

## OUTLINE OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDONESIAN LITERATURE

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### A. Introduction

Indonesia, a nation with the philosophy of *bhineka tunggal ika* (different but still one), which consists of 17,504 islands with 1,340 ethnic groups and 540 languages, certainly has cultural diversity. So does its literature. In each region and ethnic group, Indonesia has its own literary tradition called regional literature or traditional literature. In addition, Indonesia has national literature, which is literature in Indonesian that is created, filled, and carried out by Indonesians from various regions, regions, and ethnic groups.

Hence, the breadth and complexity of the work and development of literature in Indonesia, as it not only struggles with the situation and conditions of each era, but also the development of content, form, type, and innovation, as an implication of the vastness of Indonesia and its regional diversity. Therefore, it is impossible for this paper to comprehensively and detail the breadth and complexity due to time and space constraints. Therefore, this article will only outline them.

As an introduction, Indonesian literature can be viewed in two ways. The first side views Indonesian literature as literature born from the Indonesian people with its diverse tribes and languages that have existed for hundreds to thousands of years in the form of inscriptions and ancient manuscripts from the 3rd century AD to the present day. The second side views Indonesian literature as literature that is packaged in the Indonesian language, which has only developed since the 20th century when Indonesians officially began using Indonesian as the national language and language of unity. This was marked by the widespread publication of literary works in the press (newspapers and magazines) and books, both published by the private sector and the colonial government.

Ajip Rosidi in his book *When Was Indonesian Literature Born* argues that Indonesian literature was born long before the Indonesian language was formalized. Then, it was the sense of nationality that was the beginning of the birth of Indonesian literature. The sense of nationality began to appear in literary works in 1920 and 1921. This was marked by the publication of poems with a national character in *Jong Sumatra* magazine. The authors were Muhammad Yamin, Mohammad Hatta, Sanusi Pane, and other youths. Meanwhile, Umar Junus in *Medan Ilmu Pengetahuan* magazine expressed his opinion about the birth of Indonesian literature, which actually only emerged after Indonesian officially became the language of unity in the Youth Pledge in 1928.

### B. The Condition of Indonesian Literature During the Dutch Colonial Period

The arrival of the Dutch who colonized Indonesia for 350 years made literature in the archipelago get Western influence which later gave birth to Modern Indonesian Literature. Modern Indonesian Literature itself, in the view of various Indonesian literary experts, emerged around the 1920s with the birth of literary works that in form began to leave the Old Literature style (traditional Malay) and in content showed the nature of Indonesianness (in the sense of preliminary efforts to obtain its own language, history and culture for Indonesian national concepts and ideals). In the field of poetry, A. Teeuw mentions Muhammad Yamin with his book entitled *Tanah Air* as a milestone / pioneer of modern Indonesian poetry. In the field of prose, the Dutch expert on Indonesian literature named Marah Rusli with his romance *Siti Nurbaya* as a pioneer.

The works mentioned above are works that use formal Malay (or the colonial government calls it high Malay). These works in formal (high) Malay were published by the Dutch colonial government's institution, Balai Pustaka. In the beginning, Balai Pustaka was a People's Reading Commission (*commisie voor de volkslectuur*) that aimed to provide a variety of readings for the natives that were morally and politically clean and safe. Of course, clean and safe is meant here from the perspective of the colonial government, that is, one that does not threaten and endanger their status quo. Modern Indonesian literature is often referred to the works published by Balai Pustaka, which was established in 1908 and published a lot of indigenous literature since the 1920s.

However, Balai Pustaka was not the only literary publisher in Indonesia. Outside of this, there was a proliferation of works circulated in newspapers, magazines and private publishers. These works, which were not published by Balai Pustaka, were written in Malay Pasar (low Malay, the language of everyday life) by natives, Indo-Europeans and peranakan Chinese. In fact, the works of the peranakan Chinese, according to Claudine Salmon, outnumber those published by Balai Pustaka. The total number of works by peranakan Chinese writers between 1870-1960 reached 3005 titles. This beats Balai Pustaka's publications, as noted by A. Teeuw, which only numbered 400 during 1917-1967.

These Peranakan Chinese literary works are romances and short stories in the form of martial arts stories, love stories and concubinage, such as "Nyai Sumirah" by Thio Tjin Boen (1917), "Nyai Aisah" by Tan Boen Kim (1915), and "Nyai Marsinah" (1922). After romance and concubinage, the next themes developed by peranakan Chinese authors were inter-ethnic marriages (Chinese men marrying natives), as seen in the romances Bunga

Roos of Tjikembang (by Kwee Tak Hoay, 1927), Ular Cantik (by Soe Lie Piet, 1929), Itu Bidadari of Rawa Pening (by Tan Hoeng Boen, 1929), Bunga Roos Merah (by Chang Ming Tse, 1939). Another theme was the crimes that occurred in the society at that time.

