

**WOMAN'S INDEPENDENCE REFLECTED AT *THIS EARTH OF MANKIND* NOVEL BY PRAMOEDYA ANANTA TOER (1975):
A FEMINIST APPROACH**



ARTICLE

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by

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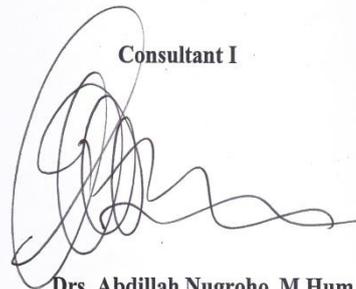
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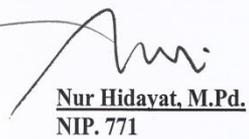
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SUMMARY

UMI HIDAYATI KARTIKA DEWI, A. 320 100 043. WOMEN'S INDEPENDENCE REFLECTED AT *THIS EARTH OF MANKIND* NOVEL BY PRAMOEDYA ANANTA TOER (1975): A FEMINIST APPROACH. RESEARCH PAPER. MUHAMMADIYAH UNIVERSITY OF SURAKARTA. 2014

This study is aimed to show women's independence which is represented by the characters in *This Earth of Mankind* novel by using feminist approach. This research is descriptive qualitative research. It is done by verifying two objectives: the first is analyzing the novel based on its structural elements and the second is analyzing the novel on the feminist approach.

In this method, there are two types of data sources, namely primary data source and secondary data source. The primary data source is *This Earth of Mankind* novel by Pramoedya Ananta Toer which is translated by Max Lane in 1982. And the secondary data sources are materials other sources such as books, dictionary, internet and journal which is related to the study. The method of collecting data is library research and this study is analyzed using descriptive analysis.

The results of the study are as follows. First, based on the structural analysis of each elements, it shows that the character and characterization, setting, plot, theme, point of view, style are related to each other and establish a unity of pleasant novel. Second, based on feminist approach, the author reflect the independence of woman in facing the harshness of the world but her independence still didnot acknowledged by society. The novel is an object in which explain the condition of Indonesian woman's life in Dutch colonialism.

Keywords: Women's Independence, *This Earth of Mankind*, Feminist Approach.

A. Introduction

1. Background of the Study

Independence or freedom is very important in people's life, especially for women. Independence is something which is had by people since they were born. Independence is a condition where people have the ability to act according to their wishes. The term independence describes people who is not forced and demanded, but with independence people can feel their existence as a human being. Actually, women and men have same right and obligation in social life. They have equal opportunity to do anything that they want as human being.

This Earth of Mankind novel is one of the famous novels in Indonesia. It has become best-sellers novel in Indonesia, then in 1981 this novel were banned by the Indonesian government on charges of propagating the teachings of Marxism-Leninism and Communism. *This Earth of Mankind* novel was written by Pramoedya Ananta Toer. He was born in Blora, a small town in central java, Indonesia on February 6th 1925. He died on April 30th 2006 in Jakarta. Almost of his life was spent in prison.

This Earth of Mankind tells about Minke, a native boy who has a mindset like an European, he was not the ordinary indigenous breeds, his blood still flows the blood of the kings of Java and so, he could get an education at HBS. In Mellema's family he meets Annelies, a girl who is so beautiful, her beauty was mentioned more than the beauty of the Queen of the Netherlands at the time, Queen Wilhelma. She was the daughter of a wonderful mother, a mother who is so capable of taking care of a lot of work including *Boerderij Boeitzorg* after Mr Mellema, his master, his husband who is not valid, turned into a crazy people who have no care about anything around him. Minke and Nyai are both proud, highly educated, strong-willed individuals, who refuse to accept the hierarchy that parcels out freedom and power according to the amount of European blood running through one's veins. They fight back European laws firmly as they could. They fight for their justice,

even they know that they will lose. In the end, Annelies was brought into Netherland and *Nyai* has no right for her daughter and wealth anymore.

There are some reasons why the researcher is interested in studying this novel; first is because this novel is a popular novel, second is because this novel tells the women's life and fate in Dutch colonialism and Javanese feudalism. Third is because this novel tells the story of woman personality which make she aware to change her fate become an independent woman. Fourth is because a realistic historical novel, which give us the historical women's life includes women's position, women's role, women's right, and women's participation.

