

Intersectionality in the Novel Rara Mendut by YB Mangunwijaya

Sri Lestari¹, Retno Winarni², Sumarwati³

{ srilestari1992@student.uns.ac.id¹, retnowinarni@staff.uns.ac.id²,
sumarwati@staff.uns.ac.id³}

Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Mas Said, Pandawa Street, Dusun IV, Pucangan,
Kartasura, Sukoharjo, Indonesia ^{1,2,3}

Abstract. Privileges owned by women bring it to luck or even bad luck. The purpose of this study is to describe intersectionality in YB Mangunwijaya's novel Rara Mendut as a portrait of resistance to power. This research is a qualitative descriptive study with Kimberle Crenshaw's intersectionality study. data collection techniques refer to, notes, literature and interviews. Interviews were conducted with literary experts as a way to seek data validation using theory and method triangulation. The data analysis technique uses intersectionality research stages. The results showed that the privileges that were obtained by women in the Islamic Mataram kingdom brought it to two sides, namely glory and adversity, fame and decline, physical heaven and inner hell, ease of life and difficulty in determining their own love destiny. This is illustrated by Rara Mendut's resistance to Tumenggung Wiraguna's order to marry her. This novel is a portrait of the resistance of women as well as elite subjects against power at that time. The obligation to pay taxes in an illogical (too large) amount was imposed as a punishment and enticement for mendut, while Mendut did not lose his mind, to get the money he used his beauty commodity by selling cigarettes, the cigarettes sold were already smoked cigarettes, the social order here is illustrated, that ordinary men can also be subject to Mendut's rules and are able to pay large sums of money just to buy cigarettes that he has smoked

Keywords: intersectionality, novel, Rara Mendut, YB Mangunwijaya

1 Introduction

The relationship between women and men from all lines is important to study because its development becomes interesting to study in more depth. Lerner (1986) stated that patriarchy is a manifestation of male dominance over women in various areas of life. Based on research conducted by the National Commission on Violence Against Women, the highest levels of violence still occurred in the personal sphere, namely 335,399 cases (99.09%). In the public domain there were 3,045 (0.9%) cases of violence and in the state domain there were 52 (0.01%) with victims coming from all age levels [5]. Komnas Perempuan has given special attention to this problem with the passage of the Draft Law on Sexual Violence (RUU TPKS) on 14 April 2022. It is hoped that this law will protect women from violence and obtain gender justice. This violence occurs because of gender injustice that occurs in society.

Indonesia recognizes gender equality, one of which has been since RA Kartini in her writings which have been collected as *Out of Darkness Comes Light*. But in fact, long before that, there have been many women in history who took roles in independence and tried to equalize their position. Devi (2022) states that women's resistance is a phenomenon that wants egalitarian social and political conditions by liberating oppressed groups. In the construction of Indonesian society, it is not uncommon for men to not be able to choose the woman they want to marry, for example, to be able to determine her as empress, concubine or just spoils of war, the empress must be the daughter of a king. It is not impossible that a king (male) loves his concubine more than his empress. Not infrequently the king wanted a concubine to become his empress, but the existing social order and customs could not make it that way. So in the governance structure of Amangkurat 1, there are two queens, namely Kanjeng Ratu Wetan and Kanjeng Ratu Kulon.

What if a woman actually wants marriage itself, if the intersection of gender and the type of power given to women from noble men during the kingdom. The social class that occurred during the royal, or premodern, era made them have no prestige and privilege as women [6]. The intersection method tries to dismantle discrimination spaces based on the interaction of the identity layers.

The concept of intersectionality was introduced by Kimberle Crenshaw (1989), she is a professor of feminist law in the USA. Initially, the intersectionality focused on her experiences as a woman of color in relation to white women. She tries to fight for her experience to get gender equality. Sociocultural categories such as ability, gender, race, class, age, gender, and other axes related to identity are in fact able to create power relations that underlie the existing gender injustice [2].