Socio-political themes were also the target of authors of this descent. The story of the Indonesian Communist prisoners in Boven Digul after their rebellion failed, for example, was written in the romances Blood and Tears in Boven Digul by Oen Bo Tik (1931), Drama in Boven Digul by Oen Bo Tik (1931), and "Merah" by Liem King Hoo (1937). It was such literary works that made the colonial government "burn with envy" and the Director of Volkslectuur, D.A. Rinkes, labeled them as wild, inferior and immoral.

Besides the literary works of Chinese authors, the colonial period also saw the publication of popular literature written by Indo-Dutch and native journalists, in the form of translations, adaptations and original works. These works were initially published as serialized stories. Works written by Indo-Dutch journalists in Market Malay included the detective story Lawah-Lawah Merah by Pon Jest, which was adapted from the French by E.F Wiggers (1875). Later the same year, Hikayat Robinson Crusoe by A.F Von De Wall was published. From then until 1900, many novels were translated and adapted from the West. The first novel that originally told the story of Indonesia was Hikajat Nyai Dasima by G. Francis.

On the part of native authors, along with the growth of the press, Mas Marco Kartodikromo's Mata Gelap (1914) and Rasa Merdeka (1924) appeared. There were also the romances Hikajat Siti Mariah (1912) by Haji Moekti, Nyai Permana (1912) by R.M. Tirta Adhi Soerjo, and Hikayat Kadiroen by Semaoen. As with the works of Chinese authors, the works of these non-Balai Pustaka indigenous authors were labeled as wild and morally corrupting.

Furthermore, what cannot be separated from Indonesian literature during the Dutch colonial period is the birth of the *Pujangga Baru* magazine whose works and thoughts in it became a milestone of an important generation in Indonesian literature. Although before the birth of this magazine, there were other magazines such as *Seri Posestaka*, *Pandji Poestaka*, *Jong Sumatra*, *Timboel*, and many more, *Pujangga Baru* Magazine became a gathering place for Indonesian culturalists, artists, and intellectuals who were influential in determining the direction of Indonesian culture and national ideals.

Until the 1940s (before 1942), Indonesian literature was under the supervision of the Dutch East Indies government. Closer to the 1940s, that is, before the arrival of Japan and the end of the Dutch colonial period, there was a period called the transition period, which was around 1937-1942.

During this period, romances were published written by indigenous people of Islamic origin. These authors are often referred to as *surau* authors. This term was given to them because these authors were graduates of the Thawalib religious school in Padang Panjang. The nickname was given by a critic named A.S. Hamid in the article "Bandjir Roman", the nickname was actually derogatory because at that time there was competition and ideological battles with those who opposed Islam.

Most of these authors' works were published by publishers often termed Medan publishers. In fact, according to Sumardjo (1999: 115), the publishing house was not only centered in Medan, but also in Bukittinggi and Padang.

The works of these authors, namely Tamar Djaya, Joesof Sou'yb, Matu Mona, and others, are often regarded as "picisan" romances, especially by Roolvink (1955). The nickname is actually tendentious in order to inhibit the dissemination of these romances because they endangered the Dutch colonial government. The romances are actually detective stories. However, the content, as can be seen from various research results (one of which is Erlis Nur Mujiningsih's research (Language Center, 2005)), infiltrates the ideology of nationalism and movements against the Dutch.

Before the Japanese came to power in Indonesia, Indonesian literature already had its own fertile and diverse life as a result of its struggles with the political, social, cultural, religious, and other aspects in search of an Indonesian identity.

However, since the Japanese invaded Indonesia, things have changed and it has been harder than ever. It is often said in Indonesian history that the 3.5 years of Japanese colonization was harder than the 3.5 centuries of Dutch colonization. Why?

During the Japanese period the song "Indonesia Raya" was forbidden to sing, the red and white flag could not fly in the sky, associations were stopped, mass media (newspapers, magazines, etc.) were limited by censorship. This has been the case in Indonesia since Japan took control of the country. Meanwhile, many of the Indonesians themselves were initially enamored with the victory of their fellow Asians over the West as they succeeded in expelling Western colonizers in Asian

lands. Indonesians were hopeful of Japan's sweet promises to liberate the colonized nations of the East, including Indonesia. These promises had been announced by the Japanese earlier through Tokyo radio, but promises remained promises, only to be met with more repression.

The pride in the strength of the Dai Nippon army and the belief in the grandiose words of the Japanese, not only spread among the general public, but also among artists and writers. Many of the artists and writers were fooled into echoing Japan's promise of a Greater East Asia victory and supporting Japan's cause in their works, before eventually realizing the falseness of the nation bearing the rising sun.

