

The Hegemony of Patriarchal Culture in *Critical Eleven* and *The Architecture of Love*

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ABSTRACT

This article is intended to analyze how patriarchy values are still implemented in Indonesian literature and this it will specifically analyze how Raia and Anya from Ika Natassa's work called *Critical Eleven* and *The Architecture of Love* face the problem with patriarchy culture that is still affecting their attitude when they face the values. This paper will be talking about the theories using 3M *masak, macak, manak* (cooking, dressing -up, having babies). The thesis will be talking about Raia and Anya who are affected with these norm values around them with their daily life. This article shows how the patriarchal values affect both Raia and Anya in their life and how those values are still implemented in Ika Natassa's book.

Keywords: affected, duties, effect, hegemony, patriarchy

INTRODUCTION

Indonesian popular literature is one of the common kinds of literature that people frequently look for. It varies through its types to entertain people such as films, songs, and novels. In early 2000, Gramedia published a new book genre that is known as chick lit. It is one of the literature products that is focused on female readers, to be precise those who are between the ages of 17 to 25 years old. The topics in chick lit are related to things that have been dreamt by women in their lives. For instance: a story about love at first sight, someone who finds their true love, etc.

In 2010, there is a new genre in the market that has similarities like chick lit but it is also different. This genre is called metropop. Even though we see both genres are quite similar, chick lit more focuses on the light plot like finding love, and how to achieve that love, is usually ended when the main character falls in love and stays together with their crushes. Metropop usually focuses more on the 'heavy' plot like solving the problem or trauma from the character and usually, they do not end in a happy ending like chick lit because it is focusing on the realistic part of life and the character development. Hence, metropop is more popular with young adults and adults because of the heavy plot.

One of the famous metropop writers is Ika Natassa. She has already published many of her works from *A Very Yuppy Wedding* (2007), *Twivotiare* (2012), *Antalogi Rasa* (2011), *Critical Eleven* (2015) *The Architecture of Love* (2016), and many others. *Critical Eleven* and *The Architecture of Love* are one of her famous works; and *Critical Eleven* has been adapted into a film. *The Architecture of Love* also received many positive reviews because she managed to bring life into her work even though she never visits New York.

We pick *Critical Eleven* and *The Architecture of Love* because we are interested in Anya Risjad and Raia Risjad. Both women are often praised as independent women, girl bosses, and successful women with their careers but on further inspection, Anya Risjad and Raia Risjad are still bound to patriarchal values, and they are not an independent icon for girls. We find out that Anya Risjad and Raia Risjad are still hegemonized and affected by the patriarchal culture.

Critical Eleven uses a common issue where a woman and a man have a marriage problem and they try to resolve this problem in their ways. Anya and Ale also try to solve their marriage problem after they lose their son, but the real problem begins when Ale accuses Anya's working schedule as the reason why her miscarriage led to their 'cold' war for months. *The Architecture of Love* itself also uses a marriage problem for the plot but it focuses on Raia's struggle after her divorce with Alam and her struggle as a writer after her divorce. Both women are shown that they are indeed still hegemonized by the patriarchal culture.

We found out that both novels use a common issue, their struggle as a wife. In the patriarchal culture where man becomes the head of the family, the wife should be able to serve her husband and her family no matter what happens. These issues already have a long history in ancient times. A woman should possess five aspects from (i) should be loyal to husband, (ii) be prepared to allow him to take another wife, good at cooking, be able to take care of her physical beauty, (iv) be modest, and (v) be good at serving her husband according to the Sri Susuhunan Pakubuwono IX (Mohd Shahnawi Muhmad Pirus, 2020). These principles become an important aspect that every woman must possess to achieve a happy marriage because a wife's heaven can be achieved by serving her family. This principle later becomes a term that we know as a 3M that stands for *macak, masak, and manak*. Those three aspects—minus being prepared to take another wife—become an important aspect that every woman especially for those who want to get married to please their husband.

If one of the aspects is left unfulfilled, the woman is usually blamed by her surroundings or society because she cannot fulfil their role as a wife. This leads to women's oppression where most of the time, they will carry the guilt or shame if they cannot fulfil the demand from the society or worse, shunned. This creates a situation where most of the time, women are often hegemonized by patriarchal values and often put in a difficult situation. Not only putting women in a difficult situation, but this oppression also often benefits men because they often hold power over women because they are often seen as the 'protectors' of the women. This is also called patriarchal hegemony.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

To analyse the problem, we will use patriarchal values and hegemony theory to analyse each character's problem and how both women see their problem as a way of hegemony in their roles as wives. As we stated before, both women are portrayed as independent women who have bright careers. But, with their bright careers, we found out that Anya and Raia are not a symbol of an independent woman. During the analysis, we find that both women are still trying to embrace the patriarchal values and are still affected when they fail to fulfil the demand.

