

# Marginality in Novel *Tempurung* by Oka Rusmini

Thera Widyastuti<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Literature Department, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Indonesia

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Abstract: The culture of patriarchy is practiced by almost all nations in the world. Women become the people who are harmed. They are treated differently from men. Novel *Tempurung* by Oka Rusmini depicts women who are living in Bali, and Balinese still adhere to customs and traditions, where women become inferior. The writer describes how women face their bodies, religion, culture and society. This research is a descriptive analytical study with intrinsic and extrinsic approaches. Critical theories of feminist literature, gender, and sociology of literature are used as tools to analyze. The research finding is that women became marginalized due to patriarchal culture.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Literary works are part of people's lives. Activities and events that occur in the society are recorded in literature. The writer wrote it, published, then read by the readers.

One of the functions of literature according to Poe (Wellek, 1977: 25) is to entertain, and at the same time teach something. Readers feel entertained when reading literary works and also contain values that provide education to the society.

Forms of literary works such as prose, drama and poetry are favored in society. One of the various types of prose is a novel, which is a long story that has a variety of events and more than one main character. The novel is made by building elements which are intrinsic and extrinsic. Both are combined in one work. A novel is totality, which is artistic by combining the two elements.

The novels that appeared in Indonesia have a long history, starting with the establishment of Balai Pustaka in 1920-1950. In this period Indonesian romans and novels were very well known, such as *Azab dan Sengsara* (Merari Siregar, 1920), *Siti Nurbaya* (Marah Roesli, 1922), *Salah Asuhan* (Abdul Muis, 1928), and *Tenggelamnya Kapal van Der Wijck* (Hamka, 1938). The development of Indonesian literature continues with the emergence of some periods: Pujangga Baru, Angkatan 45, Angkatan 50-60, Angkatan 66-70, Angkatan 80-90, Angkatan 2000, and Angkatan Milineal.

In the 80-90 period, the emergence of female writers, such as NH. Dini, Mira W, Marga T, and Oka Rusmini. They are very famous for works that show women as the main characters. The presence of female writers who brought up the themes of women's daily lives gave rise to different colors. Their work became a best seller. Concern for women makes female authors favored by female readers in particular.

Oka Rusmini is an Indonesian female writer known for poetry, short stories and novels. Aside from being a writer, she is also a journalist. Her concern for the lives of women made her raise the theme around women's issues. Oka Rusmini is from Bali, and she described a lot about Balinese customs, and her life as Brahmins. She was born in Jakarta, on July 11, 1967. Her works include *Earth Dance* (2000), *Sagra* (2001), *Kenanga* (2003), *Tempurung* (2004). She was awarded the Equator Kusala Literature award in 2004 for her poem titled *Saiban*.

This research discusses Oka Rusmini's novel *Tempurung*. It was first published as a serial story in 2004 in *Media Indonesia Daily*. This novel tells the life of Balinese women in Bali with all the problems surrounding their role, their bodies, and Balinese society. More than one female character presented, and each woman has problems with the surrounding society, and also the culture that surrounds them.

Balinese women are bound by culture, and norms that are very binding, especially the caste they adhere to, so women are helpless, and become

marginalized. The problem in this research is about the lives of marginalized women. And the purpose of this research is to find out the lives of marginalized women.

The research method used is descriptive analysis, with literature studies. Descriptive method is a research method used to investigate circumstances, situations, which are then presented in the form of research reports. This is done to achieve the desired goals (Endraswara, 2003:146). Intrinsic and extrinsic approaches are used to analyze problems in this study. Figures and settings are intrinsic approaches and the criticism theory of feminist literature, gender, and sociology of literature is an extrinsic approach used to answer research questions.

Whereas previous research on the same problem, among others, was stated by:

(1) *Feminist Literary Criticism in the Novel Imraáh Inda Nuqthah Al-Shifr by Nawal Al-Saadawi*. Minyatul Ummah. 2009. The results of the research show that women in Arabia experienced violence, and a double burden which caused them to experience gender injustice. (2) *The Image of Women in Novel Surga yang Tak Kurindukan by Asma Nadia: A Review of Feminist Literary Criticism*. Ria Rahayu Candraning Tyas. 2017. The research conclusions is women who have experience violence, but can rise to become independent women.

The presence of characters are very important role in the novel. The characters according to Abrams (in Nurgiyanto 2007: 165) are people who are displayed in a narrative work, or drama that the reader interpreted as having moral qualities, and certain tendencies such as those expressed in speech and what is done in action.

A novel shows the setting as an illustration where events or events occur so the reader gets an idea of the situation and conditions in which the character is located. Social and cultural settings have a big role in helping readers to understand society and culture in a certain period of time. Setting becomes the concrete basic of the story and clearly. Readers can feel and assess the truth, accuracy, and setting actualisation that is told so that they feel familiar. It's as if the readers find in the story something that is part of them.

