

RELATIONSHIP, MARRIAGE AND CAREER IN NH. DINI'S NOVELS:

NH. DINI'S FEMINISM MODEL

A Thesis

Presented as Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement

To Obtain the *Magister Humaniora* (M. Hum) in English Language Studies



by

Gregorius Subanti

176332005

THE GRADUATE PROGRAM OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE STUDIES

SANATA DHARMA UNIVERSITY

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Adil ka Talino
Bacuramin ka Saruga
Basengat ka Jubata

Treat all human beings fairly
like the life in Heaven
as all is from our God



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This thesis eventually cherishes the spirit of the immortal Nh. Dini's wisdom about the equality, balance, the similar opportunity and chances, or whatever terms people may use, between men and women called human beings. Nothing is more or less.



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ABSTRACT

Gregorius Subanti, 2020, *Relationship, Marriage and Career in Nh. Dini's Novels: Nh. Dini's Feminism Model*. Yogyakarta: The Graduate Program in English Language Studies, Sanata Dharma University.

This thesis examines Nh. Dini's novels by focusing on Nh. Dini's views regarding friendship, marriage and career. Feminism theories tailored into Indonesian context become the bases of this study. The gender theories taken from various Indonesian feminism perspectives are also used in the analysis. This study puts its focus on one big problem: how does Nh. Dini propose and discuss the feminism view on woman in dealing with friendships, marriages and career in her novels? As a library research, the primary texts used are all Nh. Dini's novels. The secondary texts include theory of feminism, related concepts on women's relationship and marriages. This study finds out the way Nh. Dini has her own way in viewing the value, challenge and perseverance in regards to relationship, marriage and career. The woman characters care about the good relationship and familial value. They also hold the traditional values of marriages including fully serving the husband and preserving the marriage all out to maintain family and their own reputation. Divorce is the last option though they are trapped by it. In career pursuits, Dini's women also follow the parents' obligation and financial condition. Similarly, the choice of educations also meets parents' wish. Eventually, the analysis finds that Dini's women are all bound by local, traditional, familial and religious values which force them to take decisions based on the power of male domination/patriarchal system. The women interpret the system as femal completion, obedience and dedication as backed up by social, legal and religious system. Nh. Dini responds the issue of value, challenge and perseverance using her Feminism model which is self and calm demeanor which is called Nh. Dini's Feminism Model.

Keywords: Gender, Relationship, Marriage, Career, Traditional Feminism

ABSTRAK

Gregorius Subanti, 2020, *Relationship, Marriage and Career in Nh. Dini's Novels: Nh. Dini's Feminism Model*. Yogyakarta: Program Pascasarjana Kajian Bahasa Inggris, Universitas Sanata Dharma.

Penelitian ini membahas novel-novel Nh. Dini dengan focus pada pandangan seorang Nh. Dini tentang persahabatan, perkawinan dan karir. Teori Feminisme yang dipadukan pada konteks keindonesiaan menjadi kandasannya kajian ini. Selain teori-teori gender barat dan klasik yang *mainstream*, teori-teori gender yang diambil dari pandangan-pandangan feminisme Indonesia serta merta diaplikasikan pada analisis ini. Kajian ini menitikberatkan pada satu pertanyaan besar: bagaimana seorang Nh. Dini mengajukan dan mendiskusikan pandangan feminisminya dalam urusan persahabatan, perkawinan dan karir dalam novel-novelnya. Sebagai sebuah kajian pustaka, teks utama yang ditelaah adalah novel-novel Nh. Dini. Teks-teks sekunder yang dipergunakan adalah kerangka teori feminisme yang berhubungan dengan konsep hubungan dan perkawinan. Kajian ini menemukan bahwa sebagian besar karakter dalam novel-novel Nh. Dini, terutama perempuan, kecuali di *Orang-Orang Tran*, adalah mereka yang ditantang dalam hubungan pertemanan, perkawinan dan karir. Karakter perempuan yang sangat peduli dengan hubungan baik dan nilai-nilai keluarga, dalam beberapa hal mengorbankan karir. Karakter-karakter yang memegang nilai pernikahan termasuk melayani suami sepenuh hati dan merawat pernikahan demi menjaga nama baik keluarga dan diri sendiri. Perceraian adalah pilihan terakhir kendati terperangkap di dalamnya. Dalam karir, perempuan dalam novel Nh. Dini mematuhi tuntutan orangtua dan kondisi keuangan. Selaras dengan pilihan pendidikan yang menurut kemauan orangtua. Akhirnya dapat disimpulkan, perempuan-perempuan dalam novel Nh. Dini terikat oleh nilai-nilai local, tradisional dan agama yang memaksa mereka mengambil keputusan atas dasar pola patriarki. Mereka menyebutnya keutuhan, kepatuhan dan pengabdian seorang perempuan. Nh. Dini menjawab nilai, tantangan dan perawatan hubungan dan pernikahan dengan cara kalem dan santun yang disebut Feminisme model seorang Nh. Dini.

Kata-kata Kunci: Gender, Hubungan, Pernikahan, Karir, Feminisme Tradisional

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

It was November 1990 when the national television, TVRI, first aired an interesting movie to mark the Indonesian Teachers' Day. It was a very simple story about a female teacher in a humble public school who happened to teach an elementary class in a small town. One of her students named Waskito who was portrayed as a disturbing and wild person. The hardship and struggle of Bu Suci, the teacher's name, in handling the student's behaviour from a naughty boy turning into a friendly and behaved person was the highlight of the story.

The story left the thesis writer with admiration and deep experience. Later it is found out that the film was the adaptation from a thin novel – with a thick life essence – adopting the same title *Pertemuan Dua Hati* [The Encounter of Two Hearts]. The powerful and touching novel was written by a female novelist named Nh. Dini. From the standing point, it is fair to say that a novel with strong message and idea may have impact on its audience. Shortly, the deep impression introduced the novelist's works to this thesis writer.

A fiction writer has power to introduce values. In this case, one can clearly see that Nh. Dini as a person behind her phenomenal works also has such “a hidden agenda” or motives to be put forward. The books by Nh. Dini, a prominent Indonesian woman writer, for example, are among the first books that made one realize that writing

autobiographically is an important strategy in putting forwards issues pertaining to women, or even feminist writings.¹

The main theme of Nh. Dini's novels mainly revolve about a relationship. She often formulates the conflicts in the characters based on her own surroundings. The female characters are often described with Indonesian values to proclaim their origin. The names used for the female protagonists such as Muryati, Winar, Widodo, Ganik and other typical naming will at least indicate that Dini keeps the locality of the setting. Dini utilizes herself profoundly with local properties and values.

Ethnic identity, religious background, education level and experiences influence the way character appears in fiction. The fact that Nh. Dini is a Javanese woman also contributes to the process of characterization. The writer penetrates her characters with the values embodied in her head and heart deliberately. Through writing, as a part of cultural activities, the writer expresses their personal values, opinions and thoughts through their works such as feminism view through her woman characters in most all of her novels, except *Orang-Orang Tran*.²

Nh. Dini also relates her novels and the characters to the social-cultural circumstances of the period when she lives. In addition, a writer may be affected by the aspects of surroundings and so is Nh. Dini. Regarding to that notion, Robert

¹ Aquarini Priyatna, "Feminist Voice in the Works of Indonesian Early Woman Writers: Reading Novels and Short Stories by Suwarsih Djojopuspito," *Journal of International Women's Studies*, 19.2 (Jan. 2018): p.231.

² The novel entitled *Orang-Orang Tran* [Tran People] tells about people in the new land brought by the transmigration program by the Indonesian government. The arid and difficult areas of the land create problems as they have to struggle to cultivate the land. Wild animals, drought and local hostility are problems to face by the main male character, Samirin.

Escarpit in the *Sociology of Literature* states that the literary consumption and reproduction influences the form and content of literary works.³

The next query about the previous assumption on the literature and its society is the connection between writers and their products. How dominant the authorship affects the style and product-end. It is normal that critics may relate the background of the authors to the works produced. Period, places, life experience and many connected factors affect the colors of creative pieces.

It is common that writers record what they see, feel and react on the surrounding and environment. This includes the interaction of people. They live in the real social and communal system. They likely have the tendency to follow the settings they reside including recording, recalling the memories and their personal reflections. Writers reveal their settings based on their physical placement, the current-ness.

The same case is also found in Indonesian literature. Writers are also influenced by the place setting they live. An Indonesian writer, Umar Kayam, for instance, writes about his life experience in the United States in *Seribu Kunang-Kunang di Manhattan*.⁴ Some western writers detailly describe Vietnam country side in *the Killing Field* to tell that they were once there for wars. He writes and describes the Island of Java even he has never visited Java. These examples show that geographical setting also play an important role for the writers mostly because it enriches the story they try to portray.

³ Robert Escarpit, *Sociology of Literature*. Translated by Ernest Pick. 2nd Ed.; with a New Introduction by Malcolm Bradbury and Bryan Wilson. (New York: Cass, 1971)

⁴ Umar Kayam, *Fireflies in Manhattan* (Jakarta: Lontar, 2013)

At this stage, an Indonesian novelist Nurhayati Srihardini or best known as Nh. Dini's works will be the focus of the study. Hence, the novelist's works do not only enrich the Indonesian literature but also portray particular aspects of life and culture particularly in Indonesia. All works are written in Indonesian with English translation provided. Nh. Dini's works can be divided into different sections based on themes though some works may be overlapping. The novels analyzed and quoted in this research are listed as *Hati yang Damai* [A Peaceful Heart] (1961), *Pada Sebuah Kapal* (*On a Ship*) (1972), *La Barka* (1975), *Sebuah Lorong di Kotaku* [An Isle in My Town] (1978), *Padang Ilalang di Belakang Rumah* [The Prairie in Back Yard] (1979), *Langit dan Bumi Sahabat Kami* [The Sky and Earth are Our Friends] (1979), *Kuncup Berseri* [A Glowing Bud] (1979), *Sekayu* (1981), *Orang-Orang Tran* [Tran People] (1985), *Namaku Hiroko* [My Name is Hiroko] (1986), *Pertemuan Dua Hati* [The Encounter of Two Hearts] (1986), *Keberangkatan* (*Departures*) (1987), *Jalan Bandungan* [Bandungan Street] (1989), *Tirai Menurun* [The Dropping Curtain] (1993), *Kemayoran* (2000), *Jepun Negerinya Hiroko* [Japan is Hiroko's Country] (2000), *Dari Parangakik ke Kamboja* [From France to Kamboja] (2003), *Dari Fentennay ke Magallianes* [From Fentennay to Magallianes] (2005), *La Grande Borne* (2007), *Argenteuil* (2007), *Pondok Baca* [The Reading Hut] (2011), *Dari Rue Saint Simon ke Jalan Lembang* [From Rue Saint Simon to Lembang Street] (2012), and *Dari Ngalian ke Sendowo* [From Ngalian to Sendowo] (2015). This also includes the latest novel launched in 2018 entitled *Gunung Ungaran* [Mount Ungaran]. In this study, the novels

mentioned will be used as the texts analyse excluding works such as short stories, memoirs and other translated works.

Despite the numerous books published, studies on the writer are yet inadequate. The national literature research and journals mostly fall on the western canons or Indonesian top male writers. Seeing the fact of this out mention and spotlight, it is time to expose one of Indonesian female writers named Nh. Dini, considering the numbers of her quality works. Her precious ideas and thoughts have never been deeply or detailly dissected, let alone the appreciation of a series of complete works till the Tembalang Highway claims her life.

Nh Dini's works touch a variety of topics. The works do not only talk about romance and marriage but also the labyrinth of social life, local traditions, education and nature. Eventhough the main characters are dominantly women, in some works the writer pictures student and the life of a child. Many of her works are said as duplication of her own experience which are supported by real settings of places and names. The works are considered influential as they recite about the class inequality, human relationship with other humans and nature, marriage, tradition and education. The novelist also represents the stories within the context of Indonesian history in some novels including setting them during the Dutch and Japanese colonization as backgrounds.

The majority of her important works represents her ideas about women and their position in marriage and society. She devotes her thoughts mostly of the woman issues in her major books portraying her own marriage life. There is a list of novels

telling her mental instability due to her trouble marriage. She also talks about a Japanese woman life with strange decision and her international relationship. She also reveals the fall of puppet show (wayang orang) due to the modernity and transmigration programme. In *Pertemuan Dua Hati* [The Encounter of Two Hearts], she beautifully recites the relationship of a mischievous student and a kind-hearted teacher.

Nh. Dini started her writing adventure when she first published her story in 1951. She was said to show the different style considered the breakthrough in Indonesian literary world, especially in woman writing.⁵ Nh. Dini is a writer with commitment. Her work productivity spans sixty years since she first wrote her story. She wrote poems, short stories, novels and some biographies, but is always well-known as a novelist. Her works have been published by major labels, reprinted and discussed in many occasions.

She later grew her interest even bigger. She was then married to a French diplomat and kept writing her novels. She lived in some different countries about 20 years. The places she stayed became backgrounds of her works. In 1980, she came back to Indonesia after suffering from divorce with her husband and sickness. In 1989, she got a prize from Indonesia Department of Education and Culture's "Arts Prize for Literature". In 1986, she built a reading hut for children. The branches are everywhere ever since. She was also granted some different prizes from 1988, 1991 to 2008 and

⁵ Th. Sri Rahayu Prihatmi, *Nh. Dini: Karya dan Dunianya* (Jakarta: PT Gramedia, 1999), pp. viii-ix
[Th. Sri Rahayu Prihatmi, *Nh. Dini: Works and Her World* (Jakarta: PT Gramedia, 1999), pp. viii-ix]

was invited to deliver her experience in literary forum with her enormous passions and achievements.

During the Ubud Writers and Readers Festival (UWRF) recently, the festival's founder Janet De Neefe presented Nh. Dini with the distinguished Lifetime Achievement Award for her more than six-decade literary career and her phenomenal contribution to the development of Indonesian literature. In her speech, Nh. Dini states that literature is actually nutritious food for humans' souls and minds. It is the basic foundation of humanity, a reflection of a society, reality, knowledge and wisdom, which many people including the government in charge of art and culture ignore."⁶ In relation to Nh. Dini's statement, it is clear that literature is inseparable from an individual and society as it is written in the context of place and time and directly connected to the tradition, norms and customs of the time. The portrayal of a story in a piece of literary work is but the gate to enter a society life. As a social product, literature reflects human society and culture. In this case, it is regarded as the mirror of the society. Both literary critics and sociologists agree that the sociological practice is essential to interpret literary works, but they differ in their theories and methods. The literary critics look at texts, writers and readers and speculate about creation, reception and interpretation of literature. Social scientists, on the other hand, discuss books and literary institutions and dwell upon production, distribution and consumption of cultural products. As aforementioned, literature is also used as a tool to resist and to

⁶ Rita Widiadana, "Nh. Dini and Her Endless Soul Searching- Journey," *Jakarta Post* (27 Nov. 2017). <http://www.thejakartapost.com/life/2017/11/27/nh-dini-and-her-endless-soul-searching-journey>.

criticise a certain social injustice. An Indonesia example are Widji Tukul and Pramoedya Ananta Toer whose writings are used to criticise the policy of the government during their era.

Nh. Dini, in other words, is considered to show her capacity as a prominent novelist. The novelist produces literaly qualified works, shows consistency in writing style and has good reviews from critics in her quality. The novelist's achievements are reemphazied by the numerous awards dedicated.

B. Research Questions

Based on the previous premise, there are two thesis questions as follows:

1. How does Nh. Dini express her Feminism model through the value, challenge and maintenance of the levels of relationship?
2. How do the value, challenge and perseverance of marriage and career in Nh. Dini's novels present Nh. Dini's Feminism Model?

C. Objectives of the Study

There are several objectives to achieve in this study. First is to study Indonesian owned local writer with her values and wisdom found in her works. Nh. Dini is a great author whose name is seldom highlighted among other contemporary writers. The second objective is to dissect the depth of her novels in terms of theme and characters' view on Indonesian perspective with regard to friendship, marriage and carers, and also to show how Nh. Dini challenges the feminism concept when applied to the Indonesian setting. The third aim is to introduce Nh. Dini to the world literature by affirming that Nh. Dini is worthy of serious studies. Hopefully, her works will be treated as national

and international treasure and be translated into different languages. This is also to encourage other researchers who may have the same interest in analysing Nh. Dini's works from different perspectives to explore further. Last but not least, by studying Dini's novels, readers can get some wisdoms and inspiration from the author through her characters.

D. Thesis Outline

The first chapter deals with the justification of the study including the background of the study and why the study is important. The chapter includes the problem formulation in the form of thesis questions. The section also contains the objectives of the study.

The second chapter discusses the gender theories from some classical and contemporary thinkers regarding gender role, especially the feminism point of view. This section will be supported by theories related to the gender and feminism. Indonesian gender studies on women and patriarchal system will also be gathered to support the analysis. This is to identify how the different genders view about relationships, marriages and occupations.

The third chapter is the analysis section in answering the first thesis question. This section will elaborate the value of relationship, the challenge and maintenance. This involves the personal, societal and professional relationship.

The fourth chapter answers the second thesis question. This chapter shows how Nh. Dini through her characters define the meaning of marriage in related to career. It is also to explore how Nh. Dini's perspectives on it is tested and preserved.

The fifth chapter is the conclusion chapter. This section wraps up the discussion of the previous chapters. Suggestion will be derived to trigger further studies. The purpose is also to encourage other researchers who share the same interest on Nh. Dini's works to explore further.



CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Ronald Wardhaugh states that women are different from men for their biological and physiological shapes and functions. He later claims that women's anatomy and molecular chromosomes also display the different genetic property to men as human beings. In terms of personality, women and men are also believed to possess the different features as well. Women are considered to show maturity rapidly than men.⁷

Going on different context as an addition, sex and gender become two terms which are quite overlapping. Sex is said to be the physical fact about woman bodies, the thing built without any human interventions. God destines the quality. Gender, on the other hand, is different. Gender and the role are set and in many cases are predestined by societies. Women and men are born with constructed identities embodied to their physical and psychological demands. Eckert and McConnell-Ginet state: 'The force of gender categories in society makes it impossible for us to move through our lives in a nongendered way and impossible not to behave in a way that brings out gendered behavior in others.' Gender is a key component of identity.⁸ In short, sex is God-given attributes to human while gender is a social construction of "sex-role" itself.

⁷ Ronald Wardhaugh, *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), p. 316.

⁸ Penelope Eckert and Sally McConnell-Ginet, *Language and Gender* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 50.

This also means that societies cannot differentiate the sexual functions and social function. Physical and biological may destine our normal or claimed sexual identity of either men or women. Yet beyond that context, the societies dictate roles based on one's genital or sexual identity which is called gender role. Societies give certain stigma and force people to follow the gender perspective. This is later what confirms Butler's statement that gender is socially and identifiably politicised.⁹ Further discussion on this notion will be asserted along with the discussion of the novel in the next chapter will further consolidate this notion.

A. Review of Related Studies

There are not many deep assessment and critical papers on NH Dini's works even though her name is oftenly listed as the reputable mention in the era. Although her name is mentioned in the Indonesian writers whose works are internationally recognized (though this is biased in terms of numbers of translated books or popularity), in some occasions Nh. Dini is not among other favorite writers. This is to say that not many "serious" studies and deep discussions on Nh Dini's novels are found in journals and academic works except for a few articles about the writer and on her works.

Desy Arsianty examined Nh. Dini's *Argenteuil Hidup Memisahkan Diri* using the feminism approach. She described how the woman character refused to be treated as the object of her husband's sexual desire. She chose not to be a victim of marital

⁹ Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble*. (London: Routhledge, 1990)

lock. The woman in the novel argued about her status, independence – emotionally and financially and self-protection by separating herself from her husband and burying herself in her busy life by social works and organization. The woman chose to fight the situation though she was not physically attacked by her husband. She also conducted a counter back adultery to challenge against her husband. Arsianty further wrote that she wanted to show that a woman can fulfill her personal duty: she can do her role and responsibility in the public world. She wanted to break through her patriarchal husband and the system. Her action is based on her awareness that a woman also had logic, moral, and emotional senses like a man. A woman is not a tool or instrument for happiness or for a man's perfection. She had the ability to make her fate.¹⁰ This is to say that women have authorities on their very own life.

Viewing that not many journals that deal with a comprehensive discussion on Nh. Dini's works, further studies of Nh. Dini's collections are tempting to be explored further. The works themselves not only talk about women and feminism in a traditional way, they seem to open to any opportunity to reveal the deep contents about the works, especially Nh. Dini's view and spirit. There are not only about childhood, memories and life of women and wives, they also talk about the relationships, social scopes and human perspectives.