The independence that was buzzed about to be given was just an empty message, the lives of the people were even more miserable due to being ruthlessly suppressed so that their fate was even worse and full of bitterness.

The Japanese occupation, which although only lasted for 3.5 years but was felt by Indonesians to be more repressive than the Dutch occupation which lasted 3.5 centuries, made literature and the lives of its writers and artists restricted because Japan carried out a kind of - in Ajip Rosidi's term<sup>1</sup> - enslavement of the arts for the purpose of propaganda for victory in the Greater East Asia war. Japan established the Central Office of Culture called *Keimin Bunka Shidoso*. Through this institution, Japan demanded and mobilized writers and artists to create poems, novels, plays, songs, paintings, and the like that displayed Japan's advantages and aroused public sympathy and enthusiasm to fight in support of Japanese programs. The Japanese deployed them around the regions with art groups formed to socialize the propaganda.

Works outside of Japan's wishes were banned from publication. The Japanese Imperialist government carried out censorship mercilessly. At that time, magazines, newspapers, and publications from the Dutch colonial era were still alive. However, the Japanese immediately took them over or even banned and abolished their publication. Regional language publications were abolished and Malay-language ones were taken over.<sup>2</sup> The Balai Pustaka institution formed by the Dutch East Indies government was taken over, while the Pujangga Baru magazine was banned from publication because it was considered westernized.

To more clearly map the literary works of this period, we should refer to a clear division in the years of events. Jakob Sumardjo<sup>3</sup> puts the Japanese occupation period into the Transitional Period (1940s). In this Transitional Period (1940s) there are two time spans with two events, namely 1942-1945 (the Japanese occupation period) and 1945-1949 (the independence war period against the Dutch or often referred to as the independence revolution period). Literary works during the Japanese occupation period arguably receded due to strict censorship. The works published during this period were those that met the requirements of Japanese orders.

In contrast to the Dutch colonial period with the Balai Pustaka Publishers who published more romances, at this time, in the field of literature, poetry and short stories were written. The same goes for plays. According to Ajip Rosidi<sup>4</sup>, this happened because the war situation demanded people to

be fast and brief. Poems and short stories containing support for Japan were written by writers who were initially enthusiastic about the arrival of Japan because they could not yet feel the intention behind the grandiose promise of the Dai Nippon army to liberate Asian nations from white colonialism, when in fact they themselves wanted to become new colonizers. They were artists who were fooled by the sweet mouth of the nation that always called itself Old Brother. Not surprisingly, in the early days of the Japanese occupation, these writers and artists bought into the Japanese line and created works that supported the Japanese cause.

In addition, there were also writers whose writings consciously supported Japan and fulfilled Japanese orders to save their stomachs. These works of poetry and short stories were published in media that had been taken over by the Japanese. In the field of romance, only two romances were published during this period, a propaganda-filled romance written by Nur Sultan Iskandar titled *Cinta Tanah Air* and Karim Halim titled *Palawija*. Due to their focus on propaganda, many literary critics considered these romances to lack literary value.

What about literary works that refused to be accomplices of the colonizers? These works were published in the later period, namely after Japan left during the independence revolution and after the revolution (1950s). In addition, the remaining works of the previous period (Dutch colonial period) that were not published at that time due to some obstacles (for example, works that were considered dangerous at that time), were published during the revolution and after the revolution. These "leftover" works from the Dutch colonial era that were published during the revolution and after the revolution make the literary themes of this period no different from those of the 1920s and 1930s.

As Jakob Sumardjo notes, the literary works published during the Japanese occupation did not fully reflect that period because they could only be published later (during the revolution and early independence period). Two non-propaganda works born during the Japanese period and published in 1944 and 1945 are Achdiat Karta Mihardja's novel *Atheis* and Idrus's *Aki*, two phenomenal works.

From this description of literary publishing in the transitional period, which includes the Japanese colonial period and the independence revolution, it can be seen that the response of writers and artists to the cultural policies of the Japanese imperialist government included three types:

- 1) writers and artists who consciously supported Japanese policies;
- 2) writers and artists who were initially fooled by Japan's grandiose promises; and later realized the error of their ways;
- 3) writers and artists who from the beginning rejected and defied Japanese policies.

An example of a poet who did not want to submit to Japan from the beginning is Chairil Anwar. Chairil Anwar, a poet who was later dubbed the pioneer of the 1945 Generation, was even sued by Japan, due to his poem entitled "Siap Sedia". In this poem, Chairil stirred up the spirit of struggle

for the Indonesian nation: *Comrades, Comrades / And we rise with awareness / ... / comrades, comrades, / we swing the sword to the World of Light! /*.

