

Kekerasan Terhadap Perempuan dalam Film *Women from Rote Island* (Perempuan dari Pulau Rote) (2023) Karya Jeremias Nyangoen

Violence Against Women in the Film *Women from Rote Island* (Perempuan dari Pulau Rote) (2023) by Jeremias Nyangoen

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Abstract: Gender violence that often occurs is violence against women. Women become the objects of violence because in society there is an assumption that women are weak creatures. The powerlessness of women is exploited by perpetrators to commit violence against women. Awareness of this ultimately makes women fight to free themselves. Film is a narrative work that, apart from functioning as a medium of entertainment, also functions as a reflection of social and cultural conditions in society. The aim of this research is to describe the forms of violence against women and women's struggle for justice in Jeremias Nyangoen's film *Women from Rote Island*. This study is expected to provide a deep understanding of the representation of violence against women in film and to enrich the application of feminist literary criticism theory. The research method employed is descriptive qualitative with a feminist literary criticism approach. The primary data source for this study is the film *Women from Rote Island*. The results of the analysis show that the film complexly represents various forms of violence experienced by female characters, including physical, sexual, and psychological violence, while also highlighting various efforts by women to achieve justice.

Keywords: feminism, film, gender, violence, women.

Abstrak: Kekerasan gender yang sering terjadi adalah kekerasan terhadap perempuan. Perempuan menjadi objek kekerasan karena dalam masyarakat terdapat anggapan bahwa perempuan adalah makhluk yang lemah. Ketidakberdayaan perempuan dimanfaatkan oleh pelaku untuk melakukan kekerasan terhadap perempuan. Kesadaran akan hal ini pada akhirnya membuat perempuan berjuang untuk membebaskan diri. Film merupakan karya naratif yang selain berfungsi sebagai media hiburan, juga berfungsi sebagai refleksi kondisi sosial dan budaya masyarakat. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mendeskripsikan bentuk-bentuk kekerasan terhadap perempuan dan perjuangan perempuan untuk mendapatkan keadilan dalam film *Perempuan dari Pulau Rote* karya Jeremias Nyangoen. Penelitian ini diharapkan dapat memberikan pemahaman yang mendalam tentang representasi kekerasan terhadap perempuan dalam film dan memperkaya penerapan teori kritik sastra feminis. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah deskriptif kualitatif dengan pendekatan kritik sastra feminis. Sumber data primer penelitian ini adalah film *Perempuan dari Pulau Rote*. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa film tersebut secara kompleks merepresentasikan berbagai bentuk kekerasan yang dialami oleh tokoh perempuan, meliputi kekerasan fisik, seksual, dan psikis, sekaligus menyoroti berbagai upaya perempuan untuk mendapatkan keadilan.

Kata Kunci: feminisme, film, gender, kekerasan, perempuan.

INTRODUCTION

Gender violence, particularly against women, is a serious global issue. The United Nations (UN) asserts that violence against women is a form of gender-based violence that causes physical, psychological, and sexual suffering, and threatens women's freedom (Coomaraswamy in Hasriani, 2018). Violence against women, especially sexual violence, remains a worrying problem. The contributing factors include traditions of masculinity, social norms that are permissive of violence, and a lack of legal protection. The 2024 Annual Report of the National Commission on Violence Against Women (Komnas Perempuan) recorded 330,097 cases of violence against women, an increase of 14.17% from the previous year. The most frequently reported types of violence were sexual violence (26.94%) and psychological violence (26.94%), followed by physical violence (26.78%) and economic violence (9.84%).

Violence, in essence, can stem from various factors. One of the most frequent forms of violence is violence against women, which is often triggered by social constructions of gender. According to Oakley (in Faki, 2007), "gender berarti perbedaan yang bukan biologis dan bukan kodrat Tuhan, perbedaan yang bukan biologis yaitu perbedaan jenis kelamin (sex) adalah kodrat Tuhan oleh karenanya secara permanen

berbeda" (gender means a difference that is not biological and not God's nature; the non-biological difference, namely the difference in sex, is God's nature and therefore permanently different). Gender refers to the behavioral differences between men and women that are socially constructed, meaning they are not natural or divinely ordained but are created by humans through a long social and cultural process within society. Therefore, gender changes from time to time, from place to place, and even from class to class, whereas biological sex remains unchanged.

Women are figures with two sides. First, women are beauty, whose charm can make men infatuated. Second, women are considered weak. Strangely, this weakness is used as a reason by malicious men to exploit their beauty. Tragically, even among philosophers, there is the view that "perempuan diciptakan oleh Tuhan untuk menyertai laki-laki" (women were created by God to accompany men) (Sugihastuti and Suharto, 2016). Besides the exploitation of beauty, the unjust treatment experienced by women can vary. The most potent forms are based on types of unfair treatment, such as domestic violence and public violence against women (Sugihastuti and Saptiawan, 2007). This form of violence, as explained by Fakhri (2007), can be physical, such as rape, incest, battery, and genital mutilation, as well as non-physical, such as sexual harassment which has an emotional impact. The view that places women as weak, emotional, and inferior beings compared to men also contributes to a lower position for women in society. This discrimination triggers various forms of injustice that lead to the birth of the feminist movement. According to Fakhri (2007), "feminisme bukan upaya pemberontakan terhadap laki-laki, upaya melawan pranata sosial seperti institusi, rumah tangga dan perkawinan, maupun upaya perempuan untuk melampaui kodratnya melainkan upaya untuk mengakhiri penindasan dan eksploitasi perempuan" (feminism is not an attempt to rebel against men, an attempt to oppose social structures like institutions, households, and marriage, nor an attempt for women to transcend their nature, but rather an effort to end the oppression and exploitation of women).

