

## Urban Women's Resistance in Andina Dwifatma's Novel Entitled *Lebih Senyap dari Bisikan*: Karen Horney's Feminist Psychoanalysis Approach

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### Abstract

Urban women have complex problems compared to rural women, making urban women more vulnerable to experiencing various forms of gender injustice. The problems that occur to urban women are more often related to the economy caused by gender construction in society. The purpose of the research is to analyse the forms of resistance carried out by urban female characters in Andina Dwifatma's Novel *Lebih Senyap dari Bisikan*. The research method used is descriptive qualitative with Karen Horney's feminist psychoanalysis approach. The data collection technique used is heuristic reading technique. Data were taken in the form of quotations or sentences from Andina Dwifatma's Novel *Lebih Senyap dari Bisikan*. Data validity is done through intrarater test and transferability test. Data analysis technique using hermeneutic reading technique. The results of the research are the forms of resistance carried out by urban female characters against gender injustice, such as approaching others, fighting others, and staying away from others. The form of resistance carried out by Amara is by approaching others and staying away from others and fighting others. Meanwhile, Macan fights gender injustice by staying away from others.

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## INTRODUCTION

The feminist movement originates from the idea of women's liberation which can have an impact on various domains of social life, politics, culture, and includes literary works as a form of culture (Jamir, 2022). The feminist movement is an attempt to resist and rebel against the control and domination of the patriarchal system. The patriarchal system positions men as having full control and dominance over leadership, authority, social rights, and property (Nanditha, 2021). The system makes women lose their freedom and are prone to being marginalised, oppressed and exploited by the system (Ermawati & Nurhadi, 2020). Gender roles give rise to many stereotypes that often discriminate against women (Febriani *et al.*, 2022). Gender stereotypes are beliefs about the different characteristics or attributes that men or women have, such as women are synonymous with feminine traits with activities in the domestic sphere, while men dominate the public sphere with masculine traits (Rahardian & Burhanudin, 2022). The feminist movement is here to break the long-standing injustice.

These forms of injustice lead to impacts, these impacts are felt directly by women and cause social inequality in society (Nur, 2020). Traditional gender roles and inequalities between men and women can legitimise violence against women (Willie & Kershaw, 2019). The existence of gender injustice experienced by women also led to resistance by female characters to get their rights (Sibuea *et al.*, 2021). These various forms of gender injustice can have an impact, both physically and psychologically, on women. This injustice makes women fight back. For example, McArthur & Muhammad (2020) mentions that women who experience gender injustice fight back by writing in various media.

*Lebih Senyap dari Bisikan* is Andina Dwifatma's second novel, after *Semusim dan Semusim Lagi*, which won the Jakarta Arts Council Novel Competition in 2012. In the novel, Andina portrays a character named

Amara as a figure who represents urban women who are active in cities. As the title suggests, *Lebih Senyap dari Bisikan*, this novel raises many women's issues with different sides. Furthermore, Andina portrays urban female characters who are struggling to deal with various forms of gender injustice and shows how the psychological impact is received by women who experience gender injustice, as well as how women struggle to oppose gender injustice.

The existence of gender injustice experienced by women also led to resistance by female characters to get their rights (Sibuea *et al.*, 2021). Horney (cited in Feist & Feist, 2013) it also shows that to combat such conflicts, one adopts one of three types of interpersonal relationships: approaching others, avoiding others, and opposing others.

Some previous studies that have relevance to this research, who is Nugroho, (2019) The result is a form of resistance that is carried out, like the movement towards others, against others, and away from others. Furthermore, the study of Joseph & Thomas (2021) on the representation and portrayal of women in the novel. The study of Atiyat & Raid (2022) who fought for her rights and decided to end her life. The research of Boangmanalu & Nainggolan (2021) shows that the resistance carried out by women is through writing. Furthermore, women's resistance is also carried out in various fields, such as education, social, and economic (Karim & Hartati, 2022; Muslimah *et al.*, 2019; Tandian, 2021).

