

READER APPROACH IN LEO TOLSTOY'S NOVEL "ANNA KARENINA" PENDEKATAN PEMBACA DALAM NOVEL LEO TOLSTOY "ANNA KARENINA"

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Abstract

Anna Karenina is Russian novel was written by Leo Tolstoy. This novel tells about Anna Karenina's life as a main character that her marriage unsuccessfully, and she choose to leave her husband and her son for another man . An affair, jealousy, and religion has told in this novel, it is both a destructive and a productive force in the novel, and is understood inside and outside the context of marriage. In addition, the method in this study is used analytic descriptive which used reader response by Rossenblat (1938). As through this approach, Anna Karenina has a big responsibility of their family. However, in this novel, marriage is portrayed with all of its faults and problems, from jealousy to lack of passion to abandonment. As a reader, the writer seen that this novel shows a few thing of marriage in ninetenth century that related into a marriage in twenty century in Indonesia. Yet, has a differences in geographic and culture. This case, directly gives the researcher interrelated into feminism's idea of a women freedom in her marriage.

Keywords : Marriage, society, affair, reader.

Abstrak

Anna Karenina adalah novel rusia yang ditulis oleh Leo Tolstoy. Novel ini menceritakan kehidupan Anna Karenina sebagai karakter utama yang pernikahannya gagal, dan memilih untuk meninggalkan suami dan anaknya demi pria lain. Perselingkuhan, kecemburuan, dan kepercayaan diceritakan dalam novel ini, baik yang merusak dan menjadi kekuatan produktif dalam novel, untuk dipahami dalam dan di luar konteks sebuah perkawinan. Metode dalam penelitian ini adalah deskripsi analisis dengan menggunakan pendekatan *reader-response* dari Rossenblat (1938). Melalui pandangan teori reader response, Anna Karenina adalah seorang wanita yang memiliki tanggung jawab besar untuk keluarga mereka nya. Namun, dalam novel ini pernikahan digambarkan dengan semua kesalahan dan masalah, kurangnya semangat dan besarnya kecemburuan..

Sebagai pembaca, peneliti melihat bahwa novel ini memunculkan hal-hal dalam sebuah pernikahan di abad kesembilanbelas di Rusia yang memiliki keterhubungan dengan pernikahan yang ada di abad dua puluh satu di Indonesia meskipun memiliki letak geografis dan akar budaya yang berbeda. Hal ini mengarahkan peneliti pada keterkaitannya dengan gagasan feminisme mengenai kebebasan perempuan dalam menyikapi sebuah pernikahan.

Kata Kunci: Pernikahan, masyarakat, perselingkuhan, pembaca.

Introduction

Both in reality or in fabricated-reality such as in literary works, females are often considered as second class civilians. It happens since societies make treatments related with their existence as an individual and part of the society, though they do similarly toward male as well. Thorough precept about being feminine and masculine or gender role by societies may also become one of the causes of such consideration. It, unfortunately, does not only happen in a particular society in a particular region and time, since it can be found in many different societies around the world and give influences on people's perception of society, family and marriage. Through Anna Karenina's character in Tolstoy's novel, I can see several resemblances that is also happened in Indonesian's scope. Anna's struggles to be an independent and brave woman in facing tragedies and oppressions in her life is related with an issue raised by feminist, the problem of balance between the roles of men and women.

This issue though has existed since 18th century, even before, still occurs up to present time. Feminist perspective appears as a criticism of mainstream perspectives of traditional and merely "state centric", in the spirit of emancipatory want to liberate women from the "shackles" that are socially constructed as a woman and structural subordination of man. Kamla Bhasin and Nighat Said Khan (2014:2) stated that

Keadaan yang dibuat atas kesadaran gerakan wanita yang disebut feminisme adalah keinginan yang menolak akan penindasan dan pemerasan terhadap perempuan dalam masyarakat, di tempat kerja dan dalam keluarga, serta tindakan sadar perempuan maupun lelaki untuk mengubah keadaan tersebut.

