Chinese Javanese woman, and a mother.
2.	The Position of Javanese Women	Female dominated	Sexual intercourse with husband	Household decision-making	Raped and molested
		Male	Always obey your husband's rules	Sexual intercourse with her lover	-
		Women and Men are Equal	Unrestricted to learn new things The husband also does household chores	-	-
		Women dominate men	-	-	-

3.	Javanese Women's Issues	Social	Poor communication with husband	Sexual violence	Sexual violence
			Jatuh cinta pada laki-laki lain	Suppression	Suppression
		Economy Education	Poverty	Poverty	-
			Did not get permission from his grandmother	Learn English non-formally	-
		Domestic	Can't learn Chinese quickly	Can't have a high school diploma	-
			Can't have children	-	-
			Never having an orgasm	-	-

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the self-image of Javanese women in the three novels is quite positive, while their social image tends to be negative because the main character is described as a woman who is unfaithful to her partner and as a crazy woman. The position of Javanese women in the three novels also tends to be dominated by men. The life problems faced by the Javanese female protagonists in the three novels are also quite complex.

Discussion

Analysis Results of Self-Image and Social Image of Javanese Female Characters in Three Novels by Naning Pranoto Based on Feminist Perspective

After a careful reading of the three novels studied based on the research focus, the following results were obtained.

Portrayal of Javanese Female Characters in the Novel Musim Semi Lupa Singgah di Shizi

Physical image is an image of a person related to appearance or body condition, gender, and face. This is in line with Purwahida's opinion, which states that physical image consists of aspects of gender, age, body condition, and facial features. The following is a quote that shows the physical image of Lasiyem.

“People complimented me on how elegant and classic I looked. What they liked was my long, flowing hair that fell to my waistline. Whereas what Nick liked were my big round eyes and my face that I left natural with only a light dusting of powder. Likewise, my lips were never polished with thick lipstick.” (Pranoto, 2003: 58).

Lasiyem is described as a simple girl with a natural appearance, without excessive makeup. People praise Lasiyem's graceful and classic appearance. Her long hair is left loose to the waistline, adding to her graceful impression. Her round eyes and natural face made Nick fall in love with Lasiyem. Her lips are also never polished with thick lip color. The physical image displayed on Lasiyem is natural, graceful, and youthful. This is in line with research conducted by Wardani & Sudaryani (2020), the results of which show that Lara's physical image is a simple adult woman, as it is, and does not like to preen.

The image of women according to the Javanese worldview, physically and psychologically, is a weak creature when compared to men, so it needs protection through certain rules (Desmawati, 2018; Fatmawati & Insani, 2020). Lasiyem's psychic image is described as a woman who has a strong will, caring, wise, polite, smart, independent, and hardworking. This shows that the opinion that Javanese women are considered weaker than men is not entirely true. The following quotation shows the psychic image of Lasiyem.

“Ah, what is Mbah Urip talking about? I'm still young, I don't want to think about marriage yet. If I have money, I want to go to school, Mbah. So I can work in an office. So I can get a big salary.” (Pranoto, 2003: 34-35).

The quote above shows that there is an effort made by Lasiyem to fight the culture of early marriage. Although Lasiyem is still small, she has extraordinary thoughts. Social image is a picture of women seen from a sociological perspective such as status, occupation, role in society, ethnicity, nation, and personal life. Suliantini, Martha, & Artawan (2021) argue that social image is viewed from a social perspective, namely a picture of women seen based on sociological characteristics, namely occupation, position, role in society, level of education, outlook on life, religion, beliefs, ideology, nation, tribe, and personal life. The following is an excerpt that shows Lasiyem's social image.

“I became a porter.” (Pranoto, 2003: 75).

Lasiyem casually recounts her childhood to Teddy when she was a laborer in the market. This shows that she is not at all ashamed of having once been a laborer who was considered lowly by society. When compared to her life now, it is certainly very different.

“Hemm, Teddy's smile is so sweet. Again making my heart flutter.” (Pranoto, 2003: 66).

Lasiyem is portrayed as a married woman who falls in love with her Mandarin teacher. This is inversely proportional to the image of a Javanese woman who is loyal to her husband. Women are divided into two: good women are women who are willing to serve the desires of men, being patient and loyal wives: and bad women are women who refuse to serve the interests of men (Sungkowati, 2012).

