



Representation of Feminity in the 16th Century: The Main Character in Kei Ookubo's Anime Arte Series

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Abstract

Women in the Renaissance era were portrayed as weak, emotional and illogical. This made it obligatory for women to be in the domestic sector, namely taking care of household affairs and limiting women to work. Finally, feminism was born in women who craved freedom. Today, feminism is present in various forms of literary works, one of which is the anime series Arte by Kei Ookubo. The purpose of this study is to analyze the basic character of feminism in the main character of the anime series Arte, Analyzing the internal and external factors of the emergence of the spirit of feminism. Both objectives are analyzed based on Sarah Gwyneth Ross's theory of feminism. This research uses a qualitative analysis description method with a literary feminism approach. This research uses a literature study, the object of which is anime arte, and it is researched using Sarah Gwyneth Ross's theory of feminism. It was found that Arte fulfils the five basic characteristics of feminism. First, Arte maintains her excellence in the arts. Second, Arte has intelligence equal to that of men. Third, the masculinity shown by Arte is the courage to speak up. Fourth, Arte understands the discrimination experienced by women, so she appreciates and praises women's hard work. Fifth, Arte has high creativity. Arte's inner voice to highlight her artistic talent is an internal factor in forming feminism. Meanwhile, the father figure is an external factor in forming feminism.

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INTRODUCTION

Women are the jewels of the world, but the historical discrimination of women is very painful, especially during the Renaissance. This is based on the history of Eve (Eva), who is portrayed as a woman who seduced Adam to sin, which resulted in the status of women being considered half-human and only a historical complement (Amin, 2015). Alfred Alder likens women to the story of Helen, showing how one woman can throw an entire nation into confusion and cause havoc (Alder, 1992). In addition, women are perceived as weak, limited, emotional and illogical (Palulungan et al., 2020). This contempt for women raged during the Dark Ages, before the 17th century when science was closed to women. The home was the only place for women to play their roles in the domestic sector, such as cleaning, washing, cooking, ironing and childcare, which were seen as "in tune" with women's feminist traits (Rokhmansyah, 2016).

Feeling constrained and humiliated makes women think about the rights they should have. Finally, the Age of Enlightenment in the 17th century in Europe became a milestone of freedom for all humans, especially women (Amin, 2015). The era called The Age of Reason gradually changed the position of women who initially only struggled in the domestic world, such as housewives, to women who struggled to achieve dreams. In this era, a movement to defend women's rights was formed, called the feminism movement.

Feminism was born to free women from the shackles of culture and rules that curb women's freedom. Feminism developed into an ideology or movement to fight for women's basic rights (Syahfitri, 2018). These developments are certainly expected by women who crave freedom. Women should have as many opportunities to succeed in the public eye as men (Tong, 2009). Abrams argues that feminism as a school and movement originated from the Enlightenment era in Europe (Wiyatmi, 2012). Today, feminism is depicted in various forms of literary works such as novels, plays, comics and other literary works. One of the most popular literary works in Japan

is anime. The word anime is an absorption of animation and is influenced by the drawing style of manga (Japanese comics) (Haitami & Seruni, 2016). In Japan, anime began in the 1900s and continues to grow today (Zoebazary, 2016).

In a literary work, the main character is the most important image in the feminist movement. The stronger the female character, the stronger the feminism the character shows. Arte is one of the literary works in anime that is thick with feminism. The title of this anime is taken from the name of the main character, Arte, who lived in the mid-16th century in the Florance region. Arte is a noblewoman who feels domestic culture will not make her accessible. She just wanted to fight for her ideology as a woman who could have a career. However, at that time, women who worked publicly, built careers and competed with men were considered to violate nature (Palulungan et al., 2020).



貴族のお嬢ちゃんになろうなんて、絶対無理だと思ったんだよ。

Kizoku no ojou chan ga narou nante, zettai murida to omottanda yo.

A pampered lady of noble birth trying to become a craftsman. I've always thought it was impossible.

The quote depicts men's views on women who want to have a career. They think that women will be spoiled and hinder their work. However, Arte is an intellectual woman with a strong determination, like any other feminist. As Sarah Gwyneth Ross explains, "Education made woman, not domestic liabilities but instead positive contributors to family honour and literary culture" (Ross, 2009). A woman's

perseverance in something will elevate her to become an educated human being and contribute significantly to her family and the world.

In addition to the Arte anime series, several studies examine feminism from various literary works, such as in a journal entitled "The Image of Javanese Women in the Novel *Hati Sinden* by Sri Rahyuningsih", where the actions of the main female character in maintaining the image of Javanese women are an effort to equalize women in the scope of Javanese society (Fitriani, 2018). Research on the "Phenomenon of Gender Violence of Female Main Characters in the Novel *Tembuluk* by Keduno Kedung" shows there are several forms of gender violence experienced by female main characters, including physical, psychological and sexual violence (Juidah & Herlina, 2020).