¹⁰ Desy Arsianty, "Kasus kekerasan dalam rumah tangga dalam Argenteuil Hidup Memisahkan Diri karya NH. Dini: Sebuah kajian kritik sastra feminis." Thesis. (Universitas Gadjah Mada, 2009). [Desy Arsianty, "The Domestic Violence Case in Argenteuil, Living Separately by NH. Dini: A Critical Analysis of Feminism Literature." Thesis. (Universitas Gadjah Mada, 2009)]

This study can treat itself as a more comprehensive way to see the consistency of Nh. Dini's works through the child characters to mature and married women – and also men as the rivalry characters. This study will look at the view and spirit in relationship, marriage and occupation which are varied and open to many possibilities to foreground using feminism perspectives.

This is also to prove that Nh. Dini does not hide her view and spirit about genders and masculine domination. Though she once said that sadness was something secret, not to be shared with others, her works showed the different notion. She did not bury her sadness. She proclaims it through her characters especially her marriage and unhappy relationship. Laksmi Pamuntjak, for example, believes that Dini boosts her anger, motives, loneliness, frustration and inner states towards her readers with her autofiction. Furthermore, Pamuntjak recites that one never knows how many secrets Dini has and they may be hard to unveil. She later continues on how hard Dini tries to build her image by being a victim of gendered paradoxes she has chosen. In addition, it goes with her ability to ruin it all or the inconsistency is the main point. One exists—love and hate it at the same time.¹¹

In this case, a more detailed study of Nh. Dini's works is important to see the consistency of her works in exploring the issue of gender and feminism in a soft way like the lingual dictions, choieces of words and issues. She prevails her thoughts through her works consistently. This is the underlying cause to highligh towards her

¹¹ Laksmi Pamuntjak, "Modernitas Nh. Dini." *Asymptote* (9 March 2018)
[Laksmi Pamuntjak, "Nh. Dini's Modernity." *Asymptote* (9 March 2018)]

selected works. She depicts women related issues using her autofiction and real-life experiences of her childhood and current affairs to touch base of a broader issue of gender. She may be a writer of past decades but considered as a writer of modernity as Pamuntjak stresses.

Though there are considerable studies on Dini's works, but they are sporadic and only piece by piece analysis, for example studies on certain novels or relations of her novels to personal life.¹²¹³¹⁴ This study is more comprehensive in dissecting her seven books representing her childhood, marriage and life in societies with selected novels. This study will complement the novelist's existing studies using gender theories and English medium especially in graduate level analysis.

Nh. Dini, though, is considered productive (with more than 30 works) and reputable, her translated works are less than other women writers such as Fira Basuki and Okky Madasari. This study hopefully will disclose the importance of Nh. Dini's works as Indonesian woman writer whose works are worth reading and discussing deeply by local and international readers especially the new and young readers in this era.

¹² Muhammad Yusi Kamhar, "Pandangan Dunia Pengarang dalam La Grande Brone Karya NH. Dini". *Kembara*, 3.1 (2017)

[Muhammad Yusi Kamhar, The Writer's Global View in La Grande Brone by NH. Dini. *Kembara*, 3.1 (2017)]

¹³ Nini Ibrahim and Prima Gusti Yanti, "Pola Pikir Perempuan dalam Novel Nh. Dini." *Arkhaia*, 8.1 (Jun. 2017)

[Nini Ibrahim dan Prima Gusti Yanti, "Women's Way of Thinking in Nh. Dini's Novel." *Arkhaia*, 8.1 (Jun. 2017)]

¹⁴ Ika Dwi Astutik, "Budaya Jawa dalam Novel Tirai Menurun Karya Nh. Dini." *Jurnal Sapala*, 1.1 (2013)

[Ika Dwi Astutik, "Javanese Culture in the novel Tirai Menurun by Nh. Dini." *Jurnal Sapala*, 1.1 (2013)]

Nh. Dini is said as writer who reveals feminism spirit in her works yet not many graduate studies, especially put into international journal to discuss her view. This study will fill the emptiness of the study. Dini's works may only deal with usual and ordinary issue but despite the small daily events, she cries out loud the gender issue most Indonesian women face up to now.

B. Gender and Feminism: Classical and Mainstream

Women are seen as lower class while men are likely seen in the higher sphere of society as a bourgeois. Women roles are constructed socially and culturally. The patriarchal societies drive the stigma to root in many aspects of women's life. This tendency flourishes.

Long time ago, critics and scholars, especially women, also commented and problematized this sort of concern. In mid 1800s, Mary Wollstonecraft claimed that women were less privileged and favored in her era. She assumed that the spirit of French Revolution, for example, only favored for men not for women. She also found the imbalance between woman and man education and treatment, including heritance and their privilege. Women are put aside for the privilege. She viewed that women were told to do things according to men. Women were like military men, submitted to higher ranks without any courage to question.¹⁵ There is no room to rethink or ask the essence of tasks given as set in the military condition. The higher hierarchy decides the task of lower military fellows as orders. In Wollstonecraft's description, women to men

¹⁵ Vincent B. Leitch et al., eds., *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism* (W.W. Norton and Company Inc., 2001), p. 583

relationship resembles military order that no questions are allowed. In very broad terms, feminism theory is based on three things.¹⁶ Wolfreys mentions that firstly, feminism theory adopts the assumption of relationship between texts and reality or words and the world. Texts also show their certain realities with setting of place, time and mode of production. But as soon as the texts are read, the readers reproduce the historic and specific reality. This relates feminist literary theory with Marxism and Historicism and Materialism approaches.

Secondly, texts have something to do with political motives and power. So that texts not only content ideological notion, they also produce it as well. Texts have potentiality to alter readers. This also links feminist to Marxist approach.

Thirdly, Feminism focuses on women as the center of approach. Feminism can relate itself with any type of theory of oppression. Feminism can employ all existing theories with women as the center of concern.

Simone de Beauvoir wrote her phenomenal piece in 1949 entitled “The Second Sex”. The work touched the portrayal of women in D.H. Lawrence novels.¹⁷ Some other works are also introduced by John Stuart Mills with his *The Subjection of Women* in 1869.¹⁸ Friedrich (or also spelled Fredrick) Engels also touched the issue in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* in 1884.¹⁹

¹⁶ Julian Wolfreys, editor, *Literary Theories: A Reader and Guide* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), p. 49

¹⁷ Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*. (UK: Vintage, 1949)

¹⁸ John Stuart Mills, Original URL: [//www.constitution.org/jsm/women.htm](http://www.constitution.org/jsm/women.htm).

¹⁹ Friedrich Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*. (Sydney: Resistance Books, 2004)

The feminism movement continued to expand in 1970. The social construction of patriarchal mind has been confirmed by man writings. Women were said to be poorly described in such as typical way. Women were portrayed as mere typical characters who lifted up their social status and welfare by choosing good husbands to marry. These kinds of portrayal can be found in the novels written by Jane Austen or Bronte sisters. They tend to circulate their story by forming their heroines as a good lady with good manners in order to “catch” a good man with great fortune to marry. *Pride and Prejudice*²⁰ and *Jane Eyre*²¹ are the examples.

Another example is *Fanny Hill: Memoirs of Woman of Pleasure*, a canon work for erotic literature written by John Cleland and first published in London in 1748.²² Fanny Hill, the heroine of the novel is portrayed as a woman who comes from a small town in England. She then moves to London to work as a “woman of pleasure” or a prostitute. Ms. Hill later is a lady who is deliberately committed into sexual activities with different partners and is enjoying it. Her feminism is challenged in the end of the novel when she finds an old man who gives her good fortunes; but later she decides to marry Charles, her old lover who comes from great lineage of British royalty.

Returning to the feminist movement, this movement grows bigger and wider. The question of women representation in literature peaked in 1980, comparing the

²⁰ Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*. (London: Penguin Classics, 2002)

²¹ Charlotte Bronte, *Jane Eyre*. (London: Penguin Classic, 2006)

²² John Cleland, *Fanny Hill: The Memoirs of Woman of Pleasure*. (London: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2016)

movement done by Wollstonecraft, Olive Schreiner 1910s, Virginia Woolf in 1920s²³. Some changes can be traced from the feminism movement in 1980s as follows. Firstly, feminism moves to be more eclectic. It initiates itself to draw on the findings and approaches of other kinds of criticism – Marxism, linguistics, structuralism, to name some. Secondly, feminism changes its focus from attacking males but tries to dig the woman nature and express the experiences which are neglected in male writings. Thirdly, the construction of canon is required to break upon the male domination. It needs more woman writings in the canon.²⁴ The feminism phases deal with women's authorities to voice their thoughts, not only in the scope of canon. It is about representations of female thoughts and feelings. Women should represent themselves, using their own language.

Virginia Woolf can be taken as a good example in this. In her book *Orlando*, Woolf writes about an adventure of a poet who changes lives for centuries. Some experts argue that Woolf writes this book for her lesbian lover- the aristocrate and also a poet Vita Sackville- West.²⁵ It is presumable that the character is taken from Woolf's repressed desire and her forbidden love towards Sackville- West. confirms the previous statement which stated that women should represent themselves using their own language.

²³ Woolf's essay was written in the decade that British women were given the rights to vote, a decade which their new access to civic freedom was constantly attacked in the media for encouraging women's independent, and therefore promiscuous, exercise of their sexuality.

²⁴ Susan Bassnett, *Comparative Literature* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993), pp.116-7.

²⁵ Victoria L. Smith, (14 September 2006). "'Ransacking the Language': Finding the Missing Goods in Virginia Woolf's *Orlando*" retrieved from <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/202906>

Woolf seems to take her risk to write women issues as her advanced step. In line with the facts of women writing advancement, Elaine Showalter classifies the types of feminism movement into three major types called phases. The first phase, called feminine phase, was the period when woman writers were said to imitate male writers in styles and standard. In this case, female writers copied male writers as they think it was the standard of writing during the period 1840-1880. The second phase is called the feminist phase, 1880-1920, in which women tried to radically make separation to men. The last phase was called the female phase which focused on female writings and experiences, not a mere gendered confrontation.

In the same area of linguistic view in related to genders, Victoria DeFrancisco examines that feminism has put power as the center of their concern. It assesses that gender, race, ethnicity, social class, age, sexual orientation, and other social categories be analyzed as political tools of oppression. The assumption is also supported by Lakoff's view that men are dominant and women lack power. Women are pushed to behave like men to be equal.²⁶ This is perfectly illustrated in the way how the late English Prime Minister was trained to adjust her pitch and intonation in speaking. She has to look like men to get the impression of tough and committed. She has to take out of feminine attachments such as softness and low voices.

Similar to Bourdieu's notion on masculine domination, a view of the power relation factor, Mary Crawford claims that power relations best explain what happens

²⁶ Victoria DeFrancisco, *Gender, Power and Practice: Or, Putting Your Money Where Your Mouth Is* (London: Sage, 1997): p.39.

when men and women interact linguistically. Her explicit goal is ‘to create a feminist social science for all women.’²⁷ Mary Talbot further throws a reminding statement: ‘A major determinant [of the dominance framework] is that male dominance is often treated as though it is pan-contextual. But [. . .] all men are not in a position to dominate all women.’ Despite the analysis of imbalance power relation, history shows that there are women with such power, not only men. They can also control societies if they own the power.²⁸ This should show that women have the same potentialities to govern and rule people and they do not have to be act and present themselves men-like manners. Feminity does not have any relation to lack potentiality and weakness.

Speaking differently than Talbot, John Fischer studies that women and men are raised differently. They have to behave like what has been told and trained. This also affects in social manners and linguistic behavior. The difference is clearly seen when they interact.²⁹ Parents do not show the same treatment in raising their children. They follow the styles what societies have destined. Pink as woman’s color and blue as man’s color emphasizes the societal stigma how everything should follow sexual identity.

Adding to the previous findings, Janet Holmes explains that the differences between women and men in ways of communicating may be the result of different socialization and acculturate realization. If people learn the ways of talking mainly in single sex peer groups, then the patterns they learn are likely to be sex specific. It later

²⁷ Mary Crawford, *Talking Difference: On Gender and Language* (London: Sage, 1995), p.8.

²⁸ Mary Talbot, *Language and Gender: An Introduction* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998), pp.133-4.

²⁹ John Fischer, *Social Influences in the Choice of a Linguistic Variant* (Stanford: Stanford University Press: 1958), pp. 162-3.

leads to the kind of miscommunication which undoubtedly occurs between women and men. This will be attributable to the different expectations each sex has of the function of the interaction, and the ways it is properly conducted.³⁰ The statement shows that even in communication all things are tagged. People set the expectation of the ways men and women should follow.

This is not exaggerated to say that people tend to frame things using the gender perspective. Social structure, ceremonies, thoughts, leadership and languages, to name some, are normally connected to gender views as detailed above.

C. The Perspectives and Views in Indonesian Feminism Concept

Indonesian history confirms that the first woman who proposes and practices the emancipation of the equality of gender should be R.A Kartini. Kartini is well known by her letters sent to her friends Stella, Mrs. Abendanon, Mrs. Van Kol and Mr. and Mrs. Anton, to name some in Netherlands. In the letters, Kartini firms with her Javanese root. She also questions the hegemony of White Western and civilization of post colonialism. Kartini confirms that she will not teach Indonesian children to be half Dutch and half Indonesian.³¹ In this case, Kartini chose the way she delivered her teaching. She did not follow the rule set by the government or her patterned rule as she lived in the royal family. In this sense she actually practiced the feminism concept that she broke the rule of women should not go to school. She not only went to school, but

³⁰ Janet Holmes, *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics* (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 330.

³¹ Rahmat Fadhli Lubis, "Surat Kartini untuk Perempuan Indonesia," *IDN Times* (21 Apr. 2017) [Rahmat Fadhli Lubis, "Kartini's Letter to Indonesian Women," *IDN Times* (21 Apr. 2017)]

also educating women and communicated with people from outer family circle by letters.³²

The fact that gender is constructed by societies has been a significant matter in Indonesia. A survey done by Ahmad Dahlan University in collaboration with Umea University and Lund University in Central Java 2011 shows an interesting conclusion on some general views about gendered view of woman and man roles.³³ The gendered view is constructed by religious view, especially Koran, as Indonesia is a country with the largest Muslim population. Men are viewed as the domestic or, to some extent, in a bigger scope as there are more capable rather than women. Men are considered to be predestined to lead women as they are more powerful and capable in covering the opposite gender needs.

Due to the stigma of possessing bigger responsibility, men should be provided a better education as they have to work harder than women in handling all his burden to cover his family life. Men are born with dignities as said in Koran. They should be prioritized leaders compared to women. This religious view is shaped to be the social axiom that men are more important than women in terms of leadership, responsibility and dignity.

Though the survey shows the recognition and acknowledgement of woman achievements and capability nowadays, still most societies hold the truth stated in the

³² Agnes Louise Symmers, ed., *Letters of A Javanese Princess: Raden Adjeng Kartini* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1964), p.8

³³ Elli Hayati, et al., " We no longer live in the old days": A qualitative study on the role of masculinity and religion for men's views on violence within marriage in rural Java, Indonesia, *BMC women's health* 14.58 (16 Apr. 2014): pp. 1-13.

Koran. The survey further finds that women are always seen as a subordinate of men as they are created from a man's rib. Career is one thing, but nature is a necessity.

The survey also presents some details that women are supposed to stay at home. They have to manage the domestic affairs and covers all household matters while the husband works to earn a living. The men believe that working women are risky to have extra marital affairs as they tend to disobey their husband if they own income. Educated women will be independent from men.

Next, domestic violence occurs because of women disobeying their husband. In Koran, men are the decision makers. Wife abuse is quite tolerable as men use the violent to control their wives. Violence is a way to keep the obedience. This also confirms Bourdieu's statement on the symbolic violence as aforementioned in the previous statements. This is how one can put Bourdieu's symbolic violence which may lead to physical violence and in this case, the domestic violence. The symbolic violence may come in any symbols including verbalic symbol. The verbalic state occurs when a couple experiences some disagreement and start to argue verbally over things. This will later lead also to psychological oppression as they experience some dissatisfaction will normally turn bitter to each other. Verbal violence to psychological oppression will lead into a physical violence when the wife starts to disobey the husband. Yet the society will likely blame the woman for disobeying her partner particularly in the patriarchal culture.³⁴

³⁴ Johannes Haryatmoko, Public lecture notes at HISKI (Himpunan Sarjana-Kesusastraan Indonesia) Komisariat Sanata Dharma, 28 Oktober 2017; Haryatmoko, *Membongkar Rezim Kepastian*. (Jakarta: Kanisius, 2015)

Through the example, it is important to highlight that dominance, power and control have been used in not only in the family relation but it also extends into social relation. The religious belief that men are superior than women has been expanded into the greater practice. The attitude toward women has been interpreted by patriarchal culture based on the religious doctrine. Women are seen less capable and required control in all aspects of life.

Gender has to be seen as a result of thought and human engineering. Gender is fluid yet it is constructed by the society.³⁵ The different cultures and local values will apply the varieties of gendered view, though, on the other hand, patriarchal system is strongly embodied in mindsets. The fast change of universe may affect the gendered treatment. Political wave also take control though women are fragile of men's influence.

The crucial problem in societies that children are brought up by such a patriarchal system. They are educated by the stable system. Discrimination on gender is avoidable especially for parents holding tightly the religious belief and doctrine. Women, in a traditional religious perspective, should be protected and covered, and for that reason, staying at home and doing private work. Men are free to roam public spaces.

[Johanes Haryatmoko, Public lecture notes at HISKI (Indonesian Literature Scholar Association) Komisariat Sanata Dharma, 28 Oktober 2017; Haryatmoko, *Deconstructing Certainty Regime*. (Jakarta: Kanisius, 2015)]

³⁵ Adrienne Rich, *Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence*. (New York: Norton, 1994); Michel Foucault. *The history of Sexuality I* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1998).

There are theories viewing the gendered role based on some aspects and can be classified into some points. The first one is the structural and functional theory.³⁶ This theory as clearly stated bases on the structural function in seeing gender wise. Husband-wife relation is seen as an organization with management hierarchy. The husband, wife and children function as components to operate the organization to work properly. When simulate the relation as a whole building of functional factors, this means there is a hierarchy system which endow the leader or manager with full authority to command. This model is based on the traditional view and old norm. The husband is the hunter and the wife should be at home to cook the animal. Though a wife is functioned domestically, many see this still relevant to modern life.³⁷ Traditional husbands see wives as domestic keepers and managers. They should stay at home to arrange households.

This kind of role in the structural functional theory obeys mostly the equilibrium of the role and job mechanism set by the manager. If there should be any malfunction from what set, conflicts will appear. This function is based on the gender role and will never change to avoid inharmony due to overlapping and double leadership.

This theory is questioned by the feminists. This kind of practice put men as the public executor and women serve themselves as reproduction and domestic workers.

³⁶ Ratna Megawangi, *Membiarkan Berbeda: Sudut Pandang Baru tentang Relasi Gender* (Bandung: Mizan, 1999), p. 56.

[Ratna Megawangi, *Let it be Different: A new Perspective on Gender Relation* (Bandung: Mizan, 1999), p. 56.]

³⁷ Megawangi, p.56.

This practice treats the structural function based on the sex and gender division. It supports the patriarchal hegemony. This theory also perpetuates the role of women as mere reproduction beings. Women will stay as the subordinates and can never move from its traditional functions.

The second theory focuses on The Conflict Social notion. Conflicts are the realities that can never be avoidable in societies due to the limitation of resource distribution. The egocentrism in focusing certain groups and favoritism will trigger conflicts between groups. In this case, the powerful will rule the less powerful groups.³⁸ In Marxism theory, the gap between men and women is not conditioned by the biological difference, but the relation based on the reproduction function. The relation between husband and wives is not more than working class and bourgeois relation. Engels, Dahrendorf and Collins utilize this notion that the imbalance of power relation falls not on the God-given sex types but a social construction.

Megawangi quotes Marx that he objects on the assumption that woman and men relation is predestined by gender, but by the relation is dominated by personal and group interest. This mode will cause social conflicts. The conflict is mostly triggered by limited power distribution and this will change social faces.³⁹ Women are seen as the reproduction agents and cheaper labor power. Women cannot bargain as they are seen less powerful than men. Women are also seen as agents who reproduce more labors.

³⁸ Megawangi, p.76.