All the images attached to Lasiyem have both positive and negative images. At first, Lasiyem is portrayed as a great woman who became the wife of Nick Evans. Then the image becomes negative when Lasiyem is portrayed as a married woman who loves another man who is very far below her in age. However, when viewed from a Javanese perspective, a Javanese woman is known as a loyal figure. Pardi (2019) states that in the novel *Merantau ke Deli*, the figure of Javanese women can be described by the nine characteristics of Javanese women in general who are loyal to their husbands, willing to be married, love others, are skilled in work, good at dressing up and taking care of themselves, and live simply by the author, Hamka.

Portrayal of Javanese Female Characters in Novel Wajah Sebuah Vagina

The physical image of Javanese female characters found in the novel *Wajah Sebuah Vagina* is a beautiful, slim, tan, small body, thin, short curly hair, round, red lips, rough nails, prominent hand muscles, large fingers, and thick hand skin. This is in line with the results of Aisyah, the physical image that Juminem has is a beautiful and beautiful figure. The image found in Sumirah is the image of Javanese women who are usually described as beautiful women. Here is a quote that shows Sumirah's physical image.

“She felt that her slender body wrapped in light brown skin suddenly felt so heavy, so heavy, like being crushed by the ruins of Mijil Hill, the land of her birth, which contained her placenta.” (Pranoto, 2004: 3).

Sumirah or Mira is described as having a slim body posture and light brown skin. Her skin color is a typical Indonesian skin color. Sumirah is also described as a woman who has a beautiful face. This was revealed by Mrs. Sepuh when Mira was found by her son in a

terrible condition. Despite the many wounds on her body and face, Mira still looks beautiful with a graceful appearance.

The physical image displayed by the author on the character Sumirah or Mira describes how a Javanese woman is. Having brown skin is beautiful, and rounded which is characteristic of Javanese women. The image of Javanese women in the physical aspect is depicted by the characters Mbok Warsi, Yu Rah, Mother Tawangstri, and Mother Masari who have beautiful faces, attractive appearances, and love to smile (Afidah, Mulyono, & Nirmala, 2020).

Mira is shown to have a psychic image that is resigned, big-hearted, whiny, easily swayed by men, emotional, respectful of others, tenacious, creative, and great. The psychological image in this novel is quite inversely proportional to the results of Qur'ani (2021) namely the psychological image of the female characters described including the image of a kind woman through the character Putri Candra Kirana, the image of a loyal woman through the character Dewi Sekartaji, the image of a patient woman through the character Rara Anteng. The following are excerpts that show the psychological image of Mira's character.

“No! No! No! No...! don't you kill me!” Mira suddenly roared but her voice was only stuck in her throat.” (Pranoto, 2004: 16).

After experiencing violence and attempted murder, Mira became very frightened just by hearing the sounds around her. Mira was still thinking about the time she was tortured by Mulder. Mira was displaced in Africa because she was initially seduced by Mulder. Mulder promised her grandiose things about Durban and Jo-Burg. Mira was well aware and graciously accepted what happened to her. She is well aware that every suffering and calamity that befalls her is the result of her own mistakes.

The social image displayed on Mira is that of a prostitute, a beer seller, a Javanese woman, a source of trouble, an insane woman, not a good woman, and Mulder's lover. At the beginning of the story, Mira is portrayed as a loyal woman despite her difficult economic situation, but in the end, Mira is tempted by the seduction of other men and leaves her husband, which has fatal consequences on her life. The social image displayed in this novel is inversely proportional to the results of Fitriani, Qomariah, & Sumartini (2018) namely, the image of a woman in the family is described as a woman who is loyal to her second husband but becomes a traitorous woman at the beginning of the story; the image of women in the short story *Tahi Lalat* found the image of women in society described by a woman who serves men who influence her. The following quotations show Mira's social image.

“Finally, I followed Mbak Dinah. I sold vaginas for about five years until I finally quit because Kang Suhar proposed to me.” (Pranoto, 2004: 50).

After being raped by the village head, Mira was threatened with death by the village head, so she had no choice but to leave the village. She was offered a job by Mbak Dinah in Surabaya, which turned out to be a prostitute. After getting married and living in Jakarta Mira became a beer seller. She delivered beer to the hotel where Mulder was staying. From there Mira's economy changed for the better. In the end, she was tempted by Mulder's advances, who promised her a good life abroad. So Mira left her husband for a good life with Mulder. The number of physical and verbal violence experienced by women shows that the position between women and men is still unequal. This is in line with the opinion of Ike (2019); and Revita et al. (2020) which state that many women are victims of verbal violence. Violence, an attack on a person's control over their body and life, can take many forms and have different consequences, depending on the type of violence, its context and interpretation, the chronicity of the violence, and the availability of support (Hani, Suyudi, & Hawasi, 2016).

