

Women in Shackles: The Space of Privacy in *Cinta Suci Zahrana*

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ABSTRACT

Privacy space is something that most people do not pay attention to, especially the privacy space in life choices. There is a boundary that women have as individuals that must be obeyed and not simply breached by others. These privacy spaces manifest in the fields of education, work and marriage. Women in patriarchal societies are often used as objects, not as subjects, so that they often lose their privacy space. The privacy space here refers to the private area that makes women free to be themselves, have power over themselves. For this reason, this paper aims to reveal the privacy spaces of women represented in the novel *Cinta Suci Zahrana* by Habiburrahman el-Shirazy. From the analysis results can be described first, the privacy spaces of women in the novel *Cinta Suci Zahrana*. What are the things that become the personal boundaries of the female character in the novel. Second, the form of oppression accepted by women and how women's resistance to fighting this oppression. Thus, it was found that women in the novel *Cinta Suci Zahrana* still received oppressions from patriarchal culture but tried to fight back by doing

Keywords: Privacy space, gender, oppression, resistance

1. INTRODUCTION

Gender issues are still a hot topic of conversation among academics. Although feminism has brought significant changes to women's advancement, in fact, the shackles of patriarchy still haunt women's freedom. The second world woman Wolfian [1] has succeeded in developing herself in the public sphere, but Walby mentioned that patriarchy has also migrated from the private sphere to the public space [2]. This means that this patriarchy does not just give up when women have the courage to engage in activities in the public space. Walby also said that in this era, women had progressed due to the acceleration of globalization, modern women were more advanced in terms of education and employment than previous generations of women [3]. However, we still see that women still receive oppressions in their progress.

The advancement of modern women in terms of education and work is represented in the novel *Cinta Suci Zahrana* by Habiburrahman el-Shirazy. This novel tells the story of a woman named Zahrana and her journey to achieve dreams and love. Zahrana is described as a smart woman who has an extraordinary opportunity to develop her education and career to a global level. However, Zahrana was under pressure from her parents to stay with them and not pursue her dreams too much. Until it was time for a girl to get married, Zahrana was still busy with her career,

this made her parents worried and demanded that Zahrana get married.

This zahrana is a representation of a phenomenon that often occurs in society, that women who seek education and careers still receive oppression from patriarchal culture. Women, like men, have the right to choose education, work and love. This can be said as the privacy space that is owned by each individual. Krisnawati revealed that privacy is an abstract concept that contains many meanings. This privacy refers to the word privacy in English which means a condition free from interference by others [4]. Referring to this meaning of privacy, each individual certainly has limitations about which ones can be disturbed and which cannot be disturbed by other individuals.

When a woman gets obstacles or interference in her privacy space, it means that she is being oppressed by another party which makes her uncomfortable and disturbed [5]. The oppression received by these women naturally led to rebellion among women. This rebellion is a form of resistance carried out by women for oppression against the privacy space they have [6] [7].

This paper is the result of research that discusses the privacy space in a novel by Indonesian writers, which in this case is limited to the novel *Cinta Suci Zahrana* by Habiburrahman el-Shirazy. The problems that underlie this paper are first, the privacy spaces that women have in the novel *Cinta Suci Zahrana*. Second, the forms of oppression experienced by female figures, and the three

forms of resistance that were carried out against this oppression.

2. METHOD

To analyze this novel, a descriptive-qualitative method was used [8]. This method is considered the most comprehensive because the data to be analyzed is in the form of a descriptive discourse that raises the issue of breaking into privacy spaces in the novel *Cinta Suci Zahrana* by Habiburrahman el-Shirazy.

The data collected are in the form of words, phrases, sentences and paragraphs that raise the issue of women's development in achieving education, career and love in the novel *Cinta Suci Zahrana* by Habiburrahman el-Shirazy. This data will then be explained using a feminist perspective in viewing women's privacy spaces. After knowing the privacy space and its boundaries, then an analysis is carried out on the forms of oppression experienced by female figures, and finally reveals the form of women's resistance to the oppression they experience.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Women's Privacy Space

Privacy space refers to an area or territory that cannot be disturbed by other people [9]. Every individual has their own privacy space, including women. In the novel *Cinta Suci Zahrana* by Habiburrahman El Shirazy, the privacy space is divided into three, namely the privacy space in the fields of education, career, and marriage. It has been a long time, even before Kartini, women in the West fought for education so that women could get it. The female character in the novel *Cinta Suci Zahrana* is described as having a private space in education. Zahrana figures have territories in the field of education, as a woman Zahrana determines education according to what she wants.

