

Research Article

The Femininity of Women's Image in the Novel *Nayla* by Djenar Maesa Ayu

¹Putri Lisdiastuty and ²Suroso

^{1&2}Faculty of Languages and Arts, Yogyakarta State University

¹Email: putrilisdiastuty@gmail.com; ²Email: suroso@uny.ac.id

Received: October 11, 2022

Accepted: October 26, 2022

Published: November 01, 2022

Abstract: The image of women is a form of femininity to increase the position and degree of women to be equal or equal to the position of men's degrees. Feminism struggles and efforts to achieve this goal include various ways. One way is to obtain the same rights and opportunities as men. This novel has advantages in characterization, including the main character in the story who is able and strong to face various life phenomena even though there are many conflicts in it. The purpose of this study is to describe the image of women in the novel *Nayla* by Djenar Maesa Ayu, identify the content of feminism in the novel *Nayla* by Djenar Maesa Ayu, and identify the gender relations that exist in the female figure in the novel *Nayla* by Djenar Maesa Ayu. The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative research method. The novel *Nayla* by Djenar Maesa Ayu is also very interesting when studied with a feminist approach with the condition of *Nayla*'s character being frustrated because she gets injustice as a woman and Sara Mills' theory. The data collection technique used in this research is library technique.

Keywords: Femininity, female image, gender.

Introduction

In essence, literature is a form and result of creative art work whose objects are humans and their lives by using language as the medium (Semi, 1988: 8). Literary work is present as a real form of creative imagination, a writer works with a different process between one author and another, especially in the creation of fiction stories. All of these masterpieces were selected based on aesthetic considerations (Wellek and Warren, 2014: 11).

The process is individualistic, meaning that the method used by each author can be different. The differences include several things including the method, the emergence of the creative process and how to express what is in the author to the delivery language used (Waluyo, 2002: 68). Literary works have a relationship with the real social world, namely the social environment where the language used by literary works lives and applies based on place and time (Faruk, 2010:46). Authors usually have a lot of imagination to put their writings in literary works, even though they are wrapped in the spirit of creativity, they do not escape subjective tastes and tendencies, aspirations, and personal opinions when responding to objects outside themselves, as well as individualistic characteristics inherent in the author so that expression works on the basis of the power of intuition and imagination, in addition to the power to absorb the reality of life. That is why in a story, short story or novel, an author often raises phenomena that occur in society. With the hope that readers can take lessons from this phenomenon.

Novel or short story as part of a literary form, is a universe of reality in which events and behaviors are experienced and done by humans (characters). The novel is a prose genre that displays the most

complete story elements, has a wide media, besides that the novel also presents the broadest social problems (Teeuw, 1984:67). Novel as a literary work whose world contains a model of life and is imaginative, but is realized and analogized with the real world by the author (Nurgiyantoro in Yanti, 2015: 3). The problems contained in the novel are taken from patterns of life known to humans or a set of lives in an exotic and imaginative time and place (Atmazaki, 2007: 40). This is possible because the problems that are always discussed in the novel usually discuss issues about humans and humanity. Gender means the visible differences between women and men based on values and social behavior. As there are differences, there are also differences in the roles of each gender in society. The existing division of gender roles, better known as the sexual division of labor, is the most appropriate division of labor for women and men. Gender itself is a trait inherent in men and women whose traits have been socially and culturally constructed (Fakih, 2013: 8). In general, women are given roles and positioned to take part in the domestic or household sector, while men are in the public sector or society. The domestic sector is a statistical and consumptive sector, while the public sector is a dynamic sector and has power in the political, social, defense fields, and can even produce changes to socialize.

The focus in this research tends to be a woman's problem. The female character is an image that can be found in many novels. Imaginary image becomes an important segment in the structure of contemporary novels because the dynamics of recent literary developments provide space for women to express themselves through literary works. The emergence of female authors marks a literacy movement that is responsive to social inequality and discrimination against women. This in temporal development came to be known as the emancipation of women or gender which seeks to protect women's self-esteem and fight for an equal position with men.

