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- ✳ A PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS on TANGKUBAN PERAHU SANGKURIANG LEGEND
Muhammad
- ✳ ANALISIS DEKONSTRUKTIF DRAMA KING LEAR KARYA WILLIAM SHAKESPHARE
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Litraya merupakan jurnal ilmiah berisi artikel ilmiah tentang linguistik, sastra, dan budaya, baik yang ditulis dalam bahasa Indonesia maupun Inggris, berupa hasil analisis, kajian dan penerapan teori, penelitian, dan pembahasan kepustakaan. Terbit pertama kali pada Oktober 2002 dengan rencana terbit dua kali setahun pada bulan April dan Oktober.

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Kedua kali menerima sambutan tulisan yang belum pernah diterbitkan dalam media cetak lain. Naskah dikotik dengan spasi rangkap pada kertas kuarto, panjang tulisan sekitar 20 halaman (lebih lanjut silakan baca Petunjuk bagi penulis pada halaman ketik dalam belakang). Naskah yang masuk dievaluasi oleh Penyunting Ahli. Penyunting dapat melakukan perubahan pada tulisan yang dimuat demi keseragaman format tanpa mengubah maksud dan isi.

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SALAM SAPA REDAKSI

Bismillahirrohmanirrohim,

Puji syukur dipanjatkan keharibaan Allah swt yang senantiasa mencurahkan kasih sayang dan memberikan tuntunan-Nya. Atas kerja keras segenap pihak Jurnal Ilmiah *Litraya* Volume 2 No. 2 ini dapat terbit dengan tanpa halangan yang berarti. Menjelang masuk tahun ke-3 ini kami menyadari perlunya pengembangan kerja yang lebih kompak dan serius agar jurnal ilmiah ini dapat hadir lebih sempurna sehingga dapat diajukan status akreditasi tepat pada waktunya.

Dari naskah yang masuk, setelah dilakukan pencermatan dan atas berbagai pertimbangan dapat dihadirkan 6 (enam) tulisan dengan rincian sebagai berikut, 2 (dua) naskah membahas linguistik, 3 (empat) naskah sastra dan 1 (satu) naskah budaya.

Dengan segenap kerendahan hati dan permohonan maaf, beberapa naskah belum dapat diterbitkan karena patut dilakukan penyempurnaan pada isi dan format penulisan. Kami tetap mengundang siapa pun untuk berkarya tulis pada jurnal ini sesuai dengan nafas dan misi yang diembarnya.

Billahi taufiq wal hidayah.

Redaksi

TEENAGER'S FEMINIST CONSCIOUSNESS IN BERLIE DOHERTY'S *DEAR NOBODY*

By: Ani Windarti and Ulaya Ahdiani

Abstract

Berlie Doherty's Dear Nobody is a story which portrays an English teenage girl named Helen Garton facing a difficult problem in her life – teenage pregnancy and it depicts how she tries to overcome her anxiety during her pregnancy. She attempts hard to free herself from the man's dominance and to determine her own future life by herself. As a female writer who pays attention on children and teenagers Berlie Doherty presents a distinct discussion – raising feminist consciousness among teenager's especially teenage girls. This paper will analyze how the female character obtains her feminist consciousness through her learning process from her surroundings.

A. Introduction

Teenage pregnancy has become increasing problems in every part of the world. The way these problems solved depends on the local culture. In patriarchal system society – in which woman is subordinate to man – it is commonly seen that the girl's family would demand the man to marry their daughter. In more open society, this kind of problem may not be always solved with marriage. In this particular society, some usually accept the existence of single parent, and some others legalize abortion.

Berlie Doherty is an industrious English woman writer, poet, and playwright. Before deciding to be a fulltime writer, she

is a teacher and a social worker who donates much of her time to take care of children and teenagers. She writes many children's stories and adult's fictions. Some of her works have been adapted into TV and translated into several languages. She writes scripts for TV drama series, radio, and performance. One of her famous novels is *Dear Nobody*, which was published in 1991. This novel won Carnegie Medal in 1991.

One of interesting things in *Dear Nobody* is the writer's thought to advocate the feminist consciousness to teenage girls. All through these years, feminism is always associated with the consciousness to have equal rights between adult women and adult men. In *Dear Nobody*; however,

Doherty tries to bring up the problems of teenage pregnancy in England, in which she clearly describes the anxiety of a teenage girl after knowing that her sexual intercourse has caused pregnancy. The main teenage girl character is depicted to be strong enough in facing her problem. She does not commit suicide or do something foolish. She does not depend on man by deciding to live her own life nor is she unsure of herself. Instead, she discovers she is a mature girl who has the right to decide her own decision. She decides to keep the unborn baby alive and to welcome it warmly; moreover, she plans to go on with her college studies after she thinks that the baby will be ready left with the babysitter. These are considered to be positive values of hers and of course of the feminist consciousness.