³⁹ Megawangi, p.81.

Engels, quoted by Umar, states that control over materials and production by masculine power is the source of conflict. This subordinates women. The system is later called capitalism. The decreasing status of women lays so much on the commodity and its related affairs.⁴⁰

If one bases the view on the family system, one may see that the relation between a wife and husband not a harmonious relationship as it contains inequality. The relation is risky of conflict due to its gendered system. The gendered division is legitimized the social relation. Ratna further states that the biologically different fact is utilized to eternalize the social construction, capitalism and patriarchal mood by the family and religion as Marxist and Socialist Feminists always accuse.⁴¹ Women are oppressed by husbands and societies. This is also a fact of double oppression.

This social conflict theory is criticized by many scholars. This theory is too economically based. Dahrendorf and Collins, as Umar quotes, argue that the conflict is not always caused by class struggle but it is also erected from the intense of kinship relation, family matters and so on.⁴² Despite the rejection, this Marxism theory is adopted by modern feminists. This theory gives birth of liberal feminism, Marxist-socialist feminism and radical feminism.

Megawangi also touches the influence of the feminism theories in Indonesian context. The liberal feminism believes that women and men are no different. Women

⁴⁰ Nasaruddin Umar, *Argumen Kesetaraan Jender: Perspektif Al-Qur'an* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 1999), p. 62.

[Nasaruddin Umar, *The Gender Equality Argumentation: The Koran's Perspective* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 1999), p. 62.]

⁴¹ Megawangi, p.91.

⁴² Umar, p.64.

have the same rights like men. Despite the same position, women and men are never fully equal. There should be distinction between them. Nevertheless, reproduction function of women should bring consequence in societies.⁴³

The liberal feminism is seen the most moderate group among other feminism theorists. Women should be maximally empowered to function internally and externally. The role should be integrated to avoid dominant gender. Reproduction organ should not be seen as a barrier for women to enter into public sectors. Marxist-socialist feminism projects on the social reconstruction for gender equality. Capitalism causes the gender problem. Labor division and family classes are triggered by capitalism. This type of feminism adopts the practical Marxism that women are the unfavorable class. They should be made aware that they need to revolutionize themselves to break through the unfavorable system.⁴⁴ Women are seen functionable as they have their role towards men. They are two legs to support other legs.

Opposing to Liberal Feminism, Radical feminism admits that there are two social classes in societies. First, class system which is based on economy and production. The second is based on the reproduction system, sexual system. The later legitimates the power of men over women. Men have full control over women.⁴⁵

This kind of feminism is seen to forget the importance of domestic work of women. Some experts argue that domestic work also counts as economic productivity.

⁴³ Megawangi, p. 228.

⁴⁴ Megawangi, p. 225.

⁴⁵ Kamla Bashin, *Menggugat Patriarki, Pengantar Tentang Persoalan Dominasi Terhadap Kaum Perempuan*, (Yogyakarta: Yayasan Bentang Budaya, 1996), p.36
[Kamla Bashin, *Questioning Patriarchy, AN Introduction to The Problem of Women Domination* (Yogyakarta: Yayasan Bentang Budaya, 1996), p.36]

Domestic work is not always marginalized productivity. This theory is viewed to focus heavily on sexuality and gender. This kind of work should also be valued as contribution to social productivity as well.⁴⁶

Ecofeminism is another variant of feminism which sees women try too hard to copy man masculinity. They forget to bring their feminine natures in the patriarchal world. Masculinity has dominated and ruined ecology, environment, human structure and family value as women push themselves to equalize their opposite gender. This theory takes its side different from liberal feminism. Women tend to do what is done by men, man clone. They push into their limit and perform themselves as self-centered, competitive, exploiting and dominant as they can be.⁴⁷ Women should be closer to nature as they are seen as the givers and hope nothing for returns as the natural characters of mother nature.

Adding to the types of Feminism above, in a different occasion, Herwanto blames the hegemony of patriarchal culture that has been unconsciously adopted and perpetuated by Indonesian societies. Men are considered higher than women in hierarchy. Discrimination and stereotyping are usual in societies. Women are seen weaker, unimportant, scared, to name some. The stereotyping has some unfavorable effects. Men are pushed to maintain their strength as societies require them so. To maintain it, men show force to protect their dignities. This is one of factor causes domestic violence. Women, on the other side, are forced to become submissive to

⁴⁶ Megawangi, p.143

⁴⁷ Megawangi, pp.183-9

men's which destines dignities. If they show the power over men, it will be considered breaking cultural and traditional wisdom. But as long as the role is interchangeable, it is safe to say that the role is social constructed, not destiny.⁴⁸ Men should be educated that women have to be protected justly contradicting the domestic violence. Men should not exercise their power just to show people that they are stronger to dictate and control women using physical and verbal violence. There is nothing to prove to societies than men are far stronger than women. The concept of strength is not that artificial.

As men are considered stronger and more capable, they are set for public affairs and women manage internal errant. This is also said to protect the family harmony. Women staying at home is one way to protect them from outside harms. Though in fact in societies, poor families let their wives work outside homes. They become versatile of many works: reproduction, domestic and public workers.

Societies, like living organism, depend upon one another for the balanced function. They work together to create equilibrium. Two mechanisms are required here: socialization and social control. That is why the patriarchal lesson is introduced as early as possible to maintain the gendered role. The system should be maintained through four supporting factors called adaptation, goal achieving, integration and hidden maintenance of the system. Job distribution is the key to maintain the pattern.

⁴⁸ Mansour Fakih, *Analisis Gender dan Transformasi Sosial* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka pelajar, 1997), p. 10 [Mansour Fakih, *The Analysis of Gender and Social Transformation* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka pelajar, 1997), p. 10]

In related to the system, nuclear families are seen the crucial part. They are roots of social bodies and social order. They shape the society. Families should present by marital relationship including a husband, wife and children or legally adopted children with equal rights.⁴⁹ Men, again, are considered the head of the structure. They shape the family appearance.

The superb gender of men in a religious text, otherwise, should be seen from its historical context. For example, the patriarchal culture in Arabian societies has to be viewed as socio-historical fact that men are required stronger than women. This affects the development of Islamic thoughts as this notion has been regarded as God's words. Historically, Arabian men are put in the frontiers for the purpose of mobility as they have to find water resources and to fight opponents from other tribes. Women stay backward for domestic works and protection. The situation requires men to be stronger and ready to jump into wars.

As the men are seen as future leaders, they are treated better and own more privileges. They have more values. This is well interpreted in the societies as most hold the same axiom. This affects in the distribution of rights and obligation. Men are leader of women.⁵⁰ Parents with religious militancy will educate their sons all out to obey the very sacred psalm. They have to produce perfect leaders to meet their God's wills. In An Nisa, the verse even states that men can marry as many 2, 3 and 4 as they afford to

⁴⁹ Paul B. Horton and Chester L. Hunt, *Sosiologi* (Jakarta: Erlangga, 1987), p.268

⁵⁰ Departemen Agama RI, *Al-Quran dan Terjemahannya: An-Nisa* (Bandung: CV Penerbit Diponegoro, 2005), p. 24

[Indonesian Department of Religion, *The Koran and Its Translation: An-Nisa* (Bandung: CV Penerbit Diponegoro, 2005), p. 24]

be justified and equal. This verse has been mal-interpreted by men for sexual pleasure. Children will be told that they have to be a good leader so that they can lead their wives and children. This is carelessly penetrated into a polygamous mindset.

This patriarchal is well practiced in the monarchy system. Crown is always handed to men or from the official and likely first wife without considering capabilities. Kings are meant to take more wives for the supreme show or superiority. Numbers of wives equals to a king's superiority. Meanwhile, in the modern societies, having more wives is seen as a tendency to show more prosperity and higher status.

The traditional view that men should take his wife home, more or less, shows the dominant men. It concludes that men are superior than women that his wife has to submit to her husband. Men stay with wives' houses means incapability of men to perform the gendered role. This is not accepted even to date.

Gendered role, as explained in functional structure theory, is seen as work division than gender discrimination for some followers. This is all meant to create the working system and balance. This is applicable to family, society and public scope. This is called a social system.⁵¹

In capitalism mood, women oppression is needed to generate profits.⁵² Men are exploited in the working place, go home and relate to their wives for consolation. Men who are tired will channel their emotional outlet in wives. The consolation can also

⁵¹ Dwi Narwoko and Bagong Suyanto, *Sosiologi Teks Pengantar dan Terapan* (Jakarta: Prenada Media, 2008), p. 326.

[Dwi Narwoko and Bagong Suyanto, *Sociology of Introduction Texts and Application* (Jakarta: Prenada Media, 2008, p.326)]

⁵² Fakih, pp.87-8

escalate the productivity, while on the other hand, creates domestic problem. In this sense, capitalism always keeps women at bay to improve their husbands' productivity. Women are also seen as sexual organs to produce more cheap workers through massive reproduction systems. Women are also seen as supporting workers for capitalism. They can be treated as cheap and competitive workers. They can be competitive to man workers as they are paid less. They are also seen less capable than men, and for such as reason, they cannot bargain more. This all, again, favors capitalism. Marxist-Feminists see this as the trick of capitalism, not men's thinktank. Women, in their view, should stop doing domestic work if they are employed as this will be double gendered oppression.

According to Nugroho,⁵³ the gender injustice can be in forms of marginalization, subordination, stereotyping, violence and work load exploitation. He further states that marginalization not only happens in big cities, rural areas also keep the practice. In many cases, women are considered not qualified farmers that all public socialization and empowerment are focused on men. Men are the fund receivers. Men farmers are favored in many empowerment activities. Woman labor force is also taken over by machines and men as operators. Farming technology revolution is also not woman friendly. Machines are produced for man power consideration. Women are assumed domestic assistant and convection. Subordination views women as the second

⁵³ Riant D. Nugroho, *Gender dan Strategi Pengarusutamaan di Indonesia* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2008), p. 9.

[Riant D. Nugroho, *Gender and Its Mainstream Strategy in Indonesia* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2008), p. 9.]

class. There is only one superior gender. Consequently, women are treated as the second plan. This is supported by blind obedience of religious verses. Traditional view is rooted from religious words and interpretation which is transformed into social system by patriarchal notion. Women require men's approval to do something or go somewhere. Men do not need that domestic bureaucracy. Stereotyping is considered negative labelling based on certain assumption. Women are always gendered stereotyped as domestic and timid creatures. Women's anger is seen as impolite while of men is considered firmness. Women are seen emotionally instable so that they do not fir higher position in public domains. Violence is one of superior statement against women. Physical and verbal violence is common in the gendered relation. Husbands can be the agents of violence. In work place, co-workers are the most common case. It is all about the power transformation and domination. Double work load is also seen as the gender imbalance. Poverty so often requires women to work double: as a house wife and worker. They sometimes are reluctant to refuse extra work as this may be seen as rude and impolite manners.

Understanding feminism obviously requires more efforts to avoid wrong perception about the movement itself. Feminism has changed its face since it was introduced by some phenomenal activists such as Virginia Woolf, Beauvoir, Greer and many more. Feminism should be seen as the faces of many women and men, manifested in different thoughts and expressions, all with the common goal of bringing equality for women in all areas of their lives.

The Feminism, after R.A. Kartini, grows slowly through successors such as Dewi Sartika, H.R. Rasuna Said and Rohana Kudus in the very early era. Then came a barricade of women activists including academics, writers and novelists such as Sinta Nuriyah Wahid, Saparina Sadli, Karlina Leksono, Julia Suryakusuma, Debra Yatim and a ray of “Fragrant Literature” writers including Ayu Utami, Djenar Maesa Ayu dan Fira Basuki. Compared to other countries, Indonesia is not that massive.

Indonesian Feminism movement can be classified in to three different phases.⁵⁴ The first phase was during 1900-1965 which was known as Colonial Feminism period. The marriage law and rights to education became the main concern. The second phase laid in the New Order regime or Sorharto’s rule which was under state’s control. Some prominent activists protested the effort of the government to centralize women organization under state’s umbrellas such as Indonesian Army’s Wives, Indonesian Veteran’s Wives and Wives of Household Welfare, to name a few. All is under Indonesian government hand. The current phases started in 1998 to present with various discourses and studies initiated by women organization such as Suara Ibu Peduli [Voice of Concerned Mothers], Anisa Swasti Foundation, Kalyanamitra, Solidaritas Perempuan [Women Solidarity] and Institut Kapal Perempuan [Women Ship Institute] formed after Reformation era and early 2000. They all concern about women empowerment, rights and advocating.

⁵⁴ Gadis Arivia dan Nur Iman Subono, *A Hundred Years of Feminism in Indonesia* (Jakarta: FES Indonesia, 2017), p.7

Nevertheless, Indonesian Feminism movement runs in place. The movement is seen as the movement organized by “middle class women academics and educated women only.” It was said to have no strategic impacts, exclusive, not appealing and other negative reviews. It does not involve grass root and lower-class women.

The claim of ineffective movement suggests some factors. Indonesia holds the Eastern tradition and manners preserving the traditional values, like well-behaved and also the strong religious view. Women are treated quite well and proper. Other countries may not have the same patterns of treating women.⁵⁵ Women are bound by traditional values existed in local societies. Religious values also control how women should behave. The local, traditional and religious values are penetrated from childhood in the family, society, educational institutions and religious bodies.

In the last event in 2016 held by *Jurnal Perempuan*, the statement made prevails that women as the economy contributors in Indonesia has been used to get into the feminism awareness. The approach in women as the economic empowerment can be used as a strategy to educate women about feminism issue in the grass root. This educating women about feminism is to grow the critical thoughts and commitment towards women’s issues.⁵⁶ Women are educated and pushed to have their own financial

⁵⁵ Siantita Novaya, “Feminisme Memperjuangkan Kesetaraan Antara Wanita dan Pria, Bisakah Diterapkan di Indonesia?” (2016, February 25). <https://www.idntimes.com/life/women/tita/feminisme-menuntut-kesamaan-hak-dengan-pria-apakah-bisa-diterapkan-di-indonesia>. [Siantita Novaya, “Feminism Fights for The Equality of Women and Men, can be Implied in Indonesia?” (2016, February 25). <https://www.idntimes.com/life/women/tita/Feminism-fights-for-the-equality-of-Women-and-men-can-be-implied-in-indonesia>.]

⁵⁶ Andi Misbahul Pratiwi, “Gerakan Perempuan dan Wacana Feminisme di Indonesia” (29 Sep 2016). <https://www.jurnalperempuan.org> [Andi Misbahul Pratiwi, “Women Movement and Feminism Discourse in Indonesia” (29 Sep. 2016). <https://www.jurnalperempuan.org>]

freedom by earning extra income. They are encouraged to work outside the household and have extra money to be independent. This is good in one side, but could be a kind of double oppressions in another side as women have double tasks: a domestic worker and a factory or company staff though they will be financially independent. Still a married woman is supposed to take care of her husband and children as the normative role widely practiced.

This notion may fit the local circumstance of Indonesian women who have to contribute their resources to support domestic economy with the husbands. This should not only be seen as the double oppression but also a strategic way to educate them that they are also economically able to stand on their feet. Women with poverty or economy struggling in their households, in many cases, do not have any choice of staying at home managing domestic works but obliged to works outside the shelter to earn additional income to feed mouths.

Even though the Feminism awareness growth is slow, Puji Lestari agrees that the growing awareness of feminism in Indonesia could bring positive changes in societies.⁵⁷ The new issues of Indonesian feminism could be pointed in some fields. Women in political field are set to meet the 30% quota as recently stated in the presidential decree. This gives wind of change in Indonesian political face. Women are more given attention in the nation. Some issues of women in developing countries,

⁵⁷ Puji Lestari Krisbiyantoro, "Feminisme sebagai Teori dan Gerakan Sosial di Indonesia". Universitas Negeri Semarang (11 Feb 2016). <https://www.researchgate.net>
[Puji Lestari Krisbiyantoro, "Feminism as Theory and Social Movement in Indonesia". Semarang State University (11 Feb. 2016). <https://www.researchgate.net>]

poverty, healthy reproduction, education, government budgeting, the abolishment of discriminative legal systems and numbers of female ministers are better handled now. Women in economy circles are also projected including woman labors and resources, career and domestic life, women as economy agents and many other similar issues. Last but not least should be women in relation to international relation. This focuses on women as labor force in Asian Economic Communities.

The double oppression on women as a housewife with domestic affairs and worker is seen as independent women rather than the so-called double oppression. This notion appears as women are said to be financially independent if they can earn their own income. Therefore, if anything happens to their marital lives, women could survive. With the active income, they are not fully dependent on their husbands' financial supports.

Based on the religious teaching as majority of Indonesians is Muslim, wives are supposed to stay at home taking care of children and domestic works and are also meant to be ready and to prepare their husbands' needs when the husbands come home.⁵⁸ Wives are also subject to their husband's words and approvals if they want to go somewhere.⁵⁹ This belief is adopted by most religious women.

⁵⁸ “Dan hendaklah kamu tetap di rumahmu dan janganlah kamu berhias dan bertingkah laku seperti orang-orang Jahiliyah yang dahulu, dan dirikanlah salat, tunaikanlah zakat, dan taatilah Allah dan Rasul-Nya. Sesungguhnya Allah bermaksud hendak menghilangkan dosa dari kamu, wahai ahl al-bayt, dan mem bersihkan kamu sebersih-bersihnya.” (Q.s. al-Ahzâb [33]: 33

[And should you be at home and do not you beautify yourself like the previous ones, and pray, donate for charity, and obey your God and His Prophet. Truly Allah is willing to abolish your sin, family of Muhammad and cleans you perfectly.” (Q.s al-Ahzab [33])

⁵⁹ Syarat tersebut berdasarkan firman Allah, di dalam surah al-Nisa' (4):34 yang berbunyi: “Kaum laki-laki itu adalah pemimpin bagi kaum wanita, oleh karena Allah telah melebihkan sebahagian mereka (laki-laki) atas sebahagian yang lain (wanita), dan karena mereka (laki-laki) telah menafkahkan sebahagian

In line with liberal feminism, women are part of the structural system. They function in domestic life and society as well. They may own their freedom as career women or leaders but at home they are still wives of their husbands. This is fully supported by the religious view as stated in An Nisa 34. This fact controls women that the most important thing will be the family, no matter what.

Women in the Bible are also bound by the marital function as wives. Being a good wife is praised in the holy book. A good Christian woman is said to be able to work outside the household and at the same time to manage well her family – husband and children. It is called freedom in Christ. Women who work outside the home should not be condemned, and neither should women who focus on the stewardship of the home be treated with condescension.⁶⁰ This proves that Western people also have the similar view about working women if they frame the perspective using the Bible. This is similar to Eastern view on the working wives and mothers. Family should come first than career.

One of the Bible verses in Proverbs 31 mentions of “a wife of noble character.” Verse 11 of Proverbs 31 tells about a wife takes care of her family with her power. A

dari harta mereka. Sebab itu maka wanita yang saleh, ialah yang taat kepada Allah lagi memelihara diri ketika suaminya tidak ada, oleh karena Allah telah memelihara (mereka). Wanita-wanita yang kamu khawatirkan nusyuznya, maka nasehatilah mereka dan pisahkanlah mereka di tempat tidur mereka, dan pukullah mereka. Kemudian jika mereka mentaatimu, maka janganlah kamu mencari-cari jalan untuk menyusahkannya. Sesungguhnya Allah Maha Tinggi lagi Maha Besar”

[The conditions based on God’s words, in al Nisa’s letter. (4):34 stated: Men are leaders of women’s leaders, that is why Allah gives them (men) more than others (women) as they (men) have given off their belongings. For the pious women will obey their God by taking care of themselves when their husbands are absent, like Allah does. The women you are doubt at their faithfulness, advise them, separate them in the bed, and bit them. If they obey you, do not harden them. Truly Allah is almighty.”]

⁶⁰ Lembaga Alkitab Indonesia, Alkitab. Amsal. 31.10-31 (2005)

[Indonesian Bible Institutions, Bible. Prov. 31.10-31 (2005)]

wife is a household manager to keep the house in order. Besides managing household, she also earns extra income to support her family as called an industrious wife. Family, husband and children are the priority if she has to chose between her career and others. That is her true calling. The Bible allows women to work outside the household but still she has to prioritize her husband and children.

Both Islam and Christianity put women at the same position as domestic partners and domestic workers. They have to take care of their husband and children as the first priority. Working outside the household should be the second choice for married women. They cannot choose career if they already have husbands (and children). Being a good wife and house manager is more important according to the religious view for both Muslims and Christians.