The development of the novel at this time still gives the place of female characters in the novel as a response to the reality in history. Women's issues will always appear as a discourse of opinion in society in general. Thus, it is clear that the image of a woman has been known, protected, and fought for. The image of women is an important tool as a message that is widely explored by novel authors today. Sugihastuti (2000: 125) suggests that the image of women having relationships with other humans that have special to general characteristics, women's relationships in society begin with relationships with people, up to human groups and with the surrounding community.

In the story, it focuses more specifically on women's problems written by female authors who critically highlight discrimination against women. One example of a highly appreciative female novelist is Djenar Maesa Ayu with an interesting novel title for this research, the novel *Nayla*. Each author appears with a writing style and character construction of female characters in prose stories with different problems but seems to be directed at one realization that women in all aspects of their lives are still in injustice.

The female character in the novel is an image of women addressing the problems of life and self-existence in the midst of conflicts with respect to the dignity and worth of human beings who are different but equal in the context of the critical theme of discrimination against women. *Nayla's* novel will be interesting if it is studied using a feminist critique study. However, apart from that, a suitable theory to solve the problems in *Nayla's* novel can also use Sara Mills' theory. This model looks at how the actor's positions are displayed in the text and how the reader's position is displayed in the text, so that discourse can be understood from the production and reception factors (Eriyanto, 2015: 200). This study will discuss the image of women in the novel *Nayla* by Djenar Maesa Ayu, identify the content of feminism in the novel *Nayla* by Djenar Maesa Ayu, and identify gender relations that exist in the female figure in the novel *Nayla* by Djenar Maesa Ayu.

The image of women and their complexity is the central theme of the focus of this research analysis using the material object of the novel *Nayla* by Djenar Maesa Ayu. To support the research, the concept and theoretical basis can be explained as follows.

1. Female Image Terminology

The term female image raises a lot of various study and research schemes. This theme is closely related to feminism in literature. Through literary works, feminism represents the idea of fighting for women through the characters in literary works. Dangun (in Yulastuti, 2005: 52) suggests that empirically women are portrayed in standard stereotypes as gentle, beautiful, emotional and motherly creatures, while men are considered as strong, rational, manly and mighty creatures. Basically the image or image of women in a literary work is a picture that each individual has of the female personality that can be found in the real world.

Sugihastuti (2000: 43) suggests that images are images of wishful thinking or thoughts, while every image of the mind is called an image. This novel examines the complexity of the image of women in Djenar Maesa Ayu's *Nayla*. The image of women intended in this novel are all forms of imaginary narratives that describe the mentality and behavior of the female characters in the novel. Sugihastuti (2000: 44) argues that this form of female image can be combined with physical, psychological, and socio-cultural aspects in women's lives that are behind the formation of the image of women. In maintaining this image, women as individuals must play their roles well as individuals, wives, and their roles in society.

a) Women's Self-Image in Physical Aspect

A woman's physical image can be represented by a woman's physical image that has a relationship with the development of her behavior. From the depiction of this physical relationship which cannot be separated from the physical depiction of men in the novel, discrimination or differences often occur in the social or family environment (Sugihastuti, 2000: 82).

b) Women's Self-Image in Psychic Aspect

The physical aspects of women can be represented through their psychological aspects. However, the image of women here can be recognized in the structure of literary works in prose. This can be identified in the female characters contained in the novel and includes aspects of emotional sense, a sense of acceptance of the environment, even the love that is owned is in the character constructed by the author. Psychologically, women can be seen how emotional they are, their sense of acceptance of the environment, and the love they have and also give to others or others through the image of women (Sugihastuti, 2000:95). Therefore, the image of women has a reciprocity between the physical and psychological images of women in the novel that will not be separated from each other.

c) Women's Social Image

Regarding the social image of women, it is the embodiment of the image of women in the family and their image in society (Sugihastuti, 2000:97). This social image of women has a relationship with the norms of the value system that applies in society, a place where women become members and have a desire to have relationships between humans. This opinion is a conception to put women as social beings who carry the norms that apply in society.

