



Hegemonic Masculinity in the Novel *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk* by Ahmad Tohari

(Hegemoni Maskulinitas dalam Novel *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk* Karya Ahmad Tohari)

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Abstract: The exploration of hegemonic masculinity within the context of sex and gender roles in Indonesian novels is an intriguing subject for analysis. In light of this background, the present research aimed to (1) describe and explain the hegemonic masculinity in the characters of the novel *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk* and (2) describe and explain the efforts of the characters in confronting the hegemonic masculinity in the novel *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk*. This study adopted a qualitative descriptive research approach involving a content analysis strategy. The primary data source was Ahmad Tohari's novel *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk*. Data collection techniques incorporated document analysis using the theory of hegemonic masculinity. Data validity was ensured through theory triangulation based on various theoretical perspectives. Data analysis followed an interactive approach, encompassing data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The research findings are as follows: (1) Hegemonic masculinity in the novel manifests as a cultural imposition of stigmas and limitations on women in the name of culture, evolving into societal consensus. It arises due to the gender roles deeply intertwined with the cultural values dominating society within a patriarchal culture. (2) The characters in the novel are powerless in the face of hegemonic masculinity, encompassing power relations, the presentation of gender roles, and cathexis due to the firm grip of patriarchal culture on the lives of the community in *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk*. Hence, struggles to break free from hegemonic masculinity within a patriarchal culture ultimately fail.

keywords **hegemony of masculinity, novel, *ronggeng dukuh paruk***

Abstrak: Hegemoni mengatasnamakan seks dan peran gender dalam novel Indonesia merupakan hal yang menarik untuk dianalisis. Berkaitan latar belakang tersebut, maka penelitian bertujuan (1) mendeskripsikan dan menjelaskan hegemoni maskulinitas tokoh dalam novel *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk*; (2) mendeskripsikan dan menjelaskan upaya tokoh menghadapi hegemoni maskulinitas dalam novel *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk*. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kualitatif deskriptif dengan strategi konten analisis. Sumber data berupa novel *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk* karya Ahmad Tohari. Teknik pengumpulan data menggunakan analisis dokumen dengan menggunakan teori hegemoni maskulinitas. Teknik validitas data menggunakan triangulasi teori melalui kegiatan validasi data berdasar berbagai perspektif teori. Teknik analisis data menggunakan analisis interaktif yang terdiri dari reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan simpulan. Hasil penelitian (1) hegemoni maskulinitas dalam novel berupa budaya yang memberikan stigma dan batasan kepada perempuan atas nama budaya, terjadi secara evolusi, sehingga menjadi persetujuan bersama. Hegemoni maskulinitas terjadi akibat adanya peran gender dalam budaya patriarki. Peran gender terintegrasi bersama dengan nilai budaya yang menghegemoni secara agresif masyarakatnya; (2) tokoh tidak berdaya menghadapi hegemoni maskulinitas. Terjadinya hegemoni maskulinitas meliputi relasi kekuasaan, relasi produksi peran gender, dan kateksis akibat kuatnya budaya patriarki mencengkeram kehidupan masyarakat dalam novel *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk*. Perjuangan membebaskan diri dari hegemoni maskulinitas mengalami kegagalan dalam budaya patriarki.

Kata Kunci **hegemoni maskulinitas, novel, *ronggeng dukuh paruk***

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INTRODUCTION

Literary works are a reflection of life. They showcase human thoughts, issues, and behaviors. The portrayal in literature can serve as a mirror for the reader, revealing similarities between the lives of literary characters and those of the readers. Hence, as a representation of life, literature also reveals the developmental aspects of human existence, whether it be evolutionary or revolutionary, across various nations, including Indonesia.

Within the annals of Indonesian literature, literary works are intimately linked to the historical and cultural developments in Indonesia. In this regard, culture is defined as humanity's total mental constructs, creations, and accomplishments acquired through learning rather than instinct (Koentjaraningrat, 2018, p. 5). Hence, it encompasses every facet of human existence, including thought, behavior, and tangible creations. Culture extends beyond mere forms of expression like dance, song, or language. Some aspects may evolve readily, while others are deeply entrenched in society and resistant to change. One such cultural phenomenon that persists in Indonesian civilization is patriarchy, which is a deeply ingrained cultural norm that has endured for centuries worldwide and remains particularly robust in various regions. Despite the advocacy for women's emancipation on both international and national levels, patriarchy remains deeply rooted in Indonesia.