The researcher uses the feminist theory as an approach to analyze this novel, because feminist theory is the most appropriate theory which discuss about women's problem. The researcher analyzes *This Earth of Mankind* novel by using feminist approach to break up major and minor characters which support women's independence entitled **Woman's Independence Reflected at *This Earth of Mankind* Novel by Pramoedya Ananta Toer (1975): A Feminist Approach.**

2. Literature Review

The research on *This Earth of Mankind* novel has been conducted by some students. The first study is conducted by Auliana Sofi in 2009, entitled *Eksistensi Perempuan dalam novel Pramoedya Ananta Toer*. The main point of the research paper is the existance of women which is analyzed using feminism approach. The second is study which was conducted by Rere Azizah, an Airlangga University student, in her research paper published on May 25, 2011, entitled *Complex oppression Towards Sanikem as Depicted in Toer's 'Earth of Mankind'*. This study discusses the existance of the oppression toward the Javanese women during the Dutch's colonialism in Indonesia.

3. Problem Statement

The problem statement of this research is how is woman's independence as Nyai Ontosoroh reflected in *This Earth of Mankind* Novel written by

Pramoedya Ananta Toer analyzed using feminist approach and how is woman's independence as Nyai Ontosoroh reflected in *This Earth of Mankind* Novel based on its structural elements.

4. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are : a) To analyze woman's independence as Nyai Ontosoroh reflected at *This Earth of Mankind* (1975) novel written by Pramoedya Ananta Toer using a feminist approach, b) To analyze woman's independence at *This Earth of Mankind* novel based on its structural elements.

5. Benefits of the Study

a. Theoretical Benefits

The result of this study is expected to be able to give information and contribution the development of the knowledge, an academic reference by other researchers to conduct further research and particularly the literary studies on *This Earth of Mankind* novel.

b. Practical Benefits

The study is expected to enrich knowledge and experience of the writer and another student of Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta or another university who have interest with literary study on the novel from a Feminist Approach.

6. Underlying Theory

a. Notion of Feminist

In feminist theory, the term feminist is used to identify people who support struggle for women's freedom. Feminism is a movement aimed at altering existing power relationship both men and women in society. Feminism thus seeks to liberate women. Feminism emerged as a reaction upon women's oppression in various aspects of life. The aim of feminism is establishing and defending equal political, economics, and social rights and equal opportunities for women. Women want to equalize their rights and roles in public. According to Wood (2009: 3) feminism is defined as a movement for social,

political, and economic equality of women and men. For women that include the feminist movement, they want generated an analysis by women of their oppression as women.

b. Major Principle of Feminist

1) Women's Position

In society, women always take the second place and men in the first place. Basically, women and men are different, but the differentiation should not affect their position in society. Feminist clarifies that naturally women and men have equal position in society because they have together as citizen ship. In natural law, women and men are human so that they get equal place. According to Mandell (1995: 214) women can do as well as men in giving achievement for society, contribute well in all aspect, and have the same power.

2) Women's Role

According to De Beauvoir (1993: 143), women's role treated in house hold jobs, "they remain responsible for house and children." Besides, marriage women intent to carry on the feminine function to have sex and pleasure. According to Mandell (1995: 54), "women are traditionally defined by their roles as daughters, wives and mothers. Women with disabilities are assumed unable to full care taking and partnership roles," it means that women are always associated with domestic roles.

3) Women's Right

Women and men are born equal. So, their right are also born equal too, there is no different between women and men's right. In principle, every person was given equal opportunity and civil right. According to Anderson (1983: 139) "all people should be given equal opportunities and civil right should be extended to all." It means that every human being either men or women should have the same opportunities and rights to do their activity without gender differences.

4) Women's Participation

Generally, women have fewer participation and opportunities on job than men. Women's participation both domestic and public spheres are always in second place. Women's participation in domestic spheres is closed to be wives and mother (De Beauvoir, 1993: 457). They must take care their children and serve their husband and also do housework.

c. Women's Independence

Independence belongs to every people in the world. Generally, human being have the same right to explore their abilities. Nowadays, women can stand alone without men, they can do anything by herself, they can be independent women. Independent has the meaning not dependent, not depending or contingent upon something else for existence, operation, or another aspects of lives.