"It is purely a domestic product. Completing S1 at the Faculty of Engineering UGM and S2 at ITB" (Shirazy, 2018: 3) ^[10].

"He once asked his history teacher, why is the City of Paris so cute and beautiful? The teacher replied that they had great engineers and architects. So he felt challenged and chose to continue studying at the UGM Faculty of Engineering, Department of Architecture." (Shirazy, 2018: 2)

"Even when he got a scholarship and a prize from winning a student scientific paper writing competition, he used the money to enroll in a private university. He also entered the Faculty of Engineering at the university, but majored in Civil Engineering" (Shirazy, 2018: 8)

Zahrana is described as a woman who has higher education. As a woman, Zahrana was able to get her education up to the S2 level, and even studied at two

universities at the same time when she was undergraduate. Taking a fairly prestigious major especially for a woman, one at a public university and one at a private university. Some of the quotes above show that Zahrana placed limits on his privacy.

While other women are still limited in their personal space, namely mattresses, kitchens, wells. It means that the woman is assumed to only take care of her husband, take care of the house such as cooking and washing [11]. Here the character Zahrana interpreted that women were also able to show their existence in the public sphere. Women have their own privacy space to determine the education they will take, to the point that their mother wants to study. Zahrana proved that as a woman she can choose her own education and strive to achieve the education she wants. In the novel, the character Zahrana also studied S1 at two different universities at the same time. This shows the existence of freedom in Zahrana in choosing education in the realm of his education privacy space.

Not only in the field of education, the privacy space in this novel also includes work or career fields [12]. The women in this novel are described as being able to work in public spaces. Work is something that should be a privacy space for someone, women are no exception. Women are free to have the jobs they want ^[13]. Other people have no right to interfere with someone's choice to choose a job and achieve the career they want.

"Two months after graduating, he received a call from UGM to participate in teaching. He was offered to be a lecturer assistant he was projected to become a lecturer and would be sent to the Netherlands to take his master's degree" (Shirazy, 2018: 10).

"He is often trusted by the campus in national and international symposiums. He also won the title as an exemplary lecturer for the Kopertis region of Central Java." (Shirazy, 2018: 23)

This privacy space in the field of work or career is represented by the character Zahrana in the novel *Cinta Suci Zahrana*. Zahrana character becomes a lecturer according to what he wanted from the start. A job that he had dreamed of since college, and the opportunity came to him when he graduated from UGM where he took his undergraduate education. A woman can achieve achievements because there is freedom in herself and her space to move. Without a person's privacy space, it is impossible to develop his career. Zahrana's freedom in pursuing his career produces achievements in him. He won an award and became an exemplary lecturer in his area.

In the quote there is the sentence "He was offered to be a lecturer assistant". The word offered here indicates a choice given to female figures. In choosing such an option, a person has a space called the privacy room. A space

where a person can freely determine his choice, determine his "power", and be free to be himself [14][15].

"But Rana didn't want to get married first. He is worried that if he gets married later, he will not concentrate, so that the completion can be delayed even though his scholarship is only two years. "

In addition to privacy spaces in terms of education and work, women's privacy spaces also cover marriage issues. In choosing a partner, women should also have the freedom to choose who will be their partner and choose the time when they will marry [16]. In ancient times, women who had menstruation were considered mature enough to marry even though they were still very young. Women are married off by their families so that women do not have the privacy to choose who and when they will marry. It can be said that women's privacy space is disturbed by others, in this case the father as an agent of patriarchy [17].

In this novel *Cinta Suci Zahrana*, the character Zahrana, a female character is depicted as having her privacy in matters of marriage. The Zahrana character here can choose and determine when he will marry. This can be seen from the female character who prefers to finish her Masters degree even though her surroundings have encouraged her to get married. Zahrana pointed out that marriage includes a woman's privacy space that cannot be disturbed or crossed by other people. Women have the right to manage their own privacy space.

3.2. Women in Shackles

After centuries of fighting for their existence in the public sphere, in fact women, especially in Indonesia, are still shackled by a deeply rooted patriarchal culture [18]. The novel *Cinta Suci Zaharana* by Habiburrahman El-Shirazy represents how women still get oppressions in their privacy space. This oppression was carried out by patriarchal agents. Beauvoir said that women are not completely free after they work in public spaces [19].

Cinta Suci Zahrana's novel shows a female character who still gets oppression from other parties who disturb women's privacy spaces. This can be seen in the following quote.

"For example, when he graduated from junior high school, his father asked to enter a pesantren and memorize the Qur'an, no need to continue school."

