Gender, Oppression, Class: A Feminism Postcolonial Study Towards Siti Soendari in Novel House of Glass

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ABSTRACT:
The research entitled Gender, Oppression, and Class: A Feminism Postcolonial Study Towards Siti Soendari in The Novel House of Glass aims to look at the gender oppression experienced by the character Siti Soendari through the perspective of postcolonial feminism. This study used a descriptive qualitative method. The results of this study revealed that the gender intersection that led to the oppression of Siti Soendari was due to education, gender (as a woman), and social class. The operation that emerged from these three things was the oppression of Dutch colonialism and the oppression of patriarchal culture which forced the character Siti Soendari to marry.

KEYWORDS:
Colonialism, Feminism, Gender, Oppression, Siti Soendari.

I. INTRODUCTION

Colonialism has a very close history with Indonesia. Many historical events have been recorded throughout the 350 years of Dutch colonialism over Indonesia. Literary work is one of the media that is timeless as a historical archive. Literature is an imaginary work that represents reality. Suyitno (2009) describes literature as an imaginative composition that expresses the dramatic wave of human life and its inner being in an intense and sublime manner using language selectivity that is aesthetic, expressive, and suggestive regarding life values. Literary works have extraordinary power to change the condition of society. Therefore, the attachment to a literary work is essential to continue to do. Literary works present stories and consolation while stimulating sensitivity and reflection toward life.

House of Glass (1988) is the last novel in the Buru Quartet tetralogy written by Pramoedya Ananta Toer. The three previous novels were This Earth of Mankind (1980), Child All of Nations (1981), and Footsteps (1985). Unlike the previous three novels, which used the storytelling point of the character Minke, the novel House of Glass is told from the point of view of the character Jacques Pangemanann. He was an indigenous police officer who worked for the Dutch colonial government to spy on Minke and other indigenous organizational movements. Minke, who is acting as a movement activist with his organization, the Sarekat Dagang Islam (SDI), which is very advanced and has many followers, makes Governor General Idenburg worry. He was worried that the fall of the Ching dynasty in China could inspire young people to make Indonesia become independent.

Siti Soendari was one of the young people that made the Governor worried. She was a female writer at that time, and it is told in the novel that Siti Soendari graduated from H.B.S Semarang. Siti Soendari has a face like a betel leaf, her skin is olive, and her lips are thin. She is famous for her courage in writing and addressing many masses to propagate the national awakening. However, Siti Soendari encountered many obstacles in carrying out her mission. Because she is a woman, men still look down upon her. She was also one of the targets spied on by Jacques Pangemanann and one of Minke's spiritual children.

Previous studies using the material object of the novel House of Glass have been carried out before. Nur (2015) conducted research with the title Postcolonial Studies on the Novel House of Glass by Promedya Ananta Toer. This study aims to answer three problem formulations: uncovering forms of oppression, resistance, and ambivalence in the novel House of Glass using a postcolonial perspective. The results of this study can be concluded that the form of oppression in the novel House of Glass is caused by the Dutch Government's desire to continue to control their colonial country. In contrast, the feeling of revenge and the desire to be free from Dutch rule gave rise to resistance by the Indigenous people in various ways. The burden of some jobs causes the ambivalence that occurs to the characters in the novel House of

Glass, but what they want conflicts with the reality that occurs.

The next research is Discrimination in the Novel House of Glass by Pramoedya Ananta Toer by Ajopan (2017). The research aims to answer questions about the forms of discrimination, the causes of discrimination, and the impact of discrimination in the novel House of Glass. Based on the results of data analysis that has been carried out on the novel House of Glass by Pramoedya Ananta Toer, it can be concluded that there are three forms of discrimination, namely: (1) racial discrimination, (2) gender discrimination, and (3) elite discrimination. Two causes of discrimination are depicted in the novel House of Glass by Pramoedya Ananta Toer: (1) group differences and (2) social identity. As for the impact of discrimination on the lives of the characters in the novel House of Glass by Pramoedya Ananta Toer, they include (1) causing enmity between groups, (2) killings, and (3) giving birth to poverty.