1) Women's Independence in Society

In society, women are judged become a mother and a wife. Women have an important role in family. Family is the only business they have. In family, women have an important duty as a mother and a wife who would naturally also be the homemakers and cares of children. So, care is primarily women's responsibility (Hughes, 2002:8). Women also have their own desire and wish to lead their life as a loyal wife and affectionate mother. Family duties are part of the basic women participation in society.

2) Women's Independence in Education

Education helps men and women claim their rights and realizes their potential in the economic, political and social arenas. Education plays a particularly important role as a foundation for girls' development towards adult life. A woman's level of education affects her decision-making process when it comes to questions about contraception, age of marriage, fertility, child mortality, modern sector employment and earnings.

3) Women's Independence in Work Place

Women have their own right to lead her life. Women can decide their decisions. It includes the right to entrance the working world outside family. Women can entrance all of occupation this time, even though it's men occupation, such as driver, military, etc. According to Hughes (2002: 35) women and men are the same, women are equally capable of being scientists, astronauts and corporate executives of global companies.

4) Women's Independence in Economy

Female economic power also enhances the "wealth and well-being of nations." Women who control their own income tend to have fewer children, and fertility rates have shown to be inversely related to national income growth. When women have economic power - defined as control of income and capital (land, livestock, etc.), they gain more equality and control over their own lives, while contributing directly to their children's development (nutrition, health and education) and thereby indirectly to their nation's income growth.

5) Women's Independence in Politics

Women and men are born equal, both men and women have right in any aspects of life such in social, economy or political aspects. Women in government in the modern era are under-represented in most countries worldwide, in contrast to men. However, women are increasingly being politically elected to be heads of state and government. Women's participation in political aspect shows that women have independence in political aspect and show the ability of women to reach or maintain leadership roles.

d. Structural Elements of the Novel

1) Character and Characterization

The most important thing in a story is character and characterization. Character is a person who is made by the author

to tell the story. According to Kennedy (1983: 45) the character is presumably an imaged person who inhabits a story. He also divides the character into two, namely the main or major character and minor character.

2) Plot

Plot is created by the author to make the story more interested and give an extraordinary effect to the reader. Plot is about the process of growing action from the beginning of the story to the climatic movement and end in the resolution of the story. Plot of the novel consists of exposition, complication, climax, and resolution.

3) Setting

Setting is about the time, place, location and initiates the main backdrop and mood for a story. According to Bordwell and Thompson, (1990: 130) setting can be used to reinforce something about characters. Setting is divided into two, namely setting of time and setting of place.

4) Point of View

According to Douglass and Harnden (1996: 31), “point of view is the one of the most interesting and basic narrative devices available to the storyteller.” Based on the perspective of the storyteller, point of view is divided into three types: first person point of view, second point of view, and third point of view

5) Theme

Theme of the story is whatever general idea or insight the entire story reveals. A theme is seldom so obvious. That is, a theme need not to be a moral or a message. It may be what the happening add up to, what the stories about (Kennedy, 1983: 103). The theme must be arranged as a sentence.

6) Style

Style refers to the individual traits or characteristics of a piece of writing; to a writer's particular ways of managing words that we come to recognize as habitual or customary.

B. Research Method

1. Type of the Study

In this research, the researcher uses a qualitative research. It is library research while data sources are using library data. The purpose of this research is to analyze novel using feminist approach.

2. Object of the Study

The researcher uses *This Earth of Mankind* novel written by Pramoedya Ananta Toer which is published in 1975 as the object of the study. It is analyzed by using feminist approach.

3. Type of the Data and the Data source

There are two types of data source that are used in this research, namely primary and secondary data sources. The primary data source is *This Earth of Mankind* novel by Pramoedya Ananta Toer. The secondary data sources are from other sources related to the novel.

4. Technique of the Data Collection

In conducting the study, the researcher uses the techniques in collecting the data as follows: a) reading the novel repeatedly, b) reading some related books to find out the theory and information, c) determining the character which will be analyzed, d) taking notes of important thing both of primary and secondary data sources, e) selecting particular parts considered important and relevant for analysis, f) drawing the conclusion and formulating its pedagogical suggestion.

5. Technique of the Data Analysis

The technique used in analyzing the data is descriptive analysis. It concerns with the structural elements of the novel and feminist criticism.