Javanese patriarchal culture often puts women in the second-class gender, where most of the time, women are not considered wage earners. Instead, they are considered as a *konco wingking (istri pendamping suami)* (Mohd Shahnawi Muhmad Pirus, 2020). and they must be able to act as their husband's helper—especially in the Javanese culture where a husband's position as the head of the family, he must be honored and as a wife, they must be obedient and obey the husband's order no matter what happens. Not only do they obey the husband's order, but a wife must also be able to fulfill their *kodrat* or true nature that God has given to them. Those requirements are *macak, masak, manak*. Not only are Javanese women seen as a *konco wingking* based on their true nature, but those criteria also often hinder Javanese women's movement because they are seen as only capable of doing the domesticated job, unlike men who can enter almost everything when it comes to the job. Thus, 3m values become an ideology that shapes society's mindset when it comes to women.

Hegemony itself can be interpreted in a way that a dominant figure dominates another—in this case is a marriage situation, hence why a husband should be able to ‘dominate’ the household whereas a husband, the men should be able to fulfil their role as a breadwinner and the wife should be able to fulfil their role as a house caretaker (Necla Mora, 2014). Then again, patriarchal hegemony also benefits men more than women, especially in a patriarchal society. It is shown through some examples where men can access higher education. Meanwhile, for women when it comes to accessing higher education, they are often told that women do not have to attend higher education because our true nature is to be a mother and a wife.

ANALYSIS

Both Raia and Anya come from a well-educated background where both graduate from college and have a promising career. Although their life seems perfect, we find that they are indeed still hegemonized by the patriarchal culture. Both are still embracing the traditional way of mindset where they must be able to fulfil the demand.

The first demand that they need to fulfil is the dressing up part or *macak*. Anya Risjad tries to fulfill this demand by keeping her appearance nice and smelling nice after she gets home from the office (p.54) by doing this she shows us that deep down she is still hegemonized by this concept because, in her mind, she needs to repay Ale’s kindness by looking nice and smells good for him. Another part is when Anya grants Ale’s silly wishes by showing her morning routine that costs her precious time especially when she has an important meeting. This shows us that as Javanese women, they must cast aside their sides and must serve the family. (Krisna Widyaningsih, Bambang Indiatmoko, 2020)

For Raia, her case of dressing up does not come in the form of makeup or wearing a fancy dress but her case comes in the form of honoring her husband’s name in front of the public. By doing this, she is expected to cover her husband’s flaw and shows her *bekti* (devotion) to her husband (Firman M. Firmansyah, Ahmad R.Pratama, Arie Wahyu Wijayanto, 2021.). As a wife, it is very important to show their devotion to their husband because this is one of the ways the wife serves their husband.

The second part about 3m is cooking or *masak*. Cooking is an important aspect that every Javanese woman must possess to create a happy marriage. Anya is also attacked by this concept where she is afraid that she cannot make Ale happy because of her poor cooking skill and she even compares her cooking skill with Ale’s mother (p.215) This shows us that deep down, she is afraid that she cannot provide Ale and is not able to fulfil her job as a wife. But, although she says that she cannot cook besides fried eggs, it is later revealed that she can cook pancakes and she even teaches Tini how to make these pancakes, safe to say that Anya still tries to embrace this concept.

Raia’s cooking does not involve kitchen matters, but it comes in a concept where she is expected to fulfil her duty as a wife that should serve Alam and yet, she still fails to fulfil this duty because her job as a writer that makes her neglect Alam (Raia’s situation often can be found in daily lives where women often carry the guilt because they cannot take care of their husband, so their husband leaves them. Women were also expected to serve their husbands 24/7 and are not expected to work. If they have a career, their career is expected to be much lower than the husband's so they can focus on the family.

The last part is giving birth or *manak* concept. Anya Risjad is attacked greatly by this concept, and it is shown through her actions. When she finally gets pregnant, she is happy and shows the test pack to Ale, this shows us that the patriarchal hegemony does not always come in

a negative form, but it can be a positive form where Anya willingly embraces this concept. Another example of this hegemony also shows that during her period when she loses Aidan, she feels that she is the one who needs to be blamed because of her packed schedule.

THE EFFECT OF BEING HEGEMONIZED

Both Raia and Anya are suffering from patriarchal hegemony although they have a bright career and are financially stable. Both women are suffering from the giving birth concept and this concept becomes the biggest obstacle for both women to fulfil the demand that society has given to them as a woman.

The first effect for Anya Risjad is feeling guilty. She feels guilty when she fails to bring Aidan alive to the world because she feels that this is her duty as a wife and a mother that she should be able to bring her child alive. Not only does she feel that she fails as a mother, but she also feels that she disappoints Ale because she feels that Ale entrusts his son to her, but she also fails at this, she feels guilty. ' (p.312)

The second effect for Anya is blaming herself because she feels that as a mother, she should be able to bring her son alive to the world. She thinks that she must be doing something wrong during her pregnancy (p.312). Anya blames herself as one of the strong examples that patriarchal hegemony impacts women more than men and women often carry the guilt. Her condition is also the result of the patriarchal hegemony that often blames the mothers if there is something wrong. They are also often told to behave and obey the word from the elders to keep the baby safe. If the mother ignores the warning, the bad luck will be transferred or worse, the mother will lose the baby. (Muhammad Rofi'I, 2013).