Feminist literary criticism emerged as an impact of the awareness of academics who had views about women who had been harmed in society. The goal is to deconstruct the system of society assessment of the position of women in society. (Djajanegara in Widyastuti, 2015: 23).

Then gender theory described women who are different from men. Gender is different from sex, where gender can be changed, and based on the culture in which people are located. Whereas sex cannot be changed. Many conditions change the role of women and men in the society. The term sex is generally used to refer to reproductive problems, and sexual activity, the rest are used by the term gender (Kessler and McKenna, 1977: 7). Sex is more about the biological aspects of a woman or man, concerning the number of chromosomes, genetics, and reproductive organs.

Whereas the sociology of literature helps us understand how society is related to literature, which influences our perspective on certain societies. The definition of sociology is focuses on the general aspects of society, and seeks to get the general patterns of people's lives (Soekanto, 2007). Literary work is a product of society. The writer produces literary works that are influenced by the place where he lives and the relationship that exists between the writer and the people who live in the environment. Ian Watt in Damono (1978: 3-4) said there is a reciprocal relationship between writers, literature, and society, such as (1) the social context of the writerr that relates to the social position of writers in society, and its relation to the reading society; (2) literature as a mirror of society that describes society to know the state of society, and (3) social functions of literature that see the extent to which literary works are influenced by society.

## 2 DISCUSSION

Novel *Tempurung* by Oka Rusmini is a story about women in Bali, and their bodies, as well as their problems being women. The female characters are present very interesting to analyze. Each character is portrayed as a woman who is confronted with culture, customs, and society that adheres to the prevailing norms, rules, and values.

The story begins with the presence of the character Ida Ayu or commonly called Dayu. She is from the Brahman caste which is highly respected in the Balinese community. Dayu is always greeted with respect by people who know her.

People still call me Dayu, short for Ida Ayu. The name of the greatness I have to bear because I was born to a Brahmin family. My father, who has the title Ida Bagus, married a woman, Ida Ayu. It is said that my position is very high because I was born from a woman's womb with the title Ida Ayu. (p. 6)

Dayu made a bold decision by marrying a man who was not of her caste and religion. She gave up all privileges in Balinese customs. Even so, the people around her still call her Dayu.

That woman sometimes likes to call me *atu*, short for *Ratu* An honor call for Balinese women in Brahmin caste. I often say to her, don't call me that, because now I'm no longer an Ida Ayu. I was married to a man outside my caste and religion. (p.16)

Dayu's husband is a writer who has strange habits. Sometimes he leaves home a week without notifying his wife. Suddenly he sent news by e-mail to his family to inform that he had left for the purpose of writing. Not long after returning home, then left again to look for writing inspiration.

The next characters is Ni Luh Putu Saring. She is a young woman who has a unique name, given by her parents. Saring has a beautiful body shape and beautiful face. Because of her name, she often complained about her name which was considered unusual.

My name is Ni Luh Putu Saring. All young people today must laugh at my name. I was called Saring. That name often bothers me. Nothing I can do to change my name, my parents are proud of the word Saring attached to me, a strange name that I always carry wherever I go. (p.25)

Saring married his beloved man named Barla, a man with curly hair and sharp eyes. Many people did not approve it when she married Barla, a man who worked as a guide with uncertain income. Shortly after marriage, Barla betrayed her by marrying a woman who was much younger than Saring.

You're beautiful, Saring. Don't waste your beauty. Don't torture yourself. Enjoy your youth. You're still young now. You can choose another man who is better. (p.52)

Saring never listen any comment from other people. She already made decision to marry a man who she loves so much.

Next is Ni Made Arsiki Wulandari. She is a woman who grew up in Denpasar, the provincial capital of Bali, so she felt she had no homeland. Her parents came from Denpasar. She always felt sad when her friends told her about their hometown.

My name is Ni Made Arsiki Wulandari. I grew up in Denpasar. My

father is from Denpasar, and my mother is also a Denpasar person. I don't have a country home like everyone else. I am often jealous of some friends who often tell stories about their fathers and mothers countries home (p.183)

Another female character featured by the writer is Ni Luh Wayan Rimpig. She is an emaciated old woman. Villagers consider Rimpig is very strange because her attitudes and behavior are more silent.

A thin body. Rimpig stepped forward. She wants to see more clearly. Straightened up. Two lumps of withered flesh lay a little strange above her heart.

Her eyes keep seeing her body. This time she look her stomach. Flat and not interesting. Two her hips look clearly. Also flat, and do not make she feel like an art on her body. (p.117)

Rimpig is married to I Wayan Pasung, and has three children, two sons I Wayan Ribeg, and I Made Rabug, and one daughter, Ni Luh Nyoman Songi. Her husband, Pasung never gave her money to support their household needs. He was lazy, and jobless. Therefore, they live in poverty.