Relating into statement above, I assume that feminism in this novel has interrelated between character Anna Karenina and I as the woman and the reader. Anna againts to accept the social norm that she have to maintain her marriage even the marriage unhappy. I can take annalyze about the character of Anna Karenina in period that this novel was written, as a main character she is rich in complexity: she is guilty of desecrating her marriage and home, for instance, but she remains noble and admirable nonetheless. She is elegant, always

understated in her dress. Her many years with Karenin show her capable of playing the role of cultivated, beautiful, society wife and hostess with great poise and grace. She is very nearly the ideal aristocratic Russian wife of the 1870s. Where, at the time of period gender feminist was very distinguished.

Data Source

In this research, all data are taken from the Leo Tolstoy novel entitled 'Anna Karenina' in 1877. This novel is chosen as the data source, because of the existence of gender issue in marriage and society. In addition, the data source shows the affair of a marriage that can be analysis as a feminist gender phenomenon.

Research Method

A novel by Leo Tolstoy entitled 'Anna Karenina' is used as the source of data in the research , whereas object of the research is Affair of marriage in Anna Karenina's life. To comprehend and analyze gender issue in a marriage and society, feminist criticism from Deborah Mcdowell (1980) and reader-response approach from Louise Rosenblatt (1938) are applied. Analytic descriptive method is used in describing the data analysis. According to Prof. Dr.T Fatimah Djajasudarma (1993:8)

"the analytic descriptive is the method which aims to make the description systematic, factual, and accurate related to the data, character and the phenomenon which are examined in the study".

This method is implemented to describe phenomenon and the data which has interrelated into feminism. In the other hand, analytic descriptive is useful to examine how the reader can analyzed and gives response of the novel in this research.

Theoretical Review

In this research, the theory is used to support the analysis based on Louise Rosenblatt (1:1938). Reader approach is *promoted "close readings" of literature, a practice which advocated rigid scholarly detachment in the study of texts and rejected all forms of personal interpretation by the reader.* According to Rosenblatt, the New Critics treated the text as "an autonomous entity that could be objectively analyzed" using clear-cut technical criteria. The reader should be able to demonstrate the feelings that involved in reading a text. Rosenblatt believed instead that "the reading of any work of literature is, of necessity, an

individual and unique occurrence involving the mind and emotions of some particular reader and a particular text at a particular time under particular circumstances. It can be concluded, that the reader approach is importance of the reader's role in interpreting texts. Rejecting the idea that there is a single, fixed meaning inherent in every literary work, this theory holds that the individual *creates* his or her own meaning the text based on personal associations. Because all readers bring their own emotions, concerns, life experiences, and knowledge to their reading, each interpretation is subjective and unique. In the other hand, the theory that I used in this reseaech is feminist theory. According to (Maggie Humm and Rebecca Walker 2009:1) the term feminism can be used to describe a political, cultural or economic movement aimed at establishing equal rights and legal protection for women. Feminism involves political and sociological theories and philosophies concerned with issues of gender difference, as well as a movement that advocates gender equality for women and campaigns for women's rights and interests. It can be assumed that feminist shows that women have the same rights and powers in the socio-political wherever they are lived.

Findings and Discussion

Data 1

"Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way".
(1877:1)

In the first sentence in this novel, indirectly assumed that feeling "Anna" as the main character shows that a happiness of each person is always the same. However, unhappiness will be different for some people. Happiness can not always be measured how much property and how you are viewed as a successful person. In addition, It is not that sin is more interesting than virtue, for by the end of the book the reader is much more drawn into the plot of Kitty and Levin as the other character in this novel. They had decidedly left the sinful affair in its own demise. However, it remains true that there is only *one* path to happiness, authentic happiness that is: conversion. Yet sin is as varied as the sinner. However, a variety does not make for interest anymore than simplicity makes for boredom. After all, is perfectly simple, as is he *one*. I see that the one, is person or can be referred into one things that can make us happy. In this case, both "Anna" and the other character "Kitty" felt the same feeling.

In short, Anna Karenina makes a choice between her husband and lover. Perhaps she sought love, happiness, freedom, or change. What she finds is more pain and oppression coming from other sources. As a woman no matter which man Anna chooses, she will never truly be her own independent person. She must always depend on a man for financial security and social standing. The feelings of imprisonment she feels in Alexei's home as a wife have also continued with

Vronsky. Leaving her husband's home with her lover brings shame to her name; she can no longer present herself in society. When she decides to rebel against the constraints the world has made for her because she cannot live as freely as a man, she decides to go to the theater where she is shunned by Mme Kartasov. Ironically, patriarchy has the power to make women oppress each other.