Novels serve as one of the most compelling forms of literature that portray the cultural realities of societies, especially in Indonesia. It holds true for the novel *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk*, a trilogy by Ahmad Tohari, a native of Banyumas. The novel captures the essence of life in the Banyumas region, the very place where Ahmad Tohari resides. Correspondingly, this research aimed to (1) describe and explain the elements of hegemonic masculinity experienced by the characters in the novel *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk* and (2) describe and explain the efforts made by the characters to confront hegemonic masculinity within the novel *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk*.

The analysis of hegemonic masculinity can commence with the concept of sex and gender. Accordingly, sex refers to the biological differences between males and females, a condition attributed to divine design. It is observable in women born with XX chromosomes and men with XY chromosomes. There are physiological differences in the bodies and hormonal developments of men and women. Gender, on the other hand, is the distinction arising from social and cultural constructs. Men are often associated with strength, toughness, rationality, and logic, while women are linked to traits like fragility, gentleness, emotionality, caregiving, and nurturing. These discrepancies subsequently lead to the division of masculinity and femininity (Connell, 1995; Donaldson, 1993, p. 3). In individual relationships, a man's masculinity is recognized when a woman serves him, while a woman's femininity is satisfied when she can serve a man (Darwin, 2021). The power of patriarchy perpetuates masculine behavior as an emblem of true manhood and deeply desires such manifestations (Barret, 2016; Hearn, 2017). Consequently, these gender differences often trigger gender injustices and sexual division of labor.

The emergence of gender is a consequence of its perpetuation within a patriarchal culture. Patriarchy refers to the power relations between men and women, where male dominance over females is realized through various means and methods (Connell, 1995). Hence, it is also a hierarchical sexual system in which men hold superior power and economic privileges (Fakih, 2007, pp. 102–103). It places men in a higher social position than women, often viewed as part of men's possessions (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005).

Patriarchy also fosters the perception that women are innately weaker than men, and this condition is considered a given. Such a perspective grants men the authority to dictate and direct everything. This situation is deemed acceptable because it is linked to the perceived drawback of

women. Moreover, the influence of patriarchal culture affects the relationships between women and men, which generally exhibit subordination, with men in dominant positions. This practice is enforced under the impression that men are more capable of governing all aspects of life. Some examples of patriarchal traditions include discouraging women from pursuing careers outside the home, especially in political roles.

Patriarchy is often associated with hegemony, defined by (Gramsci, 1991) as a condition in which the subordinate complies with the ruler. Those dominated not only internalize the values and norms of the ruling class but also consent to their subordination. In hegemony theory, there are dominant and subordinate or subaltern groups. Dominant groups are in control, while subordinate or subaltern groups are those under control. Masculinity is a concept influenced by patriarchal culture. In the context of gender, it constructs men as individuals culturally defined by attributes such as strength, power, resilience, aggressiveness, and control. Concerning this investigation on the hegemonic masculinity, Connell states that hegemonic masculinity studies how masculinity and gender roles relate within culture and society (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Howson, 2009). Furthermore, it represents the dominant condition of men in gender relations, reinforcing the subordinate position of women under men (Connell, 1995; Carrigan et al., 2005). Hegemonic masculinity is found in various aspects of life, including religion, mass media content, wage structures, education, government policies, and households (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Moreover, it positions men at the center of power, enabling them to perpetuate dominant relationships that allow them to maintain their privileges (Carrigan et al., 2005). Hegemonic masculinity is closely linked to the authority over and subjugation of women (Triagiani, 2018).

Connell & Messerschmidt (2005) assert that there are three key elements of hegemonic masculinity: power relations, gender role presentation, and cathexis. Power relations represent a mechanism of masculinity that showcases power within both domestic and public spheres, serving to subordinate women and position men in a superior role. Gender role presentation relates to the interaction between men and women in both domestic and public sectors, where men dominate the productive arena and economic control. Cathexis pertains to men's sexual control over women, manifested as desire as an emotional energy attached to an object.

