

## RESISTANCE, HUMANISM, AND ISLAMIC VALUE IN RATNA INDRASWARI IBRAHIM'S *LEMAH TANJUNG*

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### **Abstract**

Islam as a discourse of resistance is not a contemporary issue. Islam occurred to encounter injustice and oppression. Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim, an author with disabilities, cannot be detached from the strength of her era. She wrote a novel *Lemah Tanjung* as a form of resistance to her era. As an author, she experienced essential events in her life. This research concerned on two things: the Islamic value in the resistance in *Lemah Tanjung* and the value of Islam's veiled resistance. This study implemented Fairclough's critical discourse theory which incorporated three basic components in analyzing text. The method administered was a qualitative. The data were collected from the novel *Lemah Tanjung*. The results of the study revealed that there was a hidden meaning in the content of Islamic resistance encompassing issues for the general public. The series of criticalities contains a hidden meaning that requires to be unveiled. That people desire enlightenment, liberation and previous issues which are necessary to be discussed openly. In this study, polite resistance possesses a significant contribution in society.

**Keywords:** Resistance, humanism, Islamic values

### **INTRODUCTION**

Islam is a religion which fights against injustice. Basically, Islam came to fight tyranny, injustice, and oppression. In the Qur'an, there are 315 verses indicating tyranny, and there are at least three forms of oppression conveyed in the verses of the Qur'an, which are *Dzalim* to Allah, *Dzalim* to other Humans and *Dzalim* to oneself. One of which is in the surah Ali Imran verse 135 which highlights the actions of wrongdoers against Allah and himself (Q.S Ali Imran, 3: 135). However, in the Qur'an, the term *Dzalim* (Despotic) which appears is definitely correlated with behaviors that are categorized as *kufri*, both in terms of context and the structure of the verses employed (Muizzuddin, 2014), frequently concerning humans oppressing other humans.

This discourse about injustice was raised as a response to the current condition of Muslims. The orientation of Muslims' struggle by several people or groups has been

narrowed, for instance the spirit of *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* (do good deeds and prevent bad) is merely restricted to raiding places of immorality (particularly when approaching Ramadan only), boycotts of new sects considered heretical, and various fatwas designated to maintain the purity of Islam, and all of which are relatively performed by means of violence. However, on the other hand, the spirit of *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* seems to disappear when encountered with injustice in the economic, social, and political fields.

As a Discourse, Literary Work was born and written associated with the existing socio-cultural phenomena. Pradopo (2021) asserts that literary works were invented in the historical and socio-cultural context of a nation, in which authors were part of its society. Thus, literary works cannot disregard the study of historical backgrounds and the literary system: the universe, the reader, and the author. Information about the author owns a crucial role in literary study activities. It is because literary works are essentially a reflection of the author's experience (Teeuw, 1984; Selden, 1985; Eneste, 1982).

Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim is an author who cannot be detached from the power of her era. As a writer, she experienced paramount events in her life. The experience she underwent did not immediately change the course of her life. There was a process in living her life as an author and a Muslim.

*Lemah Tanjung* owns a tremendous power as a connection of Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim's expression of insecurity and arbitrariness by capitalism against Malang city. Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim developed many discourses through *Lemah Tanjung*, encompassing economics, politics, law and the environment. The discourse promoted through *Lemah Tanjung* possesses a significant power, particularly in the economic and political fields.

It is a concrete example of power over the suppression of human values. The context of this power might merely be interpreted from a literary and imaginative perspective because it is not written in the history books. However, in the context of news and stories, it genuinely occurred that *Lemah Tanjung's* novel was considered dangerous because there was a hidden resistance. It implies friendly resistance by administering literature, writing, and intellectuals. Therefore, *Lemah Tanjung* attempts to utilize Islam as a system of values and norms to solve the problems of the lives of all creatures on this earth as an expression of a sense of responsibility.

One of the efforts to comprehend a discourse in a text is by identifying a literary work with the discourse analysis approach of Norman Fairclough. The concept of discourse based on Fairclough (2001) is a form of 'social practice' which owns three implications. First, discourse is part of society, indicating that discourse cannot stand alone by being detached from society. Second, comprehending discourse as a social practice implies that discourse is a social process. As society is processing and developing, discourse (language) is also processing and developing. Third, discourse is processing according to what is conditioned in society. There is a kind of dialectic

between language and social conditions. Discourse is affected by social conditions, but social conditions are also manipulated by discourse.