The concept of intersectionality was introduced by Kimberle Crenshaw (1989), she is a professor of feminist law in the USA. Initially, the intersectionality focused on her experiences as a woman of color in relation to white women. She tries to fight for her experience to get gender equality. Sociocultural categories such as ability, gender, race, class, age, gender, and other axes related to identity are in fact able to create power relations that underlie the existing gender injustice [2].

According to Hankivsky (2014) intersectionality is a concept of social categorization that has intersections and interactions with one another. Man cannot be said to be the owner of a single category. The power relationship itself is basically a power relationship between other people and oneself, and other people and other people who work together. Thus arose the experience of punishment and privilege between groups. As stated by Lykke (2010) in a book entitled *Feminist Study A Guide to Intersectional Theory, Methodology and Writing* which explains that intersectionality is first considered as a theoretical and methodological tool to discuss historically the types of differences in power and/or boundaries. noormativity based on institutionally constructed, discursive and/or structurally constructed sociocultural categories such as ethnicity, gender, class, race, sexuality, generation/age, disability/ability, nationality and mother tongue interact and produce various types of social inequality and unfair social relations. Truth continues to be sought (memory theory) truth and history are always repeated learning literature at PT.

Saputra and Aryana (2022) conducted research with the result that the dual identity possessed by aristocratic women causes them to have privileges or *peliyaan* which is represented by discriminatory actions against female characters. Saputra's research is centered on folklore [6].

Al Farisi and Laila (2020) conducted research with the title *Climate Crisis, Gender and Vulnerability: Portraits of Women Farmers in Karanganyar District, Central Java*, resulting in that there is gender vulnerability in this social structure. Women are weak because they do not have access to resources, both non-material and material. This causes them to be considered as humans who are less tough. The decrease in employment for women affected by the climate has resulted in the income, role and knowledge of women farmers also decreasing [1].

The concept of intersectionality that developed in America, through Crenshaw's (1989) thought, initially only identified the discriminatory treatment experienced by women in various social arrangements and social layers in society, such as skin color and the growing social stigma [2]. However, later developed with other ideas, such as Nash (2008) which stated that intersectionality is found in a broader context to become differences in religion, nationality, ethnicity and race as well as political markers of women's identity and a source of discrimination. This concept is very important and interesting to use in examining society. By taking into account the geographical, socio-cultural and political backgrounds that exist in Indonesia, there is continuity regarding the understanding of social stigma that is developing deeper in Indonesia, especially related to anti-discrimination against women.

Intersectionality works in culture. Changes must be made from the family, as explained by Collins (1991), political matters on the strong intersectionality in controlling society through the family. Somehow, it creates new dimensions of conflict over gender, race, and nation, making the oppression of women through the patriarchal system inevitable. The discussion on intersectionality, in gender studies can be categorized as discrimination and double oppression in layers of discrimination. This creates women in a position where they have to move away from politics and their identity by becoming women who are classified on a certain basis. In Indonesia, with the diversity that includes ethnicity and race, the skin color of the Indonesian population is certainly not uniform. The occurrence of discrimination is very vulnerable to this condition, considering that high heterogeneity is often the basis for differences and conflicts of interest among races, ethnic groups and groups. The concept of intersectionality in Indonesia is very important to understand considering that diversity should be a hallmark of Indonesian culture with the uniqueness and distinctiveness of other cultures, not an interest or a conical fundamental thing.

3 Reseach Methods

This research is a qualitative descriptive study using a literary intersectionality study approach. This research is Crenshaw's explanation that intersectionality is a content analysis. The data in this study were collected using document analysis techniques using intersectionality studies. The research data is in the form of quotations that represent intersectionality. The data validation technique uses theoretical triangulation, while the data analysis technique uses Miles and Hubermann's interactive analysis whose steps consist of data reduction, data presentation, drawing conclusions and data verification.

