

Research Article

Deconstruction of Femininity in the Novel *Aku Lupa Bahwa Aku Perempuan* by Ihsan Abdul Quddus

Sahriyanti, Suhardi

Yogyakarta State University, Indonesia
Email: Sahriyanti.2020@student.uny.ac.id

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Abstract: Women become an excellent topic of study in people's lives as well as in literary works. The community that often sits women in the second position, both in the scope of the household and in work. In the novel *Aku Lupa Bahwa Aku Perempuan* by Ihsan Abdul Quddus there is a deconstruction of postmodern femininity described by the author. This research aims to know and explain the deconstruction of femininity in the novel *Aku Lupa Bahwa Aku Perempuan* by Ihsan Abdul Quddus. The study used a deconstructive approach to femininity. In this study there was a deconstruction of femininity in the female main character and there was also in the male character. The deconstruction of postmodern femininity in this study is seen from the position of women in their households and their jobs.

Keywords: Deconstruction, femininity, postmodern femininity.

Introduction

Women and men are intelligent living beings. The difference between the two is just physical form. But these differences became an important factor in the separation between men and differences in patriarchal culture which makes women as the number two order after men. Patriarchal culture is a culture that considers women and men to be in two levels, upper (male), lower (female), binary opposition.

Women become an excellent topic of study in people's lives as well as in literary works. Community culture often shows women to be second class (Wahyuni and Kusumaningrum, 2020). For example, as we already know in Indonesia has a society that is very firmly holding to patriarchal culture, placing women as lifemates with a status behind those who are obliged to take care of the household, considering ideal women are women who are always willing to give up and always demand women be submissive wives and passive to men. Patriarchal culture is not only in Indonesia, but in various countries around the world there are also people who still run this patriarchal culture. For example, in the country of Mesir that still has a patriarchal culture that will be discussed in this study.

Injustice in women does not occur in people's lives alone, but it is also reflected in literary works. The problem of injustice against women arises the feminist movement. Feminism is a movement in support of women's rights in the fight against oppression and blackmail in the scope of households and workplaces (Sugihastuti & Suharto in Wahyuni, 2020). Feminism is not a movement of revenge against men but rather a movement to create a balance of women with men. Lubis (2006) says that the symptoms of the thought and movement of feminism seem to have become mainstream contemporary women's movement which when viewed from the starting point of the underlying thought and the target of its criticism, it can be said that it is within the framework of "postmodernism".

Feminists ranging from essentialist feminists to postmodernists criticize gender discourse that is already entrenched in society. In general, society considers masculinity to be traits owned by men and femininity is traits owned by women (Zulkarnain & Wiyatmi, 2018).

One way to read text is to use a deconstruction approach. Deconstruction itself is the way derrida offers based on his thought that the text has no single meaning (Asmaradani, 2008:17). According to Al-Fayyadl (in Imron, 2015) deconstruction is a textual strategy that can only be applied directly if we read the text and then play it in parody-parody. Furthermore it is said that deconstruction is antithory or even antimetode, because the anasir in it is play and parody.

The novel discussed here is *Aku Lupa Bahwa Aku Perempuan* by Ihsan Abdul Quddus. Ihsan Abdul Quddus is an Mesir writer, novelist, and newspaper editor journalist. In the novel *Aku Lupa Bahwa Aku Perempuan* by Ihsan Abdul Quddus it features the struggle of a female character named Suad in which Suad fights dominance and ambition to achieve gender equality. In this novel the author presents gender equality which is a form of thought that is present from a male point of view. So that the message displayed comes from the point of view and partisanship of men.

Method

The study used a postmodern feminism deconstruction approach. The first step in this study was to do a careful reading of the novel *Aku Lupa Bahwa Aku Perempuan* by Ihsan Abdul Quddus. The second step is to note the forms of femininity that appear. The third step is to analyze the data using content analysis with steps to set research goals by analyzing the deconstruction of femininity.

The data from the study were words, phrases, and sentences, indicating the deconstruction of femininity. After analyzing, next is to draw conclusions related to the deconstruction of femininity in the novel *Aku Lupa Bahwa Aku Perempuan* by Ihsan Abdul Quddus.

Results and Discussions

The deconstruction of Femininity in the Novel *Aku Lupa Bahwa Aku Perempuan*

Feminism in the novel *Aku Lupa Bahwa Aku Perempuan* is deeply felt through a tough female lead character since she was a child. Since childhood Suad has shown her side of feminism as a woman who does not want to be regulated by others and even her parents about education and her way of life. As seen in the quote below.

“Aku memilih jalan hidup ini sejak dini usiaku”

The subject of the phrase is "*sejak dini usiaku*" from the phrase meaning that the heroine has chosen her own path early on (since the age of 15), and the author unconsciously also describes Suad as a feminist female figure since childhood. As in the second quote below that explains that this female lead character is indeed aware of her feminist self. Not like other women. Women in general pay close attention to their beauty only, the beauty that is intended in their marriage, to be the ideal wife. However, in the character of Suad, the author describes this character with the thought of feminism, the thought of a woman who also attaches importance to beauty and even intelligence but is not intended to one side only in the household but must be useful for the other side.