As reiterated by H.B Jassin<sup>4</sup>, *the Gunseibu* (the government coordinator in charge of restoring order and security) charged the poem as a rebellion against Japan because the institution signaled that the word Bright World was none other than Japan.

Chairil Anwar's firm rejection of the Japanese was also, as noted by Dami N. Toda<sup>5</sup>, shown by his courage to resist Japanese censorship by not giving his poems to the Japanese Cultural Center, but distributing them directly to his friends. Many of his poems were patriotic and were veiled encouragements against the Japanese.

In the midst of the restrictive and oppressive attitude of the imperialist rulers, including for written works, the writers of that time who opposed Japan, carried out various strategies against Japanese censorship so that their works could still be published and read by the public. These strategies are described below.

From the various descriptions of how the author processed his poetry for poetry or prose with patriotic themes to defend the Indonesian nation or criticize the colonizers, several strategies can be found, namely:

- 1) choosing ambiguous diction;
- 2) depict reality with symbolic comparisons.

The first strategy is to choose ambiguous diction, for example we can see in the poem "Lukisan" which depicts the lyricist seeing a young soldier. The soldier in question is certainly an Indonesian soldier, but because the word soldier can be interpreted widely, the Japanese will assume that it is a Japanese soldier.

The second strategy, symbolic comparison, can be seen in the poems of a female poet named Maria Amin. For example, this poet criticizes Japanese oppression by symbolizing it through the world of plants or animals.

### **C. The Development of Modern Indonesian Literature**

As we all realize and see, almost every country in various continents of the world knows the term and has its modern literature. Indonesia is no exception. But before recognizing this modern literature, Indonesia, which at that time was still not formed as a country as it is now and was still known as the Nusantara region, already had a type of literature called traditional literature.

The literature spans from 1) the mesolithic and neolithic periods whose emergence and creations were intended for ritual purposes, namely the worship of those believed to rule this universe, 2) the period of influence of classical Indian culture (Hinduism and Buddhism) which with the monarchical government system it brought formed the art (literature) of the palace and the

art (literature) of the people, and 3) the period of influence of Islam which brought Islamic values in literary content even though the idioms still used Hinduism and Buddhism.

At that time, literary means were still oral. Literary activities were integrated into people's daily lives. Literature was a bedtime story for children told by their parents, told by storytellers from village to village when the community gathered under the moonlight, recited, performed in ceremonies, sung in games, used in daily conversation in taverns, and so on.

It happened when technology was not as advanced as it is today. Inventions in technology, including the invention of the printing press, changed the situation. Literature shifted to written literature, which spread widely because of the printing press. This happened when the influence of Western culture came in. This influence came with the arrival of Western colonizers to the archipelago, the longest being the Dutch. This started the growth of modern literature in the region that became the forerunner of Indonesia. The forms and types of literature had already left the old (traditional) forms of literature by taking the forms and types of Western literature.

Indonesians adopted Western literary forms first through translation, then adaptation, and then creating original works.

Literary works created by Indonesian writers in the Indonesian language and containing Indonesian nationalism are then considered modern Indonesian literature. What is considered to mark the birth of the Indonesian language and Indonesian nationalism is the birth of Budi Utomo (20 May 1908) which is commemorated as National Awakening Day because the establishment of the Budi Utomo youth organization was a pioneer in the struggle to repel the colonialists in the form of national unity (no longer regional).

As for what is often said to be the period of the birth of modern Indonesian literature, it is 1920 because in that year the publication of Indonesian literary works, both in poetry and prose, began, which has been uninterrupted until now. In previous years, literary works had actually been published, but they were sporadic so that literary experts did not categorize them as the official year of the birth of modern Indonesian literature. In addition, the criteria for modernity and Indonesianness are works that in form leave the old literary style (traditional Malay) and in content show preliminary efforts to acquire their own language, history and culture as Indonesian national concepts and ideals.

Based on this, A. Teeuw named Muhammad Yamin with his poetry book *Tanah Air* as the pioneer of modern Indonesian poetry. As for the field of modern Indonesian prose, the Dutch literary expert named Marah Rusli with his romance *Siti Nurbaya* as the pioneer.

Since then, modern Indonesian literature has continued to grow and develop with forms and contents that have tendencies and characteristics of each era as a result of dialectics (struggle) with the social, cultural, political situation of the era. From this process, eventually each period has its own distinctive intrinsic and extrinsic characteristics. These peculiarities turn out to characterize



each period. From the similarity of these characteristics, the periodization of Indonesian literary works can be traced.