2. Theory of Feminist Literary Criticism

Feminism is essentially fighting for two things that women in general do not have, however, their equality with men and autonomy to determine what is good for themselves in many ways. The position of women in society is lower than that of men and they are even considered as "the second sex", second class citizens.

a) Definition of Feminism

Feminism is an awareness of the oppression and exploitation of women that occurs both in the family, at work, and in society as well as conscious actions by both men and women to lexically change this situation (Najmah and Sa'ida, 2003: 34). Feminism is a women's movement that demands full equality of rights between women and men. Feminism is not like any other view or understanding. Feminism does not originate from a theory or concept based on a single theoretical

formula. That is why, there is no abstraction of a specific understanding of the application of feminism for all women throughout the ages. Darma (2013:141) also explains the main goal of feminism theory, which is to understand the oppression of women based on race, gender, class, and sexual choices, and how to change them. The definition of feminism can change due to the understanding or views of feminists which are based on historical and cultural realities, as well as the level of awareness of perceptions and behaviors. Even among women of almost similar types there are differences of opinion and debate about feminist thought, some based on reasons (eg cultural roots) of patriarchy and male domination, and up to the final resolution of women's struggles for environmental non-exploitation, class freedom, background, race, and gender. According to Ratna (2010: 194) women should not continue to be marginalized, women also have the right to form new centers, parallel to the post-modernist movement.

3. Streams of Feminism

a) Liberal feminism

Liberal feminism is a view to place women who have full and individual freedom. This school holds that freedom and equality are rooted in rationality and the separation between the private and public worlds. Every human being, they think, has the capacity to think and act rationally, as well as women. The roots of oppression and backwardness in women are caused by women's own faults. Women must prepare themselves so that they can compete in the world within the framework of "free competition" and have an equal position with men. Liberal feminists have a view of the state as an impartial ruler between the interests of different groups derived from the theory of state pluralism. Liberal feminism tries to make women aware that they are the oppressed group. The work that women do in the domestic sector is campaigned as unproductive and places women in a subordinate position.

b) Postmodern feminism

Postmodernism's idea according to their opinion is an anti-absolute and anti-authority idea, the failure of modernity and the different separation of each social phenomenon because of its opposition to the universalization of scientific and historical knowledge. They argue that gender does not mean identity or social structure.

c) Anarchist Feminism

Anarchist feminism is more than a political ideology that aspires to a socialist society and considers the state and the patriarchal system-male domination as a source of problems that must be destroyed as soon as possible.

d) Marxist Feminism

This school views women's problems within the framework of a critique of capitalism. The assumption is that the source of women's oppression comes from class exploitation and the mode of production. Friedrich Engels' theory was developed as the basis for this flow-the status of women fell because of the concept of private property. Production activities that were originally aimed at meeting their own needs turned into exchange needs. Men control production for exchange and as a consequence they dominate social relations. Meanwhile, women are reduced to part of the property. The profit-oriented system of production results in the formation of classes in bourgeois and proletarian society. If capitalism collapses then the structure of society can be repaired and the oppression of women removed.

e) Socialist feminism

Socialist feminism emerged as a critique of Marxist feminism. This school wants to say that patriarchy has appeared before capitalism and will still not change if capitalism collapses. The critique of capitalism must be accompanied by a critique of domination over women. Socialist feminism uses class and gender analysis to understand women's oppression. She agrees with Marxist feminism that capitalism is the source of women's oppression.

f) Postcolonial feminism

The basis of this view is rooted in the denial of the universality of women's experience. The experience of women living in third world countries (colonies/former colonies) is different from that of women from first world backgrounds. Third world women bear a heavier burden of oppression because in addition to experiencing gender-based oppression, they also experience oppression between nations, ethnicities, races, and religions. The dimension of colonialism is the main focus of postcolonial feminism, which in essence challenges colonialism, both physically, knowledge, values, perspectives, and people's mentality.

g) Nordic Feminism

Nordic Feminists in analyzing a country are very different from the views of Marxist and Radical Feminists. Nordic feminism analyzes state or political feminism more than micro practices. These people think that women "must be friends with the state" because women's political and social power or rights occur through the state which is supported by state social policies.

h) Radical feminism

Radical feminism is a school that believes that the oppression of women occurs because of a patriarchal cultural system. Radical feminists see no difference between personal and political goals, sexual or biological elements. In analyzing the causes of oppression of women by men, they consider it rooted in the male gender itself and its patriarchal ideology (Faqih, 2008: 84-85).

