



## Women Marginalization in the Serial Story of *Kembang Alas Jati* by Albes Sartono

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### Abstract

This research aims to describe the types and factors that lead to the marginalization experienced by female characters in the serialized story *Kembang Alas Jati* by Albes Sartono. The subject of this research is the serialized story written by Albes Sartono, published in *Kålåwarti* Djaka Lodang from April 9 to August 13, titled *Kembang Alas Jati*. The data collection technique used is reading and note-taking. Meanwhile, the data analysis technique employs condensation, presentation, and conclusion drawing techniques. The validity of the data is obtained through semantic analysis. The types of marginalization experienced by the characters in the serialized story include the assumption that junior high school graduates are already suitable for work, the belief that education is not important for the future, restrictions on self-development, and limitations on the right to love. The causes are economic factors and social strata.

**Keywords:** *Gender Injustice; Marginalization; Serial Story*

### Introduction

Patriarchal culture still exists and develops in the midst of community life. The growth of this culture resulted in the position of women and men not being free or independent. This is based on how strict the provisions of life as men and women are. Society considers that women must have feminism traits such as beautiful, emotional, motherhood, gentleness and others. While men must have strong, mighty, masculine, rational, and other traits. Women will be said to be against nature by society if they do not have a gentle and maternal nature. And vice versa. Men who are fond of cooking and good at cooking will be seen as strange by society. However, these characteristics can still be exchanged (Fakih, 2013). The division of characteristics inherent to women and men, which are socially and culturally constructed, is referred to by Fakih as the term gender. Meanwhile, the division of characteristics associated with biological factors is referred to as sex or gender. These biological factors include the vagina, breastfeeding apparatus, and other reproductive organs possessed by women, while men have a penis, *kålå mênjing* (testicles) and produce sperm. These biological factors cannot be exchanged between women and men.

The division of roles between men and women should be fair and balanced according to their nature and individual needs. There should be no party that holds more power or dominance, and no one

should be marginalized in any aspect. However, the facts in society indicate that such a state cannot be realized effectively. This is caused by society itself, which continuously shapes and socializes gender characteristics, leading to the emergence of certain behaviors and traits within the community. This then gives rise to differences in the division of tasks between men and women. In society, these differences in duties have been regarded as God's nature and obligations that must be fulfilled by men and women. Over time, the assumption about this "obligation" has actually led to gender injustice. A problem that remains difficult to resolve to this day.

One of the consequences of gender injustice is marginalization. This marginalization can be experienced by anyone, both men and women. However, women are the most affected. Abdullah (2006) states that this is inseparable from the notion that women are second-class humans. Women are perceived as weak, gentle, sensitive, and emotional beings, which leads to their inability to be equated with men. Javanese society considers women as *kāncā wingking* (friend at back). The meaning of *kāncā wingking* (friend at back) is that the presence of women in the household is solely to address domestic issues such as cooking, cleaning the house, washing, taking care of children, and so on. Sometimes, this social construction seems to deliberately marginalize and consider women unimportant. Social problems such as gender injustice sometimes become spices and are used as material for the creation of literary work. This is based on the statement that literary works are imitations of reality. One of the purposes of literary work is to convey a message and learn about the conflicts that occur in society.

A literary work of serial stories, Albes Sartono's work entitled *Kembang Alas Jati* is interesting to be used as a subject of research, especially when viewed from a different perspective, namely the problem of gender injustice marginalization. At first glance, this story does not tell about gender injustice, but rather tells the love story between Murni, the main character, and Arinto, the *bêndâra* (master) of Murni. Albes Sartono himself is a writer who was born in Sleman, November 12, 1964. He completed his S1 at the Faculty of Letters, Gadjah Mada University in 1993. This writer who has been actively writing in various mass media since 1984 has produced many literary works. Even some of his works have been published in Kompas, Republika, The Jakarta Post, etc. Not to mention literary works published in local magazines such as Mekarsari, Djaka Lodang, and Jaya Baya. This includes *Kembang Alas Jati*, which he wrote and was published by Djaka Lodang from April 9 to August 13, 2022. Based on his achievements, the researcher has no doubt about his works, including the short story titled *Kembang Alas Jati*, which the author uses as a data source.