"His mother supported his father's decision, arguing that the pesantren was very cheap." (Shirazy, 2018: 4)

"If you teach in Jogja, that means you leave us ... If you still insist on teaching in Jogja, that means you ask us to let you go, and it is as if we don't have any more children". (Shirazy, 2018: 11)

The female character in this novel has received oppression since attending school. The father as an agent of patriarchy forbade him to continue to high school for several reasons. Likewise, mothers, instead of supporting their children who excel, actually support the decisions of the father for economic reasons. The figure of the mother is depicted as having no privacy space because she does not dare to make her own decisions. In this case, the Zahrana character was disturbed by his privacy space because it was blocked by patriarchal agents, namely his parents.

Oppression towards women's privacy space is also experienced by Zahrana figures in terms of work. The realm of work which should be a space of privacy for an individual, including women, was penetrated by her parents who did not allow Zahrana to choose the work location she wanted. The patriarchal shackles are still lasting today, seen from the story of Zahrana who got obstacles from her parents to work in the city of Jogja, on the campus of her alma mater.

It turns out that the breakthrough in the privacy space does not stop at a career ladder. When the Zahrana character still chose not to get married, other people were still meddling in his personal affairs, namely urging him to get married. Women lately think more about careers so that they don't seem to worry about marriage. Marriage is actually a barrier and a troublesome thing for women. This is because there is still stigmatization of women's work in the private space, meaning in terms of household. Identical women get restraints and tend to lose their independence as subjects.

3.3. Resistance to Oppression

The oppression that befell the female characters in the novel *Cinta Suci Zahrana* has met with resistance efforts. The female characters in this novel do not necessarily submit to and comply with the pressure or oppression that comes to them. The form of resistance or resistance in this novel is shown through the thoughts and actions of the female character herself. The character of Zahrana in this novel is described as a woman who is persistent, tenacious, and never gives up.

"Actually, he wants to follow the wishes of his father and mother, but whether he is the best graduate in the best junior high school in Semarang City, he feels more comfortable if he continues to the best high school in his hometown." (Shirazy, 2018: 4)

"So Rana taught at a private university in his hometown. His father and mother are very happy, it really feels like him. " (Shirazy, 2018: 13)

"But Rana didn't want to get married first. He is worried that if he gets married later, he will not concentrate, so that the completion can be delayed even though his scholarship is only two years. "

It is known that the character Zahrana received opposition from his father when he wanted to continue his studies to high school. However, Zahrana did not just follow his father's wishes. He tried to keep going to school as he wanted. In him is already imprinted with mature thoughts about his future. Zahrana insisted on finding a way to get into the best high school in town. His wish came true because of his hard work and prayers.

Apart from that, Zahrana has also succeeded in working in accordance with her dream of becoming a lecturer. However, Zahrana could not become a lecturer at UGM due to opposition from his parents. In return, Zahrana remained a lecturer in his hometown, Semarang. This shows a way out of the conflict between Zahrana and his father. After being oppressed not to work in Jogja, Zahrana could still work as a lecturer in the place her father wanted. Even though his private space was oppressed by patriarchal agents, Zahrana still controlled his privacy space by choosing another way out.

Furthermore, one of the things that makes the character Zahrana not want to marry implicitly can be captured that generally in the case of marriage there is a patriarchal institution that views domestic work as fully women's work even though women have worked full-time in the public sphere [2]. So that women are haunted by feelings of being trapped in a patriarchal trap, that women are supposed to take care of the house, ensure that the household runs well, serve their husbands, and so on [20]. As a form of resistance by female characters in facing marriage oppressions that try to destroy their privacy space, female characters prefer to delay marriage until they feel ready, at least until they finish their master's studies.

4. CONCLUSION

Patriarchy is identified with the existence of male agents who try to curb women's space. Even though women have managed to get out of their private sphere, namely the home. This does not automatically make women have power over their privacy space. Women's privacy space still gets oppression from my patriarchal agents, in this novel the patriarki agent is manifested through the character of Zahrana's parents. As a woman, Zahrana tried with all her strength, with all her thoughts and actions, to be able to resist any form of oppression she received.

Of the many oppressions received by female characters in this novel, not all of them can be opposed. There are things that cannot be challenged because female characters try to find a middle ground and make decisions in their own privacy space. This novel presents women's efforts in maintaining boundaries in the space of privacy. However, the results of the analysis show that there are still breakthroughs in women's privacy spaces due to the strong influence of patriarchal culture on Indonesian society.

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