C. Finding and Discussion

1. Structural Element Analysis

This Earth of Mankind novel is written by Pramoedya Ananta Toer. It is translated by Max Lane in 1982. It has become best-sellers novel in Indonesia. This novel deals explicitly with inequality of women in Indonesia at that time.

The theme of *This Earth of Mankind* novel is “a powerful woman is woman who could hold the world in her hand.” This is suitable to describe the condition which should be fought by women in that era. The era women have only two destiny, mother and wife. It is demonstrated by Pramoedya through *Nyai Ontosoroh*'s character in this novel.

The major characters in this novel is Minke, *Nyai Ontosoroh* and Annelies Mellema. The minors characters in *This Earth of Mankind* novel are Herman Mellema, Robert Mellema, Robert Suurhof, Jean Marais, Magda Peters, Darsam, Dr. Martinet, Minke's father, Minke's mother, Sarah and Miriam de la Croix, Assisstant Resident of B and Maurits Mellema.

The settings of place in this novel are in Wonokromo at *Nyai Ontosoroh*'s house, Minke's rented room at Kranggan, inside the buggy, the carriage house, cows pen, Jean Marais's house, Robert's room, Surabaya Police Station, Bupati's B Residence, Post office, Assisstant Resident's house, food stall, Ah Tjong pleasure house, H.B.S. school, Dr. Martinet's house, and the court. While, the setting of time in this novel takes time in 1990s. In the morning, afternoon, evening, night even in the daybreak.

The plot of the novel begins with the introducing of Minke and why he gets that name. Minke is not his original name and his original name is not mentioned in this novel. Then Minke meets with Annelies and *Nyai Ontosoroh* at the first time. Annelies feels comfortable besides Minke. So, *Nyai* asks Minke to visit them again in his holiday. Then the story moves backward which covers *Nyai Ontosoroh*'s childhood including her first meeting with Herman Mellema. When *Nyai* are in happiness with her family, suddenly Maurits Mellema comes to her house to know the condition of

Herman Mellema who has left him with his mother in Netherlands. After Maurits Mellema leaves the house, Herman Mellema lost his mind and forget his wife and children. When Herman Mellema died, his death is brought into the court and it is found that the murderer is Babah Ah Tjong. A few months later, Annelies and Minke marry in *Nyai*'s house. In the middle of their life, the document from the White Court which is said that the wealth of Herman Mellema falls to Maurits Mellema and also Annelies guardian. *Nyai* and Minke fight back the White Court with their strength. They lose Annelies. This story is end with the departure of Annelies to Netherlands.

In *This Earth of Mankind* novel, Pramoedya uses first participant point of view in every chapter of this novel. The story is told by the first participant in all parts of the novel. The first participant here is Minke. Minke tells the story about himself, Annelies, *Nyai* Ontosoroh and all of the events which happen in this novel.

Max Lane as the translator of this novel uses standard Australian English so the reader can understand the story easily. While Pramoedya Ananta Toer as the writer of this novel, uses some figurative language such as simile, hyperbole, metaphor and personification to make the story of the novel more interesting to be read.

2. Feminist Analysis

Some issues in feminist are women's position, women's role, women's right and women's participation. In women's position, women are in the second place under men. Women are always under control of men. In *This Earth of Mankind*, the position of women is lower than men. Their life is controlled by their father or husband. As a concubine, women has lower position than legal wife. Concubine also has a low position in society. Concubine is seen as woman who does not know a legitimate marriage and has a low moral character. *Nyai* Ontosoroh also seen as woman who sells her honour to live easily and luxury using her master's wealth.

Women's role is same as her destiny, they are only a mother and wife who must take care of all housework. In *This Earth of Mankind* novel,

unmarriage women in Indonesia should stay at home until they are picked by men. There are two types of wives, legal and illegal wife. As a legal wife, women's role in family just give birth to their children, satisfy their husband and take care of all the house work. As illegal wife or a concubine, women are seen as a slave who must satisfy her master and give birth illegitimate children. Concubine must be ready when her master wants to throw her.

Women's right is right for women in getting all aspects of life like men's right in society. As a mother, it is important for women to get education, because they will become the first teacher to their children. In Indonesia, Native women are not allowed to get education from school. The choice of life become a *nyai* does not come from her heart. People who has changed her into a *Nyai* is her father. Women cannot choose men whom they loved to marry with. The right for getting self happiness is only a dream for women.