## Method

This research employs a qualitative descriptive type. According to Strauss & Corbin (in Salim & Syahrin, 2012), qualitative research is defined as research that does not utilize statistical procedures. This explanation aligns with Sugiyono's (2013) assertion that qualitative is a method used to discover data that emphasizes meaning and does not employ statistical procedures. Here, meaning can be interpreted as data that should be and data that is certain. This explanation is also consistent with the opinion of Kusumastuti & Ahmad (2019) that qualitative research relies on definitions that consider the meaning of sentences, the development of concepts and their variables, as well as the feedback from both. In qualitative research, the researcher themselves must collect data by asking, requesting, listening, or taking. In relation to this, the research results will later be in the form of an explanation regarding what the researcher has discovered from the data sources.

The data source for this research is a serialized story titled *Kembang Alas Jati* by Albes Sartono. This serialized story was published in the magazine Djaka Lodang in 2022. The story, featuring a main character named Murni, is divided into 18 series or episodes. The first series or episode of *Kembang Alas Jati* was published on April 9, specifically in the 45th edition of the Djaka Lodang magazine in 2022. Meanwhile, the final episode was published on August 13 of the same year.

The data collection technique in this research is through reading and noting. Reading can be interpreted as a fundamental and important technique used to collect data, especially since the data source is in the form of written text. After the reading technique identifies data in the form of phrases, words, or sentences relevant to the research objectives, the next step is to note them down. The data in the form of phrases, words, or sentences is then recorded in the research instrument.

The data found by the researchers must be validated first. To validate the data, the researchers used semantic validity and intra-rater reliability. According to Endraswara (2008), semantic validity refers to the method of discovering and determining data to ensure it aligns with its context. Meanwhile, intra-rater reliability, according to Fatmawati *et al.* (2021), involves testing the data found in a hermeneutic, meticulous, and thorough manner. Both methods are employed by the researchers to ensure that the data obtained meets the desired criteria and is consistent.

## Results and Discussion

### Literary Works of Serial Stories (Cerbung)

*Cerbung* stands for "continuous story". From various forms of literary works, such as poetry or *geguritan*, prose, and drama, the *cerbung* is included in the prose section that is fictional. *Cerbung* is often found in magazines, but in the modern era like today, *cerbung* can also be found in electronic media. Magazines in the Java area that still exist and are a means to publish *cerbung* are Djaka Lodang, Panjebar Semangat, and Jaya Baya. According to Sudjiman (1984), the so-called *cerbung* is a fictional story written in a newspaper or magazine with a divided or cut format according to the edition or episode. Generally, the cutting of this episode ends with an *open ending*. What is meant by an *open ending* is the end or ending of a story that causes ambiguity. This open ending makes readers curious and waiting for the continuation of the story in the next episode.

### Patriarchy

Actually, the word patriarchy has been used since the 1960s as a tool to discuss the issue of feminism (White, 2023). Zuhri & Diana (2022) explained that the term patriarchy comes from the word patriarchy, which means a structure that places men as the center of power, single, and dominant. More than that, Ernawati (through Hasanah & Oki, 2023) states that patriarchy also teaches men to exploit women. This statement is in line with what Walby conveyed through his book *Theorizing Patriarchy* (1990), that patriarchy is a social system in which men dominate, oppress, and exploit women.

The emergence of this social system began with the lowest societal order, namely the family. Within the family, men are positioned as heads of the household, thus possessing the authority to control their families. Johnson (through Zuhri & Diana, 2022) reveals that the ideology of patriarchy is created and maintained through norms, values, traditions, and doctrines that have existed in society through a long process of socialization. This indicates that patriarchy has deeply rooted itself in social life.

Dawin & Tukiran (through Uyun, 2002) state that the entire society in Indonesia can be referred to as a patriarchal society, especially the Javanese community. In Javanese culture, there are many terms that place women in a lower position compared to men. For instance, women are referred to as "*kāncā wingking*," which means friends at the back. The term *kāncā wingking* also represents the roles or obligations of women in domestic affairs such as cooking, washing, taking care of children, and others. Another known term is *masak, manak, macak*, which describes that women's duties are limited to cooking, giving birth, and beautifying themselves. Women's activities in society are restricted, so women are not allowed to have greater influence than men. If this occurs, then the authority of men as heads of families is considered to no longer hold value.

Sometimes the patriarchal system gives rise to the notion that the existence of women is not important in terms of their role, especially in society. Women are considered the *second class* (second-

class citizens), so they are often deliberately excluded. From this explanation, it can be concluded that patriarchy is a form of male domination, especially over women and its efforts to dwarf its role and existence. The existence of this system in society has given rise to a new problem, namely gender injustice.