Poku (2019) conducted research with the title Forms of Violence in the Greenhouse Novel by Pramoedya Ananta Toer: Galtung's Perspective. This study aims to answer two problem formulations, describing the story builder's structure and the forms of violence in the novel House of Glass by Pramoedya Ananta Toer. The analysis results state that the novel's plot is forward. The main characters in the novel are Jacques Pangemanann and R.M. Minke, etc. The results of this research show that there is structural violence, namely (1) structural violence against organizational leaders, (2) structural violence from Indigenous students, and (3) structural violence against women. The results of the research on personal violence, namely (1) the personal violence of the Pitung gang, (2) the personal violence of the Chinese, (3) the personal violence of the Suurhof gang, (4) the personal violence of women, (5) the personal violence of Bernhard Meyersohn. The results of the research on symbolic violence, namely (1) symbolic violence in the form of language, (2) symbolic violence in the form of ideology, (3) symbolic violence in science, and (4) symbolic violence in the form of psychological violence.

Based on the author's search, research using the novel House of Glass as a material object and postcolonial feminism point of view has never been done. Throughout the novel House of Glass, the character Siti Soendari is written in a special way compared to other female characters. Even though Siti Soendari is not the main character, she has a prominent and important role in storytelling, especially when viewed from a feminist perspective. Therefore, researchers are interested in looking further at Siti Soendari's character. This research will answer two problem formulations: 1) How is the gender intersection of Siti Soendari's character? 2) How is the oppression caused by the intersection of gender experienced by the character Siti Soendari? This article is written into several sections, namely: 1) introduction, 2) theoretical framework, 3) methodology, 4) results and discussion, and 5) conclusion.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK
Gender Intersection

Regardless of his biological and physical condition, every individual will be attached to a role in society. The roles in society are commonly referred to as gender. Through these roles, a person is defined in accordance with the norms and rules that apply. Gender is a social construction that explains the differences between women and men, not from a biological form but from a social identity through the socialization process in society (Rohmaniyah, 2014). Gender can also be interpreted as a trait inherent in men and women which is socially and culturally reconstructed (Fakih, 2006). Gender is not something that is obtained from birth but something that is done or the result of social construction. For example, women are creatures known to be gentle, beautiful, and motherly, and men are known to be strong, manly, rational, and mighty (Sugihastuti, 2010). Gender is not natural and has different forms in many societies.

The issue of gender closely intersects with the issue of intersectionality, in which women or men are labeled or defined as something because of their identity, race, beliefs, social status, and everything attached to them. The issue of intersectionality, which grew significantly in the 20th century, was born as part of the second wave of feminism. Gender intersection originating from citizenship emerged when migrants from former colonial countries entered countries in Europe and America in the 1960s. The polemic seems to overlap with issues of racism, homophobia, Islamophobia, and other issues that make gender issues not only limited to the position of white men and women.

Intersection theory has developed in the last eighteen years and was first introduced by Kimberle William Crenshaw, a prominent figure

fighting for equality of the black race in America in 1989. This theory is rooted in Foucalt's theory of power, which explains that power resides at discursive and structural levels (Hankivsky, 2014). Thus, it can be interpreted that power also shapes subject positions and certain categories such as race, ethnicity, religion, culture, etc. When put together, these categories can form positive and negative sides. Humans cannot be explained by taking a single category, such as sex, gender, race, or socio-economic status. Human life is multi-dimensional and complex. Therefore, the reality of life is formed by different factors with social dynamics. The relationship and dynamics between social domains and processes (racism, classism, ageism, and sexism) are interrelated.

A person can be privileged and experience oppression simultaneously, depending on their situation or context. Intersection always has to do with the context of space and time. The spatial context is where the intersection occurs, and the time context is when it occurs. Intersection focuses significantly on transformation, building cooperation between different groups, and working for social justice (Hankivsky, 2014). The intersection can be understood as an approach that humans living in this world do not carry a single identity. Still, they also carry identities and other aspects that form intersections that combine their identities. The intersection is fluid and influenced by internal and external aspects. The internal aspect is in the form of identity carried by the subject, while the external aspect is in the form of spatial context, time, power relations, and momentum.