4. Gender Relations

Gender relations are socially constructed patterns of relationships between men and women. In gender relations, certain gender groups are considered to have a higher position (dominating), being dominated, and being equal. In a patriarchal society, men are considered to have a dominant position, while women are subordinated. This unequal and more domination-subordinating relationship ultimately provides opportunities for the emergence of various forms of violence against women both within the household area such as physical, psychological, and economics Gender roles relate to the division of roles of men and women which are socially formulated based on the polarization of masculinity-femininity sexual stereotypes. Examples of gender roles, for example men are placed as leaders and breadwinners because they are associated with the assumption that men are more rational beings, stronger and identical with other superior traits-compared to women, while women are considered to have the main task of serving their husbands. If a woman works, it is considered a part-time job or helping her husband, because living is considered a husband's duty (Fakih, 2006:16).

Method

This research uses a qualitative descriptive method. Descriptive method can be described as a problem solving procedure that is investigated by describing the current state of the subject or object of research based on the facts that appear in the data. This method also aims to systematically describe the facts or characteristics of the research subject in a factual and accurate manner. In this study, this method is used to describe and understand gender roles and relations as reflected in the novel *Cantik Itu Luka* and *Nayla* in the perspective of feminist literary criticism. The novel *Nayla* by Djenar Maesa Ayu is studied using a feminist critique study. However, apart from that, a suitable theory to solve the problems in *Nayla*'s novel can also use Sara Mills' theory.

The data collection technique in this study was using library techniques and note-taking techniques. The data analysis technique used in this research is to use semiotic reading. The working steps of this research analysis include: 1) the researcher reads the novel text which is studied intensively, namely reading it repeatedly; 2) search for data and classify data according to matters relating to the problems studied by the author through literature study; 3) analyzing the novel *Nayla* by Djenar Maesa Ayu. The data source is this novel is a novel entitled *Nayla* by Djenar Maesa Ayu published by PT. Gramedia Pustaka Utama in 2005 with a book thickness of 180 pages. In the novel *Nayla* by Djenar Maesa Ayu, it tells the story of *Nayla*, a woman who is not looking for love but affection. But

don't ever think that Nayla is begging for "love" especially to her family, her mother who is far away from Nayla. He searches for her alone, crawls from the world of darkness and tries to come out to prove to the world Nayla can do things on her own.

Results

1. The image of women in Nayla's novels

Nayla is a novel that tells the story of a woman named Nayla. Nayla is a woman who has a dark past, is obedient because she is overcome by fear, and suddenly transforms into an intelligent, determined, and feminist person. Since the age of 13, Nayla had to leave her mother since learning to live independently. Nayla, that's the name of the main character in the story, feels disappointed when she remembers her mother who threw herself into the Naughty and Narcotics Care Home. Since then he has become frustrated. He left his mother and learned to live independently.

In the novel Nayla by Djenar Maesa Ayu, the reader is treated to various kinds of stories. Starting from the story of Nayla's daily life, love stories, from the sensible to the illogical, so that readers always want to know how the story ends. The narrator as the character Nayla is the main character and the key to the storytelling in this novel. In the narration of Nayla's novel, the relationship between characters, plot, and setting that forms the integration of the content of the story in the novel can be taken. Sugihastuti (2000: 82) suggests that in a novel, a woman's physical image can be represented by a woman's physical image that has a relationship with the development of her behavior. From the depiction of this physical relationship which cannot be separated from the physical depiction of men in the novel, discrimination or differences often occur in the social or family environment.

From the analysis conducted, it can be concluded that the character Nayla has.

- A. The public personality of Nayla's character is classified as less adaptive because she is hesitant, afraid, afraid, lacks confidence, and is shy;
- B. quite strong animal instincts with the emergence of negative instincts such as deviant sex, likes dirty environments, is angry, and likes violence;
- C. his attitude is quite strong which is marked by the loss of gentleness and the presence of mastery of male attitudes such as smoking and the urge to love fellow women; and
- D. identity with high motivation due to a strong drive to get a better life. The factors that greatly influence the personality of Nayla's character are family, social environment, psychological condition, education, and religion. Identity is the most dominant aspect in Nayla's character.

