

# The Role of the Environment in Shaping the Characters in the Novel *Merindu Baginda Nabi* by Habiburrahman El Shirazy

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**Abstract.** This research is based on the view that the environment is indicated to be able to shape a person's character. The purpose of this study is to reveal the role of the environment in shaping the characters in the novel *Merindu Baginda Nabi*. The research method used is descriptive qualitative. The data of this study include words, sentences, texts, and discourses in the novel *Merindu Baginda Nabi*. This research is included in the realm of sociology of literature, using Gramsci's hegemonic approach. As far as the author knows through literature and access to journals, research on the novel *Merindu Baginda Nabi* with Gramsci's hegemonic approach has not been found. The results show that a positive pesantren environment is able to shape the characters to be good or the protagonist, such as respect to others, hard worker, and patient.

## 1 Introduction

Literary works as works of art are creative, meaning that they are the result of human creations in the form of aesthetic language works (in the sense of art), the results are literary works, such as novels, poems, short stories, dramas, and others [1]. Creative art is created to fulfill human life that requires aesthetic or beauty values. One of the aesthetic values is reflected in a literary work. Literary works, especially novels, record traces of social life in society. That is why, the reflections reflected in literary works (novels) can be used as material for reflection or sensitivity in social life. Thus the existence of literary works, readers are able to get a better learning in the future, even though literary works are not as a benchmark in proving the truth. The process of making a literary work (novel) cannot be separated from the influence of other elements, such as religious, social, political, household issues, or problems related to the complexity of existing life and the role of the environment that takes part in it. One of the novels that is full of the role of the environment in shaping character is the novel *Merindu Baginda Nabi* by Habiburrahman el-Shirazy.

Habiburrahman el-Shirazy has launched his previous novels which are packed with religious values, struggles to achieve dreams or ideals, education, and of course cannot be separated from the love problems that the characters go through as in the novel *Ayat-*

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*Ayat Cinta*, *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih*, *Bumi Cinta*, *Bidadari Bermata Bening*, and others. In 2018, his novel entitled *Merindu Baginda Nabi* was published [2]. The novel tells the story of a girl named Rifa with an inspiring story and good nature. Rifa does not know who her biological parents are, she was found by Mbah Tentrem as a baby, then adopted as a child and raised by Pak Nur and his wife, Bu Sal in a boarding school environment. The pesantren environment has a significant influence or share in the formation of Rifa's character. The reason is that an environment will affect a person's personality and character. How a person is able to respect others and how a person is able to position himself in the midst of society. The same thing happened to the characters Rifa, Pak Nur, Ustad Anam, and Fiona. These figures seem to represent the nature and character of the upbringing of the pesantren environment.

The novel *Merindu Baginda Nabi* is often studied. Several previous studies were investigated by Rahayu, using narratology studies and using Gerard Genette's theory. The results show that the novel *Merindu Baginda Nabi* has two movements, namely scenes and pauses [3]. Another study by Setyaningrum revealed the intrinsic elements, language (such as expressions, figure of speech, proverbs), and the values of character education [4]. Another research by Aziz, the novel *Merindu Baginda Nabi* was studied using critical discourse analysis using A. Van Dijk's theory. The results showed that the novel contains four elements, namely semantics, syntax, stylistics, and rhetoric [5]. Furthermore, research by Abidin, which discusses diexist in the novel *Merindu Baginda Nabi*. The results of the study indicate that the diexist in the novel includes person, place, time, discourse, and social diexist [6]. The novel *Merindu Baginda Nabi* when studied with Gramsci's hegemonic approach, as long as the author's search in online journals has not been found. However, there are several studies related to the novel Habiburrahman El Shirazy which were studied using Gramsci's hegemony theory, one of which was the novel entitled *Ayat-Ayat Cinta* which was studied by Falah. The results showed that Fahri's character was able to hegemony female characters, Fahri's character also benefited and became the dominant class because he had positive attributes such as handsome, smart, simple, obedient, and kind [7].

Starting from the realm of literary sociology research which examines the relationship of literary works with humans in society and their social processes, the objects in this research are full of the relationships between them. While this study uses the Gramscian hegemony approach, hegemony is a victory or power that is obtained not through the oppression (domination) of one social class over another, but by consensus [8]. A group or social class hegemonizes other social classes by spreading ideology. The spread of ideology does not happen by itself, but through central social institutions, including schools and teaching. These centers have an important role, namely the intellectuals [9]. Thus, what is the formal object in this study is very important to study to find out that the role of the pesantren environment is able to form a character. Because pesantren, which can be said to be schools, have their own values to shape the character of their students.

## 2 Method

The main method used in this research is descriptive analysis, namely by describing and explaining the facts contained in the text of the novel *Merindu Baginda Nabi*. The object of this research is the novel *Merindu Baginda Nabi* by Habiburrahman El Shirazy, the formal object of the research is the role of the pesantren environment in shaping the character of the characters. The perspective of the study departs from the realm of the sociology of literature, namely the study of Gramsci's hegemony. This research includes library research. The method of data collection is through library research, namely collecting primary data contained in the novel *Merindu Baginda Nabi* which is related to aspects of the role of the

pesantren environment in shaping the character of the characters. After the data is collected, the data is analyzed and interpreted from the perspective of Gramsci's hegemony. Then, the results of the analysis are then presented in the form of a descriptive-qualitative narrative.

