
RESEARCH ARTICLE

Women's Resistance in Indonesian Folklore "Timun Mas"

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to reveal women's resistance to patriarchal domination in Timun Mas's folklore. This study uses a feminist approach to discuss the resistance that women do to defeat patriarchal domination. The data analysis used in this study is descriptive and qualitative. The results of this study show that women and their mothers managed to defeat the patriarchal dominance depicted through the character of Buto Ijo. Buto Ijo is a representation of patriarchal domination that existed in society at that time so that female figures resisted the domination that limited it. The resistance carried out by Timun Mas was carried out in the following ways, (1) defending by outsmarting Buto Ijo, (2) fighting him directly using sprinkling bags that grow vines, throwing salt and paste on Buto Ijo, (3) The female character dares to resist domination and is able to decide on a personal decision to seize her right to stay alive. Thus it can be concluded that women are objects of men, which results in women being dominated to give up their lives to eat. Thus, with this dominance, women need to fight and fight for their rights.

KEYWORDS

Women's Resistance, Indonesian Folklore, Timun Mas, Feminism.

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1. Introduction

Literature as part of the culture and social reflections of society examines various social aspects, which are then expressed in the form of literary works, one of which is fairy tales. Fairy tales are a type of short story that is told orally in the form of folklore that is considered not to have actually happened (Danandjaja, 1997, p. 83). Nevertheless, fairy tales contain many values that can be exemplified by society.

Indonesia has many literary works, both written and oral literary works. The presence of oral literature in society as the owner of literature itself is not only intended as a solaceous story that is present as a medium of entertainment. Oral literature, as part of folklore, is an autobiographical ethnography... it is a people's own description of themselves (Dundes, 1969, p. 471). It can be said that understanding oral literature within a society can gain an understanding of the values, ideas, as well as worldview of society itself in seeing the surrounding reality. As Endaswara (2010, p. 3) stated, folklore includes various things such as knowledge, behavior, ethics, feelings, beliefs, and all traditional life practices that have a function or value for their owners.

Folklore is one of the old literary works that exist in a society whose dissemination is carried out orally (Danandjaja, 1997, p. 5; Endaswara, 2010, p. 3). Further, Potter (Leach, 1949, p. 401) states that folklore is "a lively fossil which refuses to die". It is understood that folklore discusses a lot of ancient things that discuss the origins of life in the past. Folklore, which is oral literature, then underwent a fairly wide development, not only orally, but there was folklore in writing. This is due to the emergence of the print-printing tradition, which later changed oral folklore to written folklore (Endaswara (2010, p. 3).

Danandjaja (1997, p. 50) also distinguishes folklore into several types, namely mites, legends, and fairy tales. The mite is a folktale that tells the life of a figure of gods or demigods. Legend tells the story of human life that has extraordinary characters or abilities

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and is related to the occurrence of a place. While fairy tales depict the lives of humans and animals whose stories are not considered to actually take place, they serve to convey moral teaching that is educational as well as entertaining. So, it can be said that fairy tales are one of the forms of literary works whose stories do not actually take place or are fictitious.

The division of folklore includes all sorts of traditional folk works, whether they are the result of general fantasies, customs, folk beliefs, or everything related to supernatural powers, legends, rites, ordinances, literature, arts, and regional clothing. Each belongs to a collective society, not an individual (Endaswara2010, p. 87; Purwadi, 2012, p. 1). Indonesia has many traditional folk works, including folklore. As stated by Wiyatmi et al. (2021, p. 8) that the high diversity of folkloric that exists in Indonesia needs to be read and understood with a new perspective, namely feminism which considers parallels and justice in accommodating the role of women, so that the enjoyment obtained is not limited to the comforting aspect (dulce) but also able to provide a space for cognitive understanding (utile) about history that is more just and real.

As explained above, literature is not only an entertaining art (dulce) but also a literary principle that is always inseparable from the broad human experience, not only aesthetic. Literature involves thinking that refers to moral, social, psychological, and religious life. Different facets of life can be expressed in literary works (Amir, 2010, p. 3). A literary work can be said to be a social document that describes the state of society and the nature of the mind of a work being born.