This research, then will discuss how Helen Garton decides to determine her own future life through learning experiences from her female counterparts.

I. Scope and Objectives of the study

This study focuses on the feminist perspective of Berlie Doherty as she proposes in the main teenage girl character in *Dear Nobody*. Therefore, the objectives of

this study are to find what feminist perspectives are proposed by the writer in *Dear Nobody*, and to find what form of feminist consciousness depicted in the main teenage girl character, Helen Garton.

II. Theoretical Review

According to feminist criticism, the roots of prejudice against women have long been embedded in Western culture. Such gender discrimination may have begun with the Biblical narrative that places the blame for the fall of humanity on Eve, not Adam. The ancient Greek abetted such gender discrimination when Aristotle asserted that, "the male by nature is superior, and the female inferior; and the one rules and the other is ruled" (Bressler, 1999: 180).

It takes a long time for women to have their dreams come true, to be equal with their men counterparts. Feminism begins with the premise that women's and men's positions in society are the result of social, not natural or biological, factors. Feminists generally see social institutions and social attitudes as the basis for women's position in society. In sexist societies these institutions have created structured inequities between women and men, feminists believe in transforming

institutions to generate liberating social changes on behalf of women; feminism takes woman's interests and perspectives seriously, believing that women are not inferior to men (Andersen, 8).

In the era of 60's and 70's, feminist critics began examining the literary canon and discovered that there are male dominances and prejudices toward women. There are at least four important things to show the dominance and prejudice. First, stereotypes of women in the literary canon: they were sex maniac, goddesses of beauty, mindless entities, and old spinsters. Second, a few female writers celebrated popularity, as those achieved by their male counterparts. Third, the roles of female characters were limited to secondary positions, usually occupying minor parts within the story or simply reverting to the male's stereotypical images of women. And fourth, female scholars such as Virginia Woolf and Simone de Beavoir were ignored, their writings seldom referred to by the male crafters of the literary canon (Bressler, 1999: 183).

As a woman writer, it seems that Doherty has an agenda in writing *Dear Nobody*. She wants to show that she has different point of

view in solving teenage pregnancy problem. As Showalter says in her book *A Literature of Their Own* (1977) nowadays women writers tend to establish a female tradition in writing (Mills et al, 1989: 6). Doherty's agenda is to advocate teenagers and probably their parents that there is still another way to solve teenage pregnancy problem, although of course she does not suggest them to do so.

Authentic realists claims that women's writing can be usefully discussed in terms of how texts relate to women's experience. Within this perspective, literature is seen as a potential vehicle for change in women's lives, since it can serve as a catalyst for consciousness raising, and a basis for constructing models for other ways of living (Mills et al, 1989: 51). From this point of view, it is clearly seen that one of Doherty's agendas is to give some kind of consciousness of feminism to teenage girls and their mothers.

Women's literature played an important role in awakening them to an awareness of their oppression as women, since while dealing with the individual experiences of characters, literature could also be seen as having wider reference (Mills et al,

1989: 52). This purpose is to show the consciousness-raising process.

III. Discussion

4.1. Feminist Unconsciousness

Marriage, probably, is not always the answer to teenage pregnancy. Mary Wollstonecraft once ever says in her essay "Thought on the Education of Daughters: with reflection on female conduct" (1788) about early marriage.

Early marriages are, in my opinion, a stop to improvement. If we were born only 'to draw nutrition, propagate and rot', the sooner the end of creation was answered, the better [...] In a comfortable situation, a cultivated mind is necessary to render a woman contented; and in a miserable one it is her only consolation. A sensible, delicate woman who by some strange accident or mistake, is joined to a fool or a brute, must be wretched beyond all names of wretchedness, if her views are confined to the present scene. Of what importance then, is intellectual improvement, when our comfort here, and our happiness hereafter, depends on it (Goodman, 74).

In the beginning of the story, both Helen and Chris seem to be

attached to each other. It was January, several months before their graduating day from high school. Helen was preparing to go to the school of music and Chris was preparing to go to Newcastle University. Both of them feel that they would not be able to live through their days without the other around. Although they go to different high school, they live in the same neighborhood, which give them room enough to see each other.