The last effect for Anya is feeling depressed. She falls into depression because of her inability to bring Aidan to the world alive. She starts to blame her God why He would take Aidan to her and why would He take him right away after Aidan is born (p.97) Anya's depression is also the result of Ale's ignorance whereas a husband does not console Anya first but puts the blame on her. Not only that, but she also creates an alternate reality where Aidan is alive and well, this shows us that her untreated depression is the result of Ale's ignorance at first.

Raia also gets the effects of being hegemonized by showing that she justifies herself because of her inability to give birth to the child that Alam always wants. She even states that this problem deserves more than 10 points (p.236). This shows us that patriarchal hegemony heavily blames women if there is something wrong with their marriage. Patriarchal hegemony also sometimes shapes women's minds because, from the very beginning, they were taught that being a wife and a mother is the greatest joy that we will ever have, so no matter how great our career is, if we are not able to fulfil the demand, we are not complete as a woman.

She also falls into depression after her separation from Alam. She sees herself as unworthy and questions her worth as a woman because after years with Alam, Alam leaves her with another woman. This shows us that her separation shapes her mind in a more pessimistic way especially when Raia lives in a Javanese culture that holds marriage values highly (Devi Puspitasari, 2022). This is what Raia experiences after her separation from Alam where she feels unworthy and asks herself what she does wrong after years she devotes herself.

To end the analysis, Raia is also hegemonized by this patriarchal value and she justifies her inability to give Alam a child that he always wants. This case also reminds us how important having a child is in the Javanese culture and reminds us that if this criterion is left unfulfilled, the women will be receiving the blame from society. Not only that, her case will also

serve as a reminder that being a woman means a 'weaker' sex in the society that they often do not have power over their body.

CONCLUSION

In the end, both women are still hegemonized by this concept. Their mind is still shaped on what a wife should do to create a happy marriage and they are deeply affected when they fail to fulfil the demand. Anya and Raia are shown that their mindset is still hegemonized by the patriarchal values that society has implemented on them.

Anya is shown she is willing to spend money on an expensive heel and wears them to her date with Ale. She is also shown that she managed to sacrifice her time to grant Ale's wish. This shows us that her mindset is still trapped by the values that she must be able to present herself nice and to smell good in front of Ale. This shows us that deep down she tries to embrace this concept by pleasing her husband and saying that she needs to repay his kindness.

Raia on the other hand, with her duty as a wife should be able to adjust herself as a wife. She fails to fulfil that duty because according to the Javanese culture as a wife, she should be able to act perfectly in front of the public. When Raia decides to spill some information about her marriage, Alam sees this as a failure and leads to her questioning her worth as a woman and as a wife.

Anya Risjad is also hegemonized by the second concept where she is afraid that she will disappoint Ale with her poor cooking skill, and she even says that she is extremely stupid when it comes to the kitchen. With her poor cooking skill, she can only cook fried eggs and pancakes, we can safely conclude that she uses Tini as her right hand to fulfill this demand. With Anya's action, we can also be safe to say that she also embraces this concept and it can be seen that she still fulfils her duty as a wife.

Raia on the other hand, is not expected to cook in the kitchen, but she is expected to take care of Alam's needs but fails because of her job. This shows us that even though it is Alam who finalizes the divorce, Raia is still blamed because she is accused because of her job (p.235). Alam leaves her. This shows that patriarchal values still expect women to carry the guilt after their separation

Giving birth becomes the biggest obstacle for both women because they fail to fulfil this demand. Anya feels guilty when she cannot bring Aidan alive to this world and she blames herself because of it and not checking her condition to the doctor but she solely blames herself. This shows us that when the parents lose the baby, the mother will immediately put the blame on themselves and will not check their condition to make sure what is wrong. Not only that, but the important thing that needs to be talked about is how she falls into depression after her miscarriage. Because of it, she starts to blame her God and stop doing *sholat*.

Raia on the other hand, suffers from depression because she cannot give Alam a child that he always wants so Alam makes another woman pregnant with his child. She also justifies the condition that makes Alam leave her. This shows us how the hegemony has impacted on Raia's mindset that she excuses herself that she is incapable of giving Alam a child.

To end our analysis, both women are affected by this concept, and both are suffering from this concept greatly. Anya Risjad from *Critical Eleven* suffers from feeling guilty, self-blaming, and lastly depression. Raia Risjad suffers from depression because she cannot fulfil the demand from Alam. This shows us that giving birth becomes a main obstacle for both

women and how the negative part is heavily put on them if there is something wrong with the baby.

In the end, both women are not a symbol of independent women because they are still embracing the traditional way of what a wife should do in the marriage. Not only do they try to embrace the value, but they are still deeply affected by the value when they fail to fulfil the demand from society. This serves as a reminder that both women are in fact, hegemonized by the patriarchal values after all.

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