Research on the analysis of power relations, gender role presentation, cathexis, and characters' efforts to confront hegemonic masculinity in the novel *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk* remains relatively scarce. Therefore, the present study offered a novel perspective on the topic. Previous analyses included (Fitriana, 2022) examination of the portrayal of women's subordination in the novel *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk*, where women are depicted as physically, psychologically, and socially inferior, with the character Srintil embodying traditional female submissiveness. Ananti et al., (2022) investigated semiotics in the same novel, revealing the prevalence of specific semiotic codes, including simile, metaphor, personification, and allegory. Nisa'Khusnia et al., (2022) studied translation techniques, such as borrowing, calque, transposition, description, generalization, compensation, and established equivalence in the novel *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk*. Setyami (2022) compared the novel in question with the novel *Kembang Jepun*. Lastly, Triwulan et al., (2022) conducted a social analysis of the novel employing the theory of literary sociology. The findings from the analysis of hegemonic masculinity through the examination of power relations, gender role presentation, cathexis, and characters' responses in the novel *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk* could contribute to the domain of Indonesian literary criticism, particularly from the perspective of hegemonic masculinity. In this regard, the portrayal of women experiencing hegemony in a patriarchal society is expected to provide valuable insights to the literary world, advocating for stricter legal safeguards by the government against the exploitation of women.

METHOD

This research employed a qualitative descriptive approach involving content analysis as its analytical strategy. The study was aligned with the objectives following the research method outlined by Creswell (2013). In this regard, content analysis is a research strategy that aims to provide a detailed

description of the text while keeping the scientific goals in focus, as outlined by Krippendorff (2004). In this research, the approach utilized was that of hegemonic masculinity, a study of male gender related to gender roles within culture and society, as discussed by Connell & Messerschmidt (2005). The data for this study consisted of words, sentences, and paragraphs containing meaningful information derived from dialogues, the thoughts of characters, their responses to one another, the interconnectedness of the plot, and storytelling. The primary source of data was the novel *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk*, written by Ahmad Tohari and published by PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama in 2023. Data collection was carried out by reading the novel, recording data on data cards, and sorting data that aligned with the research objectives. Data validity was ensured through theory triangulation, involving distinct theories to interpret specific data, thus confirming the validity of the research findings. Data analysis followed an interactive model (Miles & Huberman, 2014) comprising four stages: (1) data collection from the document in the form of the *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk* novel; (2) data reduction, wherein information collected was recorded on data cards and subsequently reduced, with data pertinent to the research objectives being retained for further analysis; (3) data display, which was an interactive and continuous process of analysis until the research objectives were achieved; and (4) conclusion drawing, marking the final stage of the research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Elements of Hegemonic Masculinity in the Characters of the Novel Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk

There are three elements of hegemonic masculinity: power relations, gender role presentation, and cathexis. Power relations serve as tools of masculinity that manifest power within the domestic and public spheres to subordinate women and establish men in a superior position. Gender role presentation encompasses the interactions between men and women in domestic and public sectors, in which men dominate productive roles and economic control. Cathexis represents male sexual dominance over women in the form of desire as an emotional energy attached to the object. Each element of hegemonic masculinity in the novel *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk* is discussed in detail below.

Power Relations in the Novel Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk

In the novel, power relations are depicted through the dominance of men over women, who are placed in subordinate positions. The narrative illustrates that hegemonic masculinity is perpetuated within the community's cultural context of *ronggeng* (a Malay traditional dance). The ancestral figure of Dukuh Paruk, Ki Secamenggala, is a revered guardian of *ronggeng* culture. Hence, the birth of a new *ronggeng* dancer is considered the realization of his legacy. He instilled in his community the idea that being a *ronggeng* dancer is an honorable profession for the women of Dukuh Paruk, and this consensus has been passed down through generations.

Sakarya tersenyum. Sudah lama pemangku keturunan Ki Secamenggala itu merasakan hambarnya Dukuh Paruk karena tidak terlahirnya seorang *ronggeng*. "Dukuh Paruk tanpa *ronggeng* bukanlah Dukuh Paruk. Srintil akan mengembalikan citra sebenarnya pedukuhan ini," kata Sakarya kepada dirinya sendiri. Sakarya percaya, arwah Ki Secamenggala akan terbahak di kuburnya bila kelak tahu ada *ronggeng* baru di Dukuh Paruk (Tohari, 2023, p. 15).