#### Marginalization of Women

Marginalization occurs in women since long ago, both at home (domestic) and outside the home (public) where there were discrimination against women by men. Therefore, marginalization of women can be seen from the role of women in society.

There are general conditions that make women the same as men. But there are also special conditions that women have to make them different, but not to distinguish them (Arivia, 2006:5)

Women have tools and reproductive processes that are bestowed with nature, where when women are pregnant, giving birth and breastfeeding will have gender stereotypical implications (Megawangi, 1999: 88).

Marginalization occurs because the society relates it to the patriarchal that they adhere to. The emerging gender role makes people treat women differently from men. The role is related to gender, and not sex. The definition of sex is associated with male-female, which is determined conditionally and biologically, while the masculine-feminine gender is determined by the prevailing culture in the local area.

Female characters in Novel *Tempurung* experience life that is socially problematic for themselves, and also the people around them. Patriarchal gives the women more suffering because it made rules and values which are not at women side.

According to Dayu, is the body of *tiang* not attractive anymore? Is it a man who *tiang* has marry who has broken *tiang* body? Please Dayu try.. try see the photo of *tiang* when *tiang* was young. Beautiful, slim and sexy body. (p.57)

The above quote explains that in a patriarchal society, the socio-cultural construction of a woman's body is used as a tool to maintain the power and dominance of men over women. Domination can be seen from the attitude of the people who put female sexuality as a satisfying male sexual desire.

Meanwhile, Arsiki was sad because she had to face a tribulation, her parents' house was confiscated by the court because her father mortgaged the house. Her father owed a lot money, and can not pay it. Finally, Arsiki and her mother had to leave house without money and anything. The spoiled Arsiki must be transformed into an independent and mature girl. She needs money, and look for a job bacuse she has to feed her mother and herself.

When you were a child transformed into an adult woman, many problems came. First, the problem with your body. Second, problems with the environment. As your body grows older, various rules are made by the society in our bodies. This can't be, it can't be. This is taboo, this is forbidden. Basically there are many rules. All punish. All insulted. (p. 188)

Women become subordinated in society. Patriarchal society makes women inferior, and men become superior. Women have dependence on men, and therefore men control women. When Arsiki's family wealth is lost, the mother does not know what to do because she relies on her husband. She is domestic person.

#### Marriage

When a men and women become adulth, they will continue their life journey into the marriage stage. Marriage is a sacred moment carried out by man and woman in a sacred bond. Those who are united in marriage will live a family life. Kate Millet (in Prabasmoro, 2006: 32) said that marriage/family is the main instrument of patriarchy, which regulates

the attitudes and behavior of its members in such a way that there is a perpetuation of patriarchal ideology.

Patriarchal society provides a favorable position for men, especially in personal relations, and also power relations in day-to-day bases, maybe even minute-to-minute, second-to-second bases. Wife in sub-ordinate position, and husband in dominant position. The following is a quote about the marriage that was thought by Arsiki and her girlfriend.

Marriage is also a tedious thing. First year, you start learning to know his family, its nature. You have to deal with a lot of big problems. Today's women also have to think about household economic affairs. (p.192)

Women not only think of household needs, but also social needs. According to Benston (in Tong, 2004: 157), women were initially producers, and were only secondary consumers. Women are a class of people who are responsible for the production of simple use values in activities associated with home and family. Just because women do not sell products from their work does not mean that their work is easier than that produced in the marketed product.

Whereas Ida Ayu saw that her father's marriage to her stepmother made her grandmother, her father's mother furious because her child was asked to help with housework.

"Your male authority will fall. You will no longer be a real man. You marry a foolish woman. Can't respect men. The point is that men must be respected. And the authoritative man is a man who never touches domestic work. (p. 235)

Men as leaders, and heads of households must be respected. Men may not be told to do homework by women in the household. Women do housework while taking care of their children all day long. The husband doesn't help her. The position of men over women has been going on for a long time. The domestic and public dichotomy has been going on for a long time, where women are in the domestic, and men in the public sphere, and this situation creates gender inequality.

The culture of Bali places men upheld, and women serve it. This situation makes Balinese women become oppressed. They are marginalized and cannot complain for the condition. These marginalization is the attitude of the society as a result of society social development. Dayu asked about the situation of women who cannot complain

of anything, and cannot be sick. This is unfair for women.

Then, where is the man? Above the crown of a woman. Women must not show the pain after giving birth! Do not rest before a man falls asleep! (p. 236)

The quote above is a situation that occurs in patriarchal societies where women become objects, and not subjects in the family. Therefore, women are very disadvantaged because of their gender. The female body continues to be an object, both objects to be made "holy" and to be made "sexy". Patriarchal culture prioritizes male interests, elevates masculine values, and fosters women's interests, and undermines feminine values. The implication is the low appreciation of domestic work.