Urban women are simply defined as women who conduct their activities in the city. In addition, according to Gugule *et al.* (2022) Urban women are independent figures who have no resistance to the nature constructed by patriarchal culture so that urban women can prove their independence, high mobility, consumptiveness, and the desire to self-accelerate. Thus, it can be seen that urban women have more complex problems than rural women, such as differences in mindsets that make urban women more advanced than rural women who are still attached to social norms in society (Ratnawati & Abidin, 2019). In addition,

the economic problems of urban women encourage them to become workers in order to fulfil their own needs and satisfaction.

Based on this explanation, it shows that this novel is suspected of many women's resistance efforts and struggles carried out by female characters against gender injustice. This research is expected to add knowledge to the community and readers about women's issues, especially women's resistance to gender injustice and help make people aware of equality because it can have an impact on health, especially women's mental health. Thus, researchers are interested in conducting research in the novel *Lebih Senyap dari Bisikan* Andina Dwifatma's novel allegedly contains forms of gender injustice, psychological impacts, and women's resistance experienced by urban female protagonists against gender injustice which are studied using Karen Horney's feminist psychoanalysis approach. The research objective is to analyse the form of resistance of urban female characters against gender injustice in the novel *Lebih Senyap dari Bisikan* by Andina Dwifatma.

## METHODOLOGY

The feminist psychoanalysis approach focuses on the existence and gender issues of women in literary works from a woman's point of view and can determine the psychological condition of female characters. According to Supriyanto (2021) Literary research data can only be presumed to be in words, fragments of sentences, phrases, clauses or fragments of discourse. The data acquisition technique used in this research uses heuristic reading technique (first level semiotic reading). The validity of the data in this research is determined by applying the parameters of credibility or degree of trust. As for determining the validity of the data, it can be done through the intrarater test and transferability test. Data analysis techniques using hermeneutic reading techniques. While the data analysis technique uses hermeneutic reading techniques. According to Supriyanto (2021) The hermeneutic method is a technique

of making interpretations so that those who originally did not understand become understood or understand. The hermeneutic method is often used in analysing and interpreting texts.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Women's Resistance to Gender Injustice in Andina Dwifatma's Novel *Lebih Senyap dari Bisikan*

Novel *Lebih Senyap dari Bisikan* by Andina Dwifatma illustrates urban women's resistance to gender injustice. The female characters are Amara, Mami, and Macan. The three characters are described as urban women who try to fight against things that are considered to restrain women as human beings. The forms of resistance carried out by female characters are (1) approaching others; (2) staying away from others; and (3) fighting others.

#### Approaching others

Approaching others as a form of gaining support and affection and gaining protection. Approaching others is also a form of resistance for someone to make themselves able to achieve their goals. Resistance is carried out by urban female characters as a form of their desire to be free from gender injustice that has attacked psychologically or mentally.

Amara's resistance is a form of her desire to be free from gender inequality because it affects her psychology. This is what makes Amara fight back. Amara as an urban female character who experiences gender injustice is a double burden. The double burden makes Amara too focused on household matters, children and husband, and forgets her own needs, making her often feel neglected and feel that she does not receive affection from others. Furthermore, as a form of resistance, Amara fights against gender injustice by approaching Macan and her neighbours to get support and affection that she no longer gets from Baron, her husband. Here is the quote

*Acara minum teh akhirnya menjadi ritual bersama antara Macan, Yuki, dan aku. Seminggu*

*dua klai kami saling mengunjungi di kamar kontrakan masing-masing. Kalau sedang di kamar Macan, kami bisa mendengar keluarga kecil di kamar paling ujung saling memaki dalam bahasa Betawi kasar, disusul suara tangis dua anak bersahut-sahutan yang dibalas dengan makian lebih kencang. Si Bapak sering melontarkan lelucon yang membuat istri dan dua anaknya terpingkal-pingkal. Dan masakan ibu mantap luar biasa. Sekali-dua kali dia membagi kamu semur jengkol, sayur asem pedas, dan pecak lele (Dwifatma, 2022: 120-121).* Tea time eventually became a shared ritual between Macan, Yuki, and me. Every week or two we would visit each other in our rented rooms. If we were in Macan's room, we could hear the small family at the far end of the room cursing at each other in crude Betawi, followed by the sound of two children crying out in response. The father often cracks jokes that make his wife and two children laugh out loud. And Mum's cooking is superb. Once or twice she'll share you semur jengkol, sayur asem pedas, and pecak lele (Dwifatma, 2022: 120-121).