Portrayal of Javanese Female Figures in Novel Mei Merah 1998 (Kala Arwah Berkisah)

The physical image displayed in this novel is a beautiful woman, a simple adult woman. This is in line with the results of Wardani & Sudaryani (2020), namely Lara's physical image is a simple adult woman, as it is, and does not like to preen. Furthermore, Windiyarti et al. (2022), whose research results also show that women's self-image from the physical aspect is imaged as a beautiful woman who is described through the character Nyai Ageng Tumengkang Sari. The following are presented excerpts that show the physical image of Humaira's character in the novel

"You are beautiful inside and out." (Pranoto, 2018: 88).

Humaira is not only beautiful in looks but also in heart. She has beauty inside and out. Humaira is described as a woman with long, black, and bushy hair. When she first goes to work she is described as looking neat with a long white skirt, batik top and her hair left loose, hairpins on either side, and flat-heeled loafers.

The following excerpt shows Humaira's psychic image in the novel.

"During the time I was pregnant with my son, I cried constantly because of the severe stress caused by the rape tragedy that happened to me." (Pranoto, 2018: 4).

Humaira had a difficult time when she was pregnant. Her emotions were unstable because of what happened to her at the time. She cried constantly due to the stress of the rape tragedy. When her child was born her tears crystallized like pearls, which is why she named her daughter Mutiara or Luk-Luk.

"Although I can't deny that, deep down, I was furious at Cik Wani for being so cruel - for 'throwing away' her baby, yes...me!" (Pranoto, 2018: 55).

Humaira felt angry at her biological mother when she heard the story of her true identity on her 14th birthday. Although she felt angry, she did not want to dissolve into anger towards Cik Wani who had cruelly thrown away her baby. She was grateful because as long as she lived with Bu Inten, she never lacked anything. She received full affection from Bu Inten. That's why she respected Bu Inten so much.

Humaira's psychic image of being wise, independent, and concerned about others or loyal friends is in line with the results of Mulyadi (2018), namely Maria has a mature mind, is independent, has strong principles, is brave, and is loyal to friends.

The following excerpt shows Humaira's social image in the novel.

" I'm not in my right mind. I'm a madwoman." (Pranoto, 2018: 49).

Humaira was one of the female victims of rape during the Jakarta riots in May 1998. Humaira was considered insane and a madwoman by those around her when she was in a social center. She was found under the edge of a bridge about to dive into a river in West Jakarta. She could not remember where the river was. She only remembers the days leading up to the dark tragedy that drove her mad, pregnant, and left her baby at the clinic, where she hanged herself.

" So, even though I'm of Chinese descent, I don't speak a single word of Chinese." (Pranoto, 2018: 56).

Although Humaira is of Chinese descent, not a single word of Chinese is mastered by her. Instead, she mastered Javanese. Since being adopted by Mrs. Inten, she has deliberately cut off relations with Humaira's family. When Humaira's family wanted to give her compensation, Ms. Inten refused. All of this was done so that Humaira could live in peace. It can be said that Javanese women are part of Javanese community members who live together with Javanese cultural traditions that are attached to the prevailing norms and become role models in their lives (Pardi, 2019).

The Position of Javanese Female Characters in Comparison with Male Characters in Three Novels by Naning Pranoto Based on Feminist Perspective

After careful reading of the three novels studied based on the research focus, the results found the position of Javanese women who are dominated by men and the position of Javanese female characters who are equal to men. Meanwhile, the position of women who dominate men was not found. The following describes one by one the position of Javanese female characters found in each novel.

The Position of Javanese Female Figures in Novel Musim Semi Lupa Singgah di Shizi

In this novel, there is only data that men are more dominant than women and women are equal to men. This shows that the position of female characters is still below men or it can be said that men are superior to women. This is in line with the results of Akmaliah & Khomisah (2020) which show that the construction of gender bias in the perspective of interpretation and reality results in an order in which men are always imaged in a superior position almost in Muslim history, while women are always in a weak image supported by the interpretation of verses of the Quran and al-Hadith which are misogynistic, narratively, and legally. The following quotations show the position of Javanese female characters when compared to men.