In my opinion as a feminist, I see "Anna" have a great principle. The novel is true to life in the sense that all actions have consequences and life is not always fair, especially for women. Though the reader may sympathize with Anna for her hopeless situation at the end of her life, she makes her own decisions publicly, knowing what will become of her. Ultimately we must all live and eventually die with the choices we have made and so does Anna Karenina. The novel's moral message is weaved through typical Tolstoy voluminous depth, including sub plots involving first Kitty and Constantine and his brother who marries a whore. Each sub plot helps the reader experience the cross-sections of each thread of a tapestry of sin. Kitty at first turns down Constantine's proposal for marriage but after observing Ann's sins, along side Constantine's bother's honorable faux marriage; she changes her mind and becomes a virtuous wife. I think, Tolstoy as an author leaves the reader to visualize a marriage of peasants held together by virtue. It knows no gender as parties of all sides including the sidelines feel its tension. Family, fidelity, and religion has been told in this novel, but family is major aspect. Seen when, the reasons why the Shcherbatskaya daughters are presented as the epitome of virtuous women is that they care not just for their husbands but for their parents and for their husbands' families. (Kitty, for example, gains a great deal of Levin's esteem after she cares for his dying brother Nicholas.) And one of Anna's biggest concerns about getting a divorce from Karenin is that she will no longer have access to her beloved son.

Data 2

"do you think that nine years of marriage should count for nothing against an infatuation?" His answer is *"No, but sin has a price you may be sure of that."* (1877:101)

In this data show the case of the marriage of Alexei Alexandrovich and Anna; they can be viewed as unique because of their particular personalities, class status, and the ways in which the two of them react to the world around them. But, their marriage is similar to many others in upper class Russian society because it has been arranged for them. In this way the roles of husband and wife are performed for a public audience. Alexei is the husband and provider, meeting all his duties as the man of the house. In addition, I think a woman who was once loved and admired by every person she came in contact with is detained indoors

alone where she must remain. Anna takes opium and morphine to numb the pain she experiences. She is confused and almost living in an alternate reality. Each time Vronsky leaves; she is alone, feeling abandoned by the person who caused her life to change, the only one she has left. Other women who have conformed to the ways of patriarchy are able to meet with and flirt with Vronsky in public, furthering Anna's misery. Her mind becomes clouded with drugs and depression takes over, convincing her life is hopeless. In many ways, her situation is hopeless. As she considers where she might go if she leaves Vronsky, the reader realizes along with her that Anna will never be truly happy with or without him. Her life has been ruined because she wanted to be free, something Victorian women cannot be.

Where there is a lack of love on both sides, there is no lack of pride in a public setting experienced by Alexei for the beauty and admiration Anna receives from everyone, Anna knows that her husband only relies on her to perpetuate his self-image of the successful, intelligent, and lucky man who possesses it all, including the wife everyone else wishes to have. But having no personal relationship with a spouse and detecting no emotion or appreciation year after year becomes stressful for a passionate women like Anna. When a woman realizes the world holds other possibilities and true passion is with in her reach she may consider reevaluating her situation. When the marriage is felt unhappy Anna sees that Vronsky is a man who is liked by many people as opposed to Alexandrovich. But, Vronsky does do several things thinking only of himself. Having led Kitty, Anna's young a young sweet aristocrat, to think he would marry her for his own pleasure had been cruel. Even worse, if he really loved Anna he would not have allowed her to leave her husband and disgrace her name. With his money, social standing, and most importantly, gender, Vronsky is well aware his life will not be much altered socially by an out-of wedlock relationship. He claims to feel guilt for Anna's position, yet never considers what he can do to help her. In fact, he goes as far as to say he won't discontinue his "male activities" for her. Anna knows that her situation will continue to deteriorate; she can never live a normal life again.