“Aku tidak menemukan bahwa keberadaanku sebagai wanita telah memberiku batasan. Ini bukan berarti bahwa aku menolak untuk cantik atau pintar sebagaimana umumnya wanita...”

From the above quote unconsciously the author also constructed feminism in Suad. The author describes Suad as a tough female figure and has high ambitions for her education and career. However, behind that the author displays a side of Suad who still has a part of himself in patriarchal society. Here's the quote the author showed.

"Buktinya, aku juga tidak menolak untuk menikah dan menjadi seorang ibu".

And furthermore, the quote below also provides evidence that Suad who has a thought of feminism does not eliminate the femininity side since becoming a housewife. Suad's character in the quote below is illustrated that he also pay attention to the layout of the items in his house as well as women who are households in general.

"Kini aku menyesal setelah aku menjadi ibu rumah tangga. Menyesal karena telah memberi kemerdekaan kepada ibu dan kakakku untuk mengatur semuanya. Akibatnya, di dalam rumah ini, tidak ada yang sesuai dengan pendapat, selera, dan perasaanku. Padahal rumah adalah cerminan ibu rumah tangga di dalamnya".

Women in patriarchal societies have always been number two after men. Easily deceived by men. As described by Suad who has a feminist mind but, since meeting with Abdul Hamid, Suad was unable to fight the nature of his leadership even the soul of his leadership was shed while with Abdul Hamid. As instructed by the author in the excerpt below.

"Aku berlari masuk seperti seorang gadis kecil. Perlawanananku selama ini telah luntur. Aku berdiri di depan cermin dan berhias hingga aku tampil bak pengantin"

The author also displays the attitudes of feminism carried out by a man. In this novel, Abdul Hamid who is the husband of Suad, has different attitudes in work. Men in doing work are usually more ambitious and not easily satisfied with what they have achieved even more so if the man has been married, on the contrary women in the world of work are not too ambitious to be leaders and succeed in education and career. However, in this novel the author describes Abdul Hamid who lacks the spirit of work and always feels satisfied what he has not like his wife.

"Perbedaan kepribadian antara aku dan suamiku merupakan kendala paling berbahaya dalam keluarga yang baru kami bangun ini. Perbedaan itu bukan karena kesalahan manajemen dalam rumah tangga kami, melainkan perbedaan alami yang lahir dari semangat, motivasi, pekerjaan, dan peran kami yang berbeda dalam mengarungi kehidupan ini. Keinginan Abdul Hamid atas hidup dan kehidupan ini lebih sederhana dan cenderung kurang memiliki semangat..."

Further deconstruction is also seen in the quote below, where men usually do not have free time to be with their families because they are busy working. However, in this novel the author describes Abdul Hamid who has a lot of free time after work differently from his wife who does not have free time.

"Hari-harinya hanya merupakan rutinitas dua hal: berangkat ke kantor pada pagi hari dan mengisi waktu luang sore hari bersama sepeulang kerja. Bila tidak bersamaku, dia akan bisa dengan mudah menemukan hal-hal kecil untuk mengisi kekosongannya."

In feminism, equality of women and men is one of the things to strive for (Imron, 2015). Feminism is not a movement of revenge against men but rather a movement to create a balance of women with men in both domestic and employment spheres. In this novel, the author constructs the feminism of the character Suad who is portrayed as very important position in her work and has always been considered the most important and superior woman in the field of politics. However, the author also displays the deconstruction of feminism on him like the quote below.

"Aku menjadi pusat perhatian di kampus. Di ruang kuliah, mahasiswa dan mahasiswi memandangiku, seakan mereka sedang menunggu-nunggu bayiku akan melompat keluar dari perut. Mungkin mereka tidak terbiasa melihat pemandangan seorang ibu dosen yang mengajar dengan perut membesar karena mengandung. Selama ini mereka lebih

terbiasa dengan pemandangan bapak dosen, dan sangat jarang melihat ibu dosen, apalagi dengan perut yang mungkin lucu menurut mereka. Mereka mendengarkan pelajaranku seakan sedang dibelai. Sepertinya mereka sedang memperdengarkan untaian nasihat seorang ibu kepada anaknya. Bukan sedang menyampaikan mata kuliah ekonomi politik.”

Conclusion

Based on the above analysis it can be concluded that the deconstruction of feminism in the novel *Aku Lupa Bahwa Aku Perempuan* by Ihsan Abdul Quddus is depicted through a female main character named Suad and there is a deconstruction of feminism depicted in a male character named Abdul Hamid. Suad's forward thinking regarding gender equality in the scope of households and work has not been able to penetrate the patriarchal ideology hidden in him. The author constructs Suad who as a feminist has a connection to herself in patriarchal culture as well. Seen through the deconstructive approach Ihsan Abdul Quddus describes Suad as a feminist but cannot be separated from his nature as a woman who always returns to her position number two after men.

Conflicts of interest: There is no conflict of interest of any kind.

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