

Feminism Study of the Novel “*Catatan Juang*” by Fiersa Besari

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explain the feminism of the *Suar* character in the novel “*Catatan Juang*” by Fiersa Besari in terms of liberalist feminism and post-modern feminism. This research method is a qualitative descriptive method. The source of data in this research is the novel “*Catatan Juang*” by Fiersa Besari. The research data is in the form of the depiction of the main character in the novel. The results of this study indicate that, 1) the liberal feminism of the *Suar* character who wants to be considered equal to men through strengthening in the public space, and 2) the post-modern feminism of the *Suar* character which shows the equality of men and women based on language and thought patterns.

Keywords: *Feminism, Novel, Catatan Juang*

INTRODUCTION

Prose fiction is one of the literary works that are in great demand among the public. Forms of fiction include novels. In understanding the work of fiction, analysis is required. Baribin (1989) says that literary works are a system of norms, therefore in assessing a work one must analyze or describe the literary work into its elements or norm system. Novels usually contain words ranging from 35,000 words or more. Tarigan (2003) explains that there are several characteristics, including novels depending on the characters, novels must present more than one expression, novels must also present more than one effect, besides novels also present more than emotions.

Puspita & Nasir (2019) also stated that literature can be said to be a reflection of society because the existence of literary works cannot be separated from the order of social life. The novel is one of the long prose essays and contains a series of stories of a person's life with those around him, one of which is by highlighting the character and character of each actor.

Novels are not only works of fiction that present a storyline, characters, and characterizations, but the author tries to provide a picture of a character who fights for the recognition of a female figure or in other words a feminist view. The study of literary works does not stop to be enjoyed but must also be more understanding of the literature itself, the meaning is to deepen the core of the literary work (Kurniawati, 2018).

Nurdiyantoro (2013) states that as a work of fiction, novels offer an imaginative world through intrinsic elements, namely characters, plots, settings, points of view, characterizations, and so on. The same thing is also stated by Waluyo (2002) that there are five fundamental elements in a fictional story, the fictional story referred to here is a novel. The five elements include theme, characterization, characterization, setting, and setting.

As time goes by, women in this modern era cannot be underestimated, in the sense that they already have the same rights as men. This is also strengthened by the pioneering of women's caste in the eyes of the world through the book R.A Kartini which raises the issue of equality between women and men.

The image of women does not only reach the real world but many literary works, especially novels, which raise the issue of women's equality. This is evidenced by her feminist theory in analyzing a novel. Feminism can also be said to be a bridge that aims to demand equal rights for men and women (Kurnia, 2013).

Sugihastuti, (2002) argues that feminism is categorized as a theory that discusses rights issues between men and women in all fields. In addition, Sofia (2009) also argues that women must take action to free themselves from patriarchal domination, one way is by expressing their opinions and providing understanding related to what they say. Feminism strives for two things that have not been shared by women in general, namely their equality with men and autonomy to determine what is good for them in many ways.

Feminist literary theory is one of the streams that has contributed a lot to the development of cultural studies. Feminist literature is rooted in an understanding of women's inferiority because it is felt that women always experience gender inequality. Hollows (2010) considers the study/theory of feminism as a form of politics that aims to intervene and change the unequal power relations between women and men. In principle, feminism is rooted in the position of women in the world (political, economic, cultural, social, philosophical) which is oriented towards changing patterns of power relations (Heroepoetri, 2004).

So, feminist literary theory tries to bring out women both as characters and as authors. The novel *Catatan Juang* by Fiersa Besari presents feminism from the point of view of a character named Suar. The novel tells about the character Suar who tries to get out of the boundaries that limit his life, especially in achieving his goals.

In this research, the writer will examine the novel *Catatan Juang* using literary criticism of liberal feminism and social-Marxist feminism from the point of view of the character Suar.

According to Ratna (2005), Liberal feminism is a feminist idea that gives intensity to equal rights, in terms of work and education, while postmodern feminism is a notion of gender and race which does not have a fixed meaning, so it seems as if naturally there are no men and women.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative method. Ratna (2015) explains that qualitative methods pay attention to natural data, data concerning the context of its existence. According to Cresswell, (2015), qualitative research frames studies with fundamental assumptions such as new designs and the presentation of various realities, in this case, the position of the researcher as one of the data collection instruments and focusing on the views of the participants. Furthermore, the descriptive method is used to obtain the results of a qualitative analysis, which produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from the object being observed.