Many historians of Indonesian literature have mapped out the periodization of Indonesian literature such as H. B. Jassin, Nugroho Notosusanto, Ajip Rosidi, and others. Although the names and years of the periods are somewhat different, their opinions are actually still close (almost the same). On this occasion, I will describe the periodization of modern Indonesian literature by referring to the range proposed by Rachmat Djoko Pradopo<sup>7</sup>.

I will announce the periodization for two genres, namely the periodization of the poetry genre, and the periodization of the prose genre. I summarize the descriptions from my books *Guide to Poetry Appreciation*<sup>8</sup> and *Guide to Prose-Fiction Appreciation*<sup>9</sup>.

## **1. Periodization of Modern Indonesian Poetry**

### **a. Pujangga Baru Force**

According to Pradopo, this generation occupied the period 1920-1942. These years marked the beginning of its emergence, its development, and its disappearance. The name Pujangga Baru itself is taken from the name of the magazine published at that time where the poets of this generation published their works. The important characteristics of this generation are its romantic style of expression (with an emphasis on the outpouring of feelings and beautiful depictions of nature), many nationalistic ideas, and its strong didactic nature.

### **b. Force 45**

This generation occupied the period 1942-1955. This generation emerged as a response to the Pujangga Baru generation. This generation came up with a different style and content of poetry from the Pujangga Baru generation because the style of poetry of the previous generation was considered inappropriate and could no longer accommodate the atmosphere of the times they lived in. The Class of '45 was characterized by a more turbulent era of efforts to achieve, attain, and defend the nation's independence. This influenced their style of expression, which included realism. This can be seen in the form of their poetry, which is freer and more expressive than the poetry of the Pujangga Baru generation, incorporates a lot of colloquial vocabulary, and raises humanitarian issues, such as the misery of life, human rights, social issues, etc. In addition, individualism (awareness of one's self) is prominent and strong.

### **c. 1950s - 1960s**

This generation occupies the period 1950-1970s. The poetry of this generation basically continued the conventions of the 45th Generation. However, in this period the statement style began to decrease, replacing it with a storytelling style. Many epic poems (ballads) appeared.

However, there is another important feature that marks the poetry of this period along with the political conditions of Indonesia at that time. The various political ideas as a result of the liberal system of government and parliamentary democracy at that time, made the literati fragmented as supporters of certain political parties. The support of political parties and their ideologies influenced and became the aesthetic standard of poetry. However, there were also many writers who did not commit themselves to certain parties and wrote poetry more freely.

This period is known for poems with Islamic, Catholic, and other themes. The themes expressed in the poems were generally social issues, such as poverty, unemployment, injustice, and others. Even in the 1960s, there were poems of resistance and demonstrations as a protest against the Old Order government.

#### **d. Class 1970-1990**

This period is a period full of various new styles in Indonesian poetry. Various poetic movements and innovations in the form and content of poetry colored this period. In this period, mantra-style poems such as those by Ibrahim Sattah and Sutardji Calzoum Bachri appeared. In this period, there was also a poetry movement called *mbeling* poetry. *Mbeling* poetry is poetry written by young people who broke the establishment of the time by creating poetry in straightforward language, raising trivial issues, humor, anecdotes, but full of satire against the establishment and the depravity of the older generation. In fact, the medium they used was not only language, but also images.

In addition to the two types of poetry above, at this time there were also religious poems, which became known as Sufistic poetry. In addition, what is called Imagistic Poetry also emerged. Imagistic poetry is poetry that does not intend to convey certain ideas. This poetry is more about conveying a picture of certain situations. The aim is not on meaning, but on appreciation.

## **2. Periodization of Modern Indonesian Prose**

### **a. Balai Pustaka period**

This Balai Pustaka generation was born in 1920, strengthened from 1925-1935, and disappeared (weakened) in 1940. The prose of this period was mainly romances. The romances of this period mostly dealt with traditional issues, the gap between the old and the young, and were regional in nature.

### **b. Pujangga Baru period**

This generation emerged starting in 1930, strengthened in 1933-1940, and weakened in 1945. The prose written during this period was still dominated by romances, although short stories also existed.

The prose style of this period is romantic. It dealt with urban life, individual human problems, nationalism, and was didactic in nature.