Sakarya is smiling. For a long time, the descendants of Ki Secamenggala have felt the emptiness of Dukuh Paruk due to the absence of a *ronggeng* dancer. "Dukuh Paruk is not truly Dukuh Paruk without *ronggeng*. Srintil will restore the true image of this village," Sakarya tells himself. He believes that Ki Secamenggala's spirit will rejoice in his grave when he learns of the emergence of a new *ronggeng* dancer in Dukuh Paruk (Tohari, 2023, p. 15).

Apart from Ki Secamenggala, hegemonic masculinity is also manifested through the character of Sakarya, Srintil's grandfather. He is overjoyed to witness his granddaughter dancing the *ronggeng*

without formal training. He believes Srintil possesses the inherent talent or divine inspiration for the world of *ronggeng*. Sakarya introduces Srintil to Kartareja, a *ronggeng* shaman.

Pada hari baik, Srintil diserahkan kakeknya kepada Kartareja. Itu hukum Dukuh Paruk yang mengatur perihal seorang calon *ronggeng*. Keluarga calon harus menyerahkannya kepada dukun *ronggeng*, menjadi anak akuan (Tohari, 2023, p. 17).

On an auspicious day, Srintil is handed over by her grandfather to Kartareja. It is a customary practice in Dukuh Paruk that governs the initiation of a prospective *ronggeng* dancer. The candidate's family must entrust her to the *ronggeng* shaman, making her an adopted child (Tohari, 2023, p. 17).

Srintil also experiences a hegemonic power relation with Kartareja, a prominent *ronggeng* shaman. He wields considerable influence in Dukuh Paruk and is the authority when a candidate is deemed worthy of becoming a *ronggeng* dancer. To qualify, she must be a young girl who has inherited the *ronggeng* gift from her ancestors, particularly Ki Secamenggala. Additionally, she must undergo the purification ritual and the *bukak klambu* ceremony. After completing these rituals, she earns the title of the *ronggeng* dancer.

Adat Dukuh Paruk mengatakan ada dua tahapan upacara yang harus dilalui Srintil sebelum berhak menyebut dirinya sebagai seorang *ronggeng*, yaitu upacara pemandian di depan cungkup makam Ki Secamenggala dan upacara *bukak klambu* (Tohari, 2023, p. 43).

The customs of Dukuh Paruk dictate that Srintil must go through two distinct ceremonial stages before she can rightfully call herself a *ronggeng* dancer: the purification ritual at the shrine of Ki Secamenggala's tomb and the *bukak klambu* ceremony (Tohari, 2023, p. 43).

Ki Secamenggala, Sakarya, and Kartareja are central figures in establishing hegemonic masculinity, characterized by power relations in which men hold a dominant (superior) position over women, particularly Srintil, who occupies a subordinate role. In this context, Srintil is disempowered. Other women in Dukuh Paruk also adhere to this hegemony, internalizing these power dynamics and accepting male dominance. *Ronggeng* dancer is seen as a noble profession that every woman in Dukuh Paruk aspires to. According to Primagita & Riantoputra (2019) the portrayal of women's marginalized and unjust position is often normalized within a patriarchal society.

Gender Roles Presentation in the Novel Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk

The portrayal of gender roles is evident in the control of productive and economic activities carried out by Kartareja, who serves as the village's spiritual leader over Srintil, his adopted *ronggeng* dancer. Kartareja exerts absolute authority over the physical and psychological aspects of Srintil due to his position as a *ronggeng* master. He grooms Srintil for her journey as a *ronggeng* dancer, orchestrating two significant ceremonies: the bathing ritual in front of the mausoleum of Ki Secamenggala and the *bukak klambu* ceremony. The bathing ritual involves cleansing Srintil with water and flower petals step by step. After that, she needs to perform the *ronggeng* dance in front of Ki Secamenggala's mausoleum with an audience of the local community. The second ceremony, *bukak klambu*, is a unique open competition where any man can compete to claim the virginity of the prospective *ronggeng* dancer. In this regard, men willing to provide the specific sum of money set by the *ronggeng* master, Kartareja, have the privilege of enjoying this right (Tohari, 2023, p. 51). In the passages regarding the *bukak klambu* ceremony, readers can witness the first instance of productive and economic dominance exerted by Kartareja over Srintil. He establishes rules regarding which men are entitled to enjoy the virginity of the future *ronggeng* dancer.

Orang-orang segera tahu pula, Kartareja menentukan syarat sekeping uang ringgit emas bagi laki-laki yang ingin menjadi pemenang (Tohari, 2023, p. 52).