2. Analysis of Feminism in the Novel Nayla by Djenar Maesa Ayu

Quote 1

"Men's brains are stunted. Coitus for them only revolves around strength" (Ayu, 2005: 5).

This statement is a form of Nayla's resistance to men, because men only think about their own inner satisfaction without thinking about the opposite sex. A form of injustice that is obtained by women in having sex. In this case, the injustice experienced by women does not occur in their daily routines, even when they have sex, they are also treated badly, not as expected by women.

Quote 2

"They thought I was a virgin. Though my heart is a virgin, not me. Even though I'm still young." (Ayu, 2005: 5).

From the quote above, it is clear that Nayla is no longer a virgin physically, but Nayla's heart is still a virgin. Men only want a woman's virginity without caring about anything else. Never look at a woman only from her physical form and condition but also look for a woman who is kind hearted, as well as looking for a family life partner.

Quote 3

"I'd rather love Juli than a man who just wants a hymen." (Ayu, 2005: 6).

From the quote above, it is clear that Nayla prefers Juli over men, because for Nayla, men only want a woman's virginity. This made Nayla feel angry because of the man's actions. However, this same-sex relationship is strictly prohibited by Religion and applicable law in Indonesia.

Quote 4

"I have taken care of you with great steadfastness since you were in the womb. I raised you with great courage. I provide for you. I give you a comfortable shelter. I will provide you with all your food and clothing needs." (Ayu, 2005: 6)

The quote above describes the struggle of a mother who raises and takes care of a child alone without the slightest help from a man (husband). This makes women cannot be underestimated by men, even though in essence a man (husband) in the household as the leader or head of the family and also there should not be a rift in the household even though the problems that befell a family. If it's so complicated, it's a good idea to solve it properly without having to break the marriage relationship (divorce).

Quote 5

"I will prove to him, my son, that I can stand on my own without needing him to stretch out a hand." (Ayu, 2005: 6).

The quote above explains the desire of a mother who without the help and assistance of a husband, the mother is able to meet all existing needs. Here clearly describes the actions of a woman that we should not underestimate. But in a family should live more in harmony and without divorce. So that in meeting the needs of families can share with each other.

3. Gender Relations and Roles in the novel Nayla by Djenar Maesa Ayu

Djenar Maesa Ayu mencoba melawan dominasi laki-laki dengan menghadirkan sosok perempuan yang mandiri, dominan, bahkan terkesan kejam dan disiplin dalam pandangan anaknya. Dalam novel Nayla, Djenar Maesa Ayu mempresentasikan perempuan lebih dominan dalam hubungannya dengan laki-laki baik di sektor publik maupun sektor domestik. Digambarkan tokoh ibu yang bertahan hidup dan membesarkan anak perempuannya tanpa suami. Kalaupun ibu berhubungan dengan para laki-laki yang bukan suaminya, mereka hanya dijadikan sumber uang. Di dalam novel tersebut juga nampak adanya penekanan kepada anak perempuannya (Nayla) untuk bisa mandiri. Kutipan berikut ini menandai perempuan yang dominan, bahkan memiliki nafsu untuk mendominasi laki

(1) I don't need them. Look at the many men who are submissive to me. See how they are willing to give their soul and body for me. You too have to be like me. There will be many men like your father who will dump you if you are not as strong and smart as me (Ayu, 2005: 8).

(2) mother has a variety of conquering moves. Not infrequently mothers have to use assistive devices such as handcuffs, ropes, or slings. For an animal that is a little shy, it's enough to be embraced with persuasion seduce. A greedy animal, Mother just cooks or prepares special dishes. Evidently, the animals were helpless in front of Mother. What you need, they are happy to provide. What Mother asked for, they voluntarily gave (Ayu, 2005: 39). (1) I don't need them. Look at the many men who are submissive to me. See how they are willing to give their soul and body for me. You too have to be like me. There will be many men like your father who will dump you if you are not as strong and smart as me (Ayu, 2005: 8).