Folklore, which is part of literature, is used as a medium to appreciate thoughts and also a tool to convey intentions and also criticism of something. Purwadi (2012, p. 5) stated that folklore, which is an oral tradition, can show cultural identity and can display the character and pattern of regional culture. It is as depicted in *Timun Emas's* Folklore. This oral folklore is a representation of the social situation of the time and also a critique of the social system that describes women as being number two and always being oppressed beings.

Wiyatmi (2020) said that Indonesia's ancestors had long practiced gender equality or commonly known as feminism, long before the concept and movement of feminism were born in Europe and America. The archipelago (Indonesia) with the presence of kings and heroines shows that feminism or gender equality existed in the days when Simone de Behavoir in France introduced the concept of feminism. So it is not unfamiliar if the folklore in Indonesia also represents the struggle or resistance of women at that time with the folkloric stories that exist today.

The story of the legend of the Timun Mas is included in folk legends because the story has been believed by some locals legend has happened in the past. Folk legends are easily enjoyed by various circles of readers. Researchers are interested in analyzing this folklore legend entitled "Timun Mas" because it contains a charge of resistance of women in resisting power or domination from Buto Ijo, who is an antagonist in the subject of this study. Buto Ijo itself is a representation of the patriarchal ideology prevailing in society at that time. In line with Maridja (2010, p. 1), who says that the main concept of fairy tales is a form of struggle of good against evil. The purpose of this study is to show the resistance of women in the legend of Timun Mas and to show patriarchal dominance depicted through the character of Buto Ijo. The theory used to discuss forms of female resistance is the theory of feminism.

2. Literature Review

2. 1 Feminism Theory

Sugihastuti and Suharto (2002, p. 18) say that feminism is a movement for equality between men and women in all fields, including economics, politics, education, and social and organized activities that defend the rights and interests of women. Sugihastuti also said that feminism is an awareness of the oppression and extortion of women in society, whether at work or in the household.

In line with the above statement, feminism is also defined as a politics used to change power relations between men and women that already exist in society. The power relations that exist between men and women exist in every corner of life, such as family, education, work, culture, and politics. The feminism movement proposed by Weedon is a movement that liberates women from having freedom of choice and determines their personal will. The existing power relations between women and men give rise to gender injustice, in which men have the power to marginalize women. This is based on the existence of a patriarchal system that exists and dominates women in every aspect of life (Weedon, 1993, p. 1).

Feminism is a theory that views that women have experienced discrimination, injustice, and oppression within patriarchal societies. The injustice experienced by women exists because of the assumption that women become the number two beings while men are superior creatures (Tong, 2006). Then in the 1970s, feminists developed the concept of gender, which discussed that women could not be equated exactly with men in every aspect of culture. Women have a wide variety of roles as time progresses in the social sphere (Rowbotham, 1992, p. 12). In the concept of gender promoted by feminists, it cannot be separated from the gender relationship between men and women. Gender relations between men and women usually give birth to gender injustice, and most cases of gender injustice are experienced by women.

Rahman (2010, p. 58) also posits that the theory of feminism focuses its attention on three things, as follows.

1. the main object of study is the situation and experience of women in society;
2. discussing women as the main subject in the process of study;
3. This theory actively and critically defends women and seeks to produce a better world for women specifically and generally as human beings.

2.2. Gender Relation

Gender is a term often used to separate roles and social relations between men and women. Gender is defined as the socio-cultural builder of the community that is formed in carrying out their respective roles. Gender distinguishes men and women by the existence of gender or sex, which is an innate trait or nature and cannot be changed because the essence comes from the creator. Based on the social and cultural system prevailing in society, the differences between men and women are related to the regulations, functions, duties, and responsibilities in society. It can be said that gender is dynamic and different in each region. Parti (2013) also said that the concept of gender results in the subordination of women and benefits men because they become dominant beings or marginalize women (Parti, 2013).

Gender injustice associated with biological traits is detrimental to women since women are labeled as feminine beings. This results in women being perceived as beings with weak traits, and motherhood, while men are considered strong and resilient individuals. Gender can be said to come from the point of view of society or a product of a society that is not related to the physical or biological traits of men or women. Because certain gender labeling results in injustice, this gender injustice has a lot of impact on women.