The theme of violence against women is often raised in literary works as a form of social reflection. Literature not only conveys aesthetics but also becomes a medium for understanding power relations and women's experiences. According to Sugihastuti and Suharto (2016), the feminist approach in literary research seeks to understand the role and position of women as reflected in literary works. Feminism itself is an ideology that fights for women's rights in various aspects of life, such as politics, economy, and socio-culture. Lakoff (in Utami, 2020) adds that the way women speak often reflects a subordinate position in a male-dominated society. In the field of literature, feminism has had an influence by depicting women and authors who discuss female characters, which is called feminist literary criticism.

Feminist literary criticism is a discipline of literary studies that emphasizes research from a feminist perspective. Etymologically, the word feminist comes from the word "Femme (woman), yang berarti perempuan (tunggal) yang memperjuangkan hak-hak kaum perempuan (jamak), sebagai kelas sosial" (Femme (woman), which means a single woman who fights for the rights of women (plural), as a social class) (Ratna, 2004). According to Flax (in Wiyatmi, 2012), the main goal of feminist literary criticism is to "menganalisis relasi gender, hubungan antara kaum perempuan dan laki-laki yang dikonstruksikan secara sosial, diantaranya, menggambarkan situasi ketika perempuan berada dalam dominasi laki-laki" (analyze gender relations, the socially constructed relationship between women and men, including describing situations where women are under male domination). From this explanation, it can be seen that feminist literary criticism can be used to reveal or explain literary works that discuss women.

The representation of women's experiences as victims of violence is apparent in various female characters in literary works. This research focuses on revealing gender violence in a literary work in the form of a film. A film is a narrative work that tells a story through a series of moving images accompanied by sound. According to Putra (in Ike, 2021), film encompasses various art forms such as visual arts, photography, architecture, dance, literature, theater, music, and pantomime. Film is open to multiple interpretations because it can contain social messages that are interpreted in various ways by its audience (Majid, 2020). Besides being a medium of entertainment, film also serves as a reflection of the social, cultural, and community values. Film also has a strong potential to create social change because it can reach a wide audience and influence emotions, thus "film dapat memicu perubahan dalam sikap, perilaku,

dan tindakan kekerasan terhadap perempuan di era digital" (film can trigger changes in attitudes, behavior, and actions regarding violence against women in the digital era) (Sritami, et al., 2025).

One film that represents violence against women is *Women from Rote Island (Perempuan dari Pulau Rote)* by Jeremias Nyangoen. This film raises the issue of violence experienced by women on Rote Island. The men in the film are depicted as viewing women merely as sexual objects and often belittling their existence. However, the film also shows the resistance of the female characters against the violence they experience. This makes the film a medium for social criticism and women's empowerment.

Departing from this background, the problems discussed in this research are how gender violence against women is manifested in the film *Women from Rote Island (Perempuan dari Pulau Rote)* and how women struggle to obtain justice in the film *Women from Rote Island (Perempuan dari Pulau Rote)*. The purpose of this research is to describe the forms of gender violence against women and the struggles undertaken by the female characters to obtain justice in the film *Women from Rote Island (Perempuan dari Pulau Rote)* by Jeremias Nyangoen. The benefit of this research is that it is expected to add to the knowledge of literary analysis studies in Indonesia, especially in the field of Indonesian film research that utilizes feminist literary criticism, and this research is expected to contribute to the application of literary theory and feminist literary criticism to reveal violence against women in the film *Women from Rote Island* by Jeremias Nyangoen.

To support this research, a literature review of relevant previous studies is needed. Several related studies include Hasriyani (2018) in her research titled "Kekerasan Gender terhadap Perempuan dalam Kumpulan Cerpen Suara Merdeka (Kritik Sastra Feminisme)" (Gender Violence against Women in the Suara Merdeka Short Story Collection (A Feminist Literary Criticism)) which used the theory of genetic structuralism and feminist literary criticism. The results of this study were that there was gender violence against women, namely, physical violence found in the short stories *Putri Raja dan Babi Hutan* by Aris Kurniawan and the short story *Asmodeus* by Bashirah Delmora Anjali. Psychological violence was found in the short story *Pesona Farida* by Alimin Suprayitno and the short story *Perempuan-perempuan* by Ana Mustamin. Sexual violence was found in the short story *Gadis Bermahkota Tiga Kembang yang Layu* by Faris Al Faisal. Although the theory used is the same, the different object of study gives this research a different focus and perspective.