Therefore, Anna Karenina also describes how the society and class in Russia at the time it's very influential. Russian High Society comes in for a beating in Anna Karenina. In this novel, I see relation the social background. A social background is present in this novel when the intricacies of life of the individual, as a human breathing in the middle of a particular society. However, the biggest social novel framework must break down people's private lives and their group as well as questioning the social problems and the broad philosophy. And indeed, even Tolstoi not deliberately accentuate the problems (except the last part), a careful reader could certainly live picture Russian state implicit in the transition period after the abolition of serfdom system of farmers in 1861.

Initially, the reform gave birth to the hope that the coming of peace and social welfare in the country, but a decade later, in the 1870s, that era wrote Anna Karenina, hope it was not materialized, at least not bring prosperity to farmers, the largest part of the population Russia at the time. They were freed from the shackles of slavery without the division of the land, so that many of them are forced to earn a living and escape to the city, where the exploitation and suffering actually peaked. All was chaotic and a new start is set. Similarly, a character in the novel, Konstantin Levin, which is a depiction of the characters author.

The hypocrisies and petty, small-minded beliefs of Society are painstakingly documented from their condemnation of Anna to their crusade to "save" the Slavs at the end of the book. But the novels also offers an amazing portrayal of Society's rules and rituals: dinners, balls, parties, horse-riding and croquet games. And social interaction is vital to the health of a relationship: one of the major reasons why Anna is so jealous of Vronsky is because he has the freedom to move in society, whereas she has been cast out from society. Tolstoy sets this novels of adultery and self-discovery against the backdrop of the huge historical changes sweeping through Russia during the late nineteenth century, making the historical aspects of the novel just as important as the personal and psychological aspects.

I as a reader sees that Anna is shamed for her behavior. It is connected to modern day issues affecting young women. The rules of society might change, but the actions of society and the idea of the pack solidifying itself by turning against the individual is still as relevant today as it was back then. If someone get a divorce, they are not going to necessarily lose your children or be ostracized by society, but it is much more likely that the woman will be dragged over the coals than the man. The woman will be held morally accountable. The idea that there is complete equality is ridiculous. A women had the right to vote for less than a hundred years. Anna is frustrated with her position in society, while Vronsky continues to prosper. He makes her situation worse by telling her she must conform to her new life when he is partially to blame for her condemnation. He doesn't see that she is being forced into new imprisonment for something they both did. After attending the theater Anna tells Vronsky, 'You're to blame for it all.' If Anna had resisted her attraction to Vronsky she would not be his mistress, he should never had pursued her. But is her treatment and new societal standing really warranted? She is not necessarily the shamed women society depicts her to be. She has not been with several men. If she feels shame it is due to her own guilt. Anna expresses real passion and feelings for Vronsky that should be forgiven, as Alexei comes to realize.

Much of *Anna Karenina* indicates that male-female relationships are extremely difficult, but society is what truly makes people miserable. It's one thing to allow individuals to make choices in life, it's another to decide their fate for them in a public sphere. Keeping men and women divided by basic rights and societal access creates a barrier that would not otherwise exist and allows for people's private lives to be dictated by the public.

Conclusion

The conclusion of this research shows the reader's perspective about tragic drama novel. A man who had been run over by a train earlier in the novel, Anna chooses the same fate for herself and jumps under one. Anna's thoughts and actions are one way that the moral issues and the Death theme in the novel are explored. A great deal of the spiritual underpinnings of *Anna Karenina*, especially Levin's struggle to find the Lord, are based on Tolstoy's own life. One critic has called *Anna Karenina* a "spiritual autobiography." Tolstoy went through many religious crises in his life and struggled to find a way of living religiously that fought against the hypocrisies and greed of the Greek Orthodox Church. As readers, it might seem to us that, because the narrator can tell anybody's story, that he's an uninvolved or objective narrator. But while the narrator can be anywhere in the novel at any time, the fact that he sometimes chooses to give one person's perspective instead of another's is also partisanship. The narrator does have a message to get across, but Tolstoy's idea refined to showing his thought in this novel. Instead, he lets the perspectives of the characters of most interest to him ethically or psychologically dominate the novel. *Anna Karenina* is a novel embedded with several different themes and morals. It is nearly impossible to read without noticing both the implicit and explicit misogyny throughout the text. The plots of the novel are directly related to the way human relationships function or fail to function within the constraints of societal expectations altered along gender lines which are heavily influenced by patriarchy.

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