Female figures in the public sector are described as models, models, policewomen, nurses, discotheque lights. Nayla's mother also plays a domestic role, apart from her role as a model, this is where Nayla's mother plays a dual role. See the following quote:

(3) Yes, Uncle Billy really admires Mother. In the eyes of Uncle Billy, Mother is a beautiful and independent woman. A mother can be both a mother and a father. As a well-known model in her era, Mother was able to divide her time between work and taking care of the house (Ayu, 2005: 95).

Reject the myths created in patriarchal culture for the sake of men. In addition to choosing a lesbian relationship, the characters Juli and Nayla also come to the awareness to reflect on and reject the myths created in patriarchal culture for the sake of men, as shown in the quote below.

(4) The requirements for being a woman who can easily get a man have been popular and have been passed down from generation to generation. That women must be virgins, must be good at managing finances, must be patient, must be able to cook, must be able to give offspring, must be able to satisfy her husband in bed. While the requirement to be a husband is only one, be good at making money (Ayu, 2005: 85).

Feminism states that patriarchal gender relations lead to oppression of women, because women are placed in an inferior class compared to the male class on a gender basis. Therefore, women must exercise control over their bodies and lives (Humm, 2007: 383). Nayla's novel, presents gender relations that lead to superior women, women who try to fight against the power of patriarchal culture.

Conclusion

Based on the discussion above, it can be stated that based on the analysis of feminism in the novel Nayla by Djenar Maesa Ayu, it shows that there are factors behind the spirit of feminism, namely trauma and hard upbringing of parents so that they have a picture of the image of women in the story. This is evidenced by critical mapping based on the direction of research that focuses on the physical image through the main character's speech, the psychological image through the main character, and the female social image of the main character's behavior. So it can be concluded that Nayla's character is influenced and dominated by psychology as the initial stage of the growth of the character attached to her. In addition, it represents gender relations that lead to superior women, women who try to fight against the power of patriarchy, want women's equality and even want superiority from women.

Conflicts of interest: The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

References

1. Atmazaki. 2007. Literary and Applied Sciences. Padang: Indonesian Mother Foundation.
2. Ayu, D.M. 2005. Nayla. Jakarta: Gramedia.
3. Darma, Y.A. 2013. Critical Discourse Analysis. Bandung: Yrama Widya.
4. Eriyanto. 2015. Discourse Analysis: An Introduction to Media Text Analysis. Yogyakarta: LKIS.
5. Fakhri, M. 2013. Gender Analysis and Social Transformation. Yogyakarta: Student Library.
6. Faruk. 2010. Introduction to the Sociology of Literature: from Structuralism to Postmodernism. Yogyakarta: Student Library.
7. Humm, M. 2007. Encyclopedia of Feminism. Translated into Bahasa Indonesian from Dictionary of Feminism Theory by Mundi Rahayu. Yogyakarta: Fajar Pustaka Baru.

8. Najmah and Khatimah Sa'ida. 2003. Revision of Women's Politics. Bogor: Main Library Idea.
9. Ratna, N.K. 2010. Research Methodology: Cultural Studies and Humanities in General. Yogyakarta: Student Library.
10. Semi, M.A. 1988. Literary anatomy. Padang: Great Space.
11. Sugihastuti. 2000. Women in the eyes of women. Perspective of Toeti Heraty's poems. Publisher.
12. Teeuw, A. 1984. Literature and Literary Sciences, Introduction to Literary Theory. Jakarta; Jaya Library.
13. Waluyo, H. 2002. Appreciation and Teaching of Literature. Sukarta: Eleven Maret University Press.
14. Wellek, R. and Warren, A. 2014. Literary Theory. Translated by Melani Budiantoro. Jakarta: Gramedia.
15. Yanti. 2015. Islamic religiosity in the Novel Ratu who prostrates by Amrizal Mochamad Mahdavi. Journal of Humanics, 3(15): 22-27.
16. Yuliasuti, F. 2005. The Image of Women in the Novel Hayuri by Maria Etty. Thesis, Faculty of Letters and Fine Arts, Sebelas Maret University.

Citation: Putri Lisdiazuty and Suroso. 2022. The Feminity of Women's Image in the Novel Nayla by Djenar Maesa Ayu. International Journal of Recent Innovations in Academic Research, 6(11): 1-9.

Copyright: ©2022 Putri Lisdiazuty and Suroso. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.