Gender intersection in a broader context can be a source of oppression. Oppression can be defined as unequal treatment of individuals or groups based on something that is categorical or specific attributes such as race, ethnicity, religion, or membership of social classes (Fulthoni, 2009). Widodo (2013) explains that gender oppression is divided into several things. First, marginalization, which defines as the exclusion that occurs in women in the economic, social, cultural, political, and legal fields. Second subordination, namely subjugation or positioning of women after men. Third, negative stereotypes, namely negative imagery of women, such as crybabies, seducers, and sources of crime, lead to various forms of injustice to women. Fourth, the double burden, namely the opportunity for women to work outside the home, does not reduce their work as domestic workers. Fifth is violence against women, namely verbal, physical, and psychological.

Postcolonial Feminism

The theory of postcolonial feminism is two separate theories that are elaborated. This elaboration was due to gender issues during colonialism (Wearing, 1998). Postcolonial feminism highlights the position of women during colonialism. Postcolonial theory departs from criticism of Foucault's theory of power and deconstruction by Derrida. European power discourse dominates the East in accordance with Michel Foucault's theory of power and Derrida's theory of deconstruction which has criticized the binary opposition of East and West (Wearing, 1998). This postcolonial theory analyzes the domination of the West as a superior group over the East as an oppressed inferior group (Martono, 2011). Postcolonial theory is a resistance to the discourses and practices of colonialism and imperialism in third-world countries.

Postcolonialism has a long and big task, which aims to destroy all views or movements that can give rise to various forms of injustice. This movement refers to groups or individuals who experience oppression to gain independence. Postcolonial want to sue colonialism, which gave birth to and shaped a life synonymous with racism, unequal power relations, and a culture of discrimination that occurs consciously (Loomba, 2016). Another form of colonialism that postcolonial want to destroy is domination and subordination in a relationship between groups and gender relations.

In gender relations, postcolonialism is part of the thinking and struggle to fight the injustice that occurs and is experienced by women. This movement later became the forerunner of the postcolonial feminism movement. The oppression of postcolonial feminism is evident in the position of female slaves. This form of injustice towards women in colonized societies is related to the practice of colonialism from the point of view of the self-superiority of European men. In this case, women during the colonial period suffered double oppression, namely from the colonial system and the superiority of European men (Ilma, 2016).

Postcolonial feminism becomes an attempt to deconstruct colonial practices that marginalize women and regard women as objects. Crucial issues in the postcolonial discourse are discourses on feminists and gender. Hegemonic and dominative colonialism appears in a patriarchal culture that places women as subordinate to men. In third-world countries, women get double oppression, namely oppression from colonialism and oppression from men because of patriarchal culture. Discrimination

experienced by women forms an understanding that women are objects that must be controlled. The oppression experienced by women makes them a people or party who have lost the right to speak and to fight. Spivak (1988) expresses this with the concept of subaltern, which refers to lower people or groups. In his writings, Spivak explains that subalterns are marginalized groups and those who are exploited as property. Subaltern women refer to the absence of identity and social status, the silencing of voices, and the loss of mobility.

The term subaltern has a broad connotation because, terminologically, it refers to junior officers in the British military context, meaning subordinates (Setiawan, 2018). A Subaltern is a group considered to have no identity and cannot speak. Antonio Gramsci originally introduced this term to refer to groups in a society subject to the hegemony of the ruling class. Spivak chose this term because it was considered more flexible than the word proletarian,

which conventionally meant masculine working-class subjects in Europe in the 19th century (Morton, 2008). The double oppression carried out on world women was based on the principles of colonialism and patriarchy. Spivak, through his writing entitled "Can the Subaltern Speak? explains that third-world women have difficulty being heard. Women in various colonial contexts had no conceptual language to speak because they had no ears to listen to.

Women are so oppressed that they find it difficult to find ways to represent themselves. In the study of postcolonial feminism, oppression is the main problem for colonized people. Oppression of women occurs based on race, class, and their different beliefs and are in the lower strata of social class, such as the black race, or their beliefs, such as religion. Women in the context of colonial feminism are subaltern groups that are doubled down by colonialism and patriarchy.

III. METHODOLOGY

This is descriptive-qualitative research. Qualitative descriptive research is a procedure that produces data in the form of words, written or spoken, not in the form of numbers. Ratna (2004) explains that the method begins by collecting quotations in the novel as data and facts from the object of literary study. After that, the most representative quotations were selected for interpretation and analysis using the theory of postcolonial feminism.