Soon enough, it becomes public knowledge that Kartareja requires a payment in the form of a golden ringgit for any man wishing to partake in the competition (Tohari, 2023, p. 52).

In productive and economic terms, hegemony is not solely achieved through commodifying Srintil's virginity. When two men expressed a desire to share her bed in the *bukak klambu* ceremony, Kartareja did not hesitate to offer Srintil to them, enabling him to reap substantial economic benefits. Moreover, he received a gold ringgit, two pieces of silver, and a buffalo as an alternative to the gold ringgit requirement.

Suami istri Kartareja masuk ke bilik mereka. Di sana pasangan itu bergurau. Sebuah ringgit emas, dua rupiah perak, dan seekor kerbau sudah hampir di tangan (Tohari, 2023, p. 52).

Kartareja and his wife entered their chamber. There, the couple engaged in playful banter. A gold ringgit, two silver rupiahs, and a buffalo were nearly in their possession (Tohari, 2023, p. 52).

Following the *bukak klambu* ceremony, Srintil was officially recognized as a *ronggeng* dancer. Kartareja cemented the productive and economic control within both the domestic and public spheres after Srintil's initiation. She became not only a *ronggeng* dancer but also a commodity catering to the desires of men with a specific market value.

“Aku tahu seorang ronggeng sering dianggap sebagai ternak piaraan oleh induk semangnya. Lihatlah, dalam musim orang berhajat atau masa lepas panen; ronggeng naik pentas setiap malam. Siang hari ia mesti melayani laki-laki yang menggendaknya. Sementara itu yang mengatur semua urusan, lebih-lebih urusan keuangan adalah Si dukun ronggeng. Kasihan kan? Sebaliknya, kini Kartareja menjadi kaya, kan?” (Tohari, 2023, p. 125).

“I know a ronggeng dancer is often considered a pet by their handlers. She performs every night during the planting season or after the harvest. During the day, she must satisfy the desires of men who request her services. Meanwhile, the one who manages all affairs, especially financial matters, is the ronggeng shaman. It's a pity, isn't it? On the contrary, Kartareja, the shaman, has become wealthy, hasn't he?” (Tohari, 2023, p. 125).

The productive and economic controls intensified as Kartareja realized that Srintil had become a lucrative money-making machine for him. This domination was exercised by him as a superior figure, not only over Srintil but also over her grandfather, Sakarya.

“Lalu *sampeyan*, Sakarya,” kata Kartareja kepada kakek Srintil. “Jaga jangan sampai *sampeyan* mempunyai pikiran seperti istri *sampeyan*. Ingat kewajiban *sampeyan* sebagai pemangku dan *kamitua* anak-cucu Ki Secamenggala di dukuh ini. Tanggung jawab *sampeyan* tidak membenarkan *sampeyan* mementingkan diri sendiri.” (Tohari, 2023, p. 124).

“Then, Sakarya, “Kartareja said to Srintil's grandfather, “Be mindful not to develop the same thoughts as your wife. Remember your responsibilities as the caretaker and elder of Ki Secamenggala's descendants in this hamlet. Your duty does not allow you to prioritize your self-interest.” (Tohari, 2023, p. 124).

When Srintil refused to satisfy the biological desires of men, Kartareja resorted to verbal aggression.

“*Toblas, toblas!* Kamu ini bagaimana, Srintil? Kamu menampik Pak Marsusi? Itu pongah namanya. Tetapi jangan lupa anak siapa kamu sebenarnya. Kamu anak Santayib! Orang tuamu tidak lebih dari pedagang tempe bongkrek. Bapak dan emakmu mati termakan racun. Dan kamu menolak sebuah kalung emas seratus gram? Bila kamu tidak suka kalung itu, mestinya bisa kauambil untukku. Dan kaulayani Pak Marsusi karena semua orang tahu kau seorang ronggeng dan *sundal*” (Tohari, 2023, p. 152).

“*Toblas, toblas!* What's the matter with you, Srintil? Rejecting Mr. Marsusi? That's arrogance. Don't forget who you really are! You're Santayib's child! Your parents were nothing more than *tempe bongkrek* sellers. Your father and mother died from food poisoning, and you're turning down a hundred-gram gold necklace? You should've taken it for me if you don't like it. You must serve Mr. Marsusi because everyone knows you're a ronggeng dancer and a harlot!” (Tohari, 2023, p. 152).