The inequality in genders has been a long history and a way to go. This condition is affected and strengthened by social, cultural and religious aspects. This is systemized by the country. The stigma that women are less capable and destined like biological truth is prolonged by societal practices. This belief creates injustice to women's aspects of life such as in relationship, marriage, political and religious affairs.

This thesis has tried to answer the main questions on how the novelist Nh. Dini sees the values of friendship, love affairs, particularly marriage, and its relation to the discourses of Indonesian feminism in her Feminism model. The analysis is conducted through three different methods, mainly library research, narrative analysis and discourse analysis, by library research. The data is later supported by reading several articles and academic discussions concerning Nh. Dini and her works

including her personal experiences. Narrative analysis helps to reveal how the characters are constructed and portrayed through narrative devices/ story telling techniques in these selected novels under discussion which is later viewed under the lens of gender theorists' perspective. Lastly, this study employs discourse analysis to analyse how these narrative devices construct specific discourses about Indonesian women and Indonesian feminism shown in these novels. It also shows the struggles of being a feminist in Indonesian patriarchal culture.

The theories used are theory of gender and the conflict of social notion. Several theorists such as Judith Butler and John Fischer are used for supporting the statements of the thesis. As the contexts occur in the literary arena which is related to language and the socio arena, some theories in language and society are used to strengthen the arguments of this thesis

Based on the classical theories and experts' perspectives and opinions, this becomes challenging to bridge their thoughts to Nh. Dini's novels. Connecting the theories and perspectives of classical theories, especially Western thoughts and Indonesian perspectives on feminism to Nh. Dini's works - a writer mostly claimed by local critics as a traditional feminist – will be the focus on the analysis chapter. The theories will be treated as framework in detailing Nh. Dini's novels.

CHAPTER III

THE VALUE, CHALLENGE AND MAINTENANCE OF RELATIONSHIP IN NH. DINI'S NOVELS: NH. DINI'S FEMINISM MODEL

One aspect of the human circle of life is friendship in which people show their nature as social creatures. Relationship, in this stage of friendship, is what we can find in reading Nh. Dini's novels. The novels show a number of woman characters with a blend of typical and unique relationships. The friendship, hence, not only a relationship of person to person or person to society friendship, but it also has a broad scope of a relationship between a human being and environment or nature. In the journey of friendships, Nh. Dini's characters go through the dynamic and challenges to preserve the value thereof.

A. The Value of Relationship in Nh. Dini's Novels

In her childhood experience, the little Dini shows how she is blessed by the relationship with her cousins, friends and family. She treasures the fact that in the relational solidity they can fill the gap and harvest the fruits of sincere supports. The character Dini witnessed the good relationship between her mother and a vegetable seller in *Sebuah Lorong di Kotaku* [An Isle in May Town]⁶¹ in these lines:

Lalu dia pamit. Meskipun menurut kepercayaan, seorang penjual tidak boleh mengucapkan kata-kata pamit agar tidak menghalangi lakunya dagangannya, tetapi penjual itu selalu

⁶¹ Nh. Dini, *Sebuah Lorong di Kotaku*. (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2007). All subsequent references to this work, abbreviated *SLK* (indicated *Sebuah Lorong di Kotaku*) will be used in this thesis with pagination only. All translations are the thesis writer's.

sopan terhadap ibunya dengan berpamitan sebelum meninggalkan rumah kami. (SLK, 13)

She said goodbye. Though superstitiously, a seller would not say goodbye to avoid her things unsold, the seller is so polite that she abides goodbye before leaving our house.

In Javanese culture, vegetable sellers are usually women. They biked around the village to sell vegetables or traditional herbal drinks. They do not normally say goodbye but would rather say that they will go to other customers or say “wait for a moment”. The seller breaks the role to follow her polite gesture of good relationship with the buyer, in this case, Dini’s mother. In another occasion, the sincere and caring relation with others is shown by her mother as she selects fish to give it to the neighbors as a gesture of kindness of sharing food.

Based on her childhood experience, in *Padang Ilalang di Belakang Rumah* [The Prairie in the Backyard], the novelist through the character Dini pours the beauty of the relationship in all of her novels. In one occasion, Dini cherished the closeness with the domestic assistant though situation forces them to only had one assistant who was considered part of her family:

Yang tinggal bersama kami adalah Simbok. Anak Simbok, seorang laki-laki, mendapat pekerjaan sebagai penjaga balai pertemuan tempat Ayang menjadi anggota. Dia telah kawin. Seringkali dating ke rumah kami bersma isterinya, berkunjung sambil menolong pekerjaan apa saja yang dapat dikerjakan. (SLK, 13)

The one staying with us was Simbok. Simbok’s child, a man, got a job in a meeting place where my father was a member. He was married. Often came to our house with his wife, visiting while helping anything he could do.

In spreading the care and kindness, the character Dini held a firm principle of morale when she treated others. She believed that power was not to be used to overpower others including animals, plants or human beings. In some occasions, she objected her brother's rudeness. She valued the importance of relationship. She also learnt the good example from her parents of how they treated others. In returns, many people respected her parents:

Dia sedang mengandung bayinya yang pertama, dan suaminya masuk penjara. Ibu tidak sampai hati membiarkannya tinggal di rumah orang lain, lalu menyuruhnya datang an hidup bersama kami.

Tetapi lebih sering orang tuaku tidak menerima apa-apa, karena memaklumi kesukaran mereka. (LBSK, 50)

She expected her first child dan her husband was put in jail. My mother would not let her stay in another one's house, then asked her to come and stay with us.

More often my parents did not receive anything, but felt what they suffered from.

Seperti biasa, Ibu tidak bisa berdiam melihat penderitaan orang lain. Ia segera menyilakan tetangga-tetangga terdekat untuk turut menikmati kegunaan sumber air.

As usual, my mother could not stay still seeing others suffering. She quickly permitted neighbors to approach to enjoy the water source.

The kindness the character Dini received, as frequently portrayed in her childhood series like in *Sekayu*,⁶² was a good impact from her parents' kindness:

Perempuan tua itu amat menyanyangiku. Sejak masa kecilku, aku selalu memintanya sebagai penjual nasi pecel dan minuman es serta ramuan buah-buahan.

⁶² Nh. Dini, *Sekayu*. (Jakarta: Pustaka Jaya, 2007), p. 33. All subsequent references to this work, abbreviated *Sky* (indicated *Sekayu*), will be used in this thesis with pagination only. All translations are done by the thesis writer's.

Kurasakan kesayangannya yang berlebih-lebihan. Barangkali disebabkan oleh sikap orang tuaku, terutama inu, yang selalu dermawan kepadanya. Ibu tidak pernah lupa mengirimkan sebagian rejeki yang diperolehnya kepada perempuan tua itu, baik berupa hasil kebun, uang, pakaian maupun bahan makanan lain. Di masa-masa sukar, kebiasaan itu tetap dilakukan. (*Sky*, 33)

The old lady loved me so much. Since my childhood, I frequently asked her as salad and drinks and also fruit blends. I felt her excessive care. It may be a cause of my parents, most of all my mother, who was always generous to her. My mother never forgot to send a half of her blessings to the old lady, in a form of harvest, money, clothes or any kind of food. In time of hardship, the habitual kindness never stops.

In another occasion, the neighbors came to help her parents. Dini witnessed the returned kindness by other people. Dini's parents always opened their house for others to stay while transitted. Dini befriended with the same aged daughter when some parents came to visit and stayed like when Mrs. Dwijo' visit. One part of *Sekayu's* chapter, the character Dini described the close relation with her friends Treksi, Atun and Yayuk. She visited and stayed over night with them without any further permission as they were familial care like.

Ibu Selalu mempunyai sesuatu untuk diberikan kepada mereka. Kadang-kadang obat-obatan, seringkali pakaian. Mereka itu ikut makan seadanya seperti kami, seolah-olah menjadi anggota keluarga. (*LBSK*, 70)

Mom always had something to give them. Sometimes medicines, most of the time clothes. They joined eating anything available like us, looked like they were part of family.

Sekali lagi ibu menjadi penyuguh yang dermawan. Untuk kesekian kalinya pula Ibu menunjukkan betapa luas pikirannya.

Sore hingga petang seringkali kebun atau pendapa rumahnya dipenuhi anak-anak muda. (*Kuncup Berseri*, 13)⁶³

Again, Mom was a generous provider. For a number of times Mom showed her broad mind. From evening to night, so often her garden or veranda was full of young fellows.

The character learnt about relational value from others in society in many occasions through the parents' interaction. Furthermore, as described in *La Barka*,⁶⁴ further after reaching her adulthood, she also tasted fruitful relationship with female friends. A friend named Monique is also a perfect example of friend joint:

... Monique kukenal karena keemasan hatinya. Seperti juga manusia-manusia lain, dia memiliki berbagai kekurangan serta kesalahan watak. Namun kekawanan yang ada di antara kami berdua sanggup mengatasi berbagai pasang surutnya waktu. (*La Barka*, 15).

... Monique as I knew for her golden heart. Like other human beings, she had flaws and character deficits. But our friendship could cope all ups and downs.

Dini was blessed by Monique's family like cares, attentions and warm kisses. The family she knew while she first served as a child sitter. Monique frequently visited the family and talked to Dini. Then Dini was introduced by Monique to her family. The character Dini then married and followed her husband, so did Monique. Their friendship was tested when they were separated by status and miles. The main character Rani was married to an engineer, Bonin, working at a plantation company and had to

⁶³ Nh. Dini, *Kuncup Berseri*. (Jakarta: Pustaka Jaya, 1982), p. 33. All subsequent reference to this work, abbreviated *KB* (indicated *Kuncup Berseri*), will be used in this thesis with pagination only. All translations are done by the thesis writer's.

⁶⁴ Nh. Dini, *La Barka*. (Jakarta: Pustaka Jaya, 1975). (All subsequent reference to this work, abbreviated *LB* (indicated *La Barka*), will be used in this thesis with pagination only. All translations are done by the thesis writer's.

move to Saigon. But faith keeps them united. In line with value of relationship, Dini, the main character in *Jepun Negerinya Hiroko* [Japan is Hiroko's Contry]⁶⁵ is moved and touched by the kindness and financial sacrifice by her friend Mary:

Dengan terharu aku memeluk dan menciumnya untuk memperlihatkan rasa terima kasihku. (*JNH*, 6)

With my being deeply touched by her kindness, I hugged and kissed her to show my gratitude.

Gratitude, gratefulness and the way the character value the relationship are closely connected. This covers any level of relationship. In the level of peer relationship or simply called friendship, it is clearly showed in many parts of the novels. The character Dini and her mother to cousins, neighbors, Yu Saiyem, Bu Rus or Bu Bustaman. All things which are started with kindness and gratitude will show success and good ends.⁶⁶

In many aspects, the patriarchal system sometimes takes form in the family relationship. Suci in *Pertemuan Dua Hati* [The Encounter of Two Hearts] described the first time she met the neighborhood leader's wife:

Dan Isteri RT itu kedengaran bangga bias menyebut jumlah urunan uang pertandingan buat kejuaraan yang setiap kali harus dibayarkan suaminya.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Nh. Dini, *Jepun Negerinya Hiroko*. (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2001). All subsequent reference to this work, abbreviated *JNH* (indicated *Jepun Negerinya Hiroko*), will be used in this thesis with pagination only. All translations are done by the thesis writer's.

⁶⁶ Nh. Dini, *Padang Ilalang di Belakang Rumah*. (Jakarta: Pustaka Jaya, 1979), p. 93 (All subsequent reference to this work, abbreviated *PIBR* (indicated *Padang Ilalang di belakang Rumah*) will be used in this thesis with pagination only. All translations are done by the thesis writer's.

⁶⁷ Nh. Dini, *Pertemuan Dua Hati*. (Jakarta: Pustaka Jaya, 2007), p. 15. All subsequent reference to this work, abbreviated *PDH* (indicated *Pertemuan Dua Hati*), will be used in this thesis with pagination only. All translations are done by the thesis writer's.

And the RT's wife sounded so proud mentioning the amount of money paid for the championship covered by her husband.

A wife is so proud in mentioning her husband financial capability in supporting the event. This relates to her submission to her husband superiority. She did not tell Suci that they contributed some amount to the event but using "my husband". Hence, she emphasizes his contribution as the family leader. It may also be an indication that as a woman, she wants to show her power and status as a wife.

On the other occasion, Suci visited her student's family and talked to the grandmother. The old lady recited about her son and the grandson. The notion of patriarchal pattern also exists when she mentioned about an educated and no-sense wife. This suggests how a woman looks down another woman in such an arrogant way, commenting the superiority of men – her son and husband.

"Saya akui bahwa bapaknya Wakito menjadi laki-laki yang seperti sekarang karena didikan serta pengaruh suami saya. Dia cerdas, pandai tetapi kaku dan sukar bergaul. Oleh karena itu, setelah kawin lalu mempunyai anak, menjadi bapak yang kaku pula. Didampingi oleh isteri yang tidak tahu menahu mengenai soal pendidikan! Naluri pun wanita itu tidak punya! (PDH, 38)

"I admit that Waskito's father becomes what he is now because of my husband's guidance and influence. He is clever, smart but awkward and difficult to befriend. Because of it, after marrying and having a child, he becomes a clumsy father too. Partnered by a woman who does not know anything about education. That woman does not have any instinct!

The son was educated in a certain way, a patriarchal system. The relational system is imbalanced as one has more power than others, even in a familial context. The part shows that only the father had the autonomy to shape the son's character:

Semua keputusan mengenai anak, kata Nenek lagi, selalu melalui suaminya. Seolah-olah anak itu hendak dibentuknya menurut satu model tertentu. (PDH, 38)

All decisions regarding the son, the grandmother restated, are always through my husband. As if the son would be shaped according one style only.

Patriarchal relationships also haunted Dini's characters. They can be expressed through other characters such Waskito's grandmother.

In many parts of *Pertemuan Dua Hati* [The Encounter of Two Hearts], the novelist depicted a deep relationship of a teacher name Suci and her notorious student, Waskito. Waskito was described a student longing for parental attention. In one occasion, Suci, the teacher, described her inner feelings about Waskito:

Alangkah besar penderitaan batin Waskito. Isi kelasku kuajak mengikuti jalan pikiranku. Kuminta mereka memaafkan Waskito yang suka memukul dan pmarah. Kucoba meyakinkan anak-anak didikku bahwa jauh di lubuk hatinya, Waskito tidak membenci, seperti yang selalu ia katakana. Yang sebenarnya ialah dia merasa iri. Anak semacam itu tidak seharusnya pula dibenci, melainkan dikasihani. Dia patut ditolong. (PDH, 52-3)

How huge was the mental suffering of Waskito. I wanted my class to follow my reasoning. I asked them to forgive Waskito who was fond of beating and bad tempered. I tried to convince my students that deep inside his heart, he never hated them as frequently said. He was only jealous. He should not be hated but paid pity. He needed help.

The conformity of the quality of relationship is also there such in *Langit dan Bumi Sahabat Kami* [The Sky and Earth are Our Friends].⁶⁸ The character Dini also

⁶⁸ Nh. Dini, *Langit dan Bumi Sahabat Kami*. (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 1979). (All subsequent reference to this work, abbreviated *LBSK* (indicated *Langit dan Bumi Sahabat Kami*), will be used in this thesis with pagination only. All translations are done by the thesis writer's.

treasured the meaning of relationship with her sister and cousin. It also throws a sense of freedom, girl spirit and rebellion as she recited

Bersama Maryam dan Edi, aku dahulu jarang melewatkan kesempatan tiduran di atas permukaan yang empuk dan hangat itu. (*LBSK*, 20)

With Maryam and Edi, I used not to skip the chance to lay on the soft and warm surface.

Berapa kali sudah saudara sepupuku, Edi, terjun dan meloncat ke atasnya. Tiba-tiba pikiranku melayang kepadanya, keras dan rindu. (*LBSK*, 20)

How many times my cousin, Edi, jumped onto it. Suddenly my memories flew on her, deeply and longingly.

In the novel, the close relationship with her family and other people radiated strongly. The character Dini described her parents as kind hearted and helpful despite the shortage and hardship during the Dutch colonization. She had very strong and firm view regarding the family state:

Keluarga kami sekalipun tidak menderita “kelaparan”. Selalu ada makanan. Bahkan orang tua kami selalu bias menolong dua tiga keluarga yang paling miskin di kampung kami. (*LBSK*, 33)

Our family never “starved” even once. There was always food. Even my parents could help those of the poorest in our village.

From the relationship gathered from characters to characters, a pattern can be drawn. The most significant relationship is between females. The little Dini was attached physically and emotionally more to her mother and sisters. She was also closely bound to her female cousins, Edi and Asti. Her mother also show the very

special concerns to fellow women in many occasions, very helpful to her female friends. To neighbours and societies, her mother offered the same relational warmth.

In regards to the relationship between women, Bell Hooks mentions that strong relationship between women or called sisterhood is important. It is crucial to forward statements that women issue should be seen as human right issue, not only issue related to women. Hooks describes it “universal issue, not only racial or gender issue”. It is consiusness raising, not only women consciousness.⁶⁹

The relationship showed in the novels not only about personal and societal relationship, but also the relationship between people and the environment or nature. Relationship eventually not only deals with the sisterhood type which is simply important, in an upper level, the relationship turns into inclusive, involving the society. This is clear how the novelist shows the concern of humanbeings and nature relationship besides humans to humans. In the childhood series novels, the character Dini has close relationship with her environments namely prairie, back yards, trees, flowers and rivers. The connection between the human-nature is significant.

B. Challenge in Maintaining Relationship

There is significant obedience of the female character compared to male characters in the novel. The character Dini described herself such a careful and obedient and always followed her mother’s words but her brothers did differently and

⁶⁹ Bell Hooks. *Feminism is for Everybody: Passionate Politics* (Cambridge: South End Press, 2000)

rebellious. This shows the indication of male superiority over females. They did not have to follow their mother's words:

Mengikuti ajaran Ibu, aku menyimpan hadiah tersebut baik-baik. Sekali-sekali memakannya dengan perlahan dan tenang. Tetapi kakak-kakakku tidak mengikuti caraku. Nugroho hanya bias mencapai tiga hari) isi kaleng itu habis, dan dia sendiri sakit perut karena memakan coklat enam bungkus sekaligus. (*LBSK*, 34)

Following my mom's advice, I kept the gift carefully. Once at a time, I enjoyed it slowly. My brothers did not copy my way. Nugroho only spared for three days: the tin just emptied and he suffered from stomachache as he ate six packs altogether.

Likewise, not all relationships in Dini's novels are sweet and warm. Some characters experience stale relationships, the ups and downs in life. The atmosphere of strictness and awkwardness are also found in other novels. The characters are bound into patriarchal value. The relations between children and parents are also the issues. In this sense, the factors affect the way the characters, mostly females, seek emotional outlets through friends and friendships. In *Namaku Hiroko* [My Name is Hiroko],⁷⁰ a light of rebellion appears:

Seperti biasa, aku bangun pagi-pagi, terpaksa menolong ibuku membuat sop untuk makan pagi ayahku sebelum berangkat ke lading. Kedua adikku laki-laki dengan pongahnya bertengger di depan tungku sambil mengetuk-ngetuk meja. (*NH*, 11)

As usual, I woke up earlier; forced to help my mom to cook soup for my father before he went to farm. My two brothers with their haughtiness lingered in front of kitchen furnace knocking the table.

⁷⁰ Nh. Dini, *Namaku Hiroko*. (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Jaya, 1986). (All subsequent reference to this work, abbreviated *NH* (indicated *Namaku Hiroko*), will be used in this thesis with pagination only. All translations are done by the thesis writer's.

From the description people might find how the female character cooked and served their father and brothers reluctantly. It is not because she loves to but she has to do it as she is obliged to do so. In *Hati yang Damai* [A Peaceful Heart], the same lack of family-ship presents:

Pada keluargaku tidak ada mesra kasih. Yang ada hanya rasa hormat dan takut yang harus dimiliki setiap anak muda kepada yang lebih tua. (HD, 11)

In my family, we did not have affection. Only respect and fear of the youngers to elders.

Aku ingin ada orang yang memperhatikan dan mencintaiku. Dan orang itu hanyalah pengasuh kami yang sudah amat tua. Ia selalu bercerita tentang putri-putri cantik dengan pangeran raja yang gagah dan dermawan. (HD, 11)

I wanted someone to care of and love me. And that person was our very old nanny. She always told stories about pretty princesses and charming princes.