Research conducted by Rieskie, Nuning, and Yuli (2021) titled "Kekerasan terhadap Perempuan dalam Novel Kupu Wengi Mbangun Swarga Karya Tulus Setiyadi (Kajian Feminisme Sastra)" (Violence against Women in the Novel Kupu Wengi Mbangun Swarga by Tulus Setiyadi (A Study of Literary Feminism)) examined psychological, physical, and sexual violence against the main character. The violence against women was not only committed by male characters but also by other female characters. The difference in object and form of the work makes this research different from what the author is conducting.

Research conducted by Siti, Werdiningsih, and Zaidah (2022) titled "Kekerasan terhadap Tokoh Perempuan dalam Novel Prasetyane Wanita Karya Tulus Setiyadi: Kajian Feminisme" (Violence against Female Characters in the Novel Prasetyane Wanita by Tulus Setiyadi: A Feminist Study). The results of this study indicated that violence against women arises because in society it is still viewed that women are still objects of male violence, because women have no power. The focus of this research included psychological, physical, sexual, and economic violence, but used a different object and literary context.

Research conducted by Kristin and Yoehanto (2024) titled "Makna People-Centered Development melalui Kekerasan Seksual pada Film *Women from Rote Island*" (The Meaning of People-Centered Development through Sexual Violence in the Film *Women from Rote Island*) used a qualitative semiotic approach and Sara Mills' discourse feminism theory. The focus of this research was to deepen the meaning related to People-Centered Development by focusing on human development through sexual violence. Although the object of study is the same, the differences in theoretical approach and content show that this research has novelty.

Based on the literature review above, it can be concluded that this research has novelty and originality because it is different from previous studies. Although many studies on feminist literary criticism have been conducted, a study on gender violence against women and women's struggle for justice in the

film *Women from Rote Island* by Jeremias Nyangoen has never been done. Therefore, this research is expected to be a new contribution to enriching the scientific treasury of feminist literary criticism.

METHODS

The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative. This method allows the researcher to describe and analyze data in-depth based on the phenomena that appear in the film. The primary data in this research consists of dialogue and scenes from the film *Women from Rote Island* that represent gender violence and the struggle of women to obtain justice. The secondary data in this research includes books, journals, and other scientific sources that are considered relevant and supportive.

The approach used in this study is feminist literary criticism. This approach was chosen because the research focus is related to women's experiences, specifically the gender violence experienced by the female characters in the film *Women from Rote Island* by Jeremias Nyangoen. Feminist literary criticism aims to uncover the gender injustice represented in literary works, as well as to analyze how female characters fight for justice in the context of the violence they experience.

The data collection technique used in this study is content analysis. This was chosen because the data being investigated requires description and the recording of important content contained within the data source, so the data needs to be understood rather than merely stated (Awaludin & Nila Wijaya, 2021).

As for the data analysis technique in this study, it involves directly observing the film *Women from Rote Island*, listening to every scene and dialogue in the film, noting scenes and dialogues that appear to contain violence against women and their struggle for justice through the content analysis technique, and then classifying and analyzing the collected data.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The film *Women from Rote Island* by Jeremias Nyangoen was released on Netflix on October 7, 2023, and screened in theaters on February 22, 2024. This film received various prestigious awards, including the Citra Award for Best Feature Film (2023), the Citra Award for Best Cinematography (2023), the Citra Award for Best Director (2023), and the Citra Award for Best Original Screenplay (2023). *Women from Rote Island* (*Perempuan dari Pulau Rote*) is a film that raises the issue of violence against women. In this film, the cruelty of the violence experienced by women is evident.

Forms of Violence Against Women in the Film *Women from Rote Island* by Jeremias Nyangoen

Physical Violence

According to Harnoko (in Fitriani, 2018), physical violence is violence committed by one person against another intended to harm a woman's body parts or physique using the perpetrator's body parts, such as slapping, kicking, hitting, pushing, pulling hair, or other rough physical contact. Physical violence is an act committed by someone against another that can injure the victim's body, causing pain and injury. Physical violence includes hitting, slapping, stepping on, kicking, and so on (Sari, 2017). The physical violence experienced by women is shown in the following dialogue and scene.



Image 1. Ezra chokes Martha

Ezra : “Ayo, cepat!” (Come on, hurry up!)

Martha : “Jangan. Jangan, datuk!” (Don't. Don't, datuk!)

Image 1 and the dialogue above show Martha experiencing physical violence, being choked by Ezra because she tried to fight back when he was about to molest her. However, Martha was helpless, so Ezra

succeeded in molesting her by kissing, groping, and undressing her. Additionally, Bertha experienced the same thing, as follows.



Image 2. Ezra chokes Bertha

Image 2 above shows Bertha trying to help Martha when she is about to be raped by Ezra. When she tries to fight Ezra to get him off her sister, she is hit and then choked by Ezra. Ezra, who is emotional, chokes Martha until she is in pain.

Based on this, it shows that the perpetrator commits physical violence against a woman when she is helpless. The perpetrator considers women to be weak creatures, making them easy to torture. The perpetrator's emotions drive him to cruelly carry out his actions. Thus, the perpetrator assumes his strength is greater than the victim's because he is a man.