Sexual violence against women, both psychologically and physically, signifies societal internalized inequality and is regarded as commonplace (Garcia, 2020).

Cathexis in the Novel Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk

Child sexual abuse occurs in the case of Srintil, an eleven-year-old girl selected to become a *ronggeng* dancer. As a young girl, she undergoes emotional control by men through exploitation and psychological coercion. This phenomenon is perpetuated through the cultural practices of *ronggeng* and the prevalent male dominance and hegemony over women in Dukuh Paruk. The cathexis begins from the day she experiences the *bukak klambu* ritual.

“Engkau kelihatan lelah. Darimana engkau datang, Nak,” tanya Kartareja.
“Dari Pecikalan, Kek. Nama saya Dower. Saya mendengar kabar tentang *bukak klambu*.”
“Engkau sudah tahu syarat yang kuminta, bukan?” tanya Kartareja tanpa melihat tamunya.
“Saya sudah tahu. Sekeping ringgit emas,” jawab Dower.
“Apakah sekarang Kau telah membawanya?”
“Pada saya baru ada dua keping perak. Saya bermaksud menyerahkannya sebagai panjar. Masih ada satu hari lagi. Barangkali besok bisa saya peroleh seringgit emas.”
“Baiklah. Uang panjarmu bisa kuterima. Tetapi besok malam kau harus datang membawa sebuah ringgit emas. Kalau tidak, apa boleh buat. Kau kalah dan uang panjarmu hilang.” Kata Kartareja (Tohari, 2023, pp. 58–59).

“You look tired. Where have you come from, dear?” Kartareja asked.
“From Pecikalan, Sir. My name is Dower. I heard about the *bukak klambu* ritual,” Dower replied.
“Do you already know the terms I've outlined?” Kartareja asked without looking at his guest.
“I'm aware of them. It involves a gold ringgit,” Dower answered.
“Have you brought it with you now?”
“I only have two silver coins with me. I intend to offer them as a deposit. I can obtain a gold ringgit tomorrow, hopefully,” Dower explained.
“Very well. I'll accept your deposit. However, tomorrow night, you must come with a gold ringgit. If not, there's nothing I can do. You lose, and your deposit is forfeited,” Kartareja stated (Tohari, 2023, pp. 58–59).

Cathexis, through the sexual exploitation of Srintil, is further exemplified in a transaction involving the *bukak klambu* ceremony carried out by Kartareja and Sulam.

“Apa maksud kedatanganmu ke rumah ini?” tanya Kartareja.
“Kau menyelenggarakan *bukak klambu* malam ini, bukan?” tanya Sulam dengan caranya yang angkuh.
“Baiklah. Bila demikian katamu, pasti kau sudah siap dengan sekeping ringgit emas,” ujar Kartareja.
“Tentu saja aku membawa ringgit emas itu.” (Tohari, 2023, p. 72).

Kartareja asked, "What is the purpose of your visit to this house?"
Sulam confidently said, "You are organizing the *bukak klambu* ceremony tonight, correct?"
Kartareja replied, "Very well. If that is the case, you must have a gold ringgit ready."
Sulam promptly responded, "Certainly, I have the gold coin with me." (Tohari, 2023, p. 72).

Utilizing his shrewd skills as a *ronggeng* shaman, Kartareja offered Srintil's virginity to two men simultaneously, Dower and Sulam. Dower provided him with two silver coins and one buffalo, while Sulam offered a gold ringgit, resulting in him reaping substantial profits.

Upon officially assuming the role of a *ronggeng* dancer, Srintil gained widespread recognition throughout Dukuh Paruk and its surroundings. She became renowned for her graceful dance, captivating beauty, and alluring physique. Consequently, numerous men sought to approach and share a bed with her. Kartareja, in turn, experienced elation as this situation translated into an increase in the monetary gains he accrued as a *ronggeng* shaman. Hence, it is crucial to acknowledge that Srintil was subjected to sexual exploitation and underage sexual violence without comprehending the ramifications of being a *ronggeng* dancer.

The Srintil Character's Response to Hegemonic Masculinity in the Novel Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk

Srintil, an 11-year-old girl, received the prestigious role of the next *ronggeng* dancer in Dukuh Paruk. In this regard, according to the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, a minor is defined as a child between the ages of 5 and 11. Meanwhile, the World Health Organization (WHO) categorizes minors as individuals aged 0-17 (Muamala, 2018).