Kemudian aku mendapatkan cinta dan mesra yang sebenarnya, yang berliku dan di luar pagar keluarga. Aku dimanjakan kawan-kawanku karena mempunyai suara yang bisa memikat mereka.

Then I got real love and intimacy, winding one and it's outside our family fence. I was spoiled by my friends as my voice could attract them.

In *Langit dan Bumi Sahabat Kami* [The Sky and Earth are Our Friends], though the main character Dini was a teenager, the sense of patriarchal rule came to the surface. The novelist records the patriarchal village in such an innocent way. The character described how the brothers were so greedy and consumptive. Her mother was directive but submits to domestic role as well. But her admiration felt into her father as the center of her listening to him talking:

Mulutku ternganga mendengarkan kata-kata Ayah. Mataku tidak berkedip memandangi Bapak. (*LBSK*, 64)

My mouth opened widely as I am listening to Dad. My eyes do not flick seeing Dad. The examples were true and clear to me.

The same unfavorable family relation was also manifested the character named Elyse in *Keberangkatan* (Departures).⁷¹ She also lacked warmth from her family, especially a fight with another woman i.e. her mother:

I wanted to relish these final moments together with my family, calmly and lovingly. But because of the incident with my watch, my mother had reminded me that until then I'd been living without a family, out there alone in the crazy world. Although I had my father and siblings, I'd never really experienced family life.

Another experience of a female protagonist in Nh. Dini's novel named Suci can be used to strengthen the example. As a new teacher in Semarang, a city in Central Java, Suci was assigned to teach two classes. One of her students was known as naughty as hell. Most students were scared of him and never wanted to be close to him. Even when he was absent nobody cared about him. Suci wanted them to change their mindset about Waskito. With a new approach to Waskito, Suci hoped to change the student a better one. This evidence describes the firm side and strength of the female character to be able to fight for her passion. She did not give up.

Relationship in any level is always challenged. The character Dini in the childhood series also faced the challenges. Her close sisterhood was challenged by

⁷¹ Nh. Dini, *Keberangkatan*. (Jakarta: Pustaka Jaya, 2007), p. 8. This novel has an English version entitled *Departures*, translated by Toni Pollard. Jakarta: the Lontar Foundation, 2014.

distance like what she suffered her gap with her sister Heratih and Teguh who studied in Jakarta. She also experienced the obstacles of relationship when she had to be separated with her intimate cousin Edi especially during the Dutch and Japan colonization:

Untuk melukiskan kerinduan terhadap kakakku yang ketiga itu,
aku mengganti kata-kata lagu puisi tersebut dengan puisi
karanganku sendiri.
Semua yang kukarang berisi percakapanku dengan Melati,
kenanganku hari-hari yang telah silam Bersama kakakku,
Maryam., atau dengan sepupuku, Edi Sedyawati. Keluarga
Paman mengungsi ke luar kota. (LBSK, 14)

To picture my longing to my third sister, I changed the words of
the poem with my own creation.
All composition consisted of my conversation with Melati, my
memories of old days with my sister, Maryam, or with my
cousin Edi Sedyawati. My uncle's family refuged out of town.

The distance also became the source of conflict of Dini with a friend. Time and distance changed people. In one scene of *Kuncup Berseri* [A Glowing Bud] the novelist writes that residential distance can be a cause firming the conflict and quarrel. The character Dini experienced the problem of distance in her relationship with a poet friend. Yet, she broke up as they live in different cities.

Besides distance, people with different level of politeness could be an obstacle in relationship. In *Kemayoran*,⁷² Dini describes how the ground staff are so impolite.

⁷² Nh. Dini, *Kemayoran*. (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama), 2000. All subsequent reference to this work, abbreviated *Km* (indicated *Kemayoran*), will be used in this thesis with pagination only. All translations are done by the thesis writer's.

They used to touch parts of flight assistants. The bad manners of the ground staff are detailed by Dini in the novel:

Para lelaki itu suka memegang-megang. Mungkin bicaranya tidak kasar ataupun cabul, tetapi sikapnya tidak bisa dianggap sopan oleh kami yang menerima pendidikan serba “tidak bersentuhan jika bukan keluarga.”

Di waktu berbicara dengan kami di mana pun, di kendaraan, di Kamar Tunggu misalnya, tangan mereka tidak bisa diam. Selalu terulur untuk memegang sesuatu bagian tubuh kami. (*Km*, 47)

The men liked touching. They might not speak rudely or vulgarly but their manners were not considered polite by us who were educated by principle “do not touch each other if not families.”

During conversing with us anywhere, in the vehicle, in the waiting room, for instance, their hands could never stay still. They were stretched to touch any of our body parts.

The sort of scene the novelist describes suits to Nugroho’s statement about men and women relationship in societies, even at work. According to Nugroho as aforementioned, the gender injustice can be in forms of marginalization, subordination, stereotyping, violence and work load exploitation. The incident portrayed in the novel says that men in the character Dini’s company, such a big company can do such a shameful act of harassing women.

The challenge of relationship is also surfaced in another piece of novels. In *Pada Sebuah Kapal (On A Ship)*,⁷³ the character Sri openly talked about her feelings toward her mother as she felt her mother did not like her compared to other siblings.

⁷³ Nh. Dini, *Pada Sebuah Kapal*. (Jakarta: Pustaka Jaya, 1973). (All subsequent reference to this work, abbreviated *PSK* (indicated *Pada Sebuah Kapal*), will be used in this thesis with pagination only. All translations are done by the thesis writer’s.

Sri thought that her mother was easy to get angry with her because she was unwanted child:

Dan anak yang kelima adalah aku. Rupa-rupanya aku adalah anak yang tidak dikehendaki dalam keluarga. Ini kuketahui dari ibuku yang sering mengutukku dengan kalimat-kalimatnya yang tidak menyenangkan sejak kecilku. Aku tidak menyalahkannya. Dengan empat anak sudah cukup kerja dan pengeluaran uang yang besar baginya. (PSK, 12-3)

And the fifth child was myself. It turned out that I was an unwanted child in my family. This was known from my mother who often scolded me with unpleasant sentences since my childhood. I never blamed her. With four children it was enough works and huge spending required.

Sri fully understood that having another family member with limited financial resources as her father was only a staff in Indonesian Railways Company in her town, Semarang. Sri even felt that she was closer to her elder brother than her mother. At the same time, she felt she only respects her mother and not more than that:

Aku tidak membencinya. Aku hanya mengatakan bahwa aku tidak pernah merasa adanya suatu hubungan yang lebih dalam daripada rasa hormat. (PSK, 13)

I did not hate her. I just said I never felt having a deeper relation than a respect.

The same bad relationship is also pictured in *Keberangkatan (Departures)*, the daughter-mother relationship is also questioned by the novelist utilizing the problem of Elsy, the main character who chose to stay in Jakarta rather than returning to Holland with her Dutch family:

Apalagi ibuku. Di matanya hanya uang dan kebendaanlah yang terhitung di dunia ini. (Departures: 33).

My mother had the biggest hopes. In her eyes the only things that counted in this world were money and material things.

Despite the daughter-mother problematic relation and misunderstanding, the characters could handle the matter well in such a mature manner. In both *Pada Sebuah Kapal* [On A Ship] and *Keberangkatan* (*Departures*), the characters could understand and handle the conflict well. Sri never hated her mother. Elsy or Elisa could put herself in a neutral mood. Distance and lack emotional involvements cause challenges.

Distance and loneliness can be other challenges a character facing. Sri, in *Pada Sebuah Kapal*, changed herself from a happy woman into a gloomy and sexual-oriented woman even though she said she missed the affection from men. First, she was left by her good friends due to marriage or new jobs. Secondly, she felt so bored as she only did administration works again and again. The situation turned her unfriendly to others:

Ini adalah rasa kepentingan diri sendiri padaku yang tidak menyukai kehadiran orang-orang lain di halaman atau di rumah kami. Tetapi begitulah, aku tidak lagi melihat rumah itu seperti dahulu. Dan aku ingin pergi dari sana. (PSK, 22)

This is my own interest that I do not like others in our back yard. That's it, I did not see the house as before. And I wanted to go from there.

This should be suspected why the character Sri felt the emptiness in familial relationship and unfriendly toward people sitting under their trees in her backyard while in another occasion she used to welcome people gathering in her yard. This should be not a surprise when the transition of mood appeared toward her mother. However, the challenge of relationship is also scattered here and there in the novels such *Waskito*

and her father, Suci to other fellow teachers, Dati to Asti, Samirin to some Madurese people and some conflicting females in *La Barka*.

Cares should be the core aspect in maintaining the relationship over challenges. Financial shortage could be repaired through others. In many occasions, the novelist talks about her gratefulness surrounded by caring friends such as Adam Malik, Mochtar Lubis, Aristides Katoppo, Bondan Winarno, Pramoedya Ananta Toer and Johanna, to name some. The character Dini was supported spiritually and financially by her friends after a painful divorce with her husband:

Hidupku di Tanah Air memang tidak sendirian, selalu dekat dengan saudara dan teman. Bila sewaktu-waktu aku jatuh sakit, melalui uluran tangan mereka, hingga waktu itu, Tuhan memberiku jalan keluar guna pembiayaannya. (*PB*, 8)

My life in Home Country was not alone, often close to families and friends. Anytime I fell sick, with their help, since then, God gave me way out for the expenditure.

At the same time, the character was disappointed by some reactions she got from parties that were supposed to help her. Once, the character Dini in *Pondok Baca* [The Reading Hut]⁷⁴ sent proposals to some publishers to support her reading house but only one publisher showed the gratitude. Others do not support the idea as expected.

The challenge of relationship is when people change from good to bad:

Orang yang di masa kanak-kanak menjadi teman bermainku, orang tuanya bagaikan ayah-ibuku sendiri, kini kehadirannya kuanggap angin busuk. Bila aku keluar dan lewat di depan rumahnya, dia sedang duduk atau berdiri di sana, aku tidak

⁷⁴ Nh. Dini, *Pondok Baca*. (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2011). (All subsequent reference to this work, abbreviated *PB* (indicated *Pondok Baca*), will be used in this thesis with pagination only. All translations are done by the thesis writer's.

menegurnya. Dia juga bertindak sama, diam saja membiarkan aku meneruskan jalanku. (*PB*, 40-1)

The person who in my childhood was my play mate, whose parents were like my own, now his presence was regarded bad wind. If I was out in front of his house, that he happened to be standing there, I never said hello. He did the same, let me continue my steps in silent.

The character Dini also felt the distance between her sister Heratih and herself. She reckoned that Heratih changed a lot. Heratih lost her character when she got married. Dini expressed her flat disappointment. Dini believed that Heratih's children were too rude. They adopted Heratih husband's characters. She felt the sameness in her brothers of arrogance, rudeness and impoliteness. For Dini, expressing Javanese courtesy and politeness is important in familial relationship. The novelist admits that the children have lacked the Javanese values as Dini herself strongly concerns and practices Javanese wisdom in daily life. In one article on Jakarta Post, Dini states:

“In the Javanese philosophy, a human being must be *eling* [alert], performing *tirakat* [continuous soul-searching] in order to humbly accept everything that comes to one's life. It is the way I am now — a life full of gratitude.”⁷⁵

Relationship could be maintained by expressing the local value or wisdom. Obeying and practicing local value is the way to keep the familial relationship and human relationship. To support this notion, the novelist commits herself to the Javanese philosophy of life. That is why in many parts of her books Nh. Dini concerns about

⁷⁵ Rita Widiadana, “NH Dini and her endless soul-searching journey”. *Jakarta Post* (27 Nov. 2017)

people losing the local wisdom such as Heratih's children. But it should be noted that she is also the person who breaks puritan thoughts as well. In the same article, she adds:

“At that time, I did not relate my writings to the Western theory of feminism. What I strongly believe is that a woman, wherever she lives, deserves to be treated equally and respectfully. She should also have the rights to her own body.”

It is clear though she is associated with feminism derived from her works, she never practices the western feminism. The fact that the novelist submits herself to her family consideration and inputs to keep the relationship. Challenges follow and appear in her way to stay independent while listening to others, especially the parents and husband should not be seen as barrier but opinions.

Likewise, the spirit to question things especially patriarchal system could be found in her childhood series' novels. In one moment, the character Dini felt she could do things like boys did in *Sebuah Lorong di Kotaku* [An Isle in My Town]. In another occasion, Dini asked why only women could expect babies, men could not. The mother said that women were stronger and chosen by God to generate new human beings in the world.

The other novel shows the different challenge in relationship like in *Orang-Orang Tran* [Tran People].⁷⁶ The main reason in triggering the relational conflict was the jealousy and suspicion of local people toward the new comers in the village. The character Samirin happened to be an elementary school teacher who was placed in the

⁷⁶ Nh. Dini, *Orang-Orang Tran*. (Jakarta: Sinar Harapan, 1985). (All subsequent reference to this work, abbreviated *OOT* (indicated *Orang-Orang Tran*), will be used in this thesis with pagination only. All translations are done by the thesis writer's.

transmigration area in Klintap, South Kalimantan. Being a teacher with wisdom and people skill, Samirin was hoped to be able to mediate the conflict between Madurese and the local people:

Orang-orang Madura mulai tidak percaya akan maksud baik guru-guru untuk mendekatkan kaum pendatang dengan penduduk setempat. (*OOT*, 148)

Madurese people started not to believe the good will of teachers to make closer the comers with the local people.

In the novel, Samirin and his colleagues always mediated foreign comers, transmigrants, with local people when they had conflict. It was often caused by the land clearing conflict when people tried to open wood or field to build paths or roads. In this case, the Madurese lands would be cut for the road construction. With intensive discussion and sacrifices from both parties, the conflict was slowly solved. Dini depicted the relationship of transmigration people as brotherhood life:

Hidup bertransmigrasi seperti bersaudara. Ada rasa kedekatan yang membuat orang bagaikan menderita ataupun berbahagia bersama. (*OOT*, 213)

Life as transmigration was like siblings. There are feelings of of clones that made people suffer and happy together.

Though in the novel, no important woman characters except Marsi, Samirin's wife, Makerah and the widow, in one scene, Pramono's wife and her husband in one occasion tried to save a young girl to escape from the arranged marriage. It was a good gesture of Samirin and Pramono's wife to protect the poor girl though Samirin's wife, Marsi, refused to get involved in the rescue.

The relationship challenge is also depicted in other works. The strongest bond among the woman-woman relationship should fall into Sumirat and Kedasih's one as they show the struggle in the very male dominant world of the Javanese traditional puppet show. They had to fight against men domination with limited access to physical and people support. Such a different atmosphere when it was compared to *La Barka's* girls with all western relaxing mood and wealth and freedom not everybody could taste. The problems in *La Barka* were created by their own wills, but Sumirat and Kedasih have to face problems caused by the patriarchal beliefs – how to fight against the challenge in societal and work relationship. Sumirat and Kedasih were both women and wives to challenge by society and people in their way to survive in the local puppet performance.

Regarding the matter, Sugihastuti wrote that the relationship between two women named Kedasih and Sumirat among other male characters in the Javanese *Wayang Orang* shows that Nh. Dini not only talked about the mere relationship between the two women, but she also showed the broader scope of the consequence of the female gender amid the patriarchal system. Women should follow the orders assigned by men as said to have a higher position than women. Men choose and decide for women in many aspects of life. Sugihastuti viewed Kedasih-Sumirat relationship a kind of alliance of supporting each other in such as male dominant community.

The message of maintaining relationship over challenge is strong in the novels. The strong commitment to feminist friendship clearly manifests in the spirit of the character Dini and the mother to help others, especially females. The novelist pays

concern on a young female forced to marry in *Orang-Orang Tran* [Tran People], a young girl quitting school in *Pondok Baca* [The Reading Hut], Tomiko and Hiroko's emotional bind in *Namaku Hiroko* [My Name is Hiroko] and Kedasih and Sumirat in *Tirai Menurun* [The Dropping Curtain].⁷⁷

The novelist also throws her view on eco-feminism when she keeps reminding readers about the relationship between human beings and nature. In *Kuncup Berseri* [A Glowing Bud] the writer recites:

Ibu seringkali pula menambahkan bahwa karena manusia itu merupakan sebagian dari alam, dengan pikiran yang masuk di akal, kami harus pula memperhatikan serta memelihara bagian lain dari alam itu. Sedari kecil kami dididik agar merasa dekat dan terlibat dengan tanah, binatang maupun seisi dunia lainnya. (KB, 8).

Mom always added that since human beings are part of nature, with common sense, we had to take care of the nature. Very early we were educated to feel closer to soil, animals or other creatures.

Nh. Dini concern on nature continues when she is visited by her son Padang. Dini brings her son and fiancée to visit The Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry at Gadjah Mada University. In the occasion, she mentions:

Aku ingin tamu-tamuku yang istimewa itu menyaksikan bagaimana orang Indonesia juga memiliki kemampuan menyuburkan tanah airnya. (PB, 236)

I wanted my special guests to see how Indonesian people also had the ability to fertilize their earth.

⁷⁷ Nh. Dini, *Tirai Menurun*. (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 1993). (All subsequent reference to this work, abbreviated *TM* (indicated *Tirai Menurun*), will be used in this thesis with pagination only. All translations are done by the thesis writer's.

That the character Dini's asking her son and friends to witness how the faculty turning the acres of arid land into woods tells readers about her ecosystem concern. It is obvious that the novelist has the eco-feminism spirit learned from his mother. This environmental concern is also found in the latest novel novel *Gunung Ungaran* [Mount Ungaran]⁷⁸ in which the novelist witnesses that she cannot live with her plantation friends.

The novelist advocates the human-nature relationship through her description of how the characters describing the surroundings such as landscapes, parks, trees and air. She also recited how the character Dini were careful about her flowers. The novelist also mentions about the scenery and the beauty of different kinds of plantation. It is clear to say that the relationship should not only involve humans to humans but also humans to nature as her mother quoted in one occasion how to take care of the earth:

Seperti katanya yang sering diulang-ulanginya kepada kami,
 “Sabar dan dermawanlah seperti bumi. Dia kauinjak, kauludahi.
 Namun tak hentinya memberimu makanan dan minuman.”
 (LBSK, 15)

Like her words kept repeated to us, “Be patient and generous
 like Earth. She is stepped, spitted. Yet she never stops giving
 you food and drinks.”

Nh. Dini puts relationships in a good place. The novelist talks about respecting seniors, treasuring friends and families despite different characters and backgrounds. The novelist never discriminates people based on ethnicities, educations and religions

⁷⁸ Nh. Dini, *Gunung Ungaran*. (Yogyakarta: Media Pressindo, 2018). (All subsequent reference to this work, abbreviated *GU* (indicated *Gunung Ungaran*), will be used in this thesis with pagination only. All translations are done by the thesis writer's.

through the characters. Nh. Dini welcomes all kinds of people though sometimes she can be moody and feels angry and disappointed. Challenges are there as people change affected by their new status and ignorance.

To describe Nh. Dini's thoughts, the sequences of her works would tell them clearly. The novelist repeats her mother's teaching how to treat others even in the unfavorable situation during the colonization. Her mother was happy to share food, water and shelter. People around respected their family. The character Dini often paraphrased her mother thoughts with flash back style and also used the direct speeches from her mother mouth telling how to behave.

Yet, in many occasions the character Dini complained about her financial shortage, especially after her divorce but her good relationships with others could help her handle the crisis. In *Dari Ngalian ke Sendowo* [From Ngalian to Sendowo],⁷⁹ the character Dini mentioned more than 20 times about her financial situation that made her into moody situation. She complained about people who made use of her professional status but paid less. She was disappointed with a big bank who paid only 200 hundred rupiahs for her long hour talk. She questioned Lontar Foundation that filmed her reading hut like an opera soap. The devastating financial situation even changed her into a different person:

Aku terpaksa berkelakuan slinthutan, secara sembunyi-sembunyi mencuri uang belanja untuk memenuhi kebutuhanku pribadi. Itu pun kulakukan setelah 'diajari' oleh beberapa teman

⁷⁹ Nh. Dini, *Dari Ngalian ke Sendowo*. (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2015). (All subsequent reference to this work, abbreviated *DNKS* (indicated *Dari Ngalian ke Sendowo*), will be used in this thesis with pagination only. All translations are done by the thesis writer's.

dan sahabatku, istri-istri asli berkebangsaan Prancis! (DGKS, 155)

I was forced to behave slinhtutan, silently stole shopping budget to meet my personal needs. That was because I was ‘taught’ by some friends, wives of French!