Eriyanto (2001) Fairclough developed an analytical model which incorporates discourse analysis based on linguistics and social thinking and is integrated into social change. The form of the model advanced by Fairclough is identified as social change.

Fairclough divides discourse analysis into three parts, encompassing Text, Discourse Practice and Sociocultural Practice (Fairclough, 2001). This discourse analysis is administered to perceive how the use of spoken and written language as a social practice. Social practice in discourse analysis is understood as causing an interrelated relationship between events which are detached from reality and social structures (Sobur, 2006).

Norman Fairclough's theory is employed to investigate Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim's *Lemah Tanjung* in perceiving the resistance and values of Islamic Humanism in the novel. The basis utilization by Fairclough in conducting the analysis is the Linguistic approach, because the essence of literary works use language as the medium. Furthermore, Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim arranged literary works because she has unveiled the phenomenon of imbalance and injustice in working on the environment of Malang city. Through her literary works and the condition of her disabled body, Ratna is able to initiate resistance to hegemony which performs unfairly and arbitrarily in preserving the environment.

Based on the above explanation, Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim work possesses the value of veiled resistance that is Islamic. Therefore, this research is essential because Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim work seems to own merely humanitarian values, but in fact it contains hidden resistance that is Islamic.

## METHODOLOGY

This research is categorized into literary criticism. It implemented Norman Fairclough's critical discourse theory to scrutinize the data. The data source of the study is Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim's *Lemah Tanjung* published by Grasindo Lintas Media in 2003. The data in this study were collected by employing the documentation method from the novel. Technical analysis of the data in this study administered Norman Fairclough's critical discourse analysis which implements three stages of analysis, encompassing microstructure (text), mesostructure (structure and practice of media work), and macrostructure (social society).

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study revealed that there was a hidden meaning in the content of Islamic resistance involving issues for the general public. The covert resistance in question is methods of resistance considered polite, kind, unpretentious, and sincere. It seems not patronizing and not in an Islamic way. The analysis results of the Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim's *Lemah Tanjung* with Norman Fairclough's critical discourse analysis

which departs from the Linguistic analysis in the form of Microstructure, Mesostructure and Macrostructural are elaborated as follows.

### **Microstructure: The Struggle against Environment, Injustice and Arbitrariness**

Fairclough's critical discourse analysis initially performs the text dimension. In this case, the linguistic dimension of the text by investigating the vocabulary, semantics and sentence structure is tremendously crucial, thus, comprehending the text is the key to conduct an analysis. In acquiring the objective of microstructure, three things are required to be implemented: first is a representation which refers to what is demonstrated in the text, second is a relationship which refers to the relationship between the text and the reader, and the third is identity concerning the identity of the writer and reader (Eriyanto, 2001).

In *Lemah Tanjung*, we uncovered how Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim really cares about the environment and ecosystems. The city of Malang is a special place for Ratna as illustrated in the novel *Lemah Tanjung* as it is her place of residence. Tanjung's weakness is a reflection of Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim's who struggled in fighting for environmental harmony in Malang city.

*Lemah Tanjung*, the title of the novel, is the remaining urban forest and city lungs of Malang, containing 128 plant species and is a shelter for 36 rare bird species. The struggle of Mrs. Indri, a character in the novel, has to deal with the power and tyranny of capitalism, which are developers or investors who argue for development. Mrs. Indri's struggle is presented in the quote 1.

*...therefore, I have to stay here to defend this land, a watershed and full of birds of 28 species and various kinds of rare plants. That greed is what we want to eradicate (Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim, 2003).*

This quote provides an illustration of Mrs. Indri's efforts in fighting for the environment, particularly Lemah Tanjung. Lemah Tanjung, which is the lungs of Malang city, is significantly essential to maintain its sustainability. The travesty for development and job creation is frequently echoed by developers to streamline their business *...don't forget, we open up job opportunities for many people, not like those who usually just talk... (2003: 221)*

The power of capitalism through this propagation conveys their power and arbitrariness in performing development. The developer is also considered as a group which places nature as a common ethnicity that requires to be discussed for its sustainability, but tends to be annexed as its economic business area. Hence, the existence of this urban forest is acknowledged tremendously crucial for the people of Malang, as the quote 2:

*...not only has clear water, but there are springs. If it is covered with concrete, it will flood the city of Malang. Moreover, this area is located on the APP campus, in which Indonesia's most talented young people are educated as robust agricultural extension workers. (Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim, 2003: 6)*

The struggle performed in Lemah Tanjung is essentially a struggle against arbitrariness and injustice. Mrs. Indri's concern regarding the failure of her struggle to maintain a weak cape can be observed in the quote 3:

*I told him they couldn't tell me to move out of this place. There are many rare plants and many kinds of birds .... (Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim, 2003)*

Mrs. Indri's concern occurred as the Ruilslag won by PT Bangun Kerta required Mrs. Indri to move to the land provided by PT Bangun Kerta in the Randu Agung area. The land change by the company is not a solution since it is not able replace Lemah Tanjung as the lungs and heart of Malang city which provides various rare plants and habitats for bird species. Mrs. Indri's struggle also receives an assistance from Mrs. Gita who fought to thwart the legislation which was terribly discriminatory and acknowledged to be damaging the environmental ecosystem of Malang city (Ratna Indraswari, 2003).

Mrs. Indri were uncommonly anxious about the ecosystem in the city of Malang because the destruction of the ecosystem in Malang is associated with climate change. Hence, Malang may become the same city as Surabaya city. Mrs. Indri is someone who possesses an eminently robust stance in maintaining the ecosystem and protecting the environment. Mrs. Indri's courage against capitalism (developer) who owns capital signifies the strength of Mrs. Indri's struggle in defending her environment and her love for the environment.

*Now, I imagine, that brave woman is still defending the land. Her love for the environment is extraordinary. She doesn't seem afraid of the situation she's in (Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim, 2003)*

Moreover, the power of capitalism (developer) has devastated and abandoned the humanity of Mrs. Indri and her friends. The disguise of development and modernization is the reason for capitalism (developers) to establish development and eviction without considering the ecosystem and humanity of Mrs. Indri as the legal owner of the land.

Ecosystem problems are anthropocentrism in nature, in which the human center is situated as the center of the universe which calculates the utility value, hence in this context, nature is considered not to possess value for itself (Keraf, 2005). Thus, in this context, developer's power is acknowledged as a modernist power and possess progress value without considering natural and ecosystem aspects. The continuous process of industrialization, modernization and capitalization used to cause ecological problems. It is because the process is considered the easiest and fastest way to produce maximum profits with low production costs (Gotz, 1980 in Laily Mutmainnah 2020)

Genuinely, the endeavor to defend Lemah Tanjung is eminently burdensome, involving many experts, particularly environmental experts. Environmental experts who are biology lecturers are anticipated to strengthen their ranks in defending Lemah Tanjung as the lungs of Malang city (Ratna Indraswari, 2003).

An attempt in the novel Lemah Tanjung (2003) specifies the writer's concern for the environment. Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim did not solely elaborate about her concern for the environment, but also her endeavor as a human being in defending the rights of land

management of Mrs. Indri and her friends. The struggle of Mrs. Indri and her friends is not merely a struggle for ecosystems and property rights, but also a complicated struggle against an arbitrary capitalist system.

Islam vigorously rejects injustice; the Prophet Muhammad was sent to deliver Islamic teachings to save and defend justice. It can be identified from the many verses of the Qur'an which elaborate about justice. Shihab (2000) argues that many verses of the Qur'an discussing about justice provide evidence that Allah commands justice and opposes injustice. In the context of *Lemah Tanjung*, Ratna as a Muslim and activist undoubtedly understand the injustice which occurred.

### **Mesostructure: Human Values and Gender Resistance**

Mesostructural practice is associated with intertextuality, which is the practice of mediating relations between texts, society and its culture. It incorporates the sequence of discourses at the social level, that every discursive practice is admitted as a historical legacy and a peculiarity of sociocultural practice in that discourse (Fairclough. 2001).

*Lemah Tanjung*, the struggle for humanity is a problem conveyed by Ratna Indraswari. The characters presented in *Lemah Tanjung* possess respective roles in fighting for the environment and humanity. In terms of an attempt for the weak, Tanjung is also a struggle for humanity, by defending the existing land and ecosystem which implies fighting to protect the rights of legitimate land voters.