### Gender and Its Injustices

The term gender became popular around the 1960s in America. According to Fakihi (2013), the word derived from the English word "*gene*" is interpreted as a trait or characteristic that is always inherent in men and women that is formed through social construction and influenced by cultural, religious, and political aspects. It should also be understood that these characteristics are not natural, so they can change and be exchanged between men and women. For example, men who are considered rational, dashing, and strong, in fact can also have emotional, meek, and maternal characteristics. Likewise, women who at a certain time can have rational, dashing, and strong characteristics.

The assumption that women are weak, emotional, and marginalized creatures actually causes problems. Women who should be respected, pampered, and adored instead become objects of exploitation and are not given space in public. Moreover, according to Derana (2016), in some cases, women are not given the opportunity to make a decision, thus making them always dependent on men. This is what causes the emergence of the assumption that men are more powerful than women. Perhaps this is an explanation of the meaning of the word "woman" itself. Because according to Widyastuti (2014), the word woman is short for "*wani ditata*", which means that women must be willing to be governed by men. This is what causes the emergence of a new problem, namely gender injustice. One form of gender injustice is marginalization.

### Marginalization

Marginalization can be defined as a process of impoverishment that can be experienced by anyone, regardless of gender. Febrianti et al. (2023) explain that marginalized communities often come from lower or impoverished economic classes. This is due to limited access to healthcare services, education, and other public services. The process of impoverishment, which also involves the neglect of rights that should be afforded to marginalized parties, is often overlooked under the pretext of achieving certain objectives. An example of this is the presence of rice harvesting machines. With the introduction of these machines, women who previously worked as rice harvesters have to lose their livelihoods. The reason for using rice harvesting machines is to be more effective and efficient.

This marginalization also does not provide opportunities for marginalized parties to develop themselves. The most affected victims of the marginalization process are women. This is due to the fact that women, especially in Java, still experience patriarchal processes and gender injustice. Marginalization does not occur instantly, but rather through a long social process within society. According to Fakihi (2013), the sources of marginalization can stem from government policies, beliefs, religious interpretations, traditions, customs, and assumptions in the field of science. The process of marginalization constructed through social and cultural frameworks seemingly restricts women's movement in the public sector. Their roles in society, the economy, and even education is also limited. As much as possible, women are not allowed to excel compared to men.

In the serial story *Kembang Alas Jati* by Albes Sartono, the researcher found sentences that contain marginalization or impoverishment of women. These sentences were found in episodes one, two, and four. The data and discussion regarding the marginalization present in episode one is as follows.

*"Minangkã bocah mbarep kowe kudu wani prihatin, Ni. Adhi-adhimu kabèh butuh wragad. Lothung kowe bisa lulus SMP. Saora-orane wis bisa mǎcǎ nulis. Wis kênâ kanggo sangu uripmu."* (Eps. 1). (Written in Javanese Language-red)

"As the eldest child, you have to be brave and caring, Ni. All of you need support. You can graduate from junior high school. At the very least, you should be able to read and write. It is necessary for your livelihood." (Eps. 1).

The sentence "*Saora-orane wis bisa mǎcǎ nulis. Wis kênǎ kanggo sangu uripmu,*" (at least can read and write, can already be used as a means of livelihood), contains the assumption that someone who has graduated from junior high school is already eligible to earn a living. This assumption conveyed by *Simbok*(mother) is because she can no longer afford to support Murni if she wishes to continue her education. Therefore, Murni is forced to discontinue her schooling to the next level. Worse yet, she is asked to work at an age not yet 17. Meanwhile, Murni has a desire to continue her education.

*"Mbuh ngalamun, mbuh kepriye, aku banjur kelingan kancǎ-kancǎ sêkolahku. Banjur kēpriye kabare sawise pǎdhǎ lulus SMP. Ah, mēsthine pǎdhǎ sênêng, pǎdhǎ gumbirǎ jalaran pǎdhǎ bisǎ nêrusake sekolah ing SMA utawǎ SMK. Ngèlmune bakal tambah, uripe maju, tēmbē mburine mēsthi bakal luwih kēpenak tinimbang aku."* (eps. 2).

"I don't know why, but then I remembered my schoolmates. I wonder how they are doing after graduating from junior high school. Ah, they must be happy and excited because they can continue their education in high school or vocational school. Their knowledge will increase, their lives will progress, and their future will definitely be more comfortable than mine." (Eps. 2)

Murni's desire to continue his school to the next level is expressed in the sentence above. From the sentence above, Murni considers that by continuing his education to high school or vocational school, his life in the future will be more organized and advanced.

The second data related to marginalization in the story of *Kembang Alas Jati* is still found by researchers in episode one. The explanation is as follows.