### **c. 50th Generation Period**

This generation began to emerge (born) in 1950, strengthened in 1955-1965, and weakened in 1970. During this period, Indonesia embraced a liberal parliamentary democracy system which led to many parties in Indonesia. Each party had its own cultural institutions in an effort to socialize the ideology of each party. The PKI had a cultural institution called Lekra (Lembaga Kebudayaan Rakyat), the PNI had a cultural institution called LKN (Lembaga Kebudayaan Nasional), the Islamic party had Lesbumi (Lembaga Seni Budaya Muslim Indonesia). The social, political and economic situation of the country as described above affected literature because many writers were included in these cultural institutions. In the end, their literary works also carry and socialize the ideology of the party they belong to. In addition, there were also many writers who were "independent" and adhered to the principle of writing for humanity, not for a particular party. During this period, there was a major polemic between writers who promoted communism and universal humanism, namely the Lekra-Manikebu polemic. The prose style of this period is diverse. Much of the prose of this period deals with political conflicts, everyday life, and rural life. In addition, protests against the policies of the Old Order government also colored many works of this period.

### **d. 70th Generation Period**

This generation had begun to emerge in the 1960s but began to strengthen in the 70s, and weakened around the 1980s. The transition period from the Old Order to the New Order, and the strong influx of Western culture, made the situation of society in these years, especially morally and spiritually quite turbulent. This also affected the creation of literary works. The existing literary conventions were considered incapable of voicing the roaring 1970s. Therefore, during this period there was a lot of experimentation and innovation, including in the field of prose. Many surrealist prose works emerged during this period. In addition, the strong influence of existentialism philosophy led to many prose works with the theme of absurdism. There were also prose works with satiric themes.

There are things that need to be underlined from the above periodization that:

- a. Although the works written by these writers were declared modern literature, the old literary forms and regional elements were not completely abandoned.

- b. The changing circumstances of each era bring changes in literary tendencies, both thematically and aesthetically. However, in general, this change does not occur in the sense that the work follows the flow of society, but rather is a challenge to the situation and conditions and hegemonic that are considered *toxic to life*.

Furthermore, it is also important to point out the development of Indonesian literature after the above periods, namely the end of the New Order (1990-1998s) and the reformation period (2000s until now).

### **3. New Order Literature**

In this description, due to the breadth of the issue, I will not elaborate much, but will only highlight the most salient points.

At the end of the New Order period, the dominant types of literature were short stories and poetry. These short stories and poems, different from the previous times that were published through books and magazines (because the role of magazines began to recede), at this time were published through newspapers. Thus, the barometer of this period was held by the newspaper. Because they are published through newspapers, which are public information media, literary works inevitably have to follow the characteristics of these newspapers, especially the limited space (number of pages).

At this time, there were complaints about newspaper literature that could no longer explore aesthetics due to the limited space, and emphasized content. However, this space limitation was overcome by the writers and led to innovations in aesthetics.

Thematically, the literary works of this period were dominated by the theme of socio-political criticism in challenging the repression of the authorities. However, these criticisms were not stated openly. This was done to avoid being banned by the authorities because the New Order rulers at that time curbed the limitations of opinion, even news in newspapers could not convey the actual information if it threatened the ruling status quo. So, the writers of this period expressed the facts that occurred not through *news (news)*, but through works of fiction. The facts and criticisms are wrapped symbolically and surrealistically so that the information still reaches the public but the author or writer cannot be imprisoned because he wrote it as a work of fiction.

### **4. Reformation Literature, Globalization, and Digitalization**

This is a time of openness. What was previously unchanneled, spills over in this period. Similarly, literature seemed to enjoy freedom. At this time there was no dominant literary genre. Everything (novels, short stories, poetry, drama) appeared. Types of literature that had been marginalized: local literature, women's literature, popular literature flourished.

With this freedom and openness, there is no longer a dominant selector of the quality of literary works as in the past because everyone, as long as they have capital, can publish their work with *indie* publishing. Moreover, the advancement of information technology in the form of the internet has given rise to what is called *cyber* literature, which allows individuals to publish their works freely without a selection process.

During this period, with the explosion of the communication revolution, which led to the digital globalization of information, printed literature was increasingly eroded as many publishing houses closed down, newspaper companies went out of business, and even bookstores were reduced.

During this period, popular literature, which provides superficial entertainment, became more widespread (with many new varieties). This literature is more industry-oriented and thus nourishes capitalism and materialism and is feared to erode the values of spirituality and morality.

Another development of information technology, with the presence of the internet and social media and the like, negates the boundaries of space and field. Literature is not limited to written language and verbal language, but has been packaged in multimedia so that the terms *insta poetry* (poetry packaged in Instagram), digital poetry, *alternative universe* (AU), and others are known. In addition, literary transformations that have developed in the past, namely poetry musicalization, poetry visualization, and a mixture of both, are increasingly getting a means of publication via the internet.

Not to mention *Artificial Intelligence* (AI) such as GPT chat. This technology is a very practical technology that will be widely used by the younger generation because it can be used to create any kind of writing (from articles, papers, stories, to poetry).

The phenomenon of literary works produced through AI has begun to emerge in Indonesia. For example, the poetry book *Penyair sebagai Mesin* by Martin Suryajaya experiments with various AI models so that machines can write poetry.