The quote proves that Amara approached Macan and her neighbours for support and affection. Amara feels that by approaching them, she has momentarily forgotten the problems she is facing. Amara's actions are a form of resistance to the double burden received due to her husband who is no longer responsible.

Furthermore, Macan's resistance as a victim of gender injustice is by approaching Mami and Amara. Macan became a good friend of Amara, who eventually helped Macan get to know Mami. Macan's resistance to gender injustice is by setting aside money to achieve her goal of going to university.

*Pada kunjungan terakhirnya, dengan muka berseri Macan bilang Mami menawarinya pinjaman uang masuk kuliah.*

*"Ambil saja," kataku tulus.*

*"Aku gila kalau menolak," dia nyengir.*

*(Dwifatma, 2022: 145-146).*

On her last visit, with a beaming face, Macan said Mami had offered him a loan to go to university.

"Take it," I said sincerely.

"I'd be crazy to refuse," she grinned.

*(Dwifatma, 2022: 145-146).*

The quote from Macan's conversation with Amara shows that Macan is against the idea that college is only for people who can afford it. Macan as a woman also has the right to get a proper education. This is in line with the results of the study of Syiva & Cahyaning (2019) i.e. women demand equal authority in receiving basic rights, such as education.

### **Shunning Others**

A form of resistance away from others as one of the forms necessary to gain freedom. This resistance is formed by building his own world and refusing others to approach him. This form of resistance is done with independence, solitude, and freedom. Amara's resistance is by staying away from Baron and returning to Mami's house after all the bad things that happened to her. Amara fought Baron by staying away from him after the injustices she received as a couple. As seen in the following quote.

*Aku tidak lagi memukul diri sendiri dan sekarang aku bernapas dengan lebih teratur. Aku bahkan sudah bisa memikirkan beberapa urusan yang serius seperti melamar pekerjaan baru dan mengurus perpisahan dengan Baron (Dwifatma, 2022: 150).*

I was no longer beating myself up and I was now breathing more regularly. I've even been able to think about some serious matters such as applying for a new job and taking care of the breakup with the Baron (Dwifatma, 2022: 150).

In this quote, it can be seen that Amara stayed away from Baron who had made her a victim of gender injustice. Amara chose to separate and no longer have contact with Baron after the many things she experienced. Amara stayed away from Baron as a form of resistance so that she would no longer be a victim of injustice. Amara's action of separating from Baron is also a form of resistance to the injustice

she has received so far. Amara has realised the freedom she wants so that she is no longer subjected to violence. Amara's action is also a form of resistance to the stereotype of women who divorce their husbands as ungrateful women and proves that women, even though they have children, can work like men.

The next female character who fights gender injustice is Macan. Macan is an urban woman who works in the city. Macan decided to live in the city after running away from home because she refused an arranged marriage made by her own father. Macan feels that she still wants to continue her studies after graduating from high school. However, her father instead set her up with a rich widower with three children. Macan's resistance can be seen in the following quote.

*Aku memang enggak mau menikah. Kata Macan. Amara, pernikahan itu versi manis dari perbudakan. Kalau aku menikah dengan si Advent itu Bangun, aku akan mengurus dia, anak-anaknya, orangtuannya, para ipar, sepanjang hari, terus menerus, sampai aku mati. Belum lagi dikomentari tetangga. Laki-laki tua kalau dapat istri yang masih muda akan dipuji. Sementara perempuan mudanya dibilang bego atau mengincar harta. Aku akan jadi pihak yang memberik dan berkorban paling banyak, tapi buat apa?* (Dwifatma, 2022: 119-120).