Compared to her thought of stealing money in her *Padang Ilalang di Belakang Rumah*

[The Prairie in Back Yard] childhood series:

Nugroho tidak pernah ketahuan mencuri uang kami. Sedangkan Teguh lebih sial, dua kali tertangkap basah, Dia dihajar dengan cambuk oleh Ayah, lalu dikurung dalam kamar. Hukuman terakhir itu merupakan cara yang paling sering dipergunakan orangtua kami, selain denda potongan uang dari tabungan masing-masing. (PIBR, 29)

Nugroho was never caught of stealing our money. But Teguh was more unfortunate, twice he was caught red handed. He was whipped by Dad, then kept at his room. The last punishment would be the frequent way used by my parents, besides fining by cutting some amounts from our savings.

The character Dini used to be honest and strict on never stealing from others. The contrast of what she believed from her childhood experience compared to her experience of stealing her husband’s daily shopping budget. Financial matter really challenged her from time to time. During her financial crisis, Dini had been surrounded by good friends helping her bit by bit, especially after the divorced or before departing to Indonesia while she had to work as a senior citizen sitter.⁸⁰ She had lots of what she called “spiritual brothers and sisters” repeatedly in *Pondok Baca* [The Reading Hut] and *Dari Ngalian Ke Sendowo* [From Ngalian to Sendowo] who supported inside out.

⁸⁰ Nh. Dini, *Argenteuil: Hidup Memisahkan Diri*. (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2008), p.114 (All subsequent reference to this work, abbreviated AHMD (indicated *Hidup Memisahkan Diri*) will be used in this thesis with pagination only. All translations are done by the thesis writer’s.

In many situations, when relationship was challenged, the character Dini tried to think positive and moves on. She always quoted her mother wisdom:

Seperti ibu kami sering berkata: Garis nasib tidak selalu lurus. Juga tidak selalu mulus. Di samping kepuasan-kepuasan, kegembiraan-kegembiraan, tentu tersuguh juga kerumpilan dan kekecewaan dalam kehidupan manusia. (DNKS, 244)

Like what my mother always said: A line was never straight. Not always smooth. Beside satisfactions, joys, of course disappointments are also served in humans' life.

Nh. Dini wishes human beings to accept all possibilities in relationship that people are not always like what we expect. The character Dini also contemplated religiously and had been grateful for many good acts from others. The character Dini had spiritual siblings with different statuses and professions, no less that 20 mentioned in *Gunung Ungaran* [Mount Ungaran] only. Other characters such as Dati, Muryati, Rina and Elise experienced the same help from other spiritual sisters when they were challenged in relationship. Some offered shelter, money, advise and companionship. The true affection, not the fake one, is one of the keys in maintaining the relationship.

In any relationship, sincerity should be owned by each individual. There are no doubts that one can be treated unfavorably by friends, family members or even the love ones. The novelist shows in many parts how the ability to compromise and forgive others is the way to answer relational challenges. Hiroko and Tomiko are sincere in the friendshipness. Sumirat dan Kedasih show the same quality of sincerity. Muryati, Ganik and Siswi are never fake in accepting the relational flaws. Rani, Monique and Christine are imperfect characters yet very sincere in expressing their affections.

Local wisdom the novelist holds is well attached with her when encountering different situations. Nh. Dini can be called a feminist but with her well attached background Dini can differentiate which one to hold, which one to cast away. Dini always keep respecting people with higher level no matter what is its background:

Rasa hormat dan segan terhadap dia tidak dapat dibandingkan dengan perasaan lain terhadap orang-orang biasa. Maka panggilan Romo kuanggap sebagai ‘tingkatan kehormatan’ tersendiri yang kuanut dan kupratikkan. (*DNKS*, 199)

Respect and loathness could not be compared to other feelings toward normal people. So, the name-calling Father I consider as a certain “level of respect” which I adopt and practice.

The respect is not only showed to Father Heni Daros she meets at Nanzan University in Japan. She also pays respect to many great people she meets in various occasions. She mostly respects people who appreciate ‘relationship; - personal and professional.

There are different outcomes of the process of experiencing the relationships in Dini’s novels. Some characters treasure the friendship as the compensation of the lack of family supports. Some extend their warm family relationship to the people. Some characters are trapped by the thin line of friendship and romantic adventures.

The novelist should be said as a feminist who concerns in local wisdom though spending some of her life abroad. She always foregrounds her local wisdom in anticipating relationship challenge as represented through the characters in her novels.

CHAPTER IV

THE VALUE, CHALLENGE AND PERSEVERANCE OF MARRIAGE AND CAREER IN NH. DINI'S NOVEL: NH. DINI'S FEMINISM MODEL

Marriage, like death as perceived as normality in human life, becomes a major talk in Nh. Dini's novels. In her childhood series, Dini represents her view through her experiences with her own parents' life. Regarding to the love affairs particularly on marriage life, Nh. Dini has her unique way in seeing it. In *Namaku Hiroko* [My Name is Hiroko], *Pada Sebuah Kapal* (On A ship), *La Barka* and the marital or personal life novel series. She uses fictitious characters to describe the marriage of manufactured characters in real situations (though some said it was the mini pictures of her marriage). At the time the theme of marriage of different nations is still rare in Indonesia's literature, a few to mention, such as *Salah Asuhan* [Wrong Upbringing] during Balai Pustaka era and *Selamat Tinggal Jeanette* [Goodbye, Jeanette] of Titi Said set in France and Yogyakarta. Nh. Dini proceeds with more than ten works touching the marital problems.

A. Women and Marriage: Value and Challenge

The theme called marriage in Nh. Dini's novels should be said as the main topic there. The childhood series represent the novelist's views through the character Dini on the marriage of her parents through every day's incidents and memories of her tiny mouths and eyes as a child. In *Sebuah Lorong di Kotaku* [An Isle in My Town], the

character's meaningful statements of a happy marriage were expressed in her family members:

Begitulah dengan kesadaran yang ayem dan penuh kepercayaan, ibuku dapat berkata bahwa itu adalah rumah mereka berdua, rumah ibu dan ayahku. Di sanalah kakakku sulung Heratih tumbuh dan besar. Di sanalah dia disusul oleh ketiga adiknya: Muhammad Nugroho, Siti Maryam, Teguh Asmar. (*SLK*, 10)

It was so with cool awareness and full trust. My mother could say that that home was my mother and father's. There, my eldest sister grew and got older. There, followed her three younger siblings: Muhammad Nugroho, Siti Maryam, Teguh Asmar.

That was an ideal picture of the growth of her family value residing in the house where a family of five children experienced ups and downs during a peace or colonization life. The character Dini witnessed the happy marriage of her family by participating herself in her parents' mature and wise relationship. All members supported each other with the daily flows and minor sibling conflicts.

In the case of witnessing marriage, the character Dini learned so much from her parents' marriage especially from how her mother responded situation toward her father, children and people in the neighborhood. She witnessed that in many occasions that her mother knew well how to avoid confrontation with her father. In one scene, her father did not approve the mother receiving things from The Red Cross. Her father argued that the things were bribery from the Dutch to win people hearts to colonize the country. Her mother did not respond to avoid quarrels:

Ibu berdiam diri, tidak menjawab maupun menyela kalimat-kalimat Ayah. Dia melipat pakaian sambil menyatakan isi hatinya. (*LBSK*, 69)

Ibu just remained silent, she did not respond nor interfere Father's words. She folds the clothes while saying what was inside her heart.

Dan tanpa menunggu sambutan Bapak, Ibu bangkit pergi ke ruang dalam sambil membawa barang-barang yang menjadi pokok keributan kecil itu. (*LBSK*, 70)

Without waiting Father's respond, she went inside taking those things which being their argument.

During hard time, in a typical Javanese family, a wife should be able to manage family, earn extra income to support the house hold. But, still the essence of a family was the husband particularly as a bread winner. Dini learned the substance from many occasions of her childhood. She kept in mind such a kind of family structure from her own parents, her sister Heratih's family and others. It was the meaning of a family, identically a marriage:

Pada masa itu, laki-laki di rumah adalah tiang penyangga hidup seluruh keluarga. Kalau dia hilang, rumah dapat runtuh, isinya mati kelaparan. (*PIBR*, 17)

At that time, a man at home was a pole to support the whole family. If he disappeared, the house collapsed, the inhabitants starved.

In *Pada Sebuah Kapal (On A Ship)*, the novelist portrays Sri, a woman who happened to have extra-marital affairs with different men. It is a kind of self-liberation in her marital relationship with Charles. Sri never found what she wished in her marriage. She refused several men as they never meet her needs:

Dengan Daniel, aku cuma akan menemukan kekasaran suamiku yang telah kukenal dan membosankan. Daniel kutolak. Roger, yang menjadi wakil anakku di pembaptisan tidak kuterima. Dan beberapa lagi yang tidak kuingat namanya karena caranya yang

terlalu langsung dan rendah. Dan aku tetap setia kepada laki-laki yang mengawiniku. (PSK, 176)

With Daniel, I would only find my husband's rudeness I was familiar with it and was boring by it. Daniel was rejected. Roger, who served as a guardian in my son's baptism was dumped by me. And some more which are too direct and low. And I was still faithful to the man marrying me.

She met Michel Dubanton, a ship captain, and lead themselves into the romantic affair as they both did not find the happy marriage in their life. Tia Agnes writes:⁸¹

Namun kalau dibaca dari puluhan karya-karyanya, Nh Dini jelas-jelas pro akan perempuan dan kerap membicarakan ketidakadilan gender. Novel perdananya 'Pada Sebuah Kapal' (1973) yang diterbitkan oleh Dunia Pustaka Jaya membicarakan tentang perempuan yang melepas nilai pernikahan.

But If we read her about twenty works, NH. Dini clearly backs up women and often talks about gender unfairness. His first novel; "Pada Sebuah Kapal" (1973) published by Dunia Pustaka talking about women who leaves the value of marriage.

Sri in the novel was portrayed as a happy and easy-going married woman in unhappy marriage. She was equipped with Javanese charm and yet, involved herself in affairs with other married men. In the situation, marriage was a limitation rather than security and certainty for a woman like Sri. Sri witnessed:

Seorang istri yang tidak mendapatkan apa yang diidamkannya dalam perkawinan akhirnya akan mencarinya di luar rumah tangga. Yang diidamkan adalah kehalusan, kelembutan yang seabadi mungkin... (PSK, 176)

A wife who did not get what she wanted in her marriage would seek it out there. What she wanted was softness, gentleness as eternal as it likely was...

⁸¹ Tia Agnes, "Selamat Jalan Novelis Feminis, Nh Dini". *Detik Hot* (5 Dec. 2018)
[Tia Agnes, "Goodbye the Feminist Novelist, Nh Dini". *Detik Hot* (5 Dec. 2018)]

In the context of marriage, value and challenge, it is fair to compare the characters in the novels discussed. Readers may see how different characters deal with the marital value and challenge. Dati in *Hati yang Damai* [A peaceful Heart], Muryati in *Jalan Bandungan* [Bandungan Street] and Sri are some characters that encounter the same situation of doubting the marital life. Dati was surrounded by Sidik, Nardi and Wija. Sri was amid Charles, Mike, Roger and some other men. Muryati was between the past Widodo and the latest Handoko. Dati had to face the distance due to her husband's duty, Wija. Muryati was also left by her husband due to political matter who was sent into prison. Sri was harassed by her husband's brutality. In other words, they women are all trapped into marital emptiness in different versions.

In another novel, a character in *Namaku Hiroko* [My Name is Hiroko] was a woman who lived out side the marital circle. Hiroko chose not to marry any man but lived as a mistress of a married man Yoshida. Happy in the life outside the marital relationship, Hiroko involved herself in extra marital affair with some men such as Yoshida, Sanao and Suprpto. Hiroko chooses the different attitude in viewing marriage as she does not believe in the marital tie.

Marriage can be viewed as sacred or a problem The novelist tries to question the value of marriage in different views through the characters. Is marriage more promising than extra marital relationship? The novelist would like the readers to compare the value of marriage and the challenge through the characters and how they respond the issues.

Hence, If one carefully traces the expectations or value and the challenge of marital relationship in her novels, the characters respond them differently. Sri expected the warmth and gentleness but only got rudeness from her husband, Charles. She compensated the lack by dating men. Dati found a piece of peaceful mind in Wija but then doubting it after Sidik and Nardi returned. The two men offered different value. Muryati also sought her peaceful mind after marrying Handoko, her ex-husband's brother Widodo. In *Keberangkatan* (Departures), Elisabeth or Elisa was more pitiful after being left by her boy-friend marrying another woman though she had chosen to stay in Jakarta over Holland, separated from her family.

La Barka seems to be more complex as it witnesses different characters. Rina tried to find her peace by visiting her friend Monique. In *La Barka*, she met Christine who also experienced an unhappy marriage and dating a younger man. There was also Monique, the friend she visited, with the same unhappy marital life. Rina in *La Barka* was relaxed enjoying her process of her divorce with Bonin. The submissive type of a woman character in marriage was well described by the novelist through Rina's point of view:

Dia adalah potongan orang-orang perempuan yang betah tinggal di rumah, mengurus makanan dan anak-anak, sambil menunggu kedatangan suami yang penuh cinta. Kalau dipikir, itu adalah hal yang biasa buat seorang perempuan. (*LB*, 20)

She was a type of home-woman, taking care of food and children, while waiting her husband to come home with love. Carefully thought, that was nothing but usual for a woman.

Like Rina's marital life, Monique also experienced such emptiness. The marital relationship changed as the husbands took them for granted.

The problem of feeling guilty of being not able to give babies is found in some characters. Asti in *Hati yang Damai* [A Peaceful Heart],⁸² Dati's sister in law, compensates her guilty feeling by ruining her self with another man. The same similarity found in Francine and Moniques of *La Barka* who could not give birth. Having a child becomes the problem of married couple. In this case, women will suffer of the situation. On the contrary, Rina had a baby but her husband was annoyed by the crying.

The very contradictive fact should be interesting in Dini's works regarded her marital life. In all her novels including *La Barka*, *Dari Parangakik ke Kampuchea* [From Parangakik to Kampuchea],⁸³ *Dari Fontenay ke Magallianes* [From Fontenay to Magallianes],⁸⁴ *La Grande Borne*,⁸⁵ *Argenteuil*, and *Dari Rue Saint Simon ke Jalan Lembang* [From Rue Saint Simon to Lembang Street],⁸⁶ they all show that her husband never serves herself as a good husband and father even the wife does not lack anything except the thing they could not control – the fertility.

⁸² Nh. Dini, *Hati yang Damai*. (Jakarta: Gramedia Widiasarana Indonesia, 1998). (All subsequent reference to this work, abbreviated *HD* (indicated *Hati yang Damai*), will be used in this thesis with pagination only. All translations are done by the thesis writer's.

⁸³ Nh. Dini, *Dari Parangakik ke Kampuchea*. (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2003). (All subsequent reference to this work, abbreviated *DPK* (indicated *Dari Parangakik ke Kampuchea*), will be used in this thesis with pagination only. All translations are done by the thesis writer's.

⁸⁴ Nh. Dini, *Dari Fontenay ke Magallianes*. (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2005). (All subsequent reference to this work, abbreviated *DFM* (indicated *Dari Fontenay ke Magallianes*), will be used in this thesis with pagination only. All translations are done by the thesis writer's.

⁸⁵ Nh. Dini, *La Grande Borne*. (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2007). (All subsequent reference to this work, abbreviated *LGB* (indicated *La Grande Borne*), will be used in this thesis with pagination only. All translations are done by the thesis writer's.

⁸⁶ Nh. Dini, *Dari Rue Saint Simon ke Jalan Lembang*. (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2012). (All subsequent reference to this work, abbreviated *DRSSJL* (indicated *Dari Rue Saint Simon ke Jalan Lembang*), will be used in this thesis with pagination only. All translations are done by the thesis writer's.

The ideal marriage was not only the wife's problem but a god husband should be equally contributing it. Similar to Rina-Bonin's problem about the noise of crying baby, the character Dini complained how her husband was angry and felt disturbed by the crying baby. She since then doubted a man's commitment in bringing up children:

Bagiku laki-laki tidak akan sanggup hidup seharian tinggal di rumah untuk merawat rumah dan anak-anak. Mereka berkata senang kepada anak-anak mereka, kerena biasa berkumpul dan melihat kenakalan anak-anak itu hanya sebentar-sebentar. (LB, 127)

For me, men would not be able to stay at home taking care of home and children. They might say they liked children, because they used to mingle and watch their children's naughtiness, they just occasionally did.

Do men have such an endurance and patience? The novelist through the character Rina in *La Barka* doubts that men have that same quality in taking care of children. Nh. Dini even adds that men never mean to nurture children like women do.

Seandainya dunia menjadi terbalik, perempuan-perempuan harus bekerja mencari nafkah dan laki-laki yang tinggal di rumah, akankah mereka tetap berkata bahwa mereka senang kepada anak-anak mereka? (LB, 127)

If the world reversed, women had to work to earn living and men stayed at home, would they still that they liked their children?

Continually in other novels, the problem of troubled husbands is overtly mentioned. The character Dini reckoned that her husband did not have such a discipline. In *Dari Fontenay to Magallianes* [Dari Fontenay to Magallianes], she was annoyed by her husband's bad attitudes such as easy to lose temper, in-discipline, egoism and stingy. In many occasions in the novel, she was very upset at her husband's

responses when they have to move from an apartment to another one that her husband did not help her:

Sungguh tidak ada gunanya berbantah dengan lelaki yang maunya menang sendiri semacam dia. Terdorong oleh rasa jahat dan usil di hati, nyaris aku mengucapkan kata-kata lain yang lebih keras. (*DFM*, 50)

Really it was useless to quarrel with a man that was so egoistic and never wanted to lose an argument. Triggered by evilness and mischief at heart, I almost uttered other harsh words.

Beside marital partner's attitudes, in many occasions, the problem of finance in marriage was also mentioned, especially in the marital life series. Out of the financial matter, the character Dini believed that the value of marriage should be more than physical and financial matter:

Di situ dikatakan, bahwa asmara atau rasa cinta tidak didasari oleh rupa atau harta benda, melainkan hatilah pangkal dari segalanya. Di dalam bait tembang disebutkan bahwa pawitan atau modal dari semuanya itu adalah hati. (*DFM*, 17)

On that part said, romance or affection did not base on physic or wealth, but the bottom of the heart. In the song's rhymes, it was stated that the capital is all from the heart.

If we compare all the novel characters, the marital problems mostly lay on the combination of attitude of the couple, absence of children, relationship uncertainty and financial matters. In *La Barka*, Monique and Daniel were troubled with the absence of children. Francine and Rene also faced the same problem: no children. Rina and Bonin were triggered by the husband Bonin who considered baby crying as annoying noise. In different cases, Dati was problemized by her doubt as her husband flies air plane as an army. Hiroko, a mistress, maked use of married men who found wives lacking things

they longed to. To line up, Sri in *Pada Sebuah Kapal (On A Ship)* committed adultery due to her bad-tempered husband. Muryati in *Jalan Bandungan* [Bandungan Street]⁸⁷ married another man due to her husband's political movement and narrow mind of not letting her wife teach in school. The marital problems compounded from Nh. Dini's novels vary from finance, doubt, manners, anger, bad-temper, to uncertainty. In contrast, Kedasih in *Tirai Menurun* [The Dropping Curtain] was a strong wife but troubled by his gambling husband.

Marriage is about making decision based on personal value. In *Dari Parangakik ke Kampuchea* [From France to Cambodia], the character Dini admitted that deciding to marry a man should be considered deeply as a woman can never step back after drawing the decision:

Kemudian aku sadar, bahwa dalam semua keputusan yang telah kuambil, tidak pernah ada satu tekanan pun. Kalau aku telah memilih dia sebagai suami, itu melulu merupakan kehendakku sendiri. Di waktu aku bergaul dengan dia sebelum nikah, aku kurang waspada, kurang memiliki kejelian mendeteksi 'kelicikan' manusia lelaki pada umumnya. (DPK, 19)

Then I was awake, that in all decisions I made, there was no pressure at all. Yet I had chosen him as my husband, I was not aware. Lack of observance in detecting "the trick" of men in general.

The value of marriage is the equality of both men and women. The novelist proposes very strong statements regarding the marital relationship between men and women. She says:

⁸⁷ Nh. Dini, *Jalan Bandungan*. (Jakarta: Djambatan, 1989). (All subsequent reference to this work, abbreviated *JB* (indicated *Jalan Bandungan*), will be used in this thesis with pagination only. All translations are done by the thesis writer's.