In this study, a qualitative descriptive method was used because this study would describe the research data on the novel *Juang Notes* by Fiersa Besari in the form of a dialogue between characters, and the depiction of characters by the author.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. Liberalist Feminism

The main movement of liberal feminism does not propose a fundamental structural change, but rather inserts women into the existing structure based on the principle of equality with men. However, it is more of a struggle that must touch on political equality between women and men through strengthening women's representation in public spaces.

This is shown by the character Suar, who shows that he can compete with men in terms of work. This can be found in the following quote.

“Selama setengah tahun bekerja, jumlah *closing* nasabah Suar selalu di atas rata-rata. Ia sampai dianggap sebagai aset berharga untuk perusahaan.” (*Catatan Juang*, 2017: 24)

This quote shows the equality between women and men, namely the Suar figure who is considered a valuable company asset, even though he is a woman. This shows that the role of women in a field of work is starting to be considered important. Suar ability and persistence in carrying out his work cannot be considered spoiled and easily giving up. This is evident from the success of Suar, who has worked above the average for six months.

In general, women choose to receive income, not provide income because some of them think that men should work for the family, while women work for their wishes.

However, unlike Suar, he chose to work to help his family. This can be seen in the following quote.

“Ia kembali ke Jakarta untuk bekerja, dan berharap gajinya yang pas-pasan dapat membantu ekonomi keluarganya di desa. Biar bapak tidak usah bersusah-susah lagi bekerja.” (*Catatan Juang*, 2017: 105)

The above quotation clearly shows that Suar is a woman who wants to show that women are equal to men in their work. Suar wants to help his family's economy even though he has to sacrifice his goals. This he did solely for the sake of his family and the sake of his elderly father so that he wouldn't have to bother working anymore. Suar determination shows that women are also able to work hard to be the backbone for the sake of the family, not only men can do it.

Suar determination to be able to achieve his goals has made up his mind to dare to fight against something that is considered untrue. This can be found in the following quote.

“Untuk apa keluar dari zona nyaman jika tidak memacu diri hingga ke batas maksimal? Bagi Suar, tidaklah berguna terus mengkritik keadaan jika kita tidak terjun langsung untuk mengubah keadaan menjadi lebih baik.” (*Catatan Juang*, 2017: 122)

The quote above shows that even though Suar is a woman, her willingness and concern for the environment and society make her determined to be a part of the change. He is determined to document the construction of a cement factory and its impact on the surrounding community. Even though Suar knew that what he was going to face was the government, he was not afraid to show right and wrong to the public sphere. Suar shows that even though she is a woman she must have a spirit of caring for the environment and others. If he is unable to help physically, then he must be able to assist in both thought and work.

2. Post Modern Feminism

Post-modern feminism assumes that there is no difference in terms between men and women, postmodern feminism tries to explore the issue of women's alliance sexually, psychologically, and literature by relying on language as a system. This can be seen in the following quote.

“Halaman demi halaman tulisan yang sudah dibaca Suar berhasil menjadikan sang penulis bukan sekadar inspirator, tapi juga sekaligus sebagai rivalnya yang tidak terlihat.” (*Catatan Juang*, 2017: 92)

The above quotation shows that the character Suar does not see any difference between himself and the authors of the books he has read. Even though the author of the books he has read is male, Suar still states that he is ready to compete with the author of the book in terms of creating a work. Suar belief shows that there are no terms male or female in a competition. However, there is only courage, seriousness, and confidence to be ready to compete in anything.

Women have a strong desire, both determination, and psychology. The desire to achieve goals provides a special motivation for Suar's character. This can be seen in the following quote.

“Lebih baik Suar gagal saat mencoba, Bu, daripada selamanya bertanya-tanya,” Suar menjawab mantap. (*Catatan Juang*, 2017: 111)

In the quote above, it can be seen that Suar has a strong will to show that he is able and will succeed in realizing his dreams. This shows that women have a strong will within themselves. With strong motivation and the prayers of his parents, Suar will devote everything to be able to realize his dream, in this case, to become cinematography. Although he received a subtle rejection from his parents, with confidence, will, and ability, Suar still tries to convince his parents that he will succeed in achieving his dream.

CONCLUSION

Based on research and data analysis, it can be concluded that liberal feminism in the novel *Catatan Juang* by Fiersa Besari wants to show gender equality, where the character Suar can show that even a woman can realize her dreams. Then, post-modern feminism in the novel *Catatan Juang* by Fiersa Besari shows that a woman can be recognized for her existence based on the use of language, her way of thinking, and her point of view in seeing various things.

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