The social status of woman in society affects the status of women in law. Legitimate wife could own property and have right for her own children in law. But there was still discrimination against illegitimate wife. Illegitimate wife has no right to own property. In front of White Court, a concubine has no right to own her property and her own children. *Nyai Ontosoroh* has no right to own her wealth and family. White Court did not respect her as the owner of *Boerderij Buitenzorg* and a mother who gave birth to her children.

The last feminist issues are women's participation. The custom of women in Indonesia, is stay at home and could not participate in public life, only a few of them who leave their home and work as a labour. Not all of women in Indonesia could work outside home. Only big factory and rich family who will put labour and slave to work. In *This Earth of Mankind* novel, women's participation is only participate in Family's business like *Nyai* who owns the business and controls the business herself.

Women's Independence is necessary for women to have same status as men in society. Women's Independence is owned by women who can stand alone without men beside her. Women who have self-respect to herself to do

anything they desire. They are proud of themselves and they participate in work place which they want.

Family is basic unit of society which is had by women. *Nyai* Ontosoroh, a concubine of Mr. Mellema, could control the house by herself without servant. She does everything her master's desire and try to make herself not dependent to her master. She joins to work in Mr. Mellema's business and has an important role in the business. She shows to society that as a *Nyai*, she could control her family and business. She leads her family and makes Mr. Mellema dependent on her. She has been successful as an independent woman in society. She could control people and the situation around her.

Women's independence in education also has by *Nyai* Ontosoroh. She gets education from her master. Begins with reading and writing using Dutch, then she could speak Dutch fluently. She learns everything from Mr. Mellema, from formal education until informal education, such as serving food in dining table, matching dress and another education. After getting the education she feels that she is equal with European people and has self-respected toward herself.

After getting education, *Nyai* Ontosoroh is trusted by Mr. Mellema to participate in his business. She becomes a paid labour in office, when her ability is qualified, she becomes the owner of the agricultural business. She has shown her ability in making her business progress rapidly. Then *Nyai* Ontosoroh became the owner of her agricultural firm, *Boerderij Buitenzorg*. In a work place, *Nyai* Ontosoroh becomes an independent woman who own the business and controls everything by herself.

Women have better power in economic sector then men. Like *Nyai* Ontosoroh, she prefers to save her shopping money then buy something useless. When Mr. Mellema built an agricultural business, she helps him in buying some property. Her independence in economy makes her become the owner of the business and she is able to build a home like palace.

The most powerful politic in Dutch colonialism is European politic, only European who can control all of problem in Indonesia. The independence of

women in political aspect is shown by *Nyai Ontosoroh* when she fights the European law to take the guardian of Annelies. Law in Indonesia at that time is made by White Court. In European law said that the wealth and children of European which is married illegally with Native women is under the control of an executor. In this case, when Mr. Mellema died, Annelies will be brought to Netherlands. She fights the European law firmly and she is not afraid with European Court. She has fight as hard as she could, although she could never win in front of European Court.

Finally, from all aspects that are reflected in *This Earth of Mankind* novel, there is a close relationship between the novel and the reality of women's life and destiny in Indonesia. Women's independence is important to show her pride in society and to be treated like men by society.

D. Conclusion

After analyzing *This Earth of Mankind* novel by using feminist approach, the researcher draws the following conclusions. Based on the structural elements, the character who reveals the independence of women is *Nyai Ontosoroh*. She is a concubine of Herman Mellema, but she is an extraordinary *Nyai* who appear in that era. She has strong power and character who is able to catch people and control people's mind. The setting of time in this novel happen in nineteenth century when Dutch still colonizes and controls the government in Indonesia. Almost of Indonesian women become a *Nyai* in that time. Secondly, based on the feminist analysis, it can be concluded that the author writes the story based on the phenomena of unequal rights and roles of women in Indonesian society during Dutch colonialism. He criticizes the phenomena that the rights of women especially concubines are limited almost has no right for their life. A concubine is seen as woman who not knowing a legitimate marriage and has a low moral character. They do not have the same right as men in many aspects of life. The independence of *Nyai Ontosoroh* should be an example for women in their journey of life. women should have confidence, brave, and courage to be equal as men in all aspects of life in society.

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