In terms of radical feminism, the study titled *Between Two Waver: Reconciliation of BDSM and Radical Feminism in Angela Carter's "The Bloody Chamber"* discusses the study of fairy tale literature where the fairy tale shows the need to break the shackles of patriarchy, especially from violence (Hong, 2021). Then, there are also similarities in the image of women from the physical aspect, namely in the form of a beautiful young girl, in the image of women from the psychological aspect, namely the figure of a female character who is submissive, obedient, and resigned to the fate, and in the image of women who undergo roles and responsibilities in their position according to the social aspects of each character in Japanese and Indonesian folklore (Ariefa & Mutiawanthi, 2018). Discrimination is also felt by black women in America, as depicted in the novel *Color Purple*, where a woman named Celie, who lives in the countryside, is oppressed by people and even abused by her stepfather and husband (Kara, 2021).

The research shows that women's traits and images are also capable of showing masculinity so that they can be equal to men. The feminist movement is part of the representation of feminism after the Renaissance. So how is the character of feminist women in the Renaissance century, where social status determines the future

and strong discrimination against women who violate their nature? The novelty of this research is the representation of feminism in the 16th century in the main character in the Arte series. The first movement of women fighting for their rights started by expressing their opinions, working in literature and art, and everything outside their domestic sphere.

Two relevant studies were found and can be used as references and comparisons in this study. First, a study entitled *Attitude of Woman in the Novel Of Heaven Bidadaries Tere Liye's Work, a Critical Review of Feminism Literature* shows the unyielding nature of the main character named Laisa. She is also a woman full of love and willing to sacrifice anything for her sister's happiness. Even though she is a woman, Laisa can send her younger siblings to college (Ismizakiya et al., 2021). Second, a study entitled *The Representation of Feminism in the Disney live-action film Mulan* was researched by Salsabila Astri Harinanda and Ahmad Junaidi. Three schools of Feminism were found in *Mulan*, namely, radical libertarian Feminism seen from the solid patriarchal system and discrimination of women that occurred in the film's time setting; *Mulan* chooses to behave and act according to what she wants and finally manages to prove that women can also give honour to their families by being themselves (Harinanda & Junaidi, 2021).

From that explanation, two problem formulations were formed in this research: (1) What is the basic character of feminism according to Sarah Gwyneth Ross? (2) What is the basic character of feminism according to Sarah Gwyneth Ross? Based on the formulation of the problem, this research aims to analyze the basic character of feminism according to Sarah Gwyneth Ross and the internal and external factors of feminism. This research is studied using Sarah Gwyneth Ross's feminism theory.

METHOD

The setting of this research is qualitative. Qualitative literary science has a data source in the form of manuscript works. At the same time, the research data are words, sentences and discourse (Ratna, 2020). The data source in this

research is the dialogue or narration of the main character, while the research data are quotes in the form of sentences spoken by the main character of the anime series Arte.

Literary studies and their theories have their characteristics in dissecting literary works, where the theory is used as a foundation for analyzing literary works. (Karnawati, 2020). This research uses a literature study where the research subject is the anime Arte, and the research object is Sarah Gwyneth Ross's feminism, represented by the main character. A qualitative descriptive analysis method with a literary feminism approach is used in this research. The analytical description method is carried out by describing the facts and then analyzing the facts (Ratna, 2020). Primary data in this study are quotations in the form of dialogue or narration that contain elements of feminism. Secondary data is taken from several books and previous research journals that discuss feminism and literary feminism.

The data collection technique was carried out in several steps:

1. Determine data and data sources
2. Watching the anime series Arte
3. Analyzing feminism in the main character based on Sarah Gwyneth Ross's feminism
4. Interpreting and concluding the research results

The analysis table is a research instrument used to facilitate the preparation of the findings. The table refers to the formulation of the problem and the research objectives, namely the table that analyzes the basic character of Arte and the table that analyzes the factors that form the spirit of feminism.

Qualitative data analysis is carried out continuously until complete (Sugiyono, 2010). The analysis technique used is the Miles and Huberman data analysis model, divided into three parts: data redaction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing or verification.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study focuses on the representation of feminism in the main character of the anime series Arte, which refers to the formulation of the

problem. First is the analysis of the basic character of feminism, including exemplary and maintaining excellence, intelligence equal to men, ability to show masculinity, praise and appreciation of other women and creativity.

1. Exemplary and maintaining excellence



男
の
人
が
な
り

よりたぶんもっともっと大変だから、以上に自分でちゃんと頑張らないといけんしんです

Otoko no hito ga nariyori tabun, motto motto taihendakara, ijou ni jibun de chanto ganbaranai to ikenshindedu.