3 Result and Discussion

Intersectionality is used to describe the oppression and discrimination experienced by women. Crenshaw (1991) explains that there are three concepts in the study of intersectionality which

consist of: structural intersectionality, political intersectionality and representational intersectionality [2]. These three concepts occur in Rara Mendut's novel. The oppression of women that occurs not only once but repeatedly. Rara Mendut is described as a woman who dares to refuse Tumenggung Wiraguna's proposal, is intelligent in solving problems, futuristic, and dares to take risks. Rara Mendut's novel is a trilogy by YB Mangun Wijaya entitled Rara Mendut, Genduk Duku and Lusi Lindri. This novel has a background in the Islamic Mataram era during the reign of Amangkurat I. Mendut is a character who was groomed to become the concubine of Adipati Pragola in Pati, the north coast of Java. Mendut, who comes from the common people and likes to sail (like men), is confused by the decision, because he cannot refuse, and he is too young to know the real life. He felt happy because he would become Pragola's concubine. But the battle between Mataram and Pati which was won by Mataram changed Mendut's fate. All the booty including the women was presented to Sultan Agung. For her loyalty and service, Rara Mendut, a girl who is still pure and Pragola's future concubine, was handed over to Tumenggung Wiraguna.

Rara Mendut's novel represents the resistance of ordinary women against Tumenggung Wiraguna's power. War dispossession of women from conquered areas became commonplace. Rara Mendut is a depiction of a female figure who is hegemony by Tumenggung Wiraguna. The presence of Pranacitra as Rara Mendut's savior is described as the figure of the son of the widow of a wealthy businessman who lives and lives outside the kingdom.

The strata wiraguna at that time was a tumenggung while the strata Pranacitra was under Tumenggung Wiraguna because to save mendut, he had to serve Tumenggung Wiraguna. Meanwhile, Rara Mendut is a candidate for Duke Pragola's concubine in Pati. The social identity of the three demands and guides fate and decisions, as well as the punishments imposed on them. Being in a certain social stratum requires Mendut to carry out his obligations as an individual being or a social being that represents his position. Rara mendut has an identity as a nobleman, and a woman who has characteristics, functions and roles since birth. Mendut is a female candidate for Duke Pragola's concubine. The war caused Mendut to turn into spoils and her life's destiny arranged for her to become the future empress of Tumenggung Wiraguna. As a potential concubine, she had to submit to the rules of the kingdom and kamenggunaan at that time. She gets many privileges that ordinary women don't get. However, he does not have freedom like when he was in the village. Mendut cannot choose a life partner, as evidenced by his love and his escape with Pranacitra reaps conflict and ends in a tragic death. The male figure described as Pranacitra is the man women dream of. All women will be fascinated by his good looks.

This privilege caused Mendut to present a dance typical of the north coast which is opposite to the dances of the Mataram kingdom. However, his presence made the empress and other concubines dislike Mendut's ethics. Nyai Ajeng as the empress said that the greatness of a tumenggung depended on the service of his wives. Rara Mendut is seen as a naughty, wild, naughty girl. Mendut felt that he could get angry, not only tall and wealthy people who had the will. Mendut was asked to pay 3 reals, but was not allowed to earn money by dancing, singing and appearing in public. He got the idea to sell the cigarettes he had smoked. This is a representation of Mendut's intelligence, with the conditions given by the tumenggung, he can still carry out the taxes imposed on him. By looking at the commodity and interesting side in him. He smokes behind the scenes, the longer mendut smokes cigarettes, the more expensive they are. Mendut experiences a gap between discourse and practice as conveyed in Irene's concept (2002) [3]. His soul experiences a merger between gender, class and ethnic regionalism which causes him to perform complex actions.