Perempuan dan lelaki adalah ciptaan Yang Maha Kuasa, sama seperti burung, kuda atau binatang peliharaan lain. Jadi sesungguhnya kedudukan makhluk itu sejajar, tidak ada yang lebih tinggi dari lainnya. (*DFM*, 18)

Women and men were created by The Almighty, like birds, horses or other pets. It was truly that all creatures were equal, none was higher than others.

In a different occasion, the character was sceptical about the gender equality in marriage as she witnessed:

Sebelum aku kawin, kuamati sekelilingku. Hingga aku duduk di sekolah Menengah Atas, belum pernah kusaksikan suami-istri yang ideal. Dia antara mereka selalu terjadi ketimpangan, berat sebelah dalam arti selalu pihak lelaki yang mau menang sendiri dan si istri mengalah. (*JNH*, 247)

Before married, I observed around. Until my senior school years, I never found the ideal husband-wife. Between them, there were always imbalanced in term that the husband would always want to win and the wife who to lose.

The equality of women to men is highly questioned by the novelist. Nh. Dini urges the treatment of women in marital relationship in their significant statements through her narration:

Dan yang menang selalu laki-laki, karena perempuan dihadirkan 'hanya' sebagai pembantu di mana dan di waktu dia dibutuhkan. Sebagai pelengkap, pelipur lara, pemuas kebutuhan biologis kaum adam. (*DPK*, 223)

And the one who won was men, as women were there 'only' for a helper anywhere and anytime needed. As a complement, a sadness releaser, biological amuser for Adam kinds.

The challenge of marriage – the equality of men and women – not only comes from the couple but also from tradition and religion. The two factors add the practice of inequality of men and women, not only in marital relationship but also expanding to other aspects of human life.

Religion in Dini's opinion should contribute something positive to human personality. She finds the perfect example in a man she admires most, Bagus. In one part, she admits the quality of the man of behavior. To emphasize her thoughts about women and man in marriage, the novelist then mentions that in Eve and Adam's story, is used to discriminate women. Eve representing women who tempted men to commit a sin. Women are seen a symbol of sinners.⁸⁸

Women, in the novelist; eyes, are not treated equally like men. In some cases, women are joked using sexual connotation. Women are treated improperly. This kind of treatment is far from the wills of God who created women and men to be equal creatures.⁸⁹

The exploration of novels in the previous paragraphs shows an indication that women are often being mistreated in their marital life. This may be caused by the custom they are living in particularly if they live in a masculine domination like within patriarchal system. In the case of Nh. Dini, it is reflected by the society where she lives in and her personal experiences. Thus, Nh. Dini, through her childhood observation of her parent's marriage to her personal marriage experience tends to see how men belittle women.

No women are perfect, neither are men. The novelist, in fact, does not have any tendency to create her women characters as perfect human beings. Some characters are not from warm family backgrounds but live in the patriarchal family like Hiroko,

⁸⁸ *GU*, p.95

⁸⁹ *DPK*, pp. 222-3

Muryati and Sri. Some are from warm families with close family-ship and relationships one other. With bad family bacnground or unhappy marriage, some of her characters are trapped into adultery or anti-marital bind.

Among other ‘bad’ characters, Suci in *Pertemuan Dua Hati* [The Encounter of Two Hearts] should be the different example of a character who is on track despite the limitation. Suci was limited by her financial resources. She took her father’s advice to enrol into the elementary teaching institute. She had the brain but the family could not afford more. She adopted the belief of trying first and adapting later. This spirit resembles Liberal Feminism which believes than women can never achieve a hundred percent of their aspiration.⁹⁰ They have to compromise and living their dream as what it is dictated by other external sources.

For the novelist, as shared into the woman characters, women have their own personal value when they are bound into marital knots. They dream of being perfect mothers for their children. A woman marries to man to obey the parents’ expectation. Parents even decide which man is proper and suitable to their daughter and set rules. The women are also obliged to meet societal expectation about legal marriage in legal and religious ways. The value and expectation later become challenges and problems when they do not meet the ideal state.

Women may have beautiful and higher expectations when they build marital relationship. A better life with the loved one, including children becomes every woman’s dream. In the childhood series, Nh. Dini wraps the memories of enjoying her

⁹⁰ Megawangi, p.228

family times touchingly. Amid the joy and happiness, problems existed. In her childhood, the character Dini witnessed the frequency of happy daily life, but some difficulties also jumped in, for example, during the Japan's colonization causing the food shortage and fear. Despite all obstacles, the character Dini never told about her parents' quarrels. This might be different to Sri and Hiroko's childhood and youth who experienced the lack of affection in parental and familial relationship. The same bad experience was also encountered by a young girl in *Orang-Orang Tran* [Tran People] who was fortunately saved by Samirin from the arranged young age marriage. These types of experiences will affect them in precepting marriage and marital relationship. The novelist exposes this notion through the child characters, not only adults.

The typical problems that ruin marital life are imbalance of wife and husband. The novelist in many occasions shows that a wife is less powerful and submits to a husband's will. She recited that even though before the marriage, her sister Heratih was supposed to show her future in laws that she was capable of doing domestic works. Later, she found out that her sister should quit from her work after having a child but she had to make herself believe her sister was happy in her marriage. Waskito also suffered from the relationship between himself and his classmates and parents but saved by Suci, his sincere teacher.

Expectation might be quite different to what Dini supposed. The character Dini then learned how the marriage also changed her sister's personality. She viewed that all her sister's children adopted the husband's character which was rude and impolite. She felt that her sister did not contribute any of her inner good character to her children.

Furthermore, marriage in *Hati yang Damai* [A Peaceful Heart] also showed the similar complication. The main character Dati faced her own doubt between keeping her heart to her husband Wija or surrendering herself to an old friend, Sidik. The obstacles came from Dati as her husband often left her for his flight duty as a pilot. Dati had no reasons to complain about her happy marriage with two lovely children but the past haunted her as she met her ex best friend, Sidik. She doubted herself:

Tapi benarkah mereka lahir demi cinta kami, cinta Wija dan cintaku? Pertanyaan ini tiba-tiba mencekamku dengan perasaan yang menggelisahkan. (HD, 22)

But was it true that they were born out of our love, Wija's love and mine? The question suddenly grabbed me with uneasy feelings.

The same own self-confusion she kept repeating as she underestimated her own commitment after seeing her old friend and sister in law. She learned that her sister in law was not a faithful wife. She was cynical to her sister in law in one meeting when the woman visited her. It turned out that Sidik had an affair with the woman. And the other day, Dati's brother, Jat, visited her to tell that Asti had an accident and eventually died due to severe injuries.

Dati herself was tempted by her loneliness. She was dragged into the romantic involvement between Sidik and the other old friend, Nardi. The conflict came from the fact that she could not subside her feelings from both men in filling her loneliness and uncertain waiting for her husband. Dati was supposed to conquer the unfaithful mind but she failed. To Nardi, Dati was attracted by his charm:

Kupandangi wajahnya. Aku merasa bahwa ada persamaan orang ini dengan suamiku. Kemudian aku menemukannya:

ketenangan dan kedewasaan yang menyeluruh wajah keduanya. Pengucapannya amat meneduhkan bagi yang menatapnya. Dan aku tidak mengelakkan sewaktu pandangnya bertemu dengan mataku. (*HD*, 54)

I looked at his face. I felt that there is a similarity with my husband. Then I found it: calmness and maturity. His utterance soothed those who stared at him. And I did not look away once his catching my eyes.

To Sidik, she admired his charm as they were once so close. Dati still loved Sidik as he had more elegance than before. She felt jealous if Sidik said he had to pick up his wife. In line with the facts, *Hati yang Damai* [A Peaceful Heart], depicts the troublesome marriage. The main challenge was uncertainty, loneliness and the past. Dati seemed unwilling to forget her past with Sidik and Nardi. Sidik followed his longing to Dati. Nardi kept the hopes for Dati to forget her no-news husband. Meanwhile, Asti felt guilty not to be able to have a child with Jat and compensated herself with other men and never cared about the household as she always travelled out. Asti's situation is relevant to what Betty Friedan says in her book that women are oftenly seen through traditional roles. Women are childbearers and homemakers. Hence, women who do not give born children and are not homemakers (workers) are seen as incapable or not fulfilled figures.⁹¹

If reasons are important to be revealed, there are three things considered as the main obstacles in the marriage: the gap, lack communication, guilty of being an

⁹¹ Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique*. New York: W.W, Norton & Company, Inc., 1963.

imperfect woman and self-control, especially the woman characters: Dati and Asti. They both try to escape from being bored, lonely and guilty but taking the wrong steps.

Likewise, *Jalan Bandungan* [Bandungan Street] also recites the marital complexity. It started with the typical Indonesian daughter in choosing her life partner that parents' approval was a must. The main character let the parents decide her marriage, especially the father. In Muslim belief, a legal marriage should be approved by father as the mediator. If a father is absent or dies, the uncle should be the one who mediates the marriage before the marriage headman (Penghulu).

In the novel, the main character Muryati experienced a different marital life from her parents. She witnessed how ideal was her parents' marriage showed by the father treating her mother. She reckoned her father to be the best father compared to others. In fact, her mother was so dependent to her husband:

Ibu selalu mengulangi bahwa hidup tanpa bapak tidak selalu mudah. (JB, 56)

My mother repeated kept repeating that life without father should not be easy.

Women and wives portrayed in the novels show some degrees of dependency towards men. Father approved the daughter's partner in Muryati's case. In other examples, Dati was so attached to her husband and other men's influences. Asti herself was drowned by her submissive guilt of bearing no children. Some women characters look fragile and dependent. In contrast, the novelist delivers some turning points with rebellious wives such as the character Dini in the marital life series. Kedasih and Sumirat who decided to live as local artists in Javanese plays. Suci in *Pertemuan Dua*

Hati [The Encounter of Two Hearts] who fought for fellow male teachers' doubts in handling her disturbing student, Waskito. Sri, in *Pada Sebuah Kapal* (On A ship) chose to play with men attentions. This rebellion was added by Hiroko who enjoyed her husbandless state but found her fake freedom under Yoshida's arms. In this stage, the novelist delivers the women's escape in dealing with marriage and men domination. Some follow their impulses but some might fight the condition differently. At least, as wives and women, they have options with the consequences.

B. Perseverance in Marriage and Carreer

In Islam teaching, a husband should bear all the family needs. It is a must following Islamic faith. Marriage creates consequences between a husband and wife. A husband should make sure that he meets the wife's welfare.⁹²

The novelist in *Gunung Ungaran* [Mount Ungaran] quotes Dr. Riffat Hasan⁹³ who says that in Quran, women are ten times higher than men. The Prophet Muhammad also values women higher in their positions. The teaching is not well transformed by the rulers. In practice, the rulers put women into a lower position, which are traditionally weak, using discriminative legal systems. The rulers create weakers women in societies.

⁹² Suryani, "Perempuan Pencari Nafkah dan Membiayai Keluarga dalam Perspektif Hadis Nabi SAW". *Bunga Rampai Islam dan Gender*.

[Suryani, "The Working Women and Financing Family in The Perspective of Prophet Muhammad's Hadist". *The Chronicles of Islam and Gender*]

⁹³ A Pakistani-American theologian and leading Islamic Feminist.

Connecting the notion to Nh. Dini's *Jalan Bandungan* [Bandungan Street], Muryati soon found out that the ideal marriage was not what she ended up with. She did not own the ideal marriage she had been dreaming of. She not only had to give up her work, but she also had to stand by at home. She understood that an ideal wife was the one who stayed at home and doing nothing. She had to leave her work as an elementary teacher after teaching for some years after graduating the elementary teacher institution. Her husband urged that staying at home and managing house hold was obligatory for a honorable wife.

The novelist tries to question the housewife role and working at the same time through the character Muryati who fought against her husband in forbidding her teaching:

“Aku heran mengapa kamu lebih suka mendidik anak orang lain daripada anak sendiri,” katanya tanpa menanggapi omonganku, seperti biasanya. (JB, 93)

“I wonder why you prefer education to educate other else's people's children than yours?” he said without bothering my words, as usual.

In the Islamic faith, as Muryati and Widodo were muslims, in *Jalan Bandungan* [Bandungan Street], a wife should stay at home to take care of domestic affairs. She was not supposed to work anywhere outside as her husband was still capable at meeting their needs.⁹⁴ Muryati reluctantly followed her husband's request and felt she lost her self-nature:

⁹⁴ Suryani, pp.44-5

Aku menyadari bahwa sejak aku kawin, kegesitan pikiranku di masa remaja telah menghilang. Kadang-kadang aku bahkan meragukan apakah aku masih memiliki kepribadian. (*JB*, 93).

I realized that since I married, my agile thought of my youth had lost. Sometimes I doubted if I still had such a personality.

The point of *Jalan Bandungan* [Jalan Bandungan] is that marriage should not abolish a woman's potentiality. In fact, Muryati lost her powerful and independent personality after marrying Widodo. She then married another man named Handoko when Widodo was jailed after joining a banned political party. She was fortunately sent abroad to take further education and found herself back. Although both marriages did not answer what she wanted, at least, Muryati found her power after studying abroad in the Netherlands.

Beside self empowerment, the way to handle marital obstacle is forgiving and patience like always practiced by the character Dini. The character Dini understood that her husband liked to exercise his power over her. She realized that the consequence of living with the man she chose as "laki-laki yang aku pilih". She compensated it with another man, Bagus:

Pria itu sudah menjadi bagian dari hidupku. Meskipun kelak kami akan lama tidak bertemu, dia tidak akan lepas dari diri dan batinku. Dia telah mengajariku banyak hal. Dia juga mengembalikan kepercayaan diriku: aku pantas dikehendaki oleh seorang lelaki seperti dia, pria penuh kualitas tanpa meninggalkan kelembutan dalam sikap dan perilaku yang sewajarnya. (*DFM*, 16)

The man became a part of my life. Though finally would not see each other for a long time, he would never be parted from me and my soul. He taught me many things. He also brought back my confidence: I was worthed by a man like him, a man who

was full of quality without dismantling gentleness in his appropriateness.

The violence in marriage is not only about financial limitation, anger or some factors mentioned before. It was only the daily financial and emotional crisis haunted the marital life, in one part of the chapter in *Dari Fontenay ke Magallianes* [From Fontenay to Magallianes], she was raped by her own husband while she was spending her time at La Barka, her friend's house:

“Laki-laki macam apa kamu ini...! Suaraku tidak kutahan ataupun kuredam. Kulampiaskan keberanganku. “Kau telah memperkosaku! Kaumanfaatkan waktu kantukku untuk menyelinap ke dalam diriku. Oh, *le salaud!*” Makian itu otomatis keluar tanpa dapat kukendalikan. (DFM, 97)

“What kind of man you are...! My voice was not hesitated nor proved. I bursted out my anger. “You have raped me! You use my sleepiness to penetrate me. Oh, bastard!” The mocking was automatically thrown out without my control.

The effect of the rapping accident worsened the marital relation between Dini and Yves, her husband. The husband did not show any guilty feelings. Dini expressed her disgusting gestures towards her husband. Dini even threw her cynicism over Yves:

... dia tidak mau menghabiskan uang untuk membayar pelacur guna memuskan nafsunya, maka setelah merasa diri mampu berbuat, dia lampiaskan kepa istrinya, miliknya. Karena kekasarannyalaj aku menolaknya. (DFM, 101)

... he did not want to spend money to pay a prostitute to meet his lust, hence he felt he had the power, he compensated it to his wife, his own.
To his rudeness I object.

The novelist puts the issue of marital rape as the reality in marriage. It is different from the verbal or physical abuse. It is more like men exercising his power

over women – a husband over his wife. Even though it is often doubted, the domestic rapes are real in marital relationship. To this matter, Andra Nasrie reports:⁹⁵

That number represents a small portion of the total 2,979 reported cases of sexual violence in Indonesia — itself a number so small as to suggest widespread underreporting. But even within that context, marital rape numbers are almost certainly depressed by the prevailing belief that husbands have ownership over their wives' bodies.

Despite challenge and obstacle, to overcome them, sincere acceptance, to be named, should be one key in the marital life perseverance as proposed by the novelist. Without the magical word called sincerity and acceptance, it is hard to handle challenges, especially the unanticipated ones. Hiroko, Yosidha's wife, should live with her husband's coldness. Dati, although in doubts, tried to keep the uncertainty to wait for her husband's news. Kedasi and Sumirat radiated the same sincere quality towards their husbands. The character Dini had to deal with the husband's bad habits and attitudes she never thought of. The acceptance attitude was expressed in these meaningful lines:

Mereka tidak menambahkan satu hal lain yang telah mandarah daging tertancap dalam Pendidikan kami, ialah memandang semua dalam hidup ini dari sisi baiknya. Harus memanfaatkan dan mensyukuri sesedikit pun yang kami terima sebagai karunia Sang Pencipta. (*JNH*, 355)

The did not add another thing else that had been attached in our moral teaching, it was seeing all creatures of their goodness. One should take the benefits dan be grateful even though it was not much, as the God's gift.

⁹⁵ Andra Nasrie, "How can Indonesia Deal with Marital Rape when so many Refuse to Acknowledge It Exists". (6 Aug. 2019). (<https://coconuts.co/jakarta/features/how-can-indonesia-deal-with-marital-rape-when-so-many-refuse-to-acknowledge-it-exists/>)

Marital rape is hardly seen as sexual violence as the perpetrator is the one who legally owns the woman as his wife. In many cultures, there is normal that a husband forces his wife to have sexual intercourse as it is the part of marital obedience and fulfilment. Additionally, women felt ashamed if they had to report their own husbands. This will cause social condemnments. In some countries, including Indonesia, marital rape is not considered as a crime though feminists, activists and legislators force the implementation of the marital rape acts. Reporting marital rape is considered taboo as wives are obliged to meet their husband's sexual desires.⁹⁶

Talking about marital rape in Indonesian context is not only about the cultural and religious boundary as mentioned above, this also relates to the unclear arrangement of the legal system. As mentioned by Tongat and Anggraeny, Indonesian criminal law in regulating marital law has some flaws. First, there is unclear jurisdiction construction on marital rape. Second, the sole formulation on marital rape as criminal act is absent. Third, the marital rape is part of sexual abuse which is rare and awkward in marital relation which is legal in law and religion terms.⁹⁷

In the context of marriage and the partners, the novelist implies her sincerity and acceptance of what happens in our life. The positive attitude will neutralize the impacts. A wife may be hurt at first but it is better later on to see the bad attitude positively.

⁹⁶ Nurul Fitri Ramadhani, "Marital Rape Remains Taboo Topic in Patriarchal Society". *The Jakarta Post*. (9 Mar. 2019)

⁹⁷ Tongat and Isdian Anggraeny, "Marital Rape in Indonesian Criminal Law Perspective". *Journal of Law, Policy and Globalization*, Vol. 59 (2017).

To relate to the previous discussion, not only in marital relation, in professional relation or career, it is obvious that women are also put into a certain bucket. In the world of work place, women have been designated to limited post based on their gender:⁹⁸

In work and career challenge, the novelist explores the types of women designated jobs through by stating the occupation of the characters. The typical of women occupations in Dini's novels are the real description of Indonesian woman work scope besides the traditional role as a housewife. The choice of work and career is closely related to the family background and the parents' recommendation.

It is simple to mention the types or works found through the characters. A number of occupations and career types are mentioned in all of her novels with opinions about the obstacles and how the personalities adjust and protect the work.

Teaching career should be said as frequently mentioned in her novels. Suci in *Pertemuan Dua Hati* [The Encounter of Two Hearts] serves as a junior high school teacher, Samirin in *Orang-orang Tran* [Tran People] has the same occupation, Pak Yadi, her memorable teacher is also mentioned somewhere in her childhood stories. Muryati in *Jalan Bandungan* is also a teacher with higher education and insight. Also, Christine, a charismatic teacher in *La Barka* who is said to be a single parent successfully shapes the children's character. In *Namaku Hiroko* [My Name is Hiroko], the novelist shortly mentions that her uncle is a teacher of religion institution.

⁹⁸ Boundless Sociology, "Women in the Workplace". <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/boundless-sociology/chapter/women-in-the-workplace>. Accessed 20 June 2020.