The data obtained in the novel House of Glass were analyzed, described, and concluded. Data is a source of information that will be selected as the material for analysis. The data source is related to the research subject from which the data was obtained (Siswantoro, 2010). The data in this study are in the form of documents, namely in the form of sentences and paragraphs in the novel House of Glass written by Pramoedya Ananta Toer (1988). The related data to the issue of gender oppression experienced by Siti Soendari is then viewed through the perspective of postcolonial

feminism. The data in the form of sentences and paragraphs will be collected, analyzed, and then categorized. Collecting data in this study using library techniques. The library technique is a technique that uses written sources to obtain data (Kartika in Rohmadi, 2015). A literature study is a data collection method directed at searching for data and information through written documents, photographs, images, and electronic documents that can support the writing process.

The stages of research carried out in analyzing data in the novel House of Glass by Pramoedya Ananta Toer are 1) Do deep reading of the novel House of Glass so that data is obtained in the form of sentences and paragraphs that contain elements of gender oppression, 2) Analyze the data that has been found using the perspective of postcolonial feminism theory. 3) Analyze the data collected using the perspective of postcolonial feminism. 4) Make conclusions from the results of the analysis that has been done.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Every individual is born into the world with a biological identity in the form of gender, whether male or female. In addition to carrying a biological identity, it turns out that individuals also carry social identities related to gender. Identity is a person's identity related to efforts to adapt to the social systems and structures of the community where they come from based on sex and gender.

Gender refers to the ideal norms that society wants to shape. Gender is different from sex and is not sex domination but includes other matters related to social class, race, ethnicity, religion, education, culture, skin color, etc. Since the beginning of her appearance, Siti Soendari has been described as the most prominent female character. Siti Soendari's position in the novel House of Glass is only a minor character. She starts to be discussed in chapters eight to ten, but she gets special attention compared to other female characters. Siti Soendari

is an educated and indigenous woman. In addition to having a beautiful face, she is brave, nimble, and intelligent.

> She is like a flower, every man's dream (Toer, 1988: 358)

Siti Soendari always dresses neatly, typical of Javanese women with her kebaya and neat bun. She reflects an educated person and has inner and outer beauty.

> She was always neatly dressed, clothed, and in a kebaya covered in black velvet and embroidered with flowers. The fabric is attached to the ankles, flat, with no lower or higher parts. The bun is decorated with a bun made of horns, decorated with a small silver dagger. She is always preening, both inside and outside the house. Her behavior is always polite and gentle (Toer, 1988: 405).

Since she was in school at H.B.S Semarang, she has seen her talent and ability in the writing world. She is fluent in Dutch, and her writings are often published in newspapers. Siti Soendari fought for native progress and native freedom and Dutch colonialism then.

> Since at H.B.S Semarang, she has shown talent and a love for writing. In reading an article of her in Dutch, an H.B.S. teacher finds Siti Soendari to be none other than his former student (Toer, 1988: 360).

After graduating from H.B.S., she became a teacher. Siti Soendari teaches the Dutch language in elementary school, Boedi Moeljo. Once a week, she took her students to the fields and taught Dutch there. With such a learning method, students are more eager to learn and become closer to her. She does not use the required books but learns through her natural surroundings. Because of these activities, she was reprimanded several times by the school director because her teaching technique was considered dangerous to the government at that time. Besides being active as a teacher, she was also active in the nationalist movement.

At one time, news spread that the authorities were watching Siti Soendari because of the activities she was carrying out. As a result of this news, the parents of the students flocked to the school because they were worried that their children would be influenced so that they would not be allowed to work as government employees later. Because of this, in the end, Siti Soendari was fired as a teacher.

> If she is really a woman, she is different from a Jepara girl, who is getting older and needs people's attention. This woman does not need people's attention; she wants people to pay attention to the social realities of her own life and draw lessons from them. She is not like Nyai Ontosoroh, described by Minke in her essays, who is hard-hearted and restless. Siti Soendari has that softness; she gets her strength (Toer, 1988: 357).

Pangemanann thinks that Siti Soendari is a woman who is different from other women. She has rapid development and is dangerous to the Government. At one time, an open letter was circulated in a Semarang newspaper with the initials SS, shocking the Governor General of Indenburg. The letter contained sharp criticism of the 100th anniversary of the Netherlands being free from France. Pangemanann knew that, most likely, those were the initials of Siti Soendari's name. On the one hand, Pangemanann was afraid of the movement led by Siti Soendari, but on the other hand, he admired Siti Soendari, who was smart and brave. For Pangemanann, Siti Soendari was the most brilliant woman in the Dutch East Indies era.