It'll be much harder than men, so I'll have to work hard myself.

This scene shows that Angelo, Arte's male friend, is apprehensive about her, who continues to do strenuous activities that men usually do. Arte understands Angelo's feelings. However, no matter the obstacles she faced, Arte would not back down and continued to fight for her studies at the studio, where she learned and honed her artistic talent. Sarah Gwyneth Ross said, "A woman studying was one thing, in order not to betray that talent which God and Nature have given" (Ross, 2009). So, indeed, Arte's determination is in line with women during the Renaissance, where women should not waste their talents and always learn to sharpen the talents that are a gift from God. So, it can be concluded that Arte fulfils the first basic characteristics of feminism, namely role modelling and maintaining excellence. In

contrast, Arte makes art excellence that must be maintained and honed. As she calms Angelo, Arte's excellence makes her respected and a role model.

2. Intelligence equal to men



表面は入念磨かなくちゃいけないってそれから土穴をなりもので埋めて下地を何そうも塗り重ねて

Hyoumen wa nyuunen ni migakanakucha ikenaitte sore kara tsuchiana o nerimono de umete shitaji o nansou mo nurikasanete

After cleaning the entire panel, its surface has to be polished meticulously, after which any holes in the timber has to be filled with paste.

In this scene, Arte shows his knowledge of making painting boards. Usually, this knowledge is only known by men who work in the studio. However, thanks to the art learning that Arte received, this knowledge is understood and can be practised by Arte. Basically, “the capabilities of men and woman are equal and that any differences between male and female achievement are therefore the result of “nature” not “nature” (Ross, 2009). Ability is not a gander but how a human being can own knowledge. Ability and knowledge are the same; the only

difference is perseverance in living it to achieve. So, Arte fulfils the second basic characteristic, namely intelligence, which is equal to men, where she has the same intelligence as men in art.

3. Able to show masculinity



女法んなってそんなに言うなら、もう女で消していある!

Onna honnatte sonna ni iu nara, mou onna de keshiteiaru!

If it matters so much to you, I'll just quit being one!

This scene shows Arte's harsh rejection of the 17 studios she visited. Bravely, Arte screamed in front of the studio owners and bystanders. While shouting, she expressed her frustration about discrimination. Arte's scream symbolizes the courage of women to speak out, as in the case of the female writer who asserted that she was not a princess or a little woman but the Doge Client herself (Ross, 2009). So, Arte's shouting is a form of assertion that women are "gander" and he is a "man". So, Arte fulfils the third basic character, namely showing masculinity, where Arte does not hesitate to speak out and work like a man. This makes men admire her manly self.

4. Praise and appreciate other women



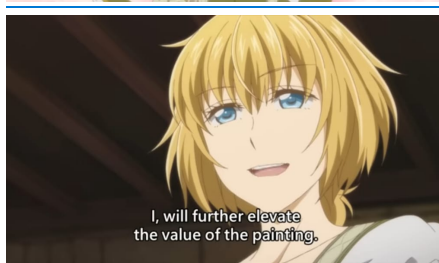
だけど、ペロニカさんは自分の力で育てるためにしているあらいのかすかすはやっぱり尊敬しているんです

Dakedo, Veronika san wa jibun no chikara de ikuru tame ni shiteiruaraiu no kasukasu wa yappari sonkei shite irundesu.

But, after witnessing this mountain of books, it's hard not to have respect for you.

This scene shows how Arte appreciates Veronica's work as a high-class prostitute. She also admires Veronica's hard work and determination to live on her terms. "as Boccaccio had done in lauding the virile spirit of his female patron, Andrea Acciaiuoli" (Ross, 2009) like Boccaccio, who admires the spirit of masculinity or manliness of Andre, a woman writer and intellectual woman. Life without a companion is quite difficult for women, but Veronica is very confident and able to show her masculinity to live with the choices. So, Arte fulfils the fourth basic character trait of praising and appreciating other women, where she admires Veronica as a manly woman.

5. Have creativity



貴族の娘らしく色々習い事をしておりました。私はそれ絵にいかすことができます。ウベルティのさま、私が絵を価値さらに高めてさしあげます

Kizoku no musumerashiku iroiro naraigoto wo shite orimashita. Watashi wa sore e ni ilasu koto ga dekimasu. Ubertina sama, watashi ga e o kachisarani takamete sashiagemasu.

Befitting of a noble family's daughter, I've learned many things. I can utilise these in my paintings. Mr. Urbentino, I will further elevate the value of the painting.