Men are more Dominant than Women

The following quotations show that men are more dominant than women.

“Sometimes I'm so uncomfortable, so disgusted, that I'm practically incapable of doing it.” (Pranoto, 2003: 55).

Having a husband who was older than her was not as Mbah Urip said that she was not too passionate about sex. Nick's passion for intercourse was very passionate. It made Lasiyem feel uncomfortable and disgusted, one could even say she was unable to do it anymore. However, Nick didn't care about that, he still looked passionate. In a relationship, good communication is needed to keep the relationship balanced. You have to be open with each other so that if there is a problem, it can be discussed properly. Likewise, in terms of bed relationships, as husband and wife must both be open to their partners, nothing needs to be covered up to create a harmonious relationship.

The number of data found on the position of women dominated by men shows that the position of women in the novel is still weak and lower than men. The image of women according to the Javanese worldview, physically and psychologically, is a weak creature when compared to men, so they need protection through various rules (Fatmawati & Insani, 2020).

Women and Men are Equal

The following quotations show that women and men are equal.

“Yes, you can learn a lot in the Antique City.” (Pranoto, 2003: 8).

As a husband, Nick always supports Lasiyem's activities to develop herself into a better person. Nick always supports his wife's learning spirit in adding. He never arbitrarily forbids his wife to continue learning. He even advised his wife to learn Mandarin while they lived in Shizi.

The Position of Javanese Female Figures in Novel Wajah Sebuah Vagina

The position of Javanese female characters in the novel *Wajah Sebuah Vagina* found data that men are more dominant than women. This shows that women in the novel are depicted as female figures who are dominated by men. When viewed from the background of female characters, female characters can be dominated because of their low economic and educational backgrounds. Yuniarti (2018) states that education is one way to improve the position of women. Sari (2019) also stated that the struggle to liberate women was not easy, Kartini tried to give a view to women so that they could get out of traditional confinement and think ahead by getting the highest education possible. The following is a description of the position of Javanese female characters when compared to men.

Men are more Dominant than Women

The following quotations show that men are more dominant than women.

"I was told to serve them when they were in Jakarta, delivering beer to them every night." (Pranoto, 2004: 43).

In terms of decision-making, Suhar as Sumira's husband tends to dominate. For example, when Suhar saw a good trade opportunity, he immediately told his wife to serve and deliver beer to Mr. Mulder and his friends at the hotel. Sumira as a wife also obeyed her husband's words, so she used to go in and out of the hotel through the back door by bribing the hotel guard.

"But I've heard men say that the vagina is an incomparable source of pleasure. That's why vaginas are sought after by men. Don't many men like to buy pussy to enjoy?" (Pranoto, 2004: 48).

Men see the vagina as a source of unparalleled pleasure in life, so many men hunt down vaginas and buy them to enjoy. This shows that men dominate women in terms of sexual satisfaction.

The Position of Javanese Female Figures in Novel Mei Merah 1998 (Kala Arwah Berkisah)

In this novel, female characters experience physical and sexual violence which makes female characters look weak because they are unable to fight men. Many women still experience physical and sexual violence that makes women subordinated (Dewi, 2014). In Nurgiyantoro (1997) it was found that, about male characters, the role and position of female characters were portrayed in 5 categories, namely strong male domination, non-strong male domination, equal men and women, female domination over men, and female domination over women. The following is a description of the position of Javanese female characters when compared to men.

Men are more Dominant than Women

The following quotations show that men are more dominant than women.

"When I was about to run up to the third floor to Cik Lin, I was suddenly ambushed by several men who tore off my clothes and squeezed my breasts savagely. When I struggled, they grabbed my hair. I screamed for help." (Pranoto, 2018: 123).

When Humaira tried to run to her boss, several men ambushed her, ripping off her clothes and violently squeezing her breasts. It was as if women were slaves to their lust. Even innocent women became victims of their anger against the government, which at that time was experiencing a financial crisis, plus the shooting of Trisakti students which further fueled anger, resulting in riots. Irresponsible men ruthlessly raped innocent women.

Issues Affecting the Life Paths of Javanese Female Characters in Three Novels by Naning Pranoto Based on a Feminist Perspective

After careful reading of the three novels studied based on the research focus, the results found problems in the social, economic, educational, and domestic fields. The following describes one by one the problems found in each novel.