Based on these definitions, it is evident that Srintil was indeed a minor. However, at the age of 11, she was subjected to sexual exploitation, psychological and sexual violence, and child trafficking. Srintil, realizing her dire circumstances, decided to rebel against her role as a sexual commodity. This rebellion is vividly portrayed in the following passage from the novel:

"*Jenganten,*" suara Marsusi serak. Senyumnya kaku seperti anak kecil sedang minta jajan kepada emaknya. "Ini kalungmu, ambillah."

"Untuk apa kalung ini *sampeyan* berikan padaku? Begini pak, kalung ini akan kuterima bila *sampeyan* maksudkan sebagai upahku menari. Nah, *sampeyan* tinggal mengatakan kapan dan di mana pentas hendak diadakan."

"Kalung ini bukan buat upahmu menari dan bertayub," ujar Marsusi.

"*Sampeyan* ingin kalung itu bukan sebagai upahku menari, melainkan untuk satunya lagi. Oh, Pak Marsusi, *sampeyan* tidak salah. Karena aku memang telah melakukan hal semacam itu dengan sekian banyak laki-laki. Tetapi sekarang aku tak mau melakukannya lagi."

"Nanti dulu! Mengapa hal ini baru kaukatakan kepadaku; bukan kepada laki-laki lain sebelum aku? Mengapa?"

"Persoalannya sederhana, pak. *Sampeyan* kebetulan menjadi laki-laki pertama yang datang setelah aku memutuskan mengubah haluan. Aku hanya ingin menari." (Tohari, 2023, pp. 149–150).

"Srintil, Dear," Marsusi's voice trembled, his smile resembling a child asking his mother for a treat. "This necklace is for you, please accept it."

"Why would you offer me this necklace, sir? I'll accept it only if you intend it as compensation for my dancing. Just let me know when and where the performance will take place."

"This necklace is not intended as payment for your dance and entertainment," Marsusi clarified.

"So, you desire this necklace not as remuneration for my dance but for something else. Oh, Mr. Marsusi, you are not mistaken. I have engaged in such acts with numerous men before. But now, I refuse to do so any longer."

“Hold on a moment! Why are you revealing this to me now and not to other men before me? Why?”

“It's quite simple, sir. You happened to be the first man to approach me after I had decided to change my path. I simply wish to dance.”(Tohari, 2023, pp. 149–150).

Srintil's courage in resisting the dominance of a shaman who relies on her financially through the sex trade under the guise of preserving the art of *ronggeng* is a central theme in this context. Kartareja's verbal abuse and intimidation led to significant mental pressure on Srintil. Moreover, he labels her an ungrateful subordinate for daring to defy his commands as a *ronggeng* shaman. Unfortunately, Srintil finds herself powerless in such a situation, indicative of a strong dominant relationship.

Srintil's experience of hegemonic masculinity encompasses power relations, gender role presentation, and cathexis. Regarding power relations, Srintil is subordinate to three dominant figures in Dukuh Paruk: Ki Secamenggala, Kartareja, and Sakarya. The *ronggeng* culture, intertwined with sexual exploitation, is perpetuated by these three individuals in the Dukuh Paruk region. The community complies with this hegemony, internalizes the power relations, and consents to this domination. Kartareja orchestrates the gender role presentation through the *bukak klambu* ceremony, in which Srintil's body gains economic value for the first time. Cathexis is also perpetuated through the continuation of *bukak klambu* ritual, involving the commercialization of sexual activities disguised as a traditional art form to generate specific economic gains. In this context, there are efforts to pressure young girls into engaging in sexual activities and for adults to engage in sexual relations with minors under the pretext that it is part of ancestral tradition.

These acts of sexual violence and the sexual exploitation of underage girls are criminal and inhumane. They are being abused merely as objects for irresponsible adults' satisfaction and economic gain. It aligns with the views expressed by Wahid & Irfan (2021), suggesting that young girls are often commoditized or exploited by specific individuals or groups for substantial economic gains within the sex industry. Additionally, it corresponds with Yudhanti (2020) and Sofian (2020), who highlight that sexual offenses are a prevalent phenomenon. These offenses often target women and children, involving sexual exploitation, cases of pornography, human trafficking, sexual commercialization, body display, erotic dancing, and more, primarily affecting young girls. According to the World Health Organization (2023), sexual violence against women represents a severe public health issue and a violation of women's rights.