This scene is Arte's negotiation with a customer named Urbentino. Here, Arte shows her feminine skills. She shows some lace pictures she learned to sew as a noble girl. By utilizing her ability, Arte intends to add value to Mr. Urbentina's painting. "her creativity would be amazing enough in a learned man, who would be free to seek out texts at whim, but are altogether astonishing in Forte(women)" (Ross, 2009). Forte is a highly creative writer. The creativity of both Forte and Arte is amazing; Arte managed to complete a problematic negotiation for Leo, her master, complete with her feminine creativity. So, Arte fulfils the fifth basic character, showing creativity when she offers a brilliant idea to her customers by utilizing her talent in sewing.

Second, the internal and external factors of the emergence of feminism are analyzed. Both formulations are analyzed based on Sarah Gwyneth Ross' theory of feminism.

1. Internal Factor





女が一人生きていくのがどんな大変の
が分かってる。だから、私にはがないから、
私は鳥過去口中で生きる良い、どこかで
たじろかもしれない、こうぼでもなん
で自分じしんの力で生きられるみちをめざ
したいんです

*On'na ga ichi-ri ikite iku no ga don'nate taihen no
ga wakatteru. Dakara, watashiniha seni ga
naikara, watashi wa tori kako Ro naka de ikiru
yoi, doko ka de notaji ro kamo shiranakute mo, kō
bode mo nande jibunji shin no chikara de iki rareru
michi o mezashitai ndesu.*

I know how hard it is for women to live
independently. Because I only have my
drawings. Rather than having to live in a
birdcage, even if I may end up dying
somewhere on the streets. I want to learn at
an atelier and strive to live independently,
relying on nobody but myself.

This scene shows that Arte is passionate
about painting, so she defies domestic rules and
lives on her terms. "The salient features of the
querelle des femmes and underlines her status as
a humanist" (Ross, 2009). The point is that Arte
wants to emphasize herself in the art field and
emphasize that she is a human being who loves
art, not an ordinary woman. Arte's inner voice,
which emphasizes what she likes, is an internal
factor in the formation of feminism in Arte.

2. External Factor



絵を書いているだけはひとみをかえか
せている。私はそのひとみを見るのは好き
でな。それに、あの子が前を向いて凛とた
ちつづけていれば、私以外にもその魅力に
気づく男は現れるさ。

*E o kaite iru dake wa hitomi o kan ae kasete iru.
Watashi wa sono hitomi o miru no wa sukide na.
Sore ni, anoko ga mae o muite rintotachi*

tsuzuketeireba, watashi igai ni mo sono miryoku ni kidzuku otoko wa arawarerusa.

It only lights up when she's drawing. I love the way her eyes shine when she paints. If she is able to face the future and stand against any adversity that comes her way, I'm sure another man other than myself will find her charming.

This scene shows Arte's parents talking about Arte's future. Arte hears her father's defence for her during their conversation. The father loves Arte so much and always supports everything that can make his only daughter happy. Because for every woman, "father and father-patrons continued to be important sources of educational opportunity and encouragement for women writers" (Ross, 2009). Arte's father's encouragement was not only defence but also the provision of facilities for Arte to learn painting. This father's support is the most significant external factor in forming feminism.

From these quotes, it can be concluded that Arte fulfils all the subjects of feminism based on Sarah Gwyneth Ross' theory. Starting from the basic character of feminism, where Arte always maintains her excellence, has the exact comprehension as men in the field of art, does not hesitate to speak out, appreciates and praises women who struggle in her path, and has high creativity, especially regarding painting.

CONCLUSION

Sarah Gwyneth Ross explains that women in the Renaissance period had feminist attitudes, as shown by the five basic characteristics of feminism. Arte in the anime series Arte lived in the 16th century in Florance. She fulfils the five basic characteristics of feminism.

First, Arte wanted to highlight her excellence in art by entering an art studio. Although it is twice as tricky as men, Arte persists in honing her skills and continues to live on her path. Secondly, Arte has the same intelligence as the men who work in the studio. She understands how to make a painting board systematically and can even practice it directly very neatly. Indeed, the intelligence of every human being is the same; the only difference is the perseverance of learning

to achieve achievement. Third, the masculinity shown by Arte is not only in physical form but in the form of courage to speak out. She is not ashamed to shout in front of many people how she feels upset by discrimination. The shout also symbolizes the determination that exists in the souls of feminism. Fourth, Arte understands how discrimination befalls women, so she appreciates every woman's profession and praises women's hard work and achievements. Fifth, Arte's creativity is very prominent when she negotiates. Arte gave a new idea by utilizing her sewing skills. Thanks to this idea, an agreement was reached in the negotiation.

In addition, Sarah explained the internal and external factors that led to the formation of feminism. The internal factor in Arte is her inner voice, which emphasizes her talent in painting. She gets external factors from her father, who always defends, encourages, and supports Arte's desires and decisions. So, it is clear that Arte, as the main character of the anime series Arte, has fulfilled all aspects of feminism based on Sarah Gwyneth Ross' theory.

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