*"I also saw the deep seriousness on the face of Pak Rahmat, a teacher who remained in Lemah Tanjung and was forced to retire early by the director."*  
(Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim, 2003)

The quote above illustrates that the case for the release of Lemah Tanjung is not merely associated with the ecosystems, but also with the humanitarian issues. Mr. Rahmat who is a teacher who lives in Lemah Tanjung must give himself up to retire early due to the coercion from his superiors. However, he still hopes to live in Lemah Tanjung and keeps defending the land he owns.

Mr Rahmat endeavors to defend his rights and human dignity as the rightful owner. Meanwhile, it seems that the developer (Roy) who has paid dearly owns his eyes closed as they are tempted by the benefits that they will receive. Hence, they performed various ways to scare the landowners by providing the land a fence.

*"The developers who feel that they have paid and completed the requirements for the ruislag still fence the area with zinc, even though they know that there are still residents there, Mrs. Indri, Mr. Rahmat and Mr. Samin. (Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim, 2003).*

The quote above displays that the struggle of figures such as Mrs. Indri, Mr. Rahmat and Mr. Samin in defending Lemah Tanjung as their land, has received opposition from the investors. They also execute psychological violence for those who are still defending their land. Characters such as Mrs. Indri, Mr. Samin and Mr. Rahmat experience psychological violence in the form of fencing the areas that they legally own. Their endeavor is a struggle for their prior right to live in their environment. However, the

owners of capital arrogantly kept fencing off their land, thus they received psychological violence.

Furthermore, the people also received psychological terror when they burned the trees in Lemah Tanjung under the travesty of an ordinary accident. The fire in Lemah Tanjung seemed to impact psychological pressure that the land was terribly unsafe for them.

*"APP complex on fire!" (Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim, 2003).*

*"All we saw was the blackened trees. Burnt leaves and twigs are scattered on the bare ground. The smell of the fire can still be smelled. (Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim, 2003)*

In terms of gender, Mrs. Indri and Ms. Gita represent women who fight against injustice, Mrs. Indri and Ms. Gita symbolize women's resistance and women's equality in proposing opinions in the public sphere. Women do not only dwell on domestic and household issues, but Mrs. Indri's social figure also represents a woman who fights against her deprived rights.

In a patriarchal society, a person's gender role is frequently determined by gender. Women who admitted as a second sex figure are acknowledged more suitable to stay at home and take care of children, while men are identified to be stronger figures and capable of seeking sustenance, hence, they possess a role outside the home. As a breadwinner, cultural assumptions like this used to benefit men and provide men a broad role, thus, men receive a higher and honorable status than women (Umar, 2001). It is also as corroborated by Fakih Manshur explaining that gender issues are understood as a natural problem and a gift from God that cannot be changed (Fakih, 2001). This concept affects the social system of society which is more favorable to men.

The character of Mrs. Indri as a lecturer, and her struggles which do not merely dwell on domestic problems, is the picture that Ratna is eagerly providing to the readers. Ratna is eminently aware that women are the same essential figure as men who have to possess an equal role and not solely dealing with domestic issues. As Qurays Shihab (2007) asserted, women also own public rights, encompassing work, as long as she requires the job and is able to avoid negative things. In this case, Mrs. Indri is the figure that Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim is willing to portray as an educated woman and possess a tremendous crucial public role.

However, the author is also aware that women are also vulnerable to violence, as the case of burning land in Lemah Tanjung signifies that how the developer as a capitalist is attempting to affect the psychology of Ms. Indri and other friends and seems to imply that Lemah Tanjung is not safe and prone to fires. Generally, gender violence refers to power relations. Power is a capitalist system which manipulates and used to commit violence both physically and psychologically (Purwati, 2020).

### Sociocultural Practices (Metrostructural) Resistance in Literature and Injustice

Sociocultural practice is part of all contexts which are outside the text, indicating that all scopes of discourse contexts possess broad relations associated with culture and society and politics (Fairclough, 2001). Thus, in the analysis of sociocultural practice, it is more concerned on dimensions outside the text and its relationship with the text and the author.