The social construction that distinguishes women and men is the central definition of the concept of gender, also put forward by Connell (2002, p. 33) that gender and sex are different things. Sex is a biological fact that distinguishes men and women. Gender is a social fact that distinguishes masculine and feminine roles or a male and female personality. The notion of gender in personal life can be obtained through the concept of gender identity. Barret (by Budianta, 1998, p. 7) posits that identity arises in a state of interpretation, which is related to complex meanings and meanings. Women and men who want an identity need a number of descriptions as a guide or guidance in society. Thus identity is the way to describe oneself and play a role in the social context (Giles et al., 1999, p. 37).

Connell (2002, p. 69) posits that existing gender relations have made it possible for the existence of a patriarchal system. Patriarchy is a male authority through social, political, and economic institutions that subject women to injustice (Humm, 2002, p. 332). Patriarchy reflects itself in both the living and public spaces. According to Bhasin (1996, p. 3), the patriarchal cultural system controls women's productivity or labor, reproduction, sexuality, movement, and women's property rights and other economic resources. Walby (in Connell, 2002, p. 58) also explains that patriarchal cultural structures are embedded in six areas such as within the company, household, culture, sex, violence, and state.

The injustice that women get includes many things such as economic, educational, and public injustice in contrast to men, who are free to choose and get any role in various social domains. This suggests that men control females. Women as objects controlled or dominated by men give birth to violence, oppression, marginalization, and subordination. An example of gender injustice can be seen in a wife who has obligations at home such as cooking, washing, and caring for children. On the other hand, the husband or man goes to the office or works outside the home (Sumbulah, 2008, p. 2).

Indonesia is a country that is thick with patriarchal culture. The relationship between men and women is hierarchical, where men are in a dominant or ruling position, while women are in the hierarchy below men and are mastered (Bhasin, 1996). Women, as creatures controlled by men, have very limited access to productivity in all fields. In this case, women are oppressed creatures, and this has become a culture created by patriarchs to benefit their people. Women do not have the authority or right to make decisions over themselves. Decisions relating to women are determined by men (Bhasin, 1996). The domination of women by men gave rise to the initiative of women to break away from subordination. One of the things that can be done is resistance or resistance.

The form of female resistance can be seen in the subject of this study, namely the Timun Mas folklore. Indonesia, especially Central Java, has a lot of folklore that contains life values and also reflects the situation of women in their time. The main cause of female resistance is male dominance; as Wiyatmi et al. (2021, p. 7) suggest that male dominance in most folklore is very thick. The depiction of women in folklore is closely related because it is influenced by patriarchal cultures and systems. However, behind this dominance can be found folklore which contains women's resistance in an effort to resist domination due to the existing patriarchal cultural system.

2.3. Resistance

The notion of resistance indicates the position of an attitude to behave defensively, against, opposing, or attempting opposition. In Foucault's view (Dosi, 2012, p. 34), power often encounters resistance in social relations. According to Chris Barker (2000, p. 363), resistance can be understood as a force that meets another force, where both are strength and resistance. So resistance (resistance) is an attitude force to behave defensively, trying to resist and oppose other powers that are in power in society.

The resistance carried out by women is the resistance of women to form voices and perspectives in the social order and seek to create a counter-ideology. One thing that needs to be highlighted in resistance is the presence of action. (Harjito, 2013, p. 38-39). This study focuses on women's resistance contained in the Timun Mas Folklore with a feminist approach.

3. Methodology

This research is qualitative descriptive research that is used to find results based on problem formulation. The data obtained are in the form of statements, utterances, narratives, and behaviors of figures contained in the Indonesian folklore, Timun Emas. This study used the read and record method in the data collection process. The instrument used is an inter-rater or author analyzing over and over again existing data. The data analysis to be carried out in this study consists of data collection, data presentation, and inference (Miles and Huberman, 2014, p. 10-12). Ratna (2006, p. 46), qualitative methods make use of ways of interpretation by presenting them in the form of descriptions. Sources of qualitative research data in literary science are works, manuscripts, and research data. The formal data analyzed are in the form of words, sentences, and discourses. The data was then interpreted using Radical Feminism as the basis for the theory.