*"Ing wêktu sémǎnǎ aku nēmbē wae rampung ujian. Ing wêktu kuwi simbok wis ǎdǎ-ǎdǎ supayǎ yèn wis tǎmpǎ ijazah aku enggal nyambut gawe."* (Eps. 1).

*"At that time, I had just finished the exam. At that time my mother was already urging me to find a job as soon as I received my diploma."* (Eps. 1).

As the researcher has explained above, that this marginalization arises not only due to the power of men, but also from the limitations of certain individuals or groups. From the beginning, *Simbok* (mother) had a desire for Murni to help his family's economy by working. This can be seen from the use of the word *ǎdǎ-ǎdǎ* which is equated with *panêmu* which in Indonesian means opinion. If you look at the data above, *Simbok's* (mother's) desire has appeared before Murni received his diploma, meaning before graduating from junior high school.

The next marginalization that the researcher finds in the *Kembang Alas Jati* story by Albes Sartono is explained below.

*"Murni ora bakal bisa urip kēpenak lan kinurmatan kǎyǎ kancǎ-kancaku sing bisa nerusake sêkolah kuwi awit aku, Murni, mung bakal dadi batur. Dadi rewang. Asor bangêt drajate. Bakal dadi wong sing mung tansah ngladèni wong liyǎ. Ora kenǎ suwǎlǎ. Ora kenǎ mancahi lan nampik marang prèntah lan dhawuhe sing dingèngèri."* (Eps. 2).

"Murni will not be able to live comfortably and dignified like my friends who can continue their education because I, Murni, will only be a servant. An assistant. The status is very low. I will be someone who always serves others. I can't ask questions. I cannot refuse or refuse the orders and orders given." (Eps. 2)

Through the data above, it can be seen at a glance that Murni is experiencing feelings of envy. This feeling arose because Murni could not continue his school to the next level because he had to work to help his family's economy. His job was only to be a maid or in Javanese known as "*batur*".

From the data above, Murni considers that his current job is very low. It can be seen from the sentence “*asor banget drajate.*” (what a very low degree she is). Murni also considers that by becoming a batur, he cannot develop himself. Because a *batur* (servant) will only be a servant of the *bendara* (master).

The next marginalization was found by the researcher in the fourth episode of the *Kembang Alas Jati* story. The data and explanation are as follows.

*"Emane awake dhewe iki mung rèwang dene Bu Ngadirah lan kulawargane kae dadi ndara utawa juragane awake dhewe. Dadi kalungguhane ya adoh karo awake dhewe kabeh. Kejaba kuwi putra-putrane Bu Ngadirah kuwi wong sekolahan kabeh. Pintêr-pintêr. Apa bisa klakon sênêng utawa nrêsnani wong kaya awake dhewe iki?"* (Eps. 4).

"It's a pity that we are only servants while Mrs. Ngadirah and her family are our masters. Thus, their position is far from the rest of us. Moreover, Mrs. Ngadirah's children are all educated. They are very intelligent. How can we be happy or love someone like us?" (Eps. 4).

The above sentence was spoken by Sumi while talking to Murni in her room. The two were talking about Mrs. Ngadirah's children, namely Rakanto and Arinto, whose faces were handsome. According to Sumi, the good looks of Mrs. Ngadirah's children are different from other men who have been known by Sumi. This is what fascinated Sumi by Rakanto and Arinto.

From the sentence *"Emane awake dhewe iki mung rèwang dene Bu Ngadirah lan kulawargane kae dadi ndara utawa juragane awake dhewe"* (It's a pity that we are merely temporary servants while Mrs. Ngadirah and her family become the stars or masters of our own selves) this shows that Sumi is aware that she is only a maid.

The difference in status and social strata makes Sumi insecure and pessimistic. The difference in status and social strata between Sumi and Mrs. Ngadirah's family dissipates the love that grows in her heart. This can be seen from Sumi's words like this: *"Apa bisa klakon sênêng utawa nrêsnani wong kaya awake dhewe iki?"* (Can we be happy or pleased for people like us?)

## Conclusion

This research concludes as follows. First, in the short story *"Kembang Alas Jati"* by Albes Sartono, there is indeed gender injustice and marginalization experienced by female characters. The process of marginalization or impoverishment consists of several types. These types include the assumption that junior high school graduates are already suitable for work, the belief that education is not important for the future, restrictions on self-development, and limitations on the right to love.

Secondly, after reading and understanding the serial story *Kembang Alas Jati* by Albes Sartono, the researcher found that the process of marginalization or impoverishment experienced by the female character in the story is influenced by two factors. These factors are economic factors and social strata.

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