Rara Mendut is an outspoken beach girl, different from royal girls and women. They called them coastal women and mountain women. His real character and personality made Wiraguna challenged as a king and as a man to conquer an unusual woman, who was not always as dhawuh as the Mataram women he often met. Rara Mendut is even described as a figure who is not feminism, impressed as 'sloppy' to associate with educated women in the Islamic Mataram royal environment. He was born from the waves and the uncertainty of the pounding of the north coast. The ups and downs of life hit and shaped her soul to rebel and run away from Wiraguna, a Tumenggung who wanted to make her the second empress. Helped by a man who loves and is loved, yes, Pranacitra. Even though in the end both of them were caught and sentenced to death, isn't it the dream of all women to live in wealth, position and jewelry? Apparently not with Mendut, his ideology was able to arouse the passion of women in his era who had been suppressed by circumstances.

Women's subordination occurs and begins with education that is intended for women themselves. Women are often only provided with skills education specifically to be feminine (Nur, 2022). Gender inequality in the marriages of women who are candidates for nobility and nobility is different from ordinary people. The women who would be occupants of the kingdom had to be brought up by the emban to be educated as suitable women to live in the king's office [4]. Nyai Ajeng's role in the decision to impose tax sanctions on Mendut by Wiraguna illustrates how a male companion (read: king) has a major contribution in determining policy. This is as stated by Marhumah (2011) who states that the role of nyai is very important in the continuity and friction between established gender discourses and new discourses in the process of gender socialization

4 Conclusion

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that intersectionality occurs due to differences between men and women who go through a long journey together. Social activities show different treatment for both. Researches on feminists show that there is a need to review the inequality experienced by women which results in gender inequality. The discrimination experienced by women during the Islamic Mataram kingdom in Rara Mendut's novel was influenced by the social status each woman carried. However, discrimination still occurs in both ordinary and aristocratic class women. Rara Mendut is a character whose character is in the crossroads of the dilemma "crossroad". Mendut experienced a series of oppression, discrimination, as a woman who was a spoils of war who was in a royal environment, so she had to submit to the traditional rules and obligations that burdened her. Mendut then chooses to be a woman who opposes power, makes herself a fighter and fights back. This is evidenced by her escape from the obligation to become Tumenggung Wiraguna's consort, and choosing to pay very high taxes. Apart from that, she also chose to run with Pranacitra, a man she loved and loved. Patterns of social status indicate privileges compared to others. The existence of women as king's concubines, as ordinary people, as empresses, as embans, and ladies-in-waiting, as children, as women with certain physical characteristics and certain skin colors gives them different rights in every event they go through. The privilege of ordinary women compared to women in the royal circle is that they can act as they please without having to be bound by royal rules and manners. Even so, ordinary women are still hegemony in terms of determining a potential life partner.

References

- [1] Al Farizi, M. S., & Alfirdaus, L. K.: Krisis Iklim, Gender, dan Kerentanan: Potret Perempuan Petani di Kabupaten Karanganyar, Jawa Tengah. *Journal of Politic and Government Studies*, 9(4), 369–385 (2020).
- [2] Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing The Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics. *U. Chi. Legal F.*, 139. [] Hankivsky, O :Intersectionality. Canada: The Institute for Intersectionality Research & Policy (2014).
- [3] Irene, Villa Paula. Always More Embodiments:Intersectionality, Submission and the Body. Framing Intersectionality Debates on a Multi-Faceted Concept in Gender Studies. Goethe University, Frankfurt, Germany . (2011)
- [4] Nur, Irwan, I Putu Wisnu Saputra, Aminah: Membongkar Praktik Ideologi Patriarki pada Sistem Kapamangkuan Masyarakat Hindu Bali. *Jurnal Sosialisasi*. (2022)
- [5] Lerner, G: The creation of Patriarchy, *Woman and History*, 1 (1) (1986).
- [6] Saputra, Buyung Ade dan Aryana Nurul Qarimah: Interseksionalitas Perempuan dan Laki-Laki Bangsawan dalam Tula-Tula Mia Wakatobi. *Arif: Jurnal Sastra dan Kearifan Lokal*, 1 (2) (2022)