Image 3. Martha is slapped by Kobis

Image 3 above shows Martha being slapped by Kobis for burning down his house. Martha did this because Ezra, who had molested her on the coast, went into Kobis's house. She wanted to retaliate against Ezra by confronting him inside Kobis's house, but when Martha tried to enter, the door was locked again. Confused, Martha suddenly saw a row of bottles containing gasoline. Martha took a bottle and threw it into Kobis's house. When the bottle broke inside, there was a lit torch, and the gasoline ignited, burning Kobis's house down.

Based on this, it shows that the perpetrator of physical violence does not first investigate why the victim did what she did. The perpetrator takes matters into his own hands, slapping the victim, who is shocked by his action. The perpetrator assumes that women are merely weak creatures who cause a lot of trouble, thus considering himself stronger and justified in his actions.



Image 4. Martha is chained

Image 4 above shows that Martha is being chained inside her house for stabbing Ezra in retaliation for his molestation, and for burning Kobis's house because she wanted to confront Ezra who was inside. The villagers decided to chain Martha to prevent her from causing more trouble. In reality, Martha would not have done these things if she had not been molested or provoked.

Based on this, the victim of violence, the woman, does not receive safety; instead, the opposite happens, and the victim is punished. A woman's voice seems to go unheard, even though the victim acted to defend and protect herself from a male sexual predator.



Image 5. Bertha is tortured inside a tank

Image 5 above shows Bertha being kidnapped by a mysterious person. Her head is covered with a plastic bag, her hands and feet are tied, and her clothes are stripped off. She whimpers in pain, asking for help. A moment later, a man wearing a head covering arrives carrying a saw. Then, the man slits Bertha's throat without any mercy. It turns out the man is Kobis. Kobis is the victim's neighbor.

Based on this, it shows that the woman experiences physical violence: hands tied, feet tied, head wrapped in plastic, clothes stripped, leaving the victim terrified and confused. The man, who should protect the woman, instead becomes a horrifying predator. Perpetrators of physical violence are often people close to the victim; even a trusted relative can be the mastermind. Therefore, the space for women to move is very limited.



Image 6. Orpa is tortured by Kobis

Image 6 above shows that after Kobis tells Orpa that he killed her daughter, Bertha, Orpa wants to escape from Kobis's house, but the house is locked. As she tries to escape, Kobis chokes Orpa and intends to kill her too because he is afraid Orpa will tell others. Orpa continues to fight back but is overwhelmed. Then Orpa is thrown by Kobis and falls to the ground.

Based on this, the physical violence against the woman occurs because the perpetrator feels cornered. If he does not commit violence, his own life will be at stake, as others will learn his secret from the victim. The perpetrator, being a man, easily commits physical violence against a woman because he considers himself to have more strength. The woman, who should receive protection and strength while seeking justice, instead experiences more violence.

Sexual Violence

According to Harnoko (in Fitriani, 2018), sexual violence is an act directed at a woman to harm or damage her sexual organs. Sexual violence can be in the form of inappropriate sexual remarks, touching parts of a woman's body without her consent, to forcing sexual intercourse with threats or promises. Sexual violence can be in the form of forced sexual relations, harassment, or rape against women (Werdiningsih in Rofiqoh, 2021). Sexual violence can also include kissing, groping, unwanted sexual jokes, and so on (Prasetyo & Hariyadi, 2017).



Image 7. Orpa is molested by a minor

Image 7 above shows Orpa being upset after being sexually harassed while shopping at the market. The harassment was committed by a minor. After shopping, Orpa rushes home and tells her neighbors about it. This is seen in the following dialogue.



Image 8. Orpa tells her neighbors

Bertha : “Ada anak kecil di pasar, dia tempel burungnya dibokong mama” (There was a little kid at the market, he pressed his 'bird' against mom's butt.)

Warga 1 (Villager 1): “Mungkin itu anak lahir dari lubang WC” (Maybe that child was born from a toilet hole.)

Warga 2 (Villager 2): “Untuk apa ke pasar? Ada tetangga yang bisa diminta tolong. Kak Abram sudah delapan hari tidur disini. Karena kemauan Kakak, kan? Sekarang Kakak berbuat hal baru. Kakak kena pelecehan, kan? Itu karena Kakak melawan adat!” (Why go to the market? There are neighbors who could have helped. Brother Abram has been laid out here for eight days. Because you insisted, right? Now you've done something new. You got harassed, right? That's because you went against tradition!)

Based on image 8 and the dialogue above, it shows that upon arriving home, Orpa tells the villagers who are at her house while her husband's body is still laid out for the wake. The villagers' response is to scold Orpa because it is taboo to go out while her husband is still at home; she should have stayed home and could have asked a neighbor for help if she needed something from the market. The villager says that Orpa was harassed because she defied tradition.

Based on this, the sexual harassment was committed by a minor, who dared to harass an older person in a crowded place like a market. This illustrates that sexual harassment is not only committed by adults; minors also have the potential to do so. Perpetrators of sexual harassment against women always find a space to act, anywhere and anytime. A woman who dares to speak out about what happened to her does not get support but is instead blamed and cornered with various excuses. This can be a factor in why victims of sexual violence are reluctant to speak up.