> The first woman to appear in public and lead! He was a thousand steps ahead of the Jepara girl. A thousand steps ahead of Nyai Ontosoroh (Toer, 1988: 374).

These advantages in Siti Soendari are the things that make her oppressed in the realm of society. Women who stand out and dare are women who are not ordinary. Aside from being a woman, her courage made Pangemanann worried about the nationalist movement she was carrying out. Because of that, Jacques Pangemanann tried to stop Siti Soendari from becoming an activist. Being educated and brave led to the oppression of colonialism and patriarchal culture. She had to be married immediately to stop Siti Soendari's activities, which were considered dangerous. Women like Siti Soendari are considered inappropriate and even considered old maids because she is unmarried.

> She is beautiful and indeed attractive, they say, but what does all that mean if women do not have the proper conditions to marry? (Toer, 1988: 406)

What man would want to marry a girl with such high education? An educated indigenous girl who first appears in public alone is a social phenomenon that must be learned (Toer, 1988: 407).

Marriage will stop women's activities because, in a patriarchal culture, women's duties only intersect with domestic affairs and raising children.

After all, an indigenous girl will finish everything she does when she enters the bridal bed (Toer, 1988: 406).

The resident has ordered the Pemalang Regent to gently force the girl's parents to marry their daughter immediately. The Regent of Pemalang summoned Siti Soendari's father and told him to choose between two: losing his position, retiring without honor, losing his daughter, or making his daughter happy with an honorable marriage while remaining in office and retiring later.

Siti Soendari's father was worried about this coercion because he really loved his daughter, and he supported what his daughter was doing. Since childhood, Siti Soendari has only lived with her father since her mother died. Therefore, the father promised always to support his daughter's actions. However, Siti Soendari's father was only a low-position staff. On the one hand, he wants to protect his daughter, but on the other hand, he doesn't want to lose his job.

The governor could provide lists of potential husbands for Siti Soendari if her father did not yet have a candidate. Shivering, Siti Soendari's father worshiped the Regent and asked for two days to discuss it with Siti Soendari. He quickly packed his things and headed to Pacitan, where Soendari taught. However, it turned out that Siti Soendari was no longer teaching there.

Siti Soendari's father finally decided to return home to Pemalang and accidentally met Siti Soendari, who would speak at Vereeniging van Spoor en Trampersoneel (VSTP) based in Semarang. Siti Soendari's father knew her daughter's soft voice, even if it was called out loud. And for the first time, Siti Soendari's father heard his daughter speak Malay. He watched his daughter speak on the podium, and he was proud. But the pressure from the Governor made his heart really upset. Siti Soendari's father is torn between the feelings of the government's unlimited power and his love for his daughter.

One day, Siti Soendari spoke again to the pulpit. Suddenly someone in the audience sitting in the front row stood up and raised his hand as he walked towards the pulpit. No one could hear his words except Siti Soendari herself. The girl immediately left the stage, and all presents were asked to disperse. When they left the building, her father waited, leading Soendari into a taxi. Two days later, it was discovered that Siti Soendari's father had withdrawn all his savings from the Javasche Bank, and since then, Siti Soendari has never appeared again. After some time, it was found that Soendari had gone into exile in the Netherlands.

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis results, it can be concluded that the intersection of gender brought Siti Soendari to oppression, both related to colonialism and patriarchy. It was because of her identity as a woman educated and indigenous woman. The progress of her mindset and courage in behaving and leading the indigenous movement was considered a threat to the Government. She was oppressed by colonialism and patriarchal culture to stop the activities she was carrying out.

Second, based on the perspective of postcolonial feminism, the oppression experienced by Siti Soendari was forced by the Government to marry by pressing her father. Marriage will plunge Siti Soendari into the role of a wife in a patriarchal culture. The attempt to force Siti Soendari to marry was with the intention that she would no longer be active in the movement because she would take care of domestic work and childcare. But this did not happen in the end because Siti Soendari fled to the Netherlands, and her story was never written again throughout the rest of the story in House of Glass.

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