## **D. Feminist Literature in Indonesia**

### **1. Introduction**

The 20th century, as American feminist Naomi Wolf once stated, was a new era for women, or she called it the era of *genderquake*, the era of women's awakening. The echoes of that awakening have continued to grow until now in the 21st century.

In the history of literature in various regions, we will see various situations that have similarities in relation to the existence of women in this field, namely the subordination and marginalization of their existence, both at the level of creative, historical and social processes. For example, in America, as described by American regional studies observer Soenarjati Djajanegara<sup>10</sup> for centuries until the 1960s, a number of literary forms, time periods, histories, and literary canons of the country's literature did not mention a single female writer.

Even in Europe, in terms of the creative and social process, many women feel oppressed and guilt-ridden by their involvement in the socially sanctioned world of authorship. In order to comply with patriarchal values, they were restricted by the aesthetic standards demanded by men, such as having to present themselves as respectable women, avoiding vulgarity and the like. This was the case in the 19th century. In fact, in order to make their writings acceptable to the public, these authors used male pseudonyms.

Indeed, many women authors have been marginalized by criticism or readings by this patriarchal society, and also by criticism from a male perspective. As Virginia Woolf once described in a paper, using male aesthetic standards, it is not uncommon for women's works to be considered inferior. The use of domestic settings (kitchen, laundry, etc.) in women's works because they do not belong to the world of men, is considered a less aesthetically pleasing idea that is not taken into account in the assessment of the literary canon.

Not only are women marginalized in terms of their history, creative process and output, they are also marginalized in their portrayal, which tends to be oppressive and sexist, especially in stories written by men.

## **2. The Condition of Women in Literature in Indonesia**

These problems also occur in Indonesia. Since the 1990s, I have raised many of these issues in various media and occasions, and I will raise them again here, although only in outline due to space constraints.

### **a. Women's Issues in the Creative Process.**

It must be recognized that for decades since the birth of modern Indonesian literature, Indonesian literature has been dominated by men. If we look at various anthology sources, the number of women is no more than 10 to 12% of the number of men. For example, in the book *Wanita Penyair Indonesia* compiled by Korin Layun Rampan<sup>11</sup> for 75 years only 111 women were recorded to have published their works.

In the anthology *Tonggak* (1 to 4) compiled by Linus Suryadi A. G, out of 45 poets, there are only 3 and 4 women. Of course, there are many other data to show this lack of women.

Besides being minimal or few, as Linus Suryadi A. once stated. G<sup>12</sup> ., the age of his work is also relatively short. Why does this happen? As stated above, patriarchal values have caused sociological and psychological barriers for women. In fact, in many cases, many women stop working after entering the household.

### **b. Women's Issues in Historical Perspective**

Apart from being few in terms of quantity, women are also marginalized in terms of history, although in Indonesia they are not as sexist as in America. Indonesian literary history does record the names and works of women. However, in the assessment of their works, there is a lot of neglect.

Literary criticism is mostly focused on the works of men, so the description of aesthetic insights is based only on what men have achieved. As a result, what women have achieved, which is actually important, is not explained.<sup>13</sup>

Marginalization can also be seen from school textbooks that rarely mention the names and works of women, so that women are not widely known and only inhabit the dark corners of history.

Another thing is that, at least until the 1990s, before the push to give proportional attention to women, literary events rarely included women. All the performers were men.

### **c. Women's Issues in Criticism**

In the introduction to this subtitle, it is said that the reading of women's works in the literary community tends to use male perspectives and male aesthetic standards. As a result of these standards, women's works are seen as inferior.

This is felt in Indonesian literature. For example, the 1970s was a time when prose works, namely novels by women, were very popular and dominated literature. However, these women's works were never recognized in the Indonesian literary canon and were only classified as part of the popular literature genre (which until recently was often considered below elite literature). This happened because the works of these women carried more domestic issues (or often termed the world in the house). However, if you want to look more objectively and neutrally, the issues raised in these novels are complex and can be said to be on par with male novels included in the literary canon.

The same is true in the field of poetry. Poets from among women experience a kind of demand that if their work is to be equal to men, it must use strong male language and themes that are a man's world (not the world in the house).<sup>14</sup> In fact, the themes raised by women are actually diverse. In addition, many male poets use diction and themes about the world in the home.

In short, women's works are considered inferior and second-class. In fact, it's not just in the works that this inferior view and considering women as the *other* occurs. It's also in the way they are referred to. Male writers are usually simply called writers (there is no such thing as a male writer) but women are called female writers. This shows the inequality of women and men in literature.