In sociocultural practice, Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim is undoubtedly productive disabled writer. She has written poetry, short stories and novels, although her most works are short stories published in various media such as Kompas, Jawa Pos, Horison, Suara Pembaharuan, Republika and others (encyclopedia Kemendikbud, 2022). The works receiving the most attention comprise of *Bukan Pinang dibelah Dua* (2003), *Lemah Tanjung* (2003) and *Pecinan* (2011). In most of her works, Ratna illustrates female characters and their resistance to arbitrariness, thus, she creates literary works as a form of resistance to injustice.

In *Lemah Tanjung*, Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim displays the character of Syarifah, a woman with disability, as a representation of herself struggling to defend Lemah Tanjung along with other activists. Ratna is not an author who merely sinks into words, but she is also involved in various foundations such as the Bakti Conscience Foundation, the Entropic Foundation of Malang, the Foundation and Culture of Pajoeng Malang and the Pelangi Forum itself which is centered in her home. Her involvement as an activist with various foundations makes Ratna appear as a person who legitimately cares about social and environmental activities.

From 1994 to 2004, he fought with environmental activists who rejected the regulation or exchange over the urban forest as the lungs of Malang city. PT Duta Perkasa won the ruislag tender and turned Lemah Tanjung into a luxury residence and hotel (Muntaha Mansur, 2018). The story demonstrated by Ratna in the novel *Lemah Tanjung* is not solely a blind imagination of Ratna, but a social concern and her resistance in maintaining the ecosystem of Malang city. Ratna is not in a mere imaginative view, but is fighting against the capitalist system which commits tyranny. In this case, Ratna is directly associated, and she made her house as a gathering place for activists to organize meetings and collect resistance strategies. Therefore, Ratna appears in two figures of resistance, which are Ratna as an activist in reality, and Syarifah as a representation of Ratna's resistance in the novel *Lemah Tanjung*.

In addition to Syarifah's figure, a figure who also performed the resistance was Mrs. Indri. Mrs. Indri in reality was Ir. Hindrarsih Cahnadi who is a close friend of Ratna. She is a retired APP lecturer who is portrayed as a serious woman on opposing evictions on APP land and deciding to survive with various risks and psychological pressures received from the authorities and developers.

The resistance of Syarifah and Mrs. Indri depicts the resistance of a disabled queen who possesses no fear in loving her environment of Malang city. It was as Ratna herself stated on Monday, January 20, 2003:



*“Really, because I am Arema (a person from Malang), I am not willing to lose Lemah Tanjung. I am very sad... therefore, the twists and turns of life, love, and the breath of resistance in Lemah Tanjung’s novel are so strong and easy to read. I fight not physically, but through literature.”* (Abdi Purnomo, 2012)

The resistance in literature provided by Ratna is an eternal resistance. Hence, the readers of *Lemah Tanjung* novel will always remember the case of Lemah Tanjung swap bolster which was won by the authorities. Readers of *Lemah Tanjung* will also commemorate the dirty practices of the unfair capitalism system which merely concern on profit under the pretext of modernization.

Literature also has strengths which are distinguished from other disciplines, that is able to provide images of psychological forces and resistance in the human subconscious to determine good and bad. Novels like *Lemah Tanjung* which convey resistance and struggle against the Malang city ecosystem are undoubtedly essential as resistance novels.

On the other hand, Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim is also an author with disability. According to her, her mother, was the one who encouraged and molded her to be this way. Her mother never distinguished herself and provided privileges to her other siblings. This attitude was encouraged to make Ratna independent and not dependent on others. It also emboldened Ratna to continue to be active at the Bakni Conscience Foundation which employs disabled people and encourages their independence.

*“If such writings keep appearing,” Ratna said with a serious expression, “can keep people with disabilities away from willing to be independent, to be subjects, and making them as objects that should be pitied constantly.”* (Abdi Purnomo, 2012)

## CONCLUSION

The novel *Lemah Tanjung* provides awareness to the readers about the importance of maintaining ecosystems. This novel also portrays the struggles produced by the characters and activists against the strong capitalist system under the pretext of progress. The reflection that Ratna Indraswari Ibrahim demonstrates in this novel is not merely fictitious but reflective and invites people to care about the ecosystem.

The various resistances performed are a reality that she presents as a writer who cares about the social life of her community and environment. Meanwhile, Norman Fairclough's discourse analysis method unveils an overview of the macrostructural resistance based on linguistic and semantic analysis of *Lemah Tanjung*'s literary text.

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