Teaching occupation is not chosen without any reason. The novelist who talks mostly about woman's works might be sensible to the typical works referred to women. As said before, parents are the most influential party to dictate what a child should study and work, especially a daughter. The other factor such financial status also plays the game of deciding what to do. Though in *Pertemuan Dua Hati* [The Encounter of Two Hearts] the parents seemed to support the female character, a sense of obedience and submission rather than affection was dominant. The novelist describes Suci on how she had to follow her parents' ambition:

Lebih baik aku bekerja untuk menambah pemasukan uang. Dengan demikian, diharapkan aku akan dapat menringankan beban atah ibuku. Dan sekali lagi aku menuruti nasehat mereka. Harapan itu ternyata agak meleset. (PDH, 10)

My dad said now I could seek for job. It's better I worked to get some income. After all, I was hoped to lose my parents' burden. Once again, I followed their words. That hope slipped.

Suci though may have an advanced thought of being a useful person with her potentiality, obeying parents:

Aku patuh, menuruti nasehat orang tua. Bapak mengantarkan aku ke Semarang untuk mendaftarkan diri ke sekolah Pendidikan Guru. Ternyata aku tidak menyesal. (PDH, 10)

I obeyed my parents. Dad dropped me to Semarang to enroll at Teacher Institute. But I did not regret.

Sesudah bertahun-tahun mengajar, aku tidak menyesal telah menuruti nasehat orang tua. Aku senang kepada pekerjaanku. (PDH, 10)

Years of doing teaching, I did not regret to have followed my parents' wish. I love what I did.

Despite her ability to plan and decide, Suci seemed to understand that the most important decisions were plotted by her father. After graduating from the Elementary School Teaching Institute, she wished to take a higher education but her family financial matter holds that ambition:

Meskipun kemampuan otakku memadai, Bapak tidak sanggup membiayai. Peraturan ikatan dinas tidak disetujui orang tuaku. Kata Bapak, kini aku sudah bisa mencari nafkah. (*PDH*, 11)

Despite my adequate smartness, my father could not afford it. My parents did not approve the contract service. Father said, I should work now.

Suci had the ability to decide actually but she seemed to submit herself to men. The first big decision was made by her father. The second decision was made by her own but based on her maternal instinct, which again summons to the exploitation, or self-volunteered exploitation:

Sebagai wanita berkarir, aku tetap merasa lebih tenang jika dapat bekerja sekaligus mengawasi anak-anakku. Mengajar di suatu tempat dengan sekolah anakku merupakan impian yang ideal. (*PDH*, 13)

As a career woman, I felt safe if I could work and watch my children at the same time. Teaching at the same place with my child's school was my ideal dream.

The case of Suci is a kind of compromise state between feminism and patriarchal system. Suci had her own ambition but she could not perform or fight for it due to her limitation especially financial shortage. She submitted her future desire to a man, in this case his father. It is voluntary domination. This may also be the practice of Liberal Feminism that women should adjust herself to a family structure to support the stability of a familial building.

Compared to the character Suci in *Pertemuan Dua Hati* [The Encounter of Two Hearts], Hiroko also experienced the force to decide what she wanted based on her environment. Hiroko struggled financially as she was raised in the poor family with gender discrimination. Hiroko should follow all rules with full obedience and without questions to the patriarchal mood built by her father and brothers.

The character Hiroko in *Namaku Hiroko* [My Name is Hiroko] worked as a domestic assistant of farmers both her father and mother. In a very young age of 16, Hiroko had to work as a domestic assistant. The parents were visited by a man seeking for a domestic assistant:

Aku merasa tamu itu tak sekejap pun mengalihkan pandang dariku, seperti seorang pembeli yang mengamati sapi yang akan dibayarnya pada suatu lelang ternak.

“Sungguh beribu terima kasih saya sampaikan atas kesudian Tamura-san mengambil saya untuk pekerjaan itu.” Dan sekali lagi aku membungkuk serendah-rendahnya hingga kepalaku hampir menyentuh tanah. (NH, 14)

I reckon the guest keeps looking at me ceaselessly like a cow buyer watching his cow bought in an auction.

“A thousand of thanks from me for your willingness to take me for the job.” And again, I bowed myself as lowest as possible for my head to touch the ground.

The gesture of bowing as lowest as possible and being sold by parents to work as a domestic servant to support family financially would be normal in Japan due to economic hardship. Poverty allowed women to work in informal fields and managing house hold at the same time. In the novel, Hiroko’s aunty also served as an elderly sitter. This kind of works was also experienced by the character Dini’s herself when she filled her time after divorcing her husband. She worked as an elderly sitter in

France. Hiroko even convinced herself that she would not have any job than a domestic assistant.

Women, poverty and marital value are clearly portrayed in Hiroko's life. Poverty forces women to sacrifice their goals to climb higher wishes. Hiroko was not uncleaver. She could differentiate people with qualities even she did not have any decent education. She knew how to improve her potential by learning how to drive a car:

Tidak ada alasan mengapa aku tidak dapat berbuat seperti mereka. Apalagi jika memang aku memerlukannya. (NH, 189)

There was no reason why I could not do like what they did. Moreover, the fact that I needed it.

Hiroko, despite her being uneducated, knew how to improve the work responsibility upon her shoulder. She performed well in managing a shop and also her personality does work:

Tanggung jawab yang diberikan orang sebagai bahu kanan Nakajima-san, menunjukkan kepercayaan pimpinan akan kesanggupanku menyelesaikan soal-soal bagianku. (NH, 194)

The responsibility given to me as the right shoulder of Nakajima-san, showed the manager's trust in handling my tasks.

Likewise, in another novel, the same quality is found in the character Suci. She had to take care of her own son who was ill. She was meant to choose either her son or Waskito as the focus of attention. But, Suci wanted both to handle both responsibilities. Suci took the fulfilment as a mother, teacher and her womanhood:

Keseimbangan dan ketenangan kelas yang menjadi tanggung jawabku sangat memperngaruhi karirku. Di samping itu, kedudukanku sebagai ibu rumah tangga hanya dapat kujalankan dengan baik jika aku tidak menemukan kesulitan di lapangan kerjaku. (PDH, 33)

The class balance and calmness in my responsibility affected my career. Besides, my role as a housewife could only be run well if I did not face any difficulty in my work place.

A full commitment of teaching profession is also well portrayed by the novelist through Suci. The character believed that the success of being a housewife was connected to her career. The dedication on her work meant that she treasured what she chooses with all potentials in helping her student:

Di lain pihak, aku merasakan kelembutan yang dalam jika memandangi muridku yang satu itu. Barangkali karena aku mengira telah mengenalnya lebih dari yang lain-lain. Jasmaniah, penampilannya memang menarik simpati. Tubuh dan wajahnya meresap pandang. Kulitanya yang coklat selalu Nampak bersih. Kadang-kadang ada keinginan padauk untuk merengkuhnya dengan lenganku, lalu berkata sehalus mungkin kepadanya bahwa aku ingin sekali menolongnya. Aku memang betul-betul ingin memberinta perhatian yang selama ini tidak didatkannya dari orang tuanya. (PDH, 56)

On the other hand, I felt the deep gentleness when I looked at that student. It might be that I though I knew him better than my other students. Physically, he was attractive. His physic and face were good looking. Her brown skin looked clean. Sometimes I wished to embrace him and said I was eager to help him. I did want to pour my attention onto him that he never got from his parents.

The same commitment on the career was showed by Muryati in *Jalan Bandungan* [Bandungan Street]. At the time when she was advised to leave the elementary school where she taught, she found it hard. A better place and plans were

waiting for her but her personal commitment which was more than the payment. It was her strong will that held her:

Mereka tentulah akan dengan mudah mendapatkan guru baru. Tetapi bagaimana mutunya? Apakah pengganti itu juga seperti aku, yang memilih mengajar sebagai profesiku yang sejati? (JB, 302)

They should be easier to find a new teacher. But how is the quality? Will the substitute be like me, who choses teaching as the real profession?

As the gender roles and sexuality always intersect with the notion of *local* norms, societal view, religious values and state law in Indonesia, a woman should go accordance to her *kodrat*.⁹⁹ Women's rights are often being neglected. Women also become an easy target of marginalisation and oppression. Seeing these phenomena, the questions of women's role, marital life and marriage are always repeated in Nh. Dini's works.

In the previous discussion narrating how Nh. Dini values relationship and love-affair, one can see that Nh. Dini herself does not have a smooth marriage with her husband. They would have to go through long emotional battles when it comes to finance and also children's welfare. This is also an indication that marriage can be one of the ways for limiting woman's independency in working and presenting themselves in the public space, not only in the kitchen.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ Julia Suryakusuma, *The State of Ibuism*. (Jakarta: Komunitas Bambu, 2011), p.49

¹⁰⁰ Sanjukta Basu, "Where are the Women: An Examination of Gender and Public Space in India." (<https://www.firstpost.com/long-reads/where-are-the-women-an-examination-of-gender-and-public-space-in-five-indian-cities-3955155.html>). Accessed. 20 June 2020.

The above facts are relevant to Kartini's fight against unfair marriage to women. Women are bound by two barriers. First, their blindness in legal system especially uneducated women. The second factor lays on the egoism of men. Marriage is about the commitment of both men and women.¹⁰¹

In addition to those notions, through some of her female protagonists, The novelist Nh. Dini tends to invite the readers particularly female readers to be a feminist by keeping their independence after marriage. This might derive from the novelist's personal experience and the bitter marriage she had with Yves Coffin, her ex-husband. A woman, in Nh. Dini's perspective should nurture her Javanese value as a devoted wife and mother yet should not neglect her nature as a free-spirited one which means a woman has the liberty to work and to expand herself professionally.

¹⁰¹ Haryati Soebadio dan Saparinah Sadli, *Kartini: Pribadi Mandiri* (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Jaya, 1990), pp. 117-9

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Nh. Dini's novels examined in this study are only small examples of the Indonesian novels that raise the voice of women. Nh. Dini shares the same concerns with the other Indonesian writers about the women's roles in societies. Nh. Dini's works may foreground the feminism aspect but expressing it differently, i.e. in a softer way. Nh. Dini voices her thoughts through daily experiences, mostly using her own experiences as themes by the childhood series and marital series as stated in her novels. Those selected novels portray the conditions that are faced by most Indonesian women. Those novels share the same portrayal of the women in each different way and contexts touching the feminism issue.

Their similarity reaches to their function as an expression to voice their identity, right, hope, dream and existence. In case of Nh. Dini's novels selected, the struggles mostly concern about dealing about how women finally embrace their destiny or *kodrat* as a woman with limited life and social access, a housewife and as a mother. Women often have to give up their dream, hope, and career. The reason to do so is somehow because of the enforcement of the social rules emphasizing the rules of woman as the house and children nurturer. The belief of women as those who function as a carer is fully supported by religious views and societal commitment. Yet each novel also has their own particular way of resistance against the still-dominant Indonesian society stereotyping women and their roles. The character little Dini such as in *Sebuah Lorong*

di Kotaku [An Isle in My Town] and *Sekayu* when she forced herself riding a man's bike not only describe the masculine side of a woman, but it also challenges the traditional and patriarchal notion that women should use all machines suited to them.

This thesis has argued that Nh. Dini's novels portray the life and the condition of Indonesian women through her stories. Seen as someone subordinate, women play a role that is limited by the socio-cultural norms, religious values, *adat*, and the state law. The aforementioned factors are among the small things which force Nh. Dini to portray her heroines as strong and independent women. She also tells her readers her personal experience in marriage and her brutal separation with the husband through the stories.

The first finding in this study shows that Nh. Dini values relationship and love the most. She often portrays her personal life into her stories. It is such an invitation for the readers to reflect their life through Dini's life which is portrayed through all the stories. The novel *Pada Sebuah Kapal (on A Ship)*, for instance Dini laments her childhood life and tries to tell her readers the feeling of being unwanted by the mother. She also expressed the oppressions as a female that she experiences in her life through her characters. In the novel *La Barka*, she takes two heroines to become the main characters. These two ladies later go against the patriarchal world like what Dini always does in her life.

Dini tastes the different shapes and experiences represented by the novels' characters. In the childhood series, the young Dini experiences the beauty of

relationship with her cousins, families, classmates and neighbours. The beauty of sharing during the colonialized period is well illustrated. They not only share food, but also anxiety, worries and cares.

The level of relationship escalates following the leap of time and age. The values change as the characters transform into more and more complex. The relationship becomes dependence as illustrated by the way the young Dini try to hold the cousin present physically at all time. Feeling lonely and jealousy are well portrayed as the characters turn teenagers as needs gradually demand more fulfilments. Relationship is challenged dramatically in a group of women with the chance of affair and betrayal as depicted in *La Barka*.

The emphasis of those portrayal is the patriarchal system which interacts with the value of customs, norms, religious beliefs and the state laws assign the gender role plays. In addition, those regulations also strengthen a hostile conception of women's position and role in the Indonesian society. Women will likely be the victim of the socio-oppression. Nh. Dini is the example of that victim. The character decides to pull herself out from the unhappy marriage and dominant husband because she wants to keep her independence as a woman. Following the divorce, she has had to struggles emotionally and particularly financially. During those moments, she realizes that the love from her friends and family are the most important things. Therefore, she values it the most and reflects it through the stories of the novels. Yet as a woman, she also has an unfulfilled desire. Therefore, all of the stories are such an invitation to her readers to see Nh. Dini's love-starving, longing, will and desire in living her life.

Marriage has become one of the problems in developing one's career and limiting a woman's movement in the professional arena. Suci in *Pertemuan Dua Hati* [The Encounter of Two Hearts], Muryati in *Jalan Bandungan* [Bandungan Street], Kedasih and Sumirat in *Tirai Menurun* [The Dropping Curtain], and Hiroko in *Namaku Hiroko* [My Name is Hiroko] are several clear examples on the notion. They all are forced by their culture and environment to give their dreams up. In relating her characters to marriage, the novelist suggests that marriage can be an open gate for the next escalating happiness of a woman's life and the trap at the same time. Happy marriage is an ideal place to dedicate the femininity and the fulfilment of women's perfection as Betty Friedan also mentions in *The Feminine Mystique*. Marriage, on the other hand, can be a trap for unhappy ones. The flock of unhappy life of women are completely portrayed in *La Barka* [La Barka], *Hati yang Damai* [A Peaceful Heart], *Namaku Hiroko* [My Name is Hiroko] and the novel series of Nh. Dini's semiautobiography's ones when marriage turns into disasters.

All characters in Nh. Dini's novels find their own ways in handling the marriage. Characters enclaved in a good marriage, using them as blessings by multiplying their gifts in nurturing the family. The happy wives are ready for the routines and prepared for any possibility in the marital bind such as long distance relationship, the absence of husbands, sudden death of the loved ones and separation.

The ones with unfortunate marriage anticipate the marital disasters with different reactions. A Japanese house maid in *Namaku Hiroko* [My Name is Hiroko]

stays calm and silently serves her role as a domestic assistant without significant emotions, in spare time she obtains money as a prostitute, while the other housewife with the same name stays in her unhappy marriage. Yu Saiyem in *Langit dan Bumi Sahabat Kami* [The Sky and Earth are Our Friends] is also forced to sleep with men for money to send food to her prisoned husband. Dati in *Hati yang Damai* [A Peaceful Heart] performs a worried wife with uncertainty and resists to adultery in uncertainty, opposite to her husband's sister in laws who compensates loneliness with affairs.

Another unhappy wife treats the failed marriage as God's destiny, no matter hard the route. Avoiding marital conflict by total dedication and acceptance is also firmly recited through some faithful characters such as Dati, Muryani and her mother, to name some. Nh. Dini's characters in the marital series novels reacts her dynamic marriage in different moods from self contemplation to negligence.

Customs and local backgrounds are those affecting the reactions to unhappy marriage. Women with western backgrounds such as a group of married women in *La Barka* are more open and expressive in countering their marriage. They put their happiness on the top shelf. They face their unhappy marriage with compensations such as vacations, escaping routines and finding other ones to seek for new happiness. They look more optimistic and easier to recover emotionally. In contrast, Nh. Dini in her series, requires more time in handling all marital conflicts.

Desperation, disappointment, anger and compensation are up and down in different channels of the series. No matter how tragic the marriage, Nh. Dini cares about the image, children, local wisdom and religious thoughts. She controls all

obstacles quite naturally though a divorce can a final remedy for her own perpetual piece.

Feminism in relationship and marriage is well channeled in all Nh. Dini's novels through her characters. They are not the explosive kinds. They are not feminal militants. They are women and housewives with self controlled demeanors. All is representation of the writer herself with Javanese background and tradition: traditional feminism model.

Patriarchal system determines the shape in family relationship, education and study choice and field, working environment and society. Society and religion both confirm that marriage is sacred. Some marriage is arranged based on other people's opinions. In minor cases, women have freedom in building personal relationship but without neglecting parents' voice, societal view and religious verses. Women protect marriage stronger than men as they are connected to the symbol of marriage itself such as caring husband daily needs, domestic works and children.

The women characters in Nh. Dini's novels are not perfect. They are brave, naughty, independent but still care much more with traditional values such as personal appropriateness, local values and social system. The female protagonists are mostly portrayed as free-spirited ones yet in most aspects of their life, they are still dictated by external factors including customs, tradition and social constructions. In this case, the feminism notion cannot be radical or practices fully as the characters have such limitation.

The colors of occupations portrayed in the novels are the typical female jobs. Women choose jobs based on traditional roles from housewives, elderly sitters, teachers, shop keepers, domestic workers, stewardess, writers and prostitutes. Nh. Dini repeatedly confirms that working for married wives is a sort of anticipation of unfavorable marriage, woman independence and proof of woman capability. In Nh. Dini's views, double works are seen as independent and multi tasking not double oppression.

Nh. Dini, the novelist, casts the problems of marriage especially women point view. It involves emotional, sexual and financial complexity, to name some. The novelist foregrounds the issue in such a calm way. Nh. Dini does not shout out the issue in an extreme. The novelist does not vulgarly throw the sexual issue in relationship and marriage but does it in a very elegant way. Nh. Dini does it properly.

Nh. Dini could be regarded as a Indonesian Traditional Feminist. Nh. Dini's Feminism model could be said to resemble the Structural and Functional one as she convinces readers using the obedient children, good friends and Indonesian typical housewives. The novelist does not stop there. Nh. Dini compares some characters of the bad and good wives. Suci in *Pertemuan Dua Hati* [The Encounter of Two Hearts], Muryani in *Jalan Bandung* [Bandungan Street], Dini's mother in all childhood series, Dati in *Hati yang Damai* [A Peaceful Heart] and both Rina and Francine in *La Barka* represent the obedient women. They are all perfect. Sri in *Pada Sebuah Kapal* (*On A ship*), Yvonne and Christine both in *La Barka*, Hiroko in *Namaku Hiroko* [My Name is Hiroko] and the character Dini signify the contrary ones. They are all hit by

unhappy marriage and commit adultery and affairs to prove their existence. They are smart yet fragile. They are not radical as the women still believe in the marital institutions and men's affection.

Even though Nh. Dini focuses on the women characters, some parts of the novels also deliver good male characters supporting the women characters. Some masculine characters are such as a teacher Samirin in *Orang-Orang Tran* [Tran People] who saves a young girl who is forced to get married in such a young age. Handoko, Muryati's second husband in *Jalan Bandungan* [Bandungan Street] who supports his wife to have a better education. Wardoyo in *Tirai Menurun* [The Dropping Curtain] who backs up Sumirat's hopes to participate in Javanese traditional play. They are all male characters who give women their future.

Nh. Dini seems to blend the Structural-Functional, Liberal and Ecofeminism at the same time. The novelist portrays the characters fitting most the mixture of the three types of Feminism. They are all grey types trapped in hopes, love and efforts to find better relationship and marriage.

As concluding remarks, this study limits itself to focusing on how Nh. Dini challenges the Indonesian patriarchal culture through her writings. As the focus is on the feminism of the novels, this thesis only focuses on the characters and novels which portray the notions. Therefore, this thesis overlooks several possibilities regarding Indonesian feminism particularly in Nh. Dini's novels that may be seen from different aspects. This thesis advocates further researches to focus on the relation between like the relationship between parents and children especially the depiction of dominant

husband/father and powerless wife/mother within patriarchal culture portrayed in Nh. Dini's novels.

Last but not least, it is good to mention what has been said by R.A. Kartini that when a relationship ends, it does not mean that the couple stop loving each other, they only stop hurting one another. Divorce in marriage should be the last option when love is absent and the couple punish each other with carelessness, disobedience and affairs as portrayed in Nh. Dini's novels.



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