### **d. Feminist Literature**

Although in these aspects women face several problems, women continue to work and voice the various injustices caused by the patriarchal system in their works. This became

more apparent during the reformation period. This means that previously literary works that voiced feminism had been present in Indonesian literature, not only by women, but also by men. However, during the reformation period, after the incessant talks and movements of feminism in Indonesia, this issue received more attention. Such works include Ayu Utami's novels that explore issues of sexuality and the body, Oka Rusmini's novels that represent and challenge the injustices experienced by Balinese women, Dorothea Rosa Herliany's poetry, and many other authors, including myself in short stories and poetry.

#### **e. Women's Strategies for Achieving Equality between Women and Men in Literature**

Women have been active in literature since the birth of modern Indonesian literature, even long before (from the pre-Indonesian or colonial period). However, they have been passive in the midst of literary problems, as described above. In fact, the women's emancipation movement has been going on since the 19th century.

The movement of women in showing their existence in literature was only felt in the 1990s. Along with the incessant thought and movement of feminism, women began to launch strategies to get their rightful place in Indonesian literature. These strategies include:

- 1) organized women-only literary performances;
- 2) established literary organizations or communities specifically for women. For example, in West Java the Dewi Sartika Literary Community (KSDS) was established, followed by the Indonesian Women Writers Community (KPPI) and many more;
- 3) publishing anthologies of women's literature<sup>15</sup>;
- 4) organizing discussions on women's issues, etc.

With the strategies and movements carried out, now the condition of women in Indonesian literature has increasingly received a proportional place and opportunity. The number of women who write is also increasing.

The development of literature in Indonesia is so complex and so vast, but hopefully this article can provide an overview. \*\*\*

#### **End Note:**

- <sup>1)</sup> Ajip Rosidi, *Overview of Indonesian Literary History* (Bandung: Pustaka Jaya, 2013), pp. 44-45.
- <sup>2)</sup> Ajip Rosidi, *Literature and Culture in Regionalism and Indonesianness* (Bandung, Pustaka Jaya, 1995), pp. 16.
- <sup>3)</sup> Jakob Sumardjo, *The Social Context of the Indonesian Novel 1920-1977* (Bandung: Alumni Publisher, 1999), p. 27
- <sup>4)</sup> H. B. Jassin, *Indonesian Literature in the Japanese Period* (Jakarta: Balai Pustaka, 1993), p. 25.
- <sup>5)</sup> Dami N. Toda, *Servants of Culture* (Jakarta: Sinar Harapan, 1984), p. 92
- <sup>6)</sup> A. Teeuw, *New Indonesian Literature* (Yogyakarta: YHS, 1979), pp. 26-28
- <sup>7)</sup> Rachmat Djoko Pradopo, *Some Literary Theories, Critical Methods, and Their Applications* (Yogyakarta, Pustaka Pelajar), pp. 18-21



- <sup>8)</sup> Nenden Lilis Aisyah, *Poetry Appreciation Guide* (Bandung: Rumpit Merah, 2009)
- <sup>9)</sup> Nenden Lilis Aisyah, *Prose Fiction Appreciation Guide* (Bandung: Rumpit Merah, 2009)
- <sup>10)</sup> Soenarjati Djajanegara, *Feminist Literary Criticism* (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2000).
- <sup>11)</sup> see Korrie Layun Rampan's book, *Wanita Penyair Indonesia* (Balai Pustaka, 1997).
- <sup>12)</sup> This was also expressed by Linus Suryadi A.G. in the Preface to *Tonggak: An Anthology of Modern Indonesian Poetry* (Gramedia, 1987).
- <sup>13)</sup> See the full explanation in the article written by Nenden Lilis A., "Literary Criticism in the Era of Gender Shock", *H.U Pikiran Rakyat*, March 8, 2004.
- <sup>14)</sup> This has been expressed by Nenden Lilis A. in Ariel "Poetry and Gender Problems", *H.U. Kompas*, July, 1996. Also, see Afrizal Malna's writing: *The Gendered World of Female Poets and Male Diction in Dorothea Rosa Herliany Nikah Ilalang*, Yogyakarta Yayasan Pustaka Nusantara, 1995, and Ahmad Syubhanuddin Alwry, "Worrying about Women's Poetry", *Republika*, 1995.
- <sup>15)</sup> Women-specific anthologies include *Seserpih Pinang Sepucuk Sirih* (1979), *Bunga yang Berserak* (Angkasa Publisher and Dewi Sartika Literary Community, 2003), *Selendang Pelangi* (Indonesia Tera, 2006), *Anthology of 100 Women Poets* (Indonesian Women Writers Community, 2014), *Roncean Syair Perempuan* (KPPI, Seni Bandung, and Trubadur, 2017), and many more.