Problems that Affect the Way of Life of Female Characters in Novel Musim Semi Lupa Singgah di Shizi

The problems found in the novel *Musim Semi Lupa Singgah di Shizi* are problems in social, economic, educational, and domestic aspects. In Nafiyah & Mardikantoro (2016), three social problems of women were found, namely crime, family disorganization, and violation of community norms. The following is a description of the problems faced by Javanese female characters in the novel.

Social Aspects

The following quotations show the problems in social aspects that Lasiyem has to face.

“I didn't dare to look at her, afraid that my heart would tremble as it did a few nights ago, when I saw her face, among the flowers illuminated by the twinkling stars..” (Pranoto, 2003: 62).

Not yet finished with her domestic problems with Nick, Lasiyem already has to face another problem. She fell in love with her Chinese tutor, who turned out to be much younger than her. Lasiyem never wanted to fall in love with Teddy. She even denied that she was in love with Teddy. She thinks her feelings are just a sense of being impressed by Teddy's intelligence. She also assumed that if she had a child, he would be as big as Teddy. Lasiyem also imagines how proud she would be if she had a son as handsome and smart as Teddy. This shows that Lasiyem's desire to have a child is very big, but unfortunately, her wish can never be realized.

Economic Aspects

The following quotations show the economic problems that Lasiyem has to face.

“My family couldn't afford to send me to school. So, I did what I could to earn money under the care of my grandmother. Yes, my grandmother had taken care of me since I was a child because both of my parents had died of gadung poisoning.” (Pranoto, 2003: 75).

Even though her family couldn't afford school, she didn't run out of ideas to fulfill her wish to go to school. She earned money by working as a porter in the market. Some of her money was set aside secretly to avoid being caught by her grandmother. With a low economic background, Lasiyem had to be more persistent to realize her desire to go to school. Fortunately, at that time Mbah Urip met Nick who needed a painting model, so Lasiyem could go to school until she graduated from SPG (Teacher Education School). Nick paid quite a lot for Lasiyem to model his paintings at Mbah Urip's request. It turns out that Mbah Urip is secretly preparing to confront Nick so that Nick will pay a lot of money for his

granddaughter to model her paintings so that she can go to school. He feels guilty for not being able to pay for his granddaughter's schooling.

Education Aspect

The following excerpt shows the problems in the educational aspect that Lasiyem has to face.

“Mbak Ninik said I could go straight to class IV. Unfortunately, Mbah Urip objected to me going to a formal school with a morning schedule, saying I had to work to earn money..” (Pranoto, 2004: 39).

After attending a school founded by students from various universities in Yogyakarta for market children, Lasiyem was finally able to read, write, and count at the age of 12. The students encouraged Lasiyem to go to formal school, but unfortunately, Mbah Urip was against it because the formal school hours were in the morning and Lasiyem had to work as a hawker in the morning. If Lasiyem went to school in the morning, she would miss the opportunity to earn money because people generally shop in the morning.

Domestic Aspects

The following quotations show the problems in the domestic aspect that Lasiyem has to face.

“Frankly speaking, I don't like her words: Hupp...huuup! If I'm being honest, I hated the word because it meant something that made my body ache, and my bones twisted and sore. Yes, I had never felt the pleasure of what Nick called the Blue Mountain.” (Pranoto, 2003: 56).

The problems faced by Lasiyem relate to her sexual life with her husband. Lack of communication is the cause of the problems faced not finding a solution. Lasiyem never said what she felt when having sexual intercourse with her husband. Her husband, too, never asked Lasiyem about her opinion during intercourse. Nick seems to only pursue his satisfaction without thinking about his wife's satisfaction. In her domestic life, a major problem is the lack of good communication between Lasiyem and Nick.

Problems that Affect the Way of Life of Female Characters in the Novel Wajah Sebuah Vagina

The problems found in the novel *Wajah Sebuah Vagina* are problems in social, economic, and educational aspects. Santoso's research (2019) found women's problems in the form of domestic violence. Meanwhile, in this novel, there are also problems of violence but not within the scope of the household. The following is an excerpt that shows the problems faced by Javanese female characters in the novel.

Social Aspects

The following quotations show the problems in social aspects that Mira has to face.

“Well, the village head in our village, Mr. Prakoso, was also rich. He used his wealth for extravagance, splurging, and playing with women. Every woman who was beautiful in his eyes became a victim of his lust. If the targeted girl didn't want to, her family was terrorized. As a result, many girls became his victims. Including me...!” (Pranoto, 2004: 46).