The efforts made by the character Srintil as a sexual object and her subordination involve a rebellion when she realizes that she is merely being exploited for sexual purposes. Nevertheless, the pressure, intimidation, sexual coercion, and verbal abuse inflicted upon Srintil render her powerless. This sense of powerlessness is a consequence of the sexual crimes she endures. Several relevant research also revealed the prevalence of male hegemony over women, resulting in their powerlessness. For instance, Bahardur (2020) found that women, represented by *Jugun Ianfu* in the short story "*Kapotjes dan Batu yang Terapung*," also experience physical abuse, rape, sexual exploitation, and helplessness. Sa'diyah et al., (2021) state that female overseas domestic workers (TKW) in the novel *Jatisaba* by Ramayda Akmal exhibit powerlessness when subjected to sexual exploitation. Research by Derana (2016) demonstrates the marginalization of women in the novel *Tarian Bumi* due to traditional customs and religious interpretations, resulting in female characters depicting powerlessness.

The Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (KemenPPPA) recorded 9,645 cases of violence and criminal acts against children in Indonesia from January to May 28, 2023. Of these, 8,615 cases involved female child victims. In addition, sexual violence against children was the most prevalent, with 4,280 reported cases (Nordiansyah, 2023). Based on this information, it can be concluded that sexual violence against female children persists. Accordingly, it portrays that hegemonic masculinity objectifies and commodifies women sexually. To address this issue, the government has enacted criminal provisions regarding Sexual Exploitation Activities, as stipulated in Articles 289, 296, and 506 of the Indonesian Criminal Code (KUHP), Articles 4 and 30 of Law No. 44 of 2008, Articles 1 and 2 of Law No. 21 of 2008, Articles 27 and 45 of Law No. 11 of 2008, and

Law No. 12 of 2022 on Sexual Violence Offenses. These regulations are expected to provide women with better legal protection.

The findings of this research differ from those of Ahmadi (2022), who examined masculinity in two Indonesian novels, *Orang-orang Biasa* and *Rafilus*. The results indicated that men exhibiting healthy behaviors are depicted as strong, responsible, and honest. In contrast, those engaging in unhealthy behaviors are portrayed as causing harm to others and committing crimes. Furthermore, these findings contrast with Bahardur, Andayani, Suwandi, and Wardani (2022), who revealed that the novel *Siti Nurbaya* features hegemonic masculinity in the form of the *kawin bajapuik* tradition and polygamy. Both traditions are marked by male authority in determining marriage conditions that demand female compliance. Additionally, this study differs from Septianingsih (2019), who examined the *lengger* (a folk dance originating from Banyumas Regency, Central Java) dancers from the perspective of their performance. It also diverges from an analysis by Udasmoro (2023) on masculinity in two poems by Ambonese poets following the Ambon conflict. The results demonstrated that those poets exhibit fluid masculinity through their literary works, presenting a different framework than traditional norms. Lastly, the present research findings contradict Sugiarti (2021), who explored patriarchal culture in East Javanese folklore. They also differ from the investigation conducted by Sugiarti et al., (2022), which examined the representation of male masculinity in folk tales from the archipelago.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results and discussions, it can be concluded that the occurrence of hegemonic masculinity, including power relations, gender role presentation, and cathexis, is a result of the substantial influence of patriarchal culture on society's life, as depicted in the novel *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk*. The imbalanced power relations between men and women, with men in dominant positions and women subordinated, results in men consistently being in a subject role and women becoming mere objects. Furthermore, across generations, men determine what is socially acceptable and what is not, often using culture as a justification. Women, as objects, have been molded within the patriarchal culture as passive, submissive, and obedient to men, ultimately internalizing these values, complying with power relations, and consenting to power relationships without agency. The hegemonic masculinity in the novel *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk* ultimately leads to sexual exploitation and sexual crimes against underage girls disguised under the *ronggeng* culture. Underage girls are equated with economic commodities, disregarding their humanity. Analyzing the novel from the perspective of hegemonic masculinity has implications for literary criticism, particularly in examining Indonesian novels. Based on the analysis results, there are also implications for readers, in which they can observe the representation of Indonesian society, where sexual crimes against underage girls are a harsh reality and a national issue that must be promptly addressed.

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