Image 9. Ruben and Marco peep at Martha's skirt

Ruben and Marco : “Lihat! Lihat!” (Look! Look!)

Bertha : “Hei! Kalian lihat apa?” (Hey! What are you looking at?)

Ruben and Marco : “Tidak lihat apa-apa” (Not looking at anything.)

Bertha : “Kakak jongkok tutup roknya!” (Sister, squat down and cover your skirt!)

Image 9 and the dialogue above show Martha looking for a bird's nest in a tree. She climbs the tree but has difficulty getting down. She then calls her sister, Bertha, to help her. Bertha comes but is unsure how to help her sister. As Bertha is about to help, Ruben and Marco approach. However, Ruben and Marco instead look up at Martha's skirt as it is lifted by the wind. Bertha, seeing this, gets angry and shoos them away. Confused and with no other option, Bertha calls Ruben and Marco back because they are the only ones nearby, but an unexpected incident happens to Martha, as follows.



Image 10. Marco gropes Martha's breast

Image 10 above shows Ruben and Marco approaching Martha again after being called by Bertha to help her sister. Then Ruben and Marco climb the tree to help Martha. Martha, anxious and scared, can only surrender as they help her. While helping, Ruben and Marco fall along with Martha from the tree. As they fall, Marco suddenly hugs Martha and gropes her breast. Seeing this, Martha gets angry and chases Marco.

Based on this, it shows that sexual harassment can occur at any time, even in a critical situation. The perpetrator can take advantage of the situation to carry out his actions when the victim is scared and confused. The victim's helplessness is what the perpetrator exploits. The perpetrator of harassment can be anyone, even a close relative. This is experienced by the character Martha, whose perpetrator, Marco, is a distant relative.



Image 11. Martha is raped while chained

Image 11 above shows Martha experiencing sexual violence, namely rape, while she is chained. This happens not just once but multiple times, almost every night. Martha is always raped in the middle of the night because the place where she is chained is in a different room from her family; whenever she calls for help, no one hears her. The continuous incidents can only make her resign to her fate. Furthermore, Martha cannot do much because she is chained, so she cannot run away.

Based on this, rape can happen anytime and anywhere. This female character experiences rape while at home but in a chained condition. The character can only surrender to what is happening to her. The rapist can commit the act when the situation is favorable, such as at night when others are asleep, so the victim's screams are not heard. A female victim of violence should receive protection from those around her, but instead, the victim is chained, leading to another bitter experience while being surrounded by her relatives.

Psychological Violence

According to Harnoko (in Fitriani, 2018), psychological violence is an act directed at a person to harm a woman's psyche and degrade her image or self, manifested through words or actions that emotionally pressure the woman, such as insults, threats, or yelling. Psychological violence includes actions/words directed at someone that result in fear, loss of the ability to act, loss of self-confidence, lack of recognition, neglect, threats, control, belittling, or yelling, which leads to the victim feeling fear (Prasetyo & Hariyadi, 2017). In the film *Women from Rote Island* by Jeremias Nyangoen, the female characters experience psychological violence, shown in the following dialogue and scene.



Image 12. Martha suddenly screams in fear

Martha : “Tuhan. Tuhan tolong. Mama dia lompat Mama! (God. God help. Mom, he's jumping, Mom!)

Orpa : “Siapa?” (Who?)

Martha : “Mama dia ada disini! (Mom, he's here!)

Orpa : “Siapa? Kenapa Martha? Disini tidak ada siapa-siapa.” (Who? What's wrong, Martha? There's no one here.)

Image 12 and the dialogue above show that while Orpa is combing her hair, Martha looks in the mirror and then screams in fear as if someone is about to bother her, even though only she and her mother are in the room. This incident confuses her mother. A similar incident occurs again, as follows.



Image 13. Martha is shocked and scared to see Uncle Theo

Orpa : “Martha ini Paman Theo” (Martha, this is Uncle Theo.)

Paman Theo (Uncle Theo): “Halo Martha. Tidak ingat Paman Theo?” (Hello, Martha. Don't you remember Uncle Theo?)

Martha : “Datuk! Mama! Datuk!” (Datuk! Mom! Datuk!)

Orpa : “Ini teman bapakmu” (This is your father's friend.)

Martha : “Mama Datuk. Clara, Bertha usir dia!” (Mom, Datuk. Clara, Bertha, get him out!)

Bertha : “Bukan, Kak” (It's not him, Sis.)

Image 13 and the dialogue above show Martha suddenly staring wide-eyed. She is shocked to see Uncle Theo who has come to see her mother and offer condolences for her father's death. Uncle Theo greets Martha kindly, but Martha instead tells him to leave. She tells her sister to get him out because she feels threatened, even though Uncle Theo is her father's good friend. When hysterical, Martha repeatedly says the word 'datuk'. Uncle Theo, seeing Martha's strange behavior, tells her mother to take Martha to a hospital in Kupang. Martha's strange behavior continues, as follows.