I really don't want to get married. Macan said. Amara, marriage is the sweet version of slavery. If I marry that Adventist Bangun, I will take care of him, his children, his parents, his in-laws, all day long, continuously, until I die. Not to mention the comments from the neighbours. If an old man gets a young wife, he will be praised. Meanwhile, the young woman is said to be stupid or eyeing wealth. I'll be the one who gives and sacrifices the most, but for what? (Dwifatma, 2022: 119-120).

The quote shows that Macan resisted the form of gender injustice she received by staying away from other people, her father. Macan was arranged by her father to marry someone she disliked. Macan's resistance proves that women are able to get out of the unfair gender

construction, namely arranged marriage. Macan prefers to leave home and migrate. Looking for the freedom she wants and realising her dream, which is to continue her studies. The following quotation supports the form of resistance carried out by Macan.

*Apa bapakmu tidak mencarimu? Bisa saja, tapi Jakarta terlalu luas buat dia. Lagi pula aku ingin kuliah. Di pamulang ada universitas murah tapi tabunganku belum cukup untuk uang masuk* (Dwifatma, 2022: 120).

Isn't your father looking for you? He could be, but Jakarta is too big for him. I want to go to university anyway. There's a cheap university in Pamulang but my savings aren't enough for the entrance fee (Dwifatma, 2022: 120).

This quote proves that Macan fights against the injustice of marginalisation. Rural women are considered unnecessary to go to university and only spend money. So, Macan has to save money first to achieve her goal. Macan's resistance is also a form of awareness of Macan's mindset towards education. As the research of Arifatur (2019) mentions that women's resistance in the field of education is by having a strong desire to seek higher education. Macan's actions are typical of urban women who love freedom and a high level of intellect so that they feel able to determine what is best for them. (Maulana et al., 2021).

### **Against Others**

Women are always associated as weak creatures that often get unpleasant treatment. This makes Andina want to prove that this assumption is wrong as proven by the urban female characters in the novel *Lebih Senyap dari Bisikan* It is portrayed simply in accordance with the reality that exists today. Women are often labelled negatively due to the patriarchal culture that always prioritises the position of men always superior to women. This inequality makes women want to fight back. One form of resistance is to fight against others by trying to appear ideal, strong, and perfect and superior.

This is what Amara did. Amara fights Baron as a form of self-defence and can be separated from others. As the following quote.

*Surat peringatan dari bank akan segera data dan aku tidak mau seluruh tetangga melihat saat rumah kami disegel dengan stiker merah besar-besar. Aku menyampaikan ide ini pada Baron dan dia hanya mengganggu tanpa bilang apa-apa. Sepertinya pembagian kerja dalam rumah tangga kami saat ini sudah jelas: aku bagian bertahan hidup dan dia bagian kepingin mati (Dwifatma, 2022: 115).*

The warning letter from the bank would be coming soon and I didn't want the whole neighbourhood watching as our house was sealed with a big red sticker. I mentioned this idea to Baron and he just interrupted without saying anything. It seems like the division of labour in our household is now clear: I'm the one surviving and he's the one wanting to die (Dwifatma, 2022: 115).

The quote proves that Amara has resisted the Baron by making her own decisions. Amara fought against the double burden of gender injustice she received. Amara chose to fight Baron in order to be independent and feel free to make her own choices. In addition, Amara's resistance to Baron shows that Amara no longer trusts Baron and is out of subordination. Amara no longer feels inferior and must obey Baron. Amara proves that as a woman, she must be able to solve problems faced with responsibility, not run away from responsibility. This was done after Amara experienced gender injustice which had an impact on her psychological or mental state. In line with Tianyuan (2022) dan Atiyat & Raid (2022) which mentions that eventually a person is able to achieve self-actualisation through the attraction of mastery, the attraction of love, and the attraction of freedom.

## CONCLUSION

The injustice experienced by urban female characters in the novel entitled *Lebih Senyap dari Bisikan* has a psychological impact so that in order to rise up, the female characters fight back

in various ways. The resistance carried out by urban female characters against gender injustice is by approaching others, fighting others, and staying away from others. Amara's resistance is by approaching others and staying away from others and fighting others. Meanwhile, Macan fights gender injustice by staying away from others. The resistance shows that women have the same rights as men so that they can do the same things and have the same position.

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