3.1 Research Steps

The steps of this study are carried out as follows.

1. Data reduction to select substantial things in Timun Mas folklore that are related to resistance by women.
2. Display data to be categorized based on the instruments that have been created.
3. Conclusion making/verification for the validity of the data and its validity.

4. Results and Discussion

This research shows that: (1) in terms of text dimensions and linguistic aspects; it shows the resistance of the main female character through story vocabulary, and (2) in terms of discourse practice, it shows injustice and violence due to the domination of power carried out by Buto Ijo.

4.1 Women's Resistance with Surviving

Old Indonesian literature, including legends, fairy tales, and mites, raised many issues of women's subordination, especially oral literature, which showed that women in the past experienced a variety of different subordinations. In Java, the problems related to women changed from time to time. This can be seen from the many representations of Javanese women that are subordinated in many oral kinds of literature. Oral literature part of literature can describe "fiction". Literary works can also reflect the situation of contemporaneous societies and cultures (Susanto, 1992, p.12-13).

This study discusses the resistance of a female character named Timun Mas. Timun Mas was raised as a biological daughter by Mbok Sрни and Pak Joyo. Those who have been married for a long time and haven't had children. One day, Mbok Sрни and Pak Joyo go to the forest and find a large cucumber; when the cucumber is cut open, containing a beautiful baby girl. It turned out that the cucumber fruit that Mbok Sрни and Pak Joyo were split by Buto Ijo. Buto Ijo allowed them to take care of the Timun Mas to grow up and would take it back when the time had come to eat her.

The above image of women that can be asked and eaten indicates that women in ancient times were treated unduly by men as powerful people. In this case, Buto Ijo has full control over the Timun Mas. Buto Ijo, who is a Giant, is described as having a large and tall physique and green skin, as the name implies. Buto Ijo's character is portrayed as an evil being. Because Buto Ijo is a powerful figure and has power, the Timun Mas, Mbok Sрни, and Pak Joyo want to fight him to save the life of the Timun Mas. The first strategy was an attempt to extend time.

- 1) ...*"Hei Pak tua, di mana anak yang kuserahkan dulu? Aku akan membawanya sekarang!"* teriak Buto Ijo." (Henky & Kiki, 2018, p.9)

...*"Hey, old man, where was the child I gave up first? I'll take her now!"* shouted Buto Ijo." (Henky & Kiki, 2018, p.9)
- 2) *"Jangan sekarang Buto Ijo, dia sedang sakit, jika kau makan pasti rasanya tidak enak."* (Henky & Kiki, 2018, p.10)

"Not now Buto Ijo, she's sick, if you eat it must taste bad." (Henky & Kiki, 2018, p.10)

The above statement shows that Mbok Srini and Mr. Joyo are trying to survive by saving Timun Mas from Buto Ijo. Their efforts are an ingenious effort to buy time to find other ways so that the Timun Mas can survive when Buto Ijo comes again. This shows that women are not creatures that deserve to be oppressed. There have always been attempts to resist the subordination and domination of the ruling class as the Timun Mas parents did.

4.2 Women's Resistance by Defeat

The Theory of resistance explained at the beginning of this study is that resistance is an effort to resist, oppose or attempt to oppose the dominating or ruling factor. The resistance carried out by the Timun Mas is against Buto Ijo, which is a representation of the power that dominates women. It is told that after some time passed, Buto Ijo came back asking for Timun Mas. Before Buto Ijo met the Timun Mas, previously, the Timun Mas was given four small pockets that could be used against Buto Ijo.

- 1) "la segera mengambil bungkusan pertama dan menaburkan isinya yang berupa garam. Ajaib! Tiba-tiba hutan di sekitar mereka berubah menjadi lautan yang luas. Buto Ijo pun tenggelam" (Henky & Kiki, 2018, p.18)

"She immediately took the first package and sprinkled the contents in the form of salt. Miraculous! Suddenly the forest around them turned into a vast ocean. Buto Ijo drowned" (Henky & Kiki, 2018, p.18)

The first attempt made by Timun Emas to fight back was to sprinkle salt on Buto Ijo. However, the strong and tall, and large-man Buto Ijo was able to return to the mainland after sinking into the ocean. Timun Mas, who was surprised that Buto Ijo could still survive, then ran again to maintain her life. While running, The Timun Mas took the second package containing the needle down Buto Ijo's leg.