Image 14. Martha is scared of a man at the market

Martha : “Datuk, tolong jangan. Datuk, Jangan!” (Datuk, please don't. Datuk, Don't!)

Orpa: “Aduh, Pak, maaf. Anak saya sakit. Mohon maaf.” (Oh, Sir, I'm sorry. My daughter is sick. I apologize.)

Image 14 and the dialogue above show that when Martha goes to the market with her mother, she wants to buy a traditional toy that makes a bird-like sound when blown, but she has no money. Martha asks the toy seller to wait for her mother, who is shopping elsewhere, assuring him she will pay. However, Orpa does not return promptly. The seller then gives the toy to another buyer who has money. Martha

gets angry at the toy seller. During the commotion, a man in a hat comes to intervene, but Martha becomes frightened upon seeing him and again says the word 'datuk'. Martha avoids the man in the hat as he tries to help. Not long after, Orpa arrives and apologizes for the disturbance Martha caused. The strangeness of Martha's behavior continues.



Image 15. Martha is terrified as Ezra is about to rape her

Ezra : “Ayo, cepat!” (Come on, hurry up!)

Martha : “Jangan, Datuk!” (Don't, Datuk!)

Image 15 and the dialogue above show Martha terrified as Ezra is about to molest her, specifically to rape her. Martha tries to refuse but is still forced by Ezra. Cornered, Martha suddenly says the name 'datuk'. She forbids Ezra, whom she perceives as the 'datuk' figure, from doing that to her.

Based on images 12, 13, and 14, the female character, Martha, feels scared and often mentions the name 'datuk'. In these images, it is not yet clear why Martha's strange behavior emerges whenever she remembers the 'datuk' figure or sees someone she thinks resembles him. In image 15, the reason for Martha's strange behavior is answered when Ezra is about to rape her on the beach. The female character again calls out the name 'datuk', even though the person in front of her is not a 'datuk'. The word 'datuk' is synonymous with a man from Malaysia, signifying a position of honor. Martha had never shown strange behavior before she came from Malaysia. It seems she frequently experienced the same thing that Ezra was doing—violence committed by a 'datuk' figure—which has shaken her psyche, causing her to suddenly become frightened and hysterical. Psychological violence is also experienced by another female character, Bertha, as evidenced by the following dialogue.



Image 16. Bertha is teased by Kobis

Kobis : “Saya kira tanda tangan surat nikah kita” (I thought we were signing our marriage certificate.)

Bertha : “Mengkhayal apa lagi ini? Semir dulu rambut itu!” (What are you daydreaming about now? Dye that hair first!)

Kobis : “Pakai apa, Sayang?” (With what, darling?)

Bertha : “Pakai semir sepatu. Sudah cepat saya ada kegiatan lain” (With shoe polish. Hurry up, I have other things to do.)

Kobis : “Yang muda banyak tapi belum tentu setia” (There are many young ones, but they may not be loyal.)

Bertha : “Iya, yang tua juga banyak, tapi genit. Belum tentu setia juga!” (Yes, there are many old ones too, but they're flirty. Not necessarily loyal either!)

Kobis : “Ada yang tua tapi setia. Mau tidak? Jawab dulu! Mau tidak?” (There's one who is old but loyal. Do you want him? Answer me! Do you want him?)

Bertha : “Saya pilih yang muda, ganteng dan kaya. Puas! Dasar mimpi! Sudah tua masih aja genit.” (I'd choose someone young, handsome, and rich. Satisfied? What a dreamer! So old yet still so flirty.)

Image 16 and the dialogue above show that when Bertha comes to Kobis's house to deliver compensation for the house Martha burned down, Kobis instead flirts with her. Kobis teases Bertha by

asking her to be his partner, but Bertha refuses. Hearing Kobis's words, Bertha doesn't stay silent; she fights back. Annoyed at being constantly cornered, Bertha quickly leaves.

Based on this, the perpetrator commits psychological harassment against an underage girl with statements that constantly corner and degrade her dignity. The perpetrator uses language as if a woman's dignity is below a man's, which makes men feel more confident. Besides Martha and Bertha, the next character to experience psychological violence is Orpa, as evidenced by the following scene.



Image 17. Kobis asks Orpa to have sex

Orpa : “Kalau seorang ibu bisa mengandung dan melahirkan seorang anak, itu sama artinya dia sanggup melakukan apapun demi anaknya” (If a mother can conceive and give birth to a child, it means she is capable of doing anything for her child.)

Kobis : “Masih ada satu syarat lagi” (There is one more condition.)

Orpa : “Info pelakunya atau syarat dulu?” (Information about the perpetrator or the condition first?)

Kobis : “Dimana-mana syarat dahulu” (The condition always comes first.)

Orpa : “Jaminannya? Sanggup dikutuk tujuh turunan kalau tidak mempati?” (What's the guarantee? Are you willing to be cursed for seven generations if you don't keep your word?)

Kobis : “Jangan menantang saya” (Don't challenge me.)

Orpa : “Syaratnya?” (The condition?)

Kobis : “Saya mau kita bercinta sekarang” (I want us to make love now.)