Mira became one of the victims of the village head's depravity. Mira's parents were killed when she was five years old for being involved in the communist party. Her parents belonged to the BTI (Barisan Tani Indonesia) which was an organization under the umbrella

of the communist party. She was from a poor family, so one day when the village head called her she came in the hope that he would assist her family. But in reality, she was raped and threatened.

“The first time was on the boat when I was sailing here - to Africa. Another time, Mulder sold me again, a few days before he buried me alive in this region. This time the transaction took place in a five-star hotel in Durban....” (Pranoto, 2004: 56).

Mulder's initial sweetness towards her changed on the boat to Africa. Mulder sold Mira to a friend of his and similar incidents continued until finally Mira was buried alive by Mulder. When Mira was buried by Mulder in the forest, it turned out that a resident found Mira, so Mira's life could still be saved. If it wasn't for the locals who found Mira, she would have been buried alive by Mulder.

Economic Aspects

The following quotations show the problems in the economic aspect that Mira has to face.

“We were very poor. That's why, when Mr. Lurah called me, I wanted to approach him. It turned out that he was just...” (Pranoto, 2004: 47).

Mira was born in a village with barren land and a very poor family, so one day when the village head called her she wanted to come closer because she thought she would get help from the village head. But her assumption was wrong, she became a victim of rape.

Education Aspect

The following quotations show the problems in the educational aspect that Mira has to face.

“Ever since I was a kid, I dreamed of having a high school diploma, so that I could get a secure, well-established job. The reality? Due to severe poverty, I could only afford to have an elementary school diploma that was not marketable for job applications..” (Pranoto, 2004: 50).

Since childhood, Mira wanted to have a high school diploma so that she could get a good job. But because she came from a poor family, she could only go to elementary school. It turned out that her diploma could not be used to apply for a good job. Mira never had a formal education to learn English. She learned English from Mulder and his Dutch friends. So it's natural that her English is not that good.

The various problems displayed in the novel *Wajah Sebuah Vagina* are quite similar to the results of Setianingtyas, Djohan, & Trijanto's (2016) research which shows the existence of, violence, unfaithfulness, stereotypes, double burden which are forms of gender inequality experienced by Balinese women, and as a form of Balinese women's resistance to gender inequality in the novel *Tarian Bumi* by Oka Rusmini, namely celibacy, lesbianism, and fighting customs.

Problems that Affect the Way of Life of Female Characters in the Novel Mei Merah 1998 (Kala Arwah Berkisah)

The problems found in the novel *Mei Merah 1998 (Kala Arwah Berkisah)* are problems in social, educational, and domestic aspects. In Rahma, Suswandari, & Naredi's research (2020), women's problems in the form of sexual violence against women during the Japanese occupation were found. The following is a description of the problems faced by Javanese female characters in the novel.

Social Aspects

The Javanese female character in the novel who experiences problems in social aspects is Humaira. The following excerpt shows the problems in social aspects that Humaira has to face.

"Everything had happened and I was in the chaos as a victim of the behavior of barbarians leading to an unnatural death." (Pranoto, 2018: 116).

Everything had happened and Humaira was part of the chaos of the May 1998 tragedy. She became a victim of barbaric behavior that led to her unnatural death. Humaira never wanted to become pregnant at her age during the rape in the May 1998 riots that heralded the country's Reformation. At the time of the tragedy, Humaira was taking part in training in preparation for work in a restaurant owned by a kind Chinese woman: Herlinawati. Humaira continued to scream. Especially after she found out that the rapists had cut off her calf-length hair. Not only had they raped her, but they had also damaged her crown.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research and discussion of the image of Javanese women in three novels by Naning Pranoto, it can be concluded that the image of women displayed in the novels *Musim Semi Lupa Singgah di Shizi*, *Wajah Sebuah Vagina*, and *Mei Merah 1998 (Kala Arwah Berkisah)* is quite dynamic due to the social contact experienced by the characters. Each character's background also affects the image labeled towards Javanese female characters in the three novels. When viewed from the position of female characters, Javanese women in the novels are depicted as figures who are more dominated by men. This could be Naning Pranoto's intention as a form of protest or cynicism towards those who marginalize women. The subsequent problems shown mostly start from economic problems that cause other problems to arise such as sexual violence, oppression, and marginalization.

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