- 1) "Dalam sekejap muncullah tumbuhan rambat berduri dari dalam tanah. Tumbuhan itu tumbuh dengan cepat dan akar-akarnya melilit tubuh Buto Ijo. Kini raksasa itu tak bisa bergerak dan kesakitan terkena duri-duri tajam". (Henky & Kiki, 2018, p.21)

"In a short time came the thorny vines from the ground. The plant grew rapidly and its roots wrapped around Buto Ijo's body. Now the giant is immobile and got pain from the sharp thorns". (Henky & Kiki, 2018, p.21)

The Timun Mas, which was confidently able to defeat Buto Ijo, managed to make Buto Ijo trapped by thorny vines. For a moment, Buto Ijo stopped chasing her, but the thorny plants could not hold Buto Ijo for a long time; Timun Mas also ran away from Buto Ijo again. The unyielding Timun Mas fought Buto Ijo, then sprinkled a third package containing shrimp paste and made Buto Ijo sink in the swamp.

- 1) "Tanpa ragu Timun Mas menaburkan isi bungkusan terakhir yang berisi terasi. Secara ajaib tanah yang diinjak Buto Ijo berubah menjadi rawa berlumpur. Tubuh Buto Ijo terperangkap dan mulai tenggelam. Seketika itu Buto Ijo tewas dalam rawa lumpur itu selamanya". (Henky & Kiki, 2018, p.23)

"Without hesitation, Timun Mas sprinkled the contents of the last package containing the paste. Miraculously the land that Buto Ijo stepped on turned into a muddy swamp. Buto Ijo's body was trapped and began to sink. Instantly Buto Ijo was killed in the mud swamp forever". (Henky & Kiki, 2018, p.23)

Timun Emas's success in defeating Buto Ijo shows that she managed to save herself and get peace of life together with Mbok Srini and Pak Joyo. The power and dominance of Buto Ijo can be gradually endowed by the Timun Mas. The resistance carried out by Timun Mas is a representation that women can solve problems or, in this case, shackle dominance by facing them one by one. Timun Emas's efforts to defeat Buto Ijo, step by step, made her win against Buto Ijo, and finally, Buto Ijo was defeated. The resistance of Timun Mas and Mbok Srini is a reflection of women's struggle to achieve patriarchal domination, which is represented in the figure of Buto Ijo, which is a reflection of power, domination, and the ability to control women.

5. Conclusion

Folklore, which is oral literature and a representation of society's social, cultural, and way of life, can represent the human state, especially women. As a literary product, folklore can include aspects of women's culture, history, and circumstances. Timun Mas Folklore aims to discuss women's resistance to the dominance of patriarchal cultural systems that restrict women. In this folklore, a female protagonist is depicted, namely the Timun Mas, against the dominance described by Buto Ijo. This study found some resistance from women in fighting for their rights.

Timun Mas is the embodiment of women's resistance in the face of domination depicted through the character of Buto Ijo. Timun Mas, representing women, fought against the patriarchal culture that criminalized it. The defeat of Buto Ijo indicates that women

actually want the patriarchal domination of men to be eliminated. Resistance can be carried out through the following means, (1) defending by outsmarting Buto Ijo, (2) fighting it directly using the means of sprinkling bags that grow vines, melting salt and shrimp paste on Buto Ijo, and (3) daring to resist dominance and being able to decide personal decisions.

The strong patriarchal culture in Indonesia can be seen in the existing literary products, such as folklore. The Timun Mas Folklore not only discusses the resistance of women carried out by the Timun Mas, but there is also a patriarchal dominance that limits women in personal matters such as the right to life. This story shows that women's right to life is also determined by those who have power, namely men. Thus, the resistance of The Timun Mas is a meaningful value and lesson to be continued so that lessons can be learned that women have rights over themselves and have the capacity to resist the injustice of patriarchal domination.

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