Orpa : “Kalau saya tolak?” (What if I refuse?)

Kobis : “Silakan angkat kaki dari sini!” (Then you can leave this place!)

Image 17 and the dialogue above show Orpa being forced by Kobis to have sex with him as a condition for him to provide information on who killed her daughter, Bertha. Orpa goes to Kobis and asks about it because Kobis was the first person to find Bertha. Orpa hopes Kobis knows who killed her daughter and will tell her. The information Orpa seeks is not free. She has already given him money, earrings, and even her wedding ring, but it is not enough. The main condition she must fulfill is to have sex with Kobis. If Orpa refuses, Kobis will not tell her who killed Bertha. With a heavy heart, Orpa is forced to do it.

Based on this, the perpetrator commits psychological harassment against the woman by creating feelings of worry, fear, and being cornered. The perpetrator threatens the woman that if she does not comply with his wishes, he will not provide her with a sense of security, as she will still be burdened with knowing who killed her daughter. Thus, the female character is forced to do what the perpetrator wants because she has no other choice. The frequent violence against the women of Rote leads to the victims' resistance against the perpetrators, as follows.

Resistance of the Female Characters

In the effort to resist perpetrators of violence against women, the main character Martha's resistance to the various treatments by perpetrators is very apparent. As a woman who constantly experiences violence, Martha develops anger and a desire to retaliate. This is evident in the following image.



Image 18. Martha chases Marco

Image 18 shows that while Martha is looking for a bird's nest in a tree, she has trouble getting down and calls her sister, Bertha. While her sister is confused about how to help, Ruben and Marco approach. With smiles and wide eyes, Marco and Ruben look up at Martha's exposed skirt. Bertha scolds them and shoos them away. A moment later, Bertha calls them back to help her sister. They climb the tree and help Martha. While helping, Marco and Ruben fall while holding onto Martha's body, and Marco gropes her breast. Seeing her sister being molested, Bertha gets angry and hits them. Ruben and Marco run away. Suddenly, Martha grabs the machete she brought and chases Marco. Terrified, Marco runs towards the village. At that time, Uncle Ezra's workshop is crowded with people. Martha suddenly points her machete at a boy in a white shirt, thinking it is Marco, while Marco has actually run into Uncle Ezra's house, and everyone in the workshop is terrified.

This shows that harassment can be committed by people around, even if they are family. The victim, a woman, wants to retaliate, but the perpetrator receives protection from those around. The victim is made to look like the villain for chasing the perpetrator with a machete. The villagers at the workshop do not investigate first to find out who the real victim is. A victim has the right to fight back against perpetrators of violence to teach them a lesson so they will not do it again. Furthermore, the character Martha resists again as follows.



Image 19. Martha stabs Ezra

Image 19 shows Martha finding a bird's nest that fell from a tree when Ezra suddenly approaches her. Martha asks Ezra for help to return the nest to the tree. Ezra does not help her but instead has malicious intentions towards Martha. He takes her to the coast to rape her. Upon arriving at the coast, Ezra chokes Martha because she resists, then he molests her. While Ezra is molesting her, she hits him with a rock and runs away. She runs as fast as she can, confused and looking for help. As she runs, she falls, and the baby bird she was carrying is stepped on and killed by Ezra.

Martha becomes hysterical and cries. Ezra continues to molest Martha, but Bertha arrives and hits Ezra, stopping him. Annoyed, Ezra then chokes Bertha. Martha, seeing this, grabs a piece of wood with a sharp end and stabs Ezra in the stomach until it bleeds. Frightened, Ezra runs away from Martha and Bertha, but Martha does not give up; she chases Ezra with all her might to retaliate. Ezra runs to the villagers for help, but they are afraid to help him because his stomach is bleeding profusely. Confused, Ezra breaks into Kobis's house. Martha is unsure how to get in because the door is locked again. Without thinking, Martha sees gasoline in front of Kobis's house. She takes it and throws it into the house. The house catches fire because there is a torch inside. Kobis and Ezra come out; Ezra is terrified to see Martha still in front of the house.

This incident ignites Martha's anger towards Ezra. The victim retaliates by hitting him with a rock and stabbing him with a sharp piece of wood until his stomach bleeds. The victim takes this action because she feels threatened, aiming to protect herself and to make the perpetrator feel fear and regret.

Women's Struggle for Justice



Image 20. Orpa hits the perpetrator of harassment

Image 20 shows Orpa's family setting a trap for the man who raped Martha, getting her pregnant. After Bertha's funeral, during a traditional party in front of Orpa's house at night, many villagers are still enjoying the feast. Orpa's family takes this opportunity to execute a plan: they tell Martha to sleep again in the same spot where she was chained, while the family hides and watches. A moment later, a mysterious figure wearing a head covering appears. The figure sneaks in and gets onto Martha's bed. He intends to rape Martha again. As he is about to act, Orpa's family, who were hiding and watching, immediately come out and beat the perpetrator until he is unconscious, as follows.