Love makes blind women. She doesn't care about the opinions of others. When love is lost due to suffering caused by the man she loves, then she realizes that she has been tortured. Saring husband's betrayal her for other woman who works in the Salon near their house. Since they get married, Barla, her husband's did not give his wife money, even though as a guide he often brought many foreign tourists. Saring and her two sons, I Wayan Pasek and I Made Pasek had to endure hunger because they did not have money to buy food. The ideal life that Saring dreamed was lost, and had to face the bitter reality.

Patriarchy is a social structure, and ideology or system of belief that men have superiority. Every social system or historical period raises its own variations regarding how patriots work, and how different social and cultural practices. But the principle remains the same, that men control most of their income and social, economic and political institutions (Bhasin in Widyastuti, 2015: 4). The role of women as wives, and also mothers who take care of homes, raise and care for children, and are hard work. Here is the opinion of Elshtain (in Tong, 2008: 54) that Mothering is not an equal "role" with being an administrative employee, a scientist, or an air force member. Mothering is an activity that is complex, rich, ambivalent, fun, which is a biological, natural, social, symbolic, and emotional thing. The following is a quote about the mothering that Ida Ayu experienced which caused a contra in her.

"Now I know. Are you worried about being pregnant? Because you know a lot about various diseases that attack the womb. If you just read, and read

on, without ever trying how it feels to be pregnant, giving birth, breastfeeding, raising children, you won't feel how extraordinary and the torment of being a mother, how pleasurable and painful it is. Sleep becomes a luxury. (p. 66-67)

Patriarchal society thinks that women who are pregnant their children, are the most appropriate figure to care for and raise them. Myths about motherhood state that all children need their mothers. Marriage is united men and women in bonds that make them unite in the home. The differences from one another eventually merge into one. The life journey makes marriage a story that can end in happiness or sadness.

For Rimpig, at first her marriage to Pasung was initially sprinkled with hundreds of love. Thousands of dreams. Millions of wishes. In fact, the man he married was a lazy man. He works only drinking alcohol at the edge of the village. Always go home at night. Meanwhile, Rimpig, a simple village woman who does not have any skills, only cooking, cutting firewood, and planting several pieces of vegetables for daily food. She never earn money. (p. 116)

Happiness Rimpig had never felt during her marriage. She had a dream of a happy marriage and an established family, but she never achieved it. But instead, she experienced domestic violence. Her body was always battered beaten by her husband. Komnas Perempuan (2001) states that violence against women is all acts of violence committed against women resulting in physical, sexual and psychological harm and suffering to women. Women as victims tend to be passive, and harbor their inner self.

Rimpig's body was always battered. The man never knew how tired it was to take care of children. If his lust was high, Pasung did not hesitate to drag Rimpig, lay her thin body on the ground in the kitchen, forcefully entered his body roughly. (p. 116)

Violence committed by a husband against his wife can be triggered by social conditions. Berger (1990) suggested that individual behavior is actually a social product, where values and norms in society contribute to individual behavior, meaning that if the value of society is patriarchal, men become superior,

and women become inferior, where domination of the husband towards his wife in the home. Violence experienced by women is oppression, Jagger (in Widyastuti, 2015: 12) explained about the oppression experienced by women: (1) historically, women were oppressed groups, (2) oppression of women experienced in various layers, (3) oppression of women was most difficult to eradicate (4) the consequences of oppression cause misery, and (5) oppression gives rise to other forms of other difficulties.

Women as marginalized people in society are unable to change the fact that they are inferior groups controlled by superior groups. Gender roles have a big influence on women because the culture in which women live makes how women are treated.

### 3 CONCLUSIONS

Indonesian Literature presents female writers who care about women and their problems. Novel *Tempurung* feature female characters Ida Ayu, Ni Luh Putu Saring, Ni Luh Wayan Rimpig, and Ni Made Arsiki Wulandari with each of the problems they face as Balinese women.

Marginalization occurs because women become inferior, and men become superior. This condition is detrimental to women because marriage makes women do domestic work, all must be done without complaining. Ida Ayu, and Ni Made Arsiki Wulandari must experience a situation where their living conditions fall at the lowest point because society makes them unable to avoid the values and norms that apply.

While Ni Luh Putu Saring, and Ni Luh Wayan Rimpig faced problems with their spouses, who gave them suffering. Barla and Pasung betrayed their wives, and caused suffering that made Ni Luh Putu Saring and Ni Luh Wayan Rimpig become oppressed women. Their loyalty as a wife is not appreciated, because of a betraying husband.

Women as marginalized people in society are unable to change the fact that they are inferior groups controlled by superior groups. Gender roles have a big influence on women because the culture in which women live makes how women are treated. Women tried to make better life but its still needs long time to achieve their goal.

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