It happens on late January, in Helen's room. They were alone, no body was home, and it just happens. In the beginning, there was no regret between them. It gets them closer together. It seems their love is getting stronger afterwards; their bond is getting tighter.

But when Helen finds that her period does not come the next month, she feels that her world is turning up side down. She does not know what to do or who to tell. After some time of consideration, she tells Chris, hoping that it would make her period comes. She goes to the Family Planning Clinic in order to search for help, but she goes home without seeing someone. All along these times, Helen prays that the 'nobody' would go away from her body.

After knowing for sure that she is pregnant, she intends to abort the baby by carelessly and speedily riding a horse. She does not want to have the baby. She does not even want the baby to exist. She is afraid of being called 'naughty girl', not being able to control her sexual desire. Her attitude probably is shaped by the cultural understanding that female sexuality is seen as something to be contained and controlled, as can be seen in the traditional dichotomy of labeling women either as virgins or as whores. Such labels depict female sexuality as evil and dangerous if not constrained and imply that 'good girls' repress their sexual feelings (Andersen, 81).

Helen's purpose to abort the baby is becoming the beginning of the consciousness-raising process of Helen proposed by Doherty. Helen meets Jill, Chris's aunt, who seems to give her understanding about the importance of her condition. Here, Doherty's agenda to give some kind of consciousness to Helen is spoken through the character of Jill. In fact, in gaining the process, Helen gets big help from other female characters in the novel, Alice (Helen's mother), Nan (Helen's grandmother), Joan (Chris's mother)

and Jill. Helen, through the process of socialization, takes advantages from her older counterparts.

a. Alice

Alice is a picture of unhappy, discontent and uncomfortable wife. She is not close to her mother. Sometimes she seems too keep distance with Helen. From the beginning of her marriage, her parents had already seen the differences between Alice and her husband, Mr. Garton. Her parents thought that it would be a strange match, because Alice was always cheerful and attractive while young Garton was a reserved person. They met at a jazz club. Alice was going to a club a lot to dance. She used to like dancing. Garton worked at the club as a part time pianist. They fell in love and decided to get married. But after the marriage, Garton stopped her from going to the club. He did not like his wife to become a kind of exhibitionism (Doherty, 146-147).

Alice is not a nice mother to talk to either. Helen always feels discomfort when she wants to talk to her. She cannot as freely talk to her mother as her best friend to her best friend's mother (Doherty, 22). Her first reaction after knowing that Helen is pregnant is to drag Helen into an abortion clinic. She

persuades Helen that no one will know what happens to her (Doherty, 82).

b. Nan

Nan had Alice out of wedlock. Alice never knows who her father was, except that he was a dancer. In the time of Nan's, it was a disgraceful sin. A child who was born out of wedlock was called bastard. Nan's family could not accept Nan and her daughter because of what Nan did. It was considered to be a disgrace to keep a baby out of wedlock. But Alice hates her mother because of it. When Alice was nine years old, Nan got married with granddad. It was a brave conduct, then, marrying a woman with a child without knowing who her husband was.

c. Joan

Joan's dad died when she was twelve. Joan was still young when she met Alan. They met at work. Alan reminded her to her father. They felt close each other. When Alan asked her to marry him, she took the proposal for escape. From her marriage, she has two sons, Chris and Guy. She did not feel happy in her marriage. She joined a climbing club to escape from her house. Then she met other man, and after sometime of consideration, she

decided to leave her family to pursue her own happiness.

d. Jill

Jill has kept the secret for fifteen years that she aborted her unwanted baby. She aborted the baby because it was not the right time for her to have another baby. She had already had three children, her husband had just left her, and she was about to start her stable business. She thought that it was the most proper thing to abort the unwanted baby. She did not tell anyone. She kept her regret for herself. She told Helen and Chris this secret after she had kept it for fifteen years.

e. Feminist Consciousness

Socialization begins at birth, and it continues throughout adulthood. When we encounter new social experiences, we are socialized to adopt new roles through the expectations others have of us. Socialization patterns can be observed in many individual and group experiences and in the context of all of the institutions of society (Andersen, 37). This socialization also works for gender roles.

In learning gender roles, one can response to environment. Social learning occurs through an ongoing

process of reinforcement from other people. Children model themselves on the behaviors and attitudes of the same-sex parents, but these attitudes and behaviors can change as the situations and expectations in the environment change. However, parents are not the only significant role models. A wide array of images and expectations in the culture serve as reinforcement for gender identity (Andersen, 45).