Image 21. Orpa's mother-in-law pours sauce into the perpetrator's pants

Image 21 shows Martha's rapist unconscious after being beaten by Orpa's family. Curious to see who could commit such a heinous act, the family removes the mysterious man's head covering. They are shocked to see that the person is Habil. Habil was the one who helped arrange for Martha to work in Malaysia and was also Orpa's trusted person in all matters. Martha's grandmother, who is furious, then pours chili sauce into Habil's pants. Habil is then chained while Orpa reports him to the police. Besides being reported to the police, Habil also receives a customary punishment: digging up his mother's grave, taking the remaining bones or body, and handing them over to Orpa. While handing over the bones, Habil cries and repeatedly apologizes to Orpa. Orpa forgives him, but the law must still take its course. Due to the rampant violence against women in Rote, the villagers, especially the women, take action as follows.



Image 22. The women of Rote demonstrate

Para warga (Villagers): "Mama, Mama Bangkit! Dari Rote kami bersuara. Bangkit! Dari Indonesia, kami berteriak, bangkit! Perempuan dunia, bangkit!" (Mothers, Mothers Rise! From Rote, we raise our voice. Rise! From Indonesia, we shout, rise! Women of the world, rise!)

Orpa: "Usut tuntas semua pelecehan terhadap perempuan!" (Thoroughly investigate all harassment against women!)

Para warga (Villagers): "Bangkit! Dari Rote kami berteriak!" (Rise! From Rote, we shout!)

Image 22 and the dialogue above show the villagers, especially the women of Rote Island, demonstrating at the police station, carrying kitchen utensils. They flock to the police station, shouting to demand justice after all the violence that has occurred against the women of Rote Island. During the demonstration, the villagers also take other actions as follows.



Image 23. The women of Rote take off their shirts during the demonstration

Image 23 shows the villagers, the women of Rote, taking off their shirts. This act can be interpreted as a form of expression of the Rote women's anger over what is perceived as injustice experienced by women.

The actions above show that the struggle undertaken by the women of Rote Island is an act that can make law enforcement officials more aware of the need to protect women in all situations and everywhere. Furthermore, perpetrators of violence against women must receive a punishment that fits the crime because they have trampled on women's dignity. When victims of violence dare to speak out, the government and law enforcement must guarantee their safety and legal certainty, not silence them.

Based on the discussion of the research findings on the issues of violence against women and the struggle for justice in the film *Women from Rote Island* by Jeremias Nyangoen, the following can be concluded: this film depicts life on Rote Island, specifically on the coast. The film shows the reality of violence that occurs against women in eastern Indonesia, which is rarely or never touched upon on the big screen. It covers everything from the legal system, social conditions, to patriarchal culture, which still obstructs efforts to provide justice for victims of violence, making it a strong issue. The fluctuating plot gives rise to changing feelings and emotions. The screams of the Rote women, who repeatedly experience violence, create a tense situation. The dialogue in the film uses the local Rote dialect, giving the film's originality its own strength.

In this film, it is explained that the characters Martha, Bertha, and Orpa experience gender-based violence. It starts with the physical violence experienced by Martha and Bertha, who are choked by Ezra; Martha is slapped by Kobis; Martha has her leg chained; and Bertha is tortured and then has her throat slit until she dies. The next violence experienced by the Rote women is sexual violence. This is experienced by Orpa and Martha: Orpa is sexually harassed while shopping at the market when a boy presses his genitals against her buttocks; Martha is peeped at by Ruben and Marco, which leads to Marco groping her breast; and Martha is raped repeatedly by Habil until she gives birth to a daughter. Lastly, there is psychological violence. This is experienced by Martha, Bertha, and Orpa: Martha often becomes hysterical and screams whenever she remembers the 'datuk' figure because she experienced violence in Malaysia that left her psychologically shaken; Bertha is harassed by Kobis, who teases her and uses demeaning language, making Bertha upset; and Orpa is forced by Kobis to have sex. Feeling scared and cornered, Orpa is forced to comply with Kobis's demand.

Consequently, the women of Rote demonstrate to gain protection and a sense of safety in every aspect of their lives. The fear of violence can lead to vigilance and alertness; such feelings can change and limit activities in daily life, as noted by Jackson and Gray (in Vania Ceccato, 2022). Furthermore, they demand that law enforcement ensure punishment for perpetrators of violence so they will be deterred and not repeat their actions.

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion above, several conclusions can be drawn as follows: (1) Violence is not only experienced by the main female characters but also by other women. In the film *Women from Rote Island* (*Perempuan dari Pulau Rote*) by Jeremias Nyangoen, those who experience violence are Martha, Bertha, and Orpa. There are generally four forms of violence against women: physical, sexual, psychological, and economic violence. However, in this film, only three forms are depicted: physical, sexual, and psychological violence. The perpetrators of violence are often people close to the victim, sometimes even relatives. (2) The violence experienced by the female characters gives rise to resistance. This resistance is carried out by

the female characters to defend and protect themselves. Whenever a victim of violence fights back or speaks out, she does not receive protection but is instead considered to be at fault. This leads the women of Rote to demonstrate at the police station to obtain protection and to make law enforcement officials more sensitive to the violence occurring against them, as well as to demand appropriate punishment for the perpetrators.

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