In the case of Helen, she socializes her gender role not only from her mother, but also from her grandmother, Chris's mother and Chris's aunt. She learns something from those four female characters.

She learns the disadvantage of abortion from Jill. Jill tells her that she aborted her unwanted child once and she regretted for it for the whole years after. After Helen tells her mother that she is pregnant, Helen knows that she has hurt her mother. The first reaction of Helen's mother is to take Helen to an abortion clinic. Helen and her mother go to clinic, and they will not tell anybody including her father about what they are going to do. Alice promises Helen that nobody will find out about it, in case Helen feels embarrassed (Doherty, 82). Although feeling uneasy, Helen

agrees with her mother and decides to go to the abortion clinic. She feels sorry for the unborn baby. She knows that the baby does not ask for all of this (Doherty 83).

In the abortion clinic, something happened to Helen. While the doctor is preparing for the abortion she decides to leave the clinic and strongly confirms that she will keep the baby, she will not let go of the baby (Doherty, 93). In this point, it is obvious that Doherty raises Helen's feminist perspective on abortion. In the feminist point of view, it is woman's rights to choose abortion.. It other word, whether a woman wants to abort her unborn child or not, it must be her decision, not other's. In Helen's case, Alice does not have rights to tell Helen to abort her unborn child. Doherty wants to confirm that even though abortion is legalized in some parts of the world, it does not mean always the answer to an unmarried pregnancy.

Helen's confirmation to keep the baby is supported by her grandmother's past experience. Nan was pregnant when she was not married. She did not even know well who the man was. She knew him only for a while. It was a disgrace of the family. Alice never forgives her

her for making her fatherless, bastard child (Doherty, 157). Doherty probably has intention to show to Helen that Nan, instead of aborting her baby like Jill, decided to keep the baby because it is her right to do so. Although she was an outcast in the family and in the society, Nan confirmed herself to keep the baby. Alice, the one who should be grateful for that, cannot appreciate what her mother had done. Helen learns that. She wants to keep the baby because she does not want to be regretful, but she has an intention to let the baby know someday that it is her right to choose to have a baby and not to have a husband.

Helen's decision to not having a husband is more or less influenced by the facts that almost all adult females around her are not happy in their marriage. Alice, Helen's mother, finds out that she has chosen the 'wrong' man. She fell in love with a man who was not of her type. From the very beginning, her parents saw the strangeness of their relationship. They saw that Alice and her boyfriend did not match. However, Alice decided to marry him. After marriage, she knew that he disappointed her. Alice's husband is a type of husband who

does not let his wife to go out a lot, especially when she wants to have fun (Doherty 146 -147). Grandfather tells Helen about the fact that his father is a disappointment to her mother.

Joan, Chris's mother, left her family because of the similar reason. She felt disappointed to her husband. She loves him for the wrong reason. She does not love him passionately; she loves him as a daughter to a father. She did not quite realize it until her second son was about two years old. She joined a climbing club just to get out of the house and met a man whom she deeply fell in love with. It was the love of a woman to a man. After considering for about four years, she decided to leave her husband and her two sons. She thought that it was the only way to save her self (Doherty, 114 - 115).

Not only did Alice and Joan, Jill and Nan also had bad experience with men. Jill was left by her husband when she was about to start her stable business. He left her with her three children and one unborn baby. Nan was also left by a man who had already planted his seed inside her womb. This man did not even know that he had given her disgrace.

not even know that he had given her disgrace.

These experiences support Helen in deciding that she will not marry Chris. Therefore she feels confident to face all problems she will face without his presence. And finally she realizes that as a woman she will be able to handle her own burden by herself.

B. Conclusion

The birth of feminist consciousness experienced by Helen Carton is the result of a learning process from her female counterparts: her grandmother, her mother, Christ's mother and Jill. The main character learns from her surroundings how women feel dissatisfied with her position as women, as a result, she comes to the conclusion that as a woman she must be independent in deciding her future steps. Therefore, she can determine her own life without the presence of Christ, the man she used to be dependent on.

Although teenage pregnancy is something unexpected in a society, Berlie Doherty still sees a wise solution to this problem. As a female writer she has offered a different discussion as most writers

talk about feminist consciousness among adults. She advocates feminism among teenagers - a group of people that must be seriously guided in understanding the concept of feminist consciousness from the very beginning of their life stage.

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