### **3 Result and Discussion**

This research with the material object is the novel *Merindu Baginda Nabi* by Habibburahman el-Shirazy. Of course, what is the problem in this research is based on the role of the environment in shaping the character of the characters, that it can be seen that the environment in which they live affects their nature and character in social life. The novel *Merindu Baginda Nabi* by Habburrahman El Shirazy, which is told to have a background in the Islamic boarding school environment, became the focal point of research to reveal the role of the environment in shaping the characters' characters. Is the presence of teachings from the pesantren able to make the character have a good character or is the character rebelling against the teachings of the pesantren. The role of the environment in shaping the character of the characters include:

#### **3.1 Religious Understanding**

As it is known that the teachings in the pesantren environment are full of religious values. This is supported by activities that are filled with the image of a people who are obedient to God and his Prophet, such as the study of the books of *Al-Mabadi' Al-Fiqhiyyah* by Al Ustaz Umar Abdul Jabbar, *Al Futuhat Al-Madaniyyah Syarah Al-Syu' ah Al-Imaniyyah* by Shaykh Nawawi Al-Batani, and the book *Al Minah As Saniyyah* by Imam Asy Sya'rani [2]. Then continued with the practice of playing the tambourine to kick the praises of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. Thus, the students have a strong understanding of the religion they embrace.

The message that Kyai Ridwan (his teacher) always remembers is that life is about fighting. Strive to be close to God. There are various ways to get close to Allah, all of which will lead to one, namely the pleasure of Allah as long as you follow the way of the Prophet. Because, all methods that do not follow the way of the Prophet, will not reach the pleasure of Allah [2]. The message is very thick with religious values, and which has become the grip of every santri who grows up in the pesantren environment.

The pesantren environment always prioritizes the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad. His Majesty the Prophet asked his people to be useful people and be people who provide benefits. Good and righteous people will benefit others, and vice versa. To become a person who is able to provide benefits, then one must have something that can be donated or has advantages, so that what is donated can provide benefits to others. In addition to teaching about someone who is useful and provides benefits, sincerity in living life is very important because it will be a guarantee of blessing for someone who benefits and for those who are benefited.

The existence of teachings from pesantren that place great emphasis on students or their students to always follow the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad, such as being useful and providing benefits and teachings to fight in the way of Allah SWT make students have deep religious knowledge. Thus, from the existence of this environment, a sense of love for the Prophet Muhammad SAW and Allah SWT grew.

#### **3.2 Change of Character from Bad to Good**

At first the character Abah (Pak Nur) as a teenager had a bad past, the incident that he accidentally killed people when he fell into the wrong environment. Finally, Pak Nur's

character was asked to "mom" by his uncle and could not return home until he was asked to return home by his teacher or kyai. For years, Pak Nur's character studied with Kyai Ridwan, he gained new knowledge and was able to change his attitude from being bad to being good (already repentant). Until finally, Mr. Nur was asked to return home, then practice the knowledge he had. Even unexpectedly, Mr. Nur was trusted by the late. Mbah Tentrem who donated the land as a boarding school, and Pak Nur as the caretaker. Thus it can be seen that the role of the pesantren environment is able to shape the character of Pak Nur to be good or the protagonist.

In addition to the character of Pak Nur, who is influenced by the pesantren environment, there is also the character of Rifa (the adopted son of Pak Nur and Bu Salamah). When she was still an elementary school student, Rifa was known as a naughty child and had indications of being naughty when she was a teenager. However, with the upbringing of the pesantren environment and the teachings of Abah (Pak Nur) and Umami (Bu Salamah), Rifa grew up to be an accomplished and intelligent and proud child. Rifa is known and grew up as a patient, caring, and humble girl. Not only smart or have skills in terms of academic education, but in terms of socializing with teachers and friends Rifa also has politeness in speaking. That's why, Rifa is liked by many teachers and friends. The teachings in the pesantren environment by his parents had an important role in shaping Rifa's character.

### **3.3 Forming a Humble Character**

Thanks to the efforts of Mr. Nur, the Darus Sakinan Islamic boarding school has gained the public's trust, even beyond expectations that Mr. Nur is respected by many people because he has good qualities and character. personal affair. The lectures given to his students and the surrounding community were very good and well received. Even though he has become a pesantren caregiver and many people respect Pak Nur like a kyai, Pak Nur still doesn't want to be called a "kyai". He feels that he is nothing, his knowledge is not much to be called "kyai" because there are better than him, who deserve to be called "kyai" and deserve to be made as imam in the mosque. Pak Nur's character prefers to be called "Pak".

### **3.4 Surrender After Trying Your Best**

Rifa's journey to get achievements is not always easy. There is one friend named Arum, Arum really hates Rifa because Arum can't beat the ranking in his class. As long as there is Rifa, Arum will not be the first. Rifa, who has a good character, tries to approach Arum and invites him to talk and becomes good friends. Unfortunately, Rifa's efforts never bore fruit. Instead, Arum is always fierce and hates Rifa even more. Rifa's efforts finally reached her maximum point to be good friends with Arum. This time, Rifa chose to surrender when her presence at Arum's house was not welcomed, let alone not given a drink. Instead, Rifa was kicked out harshly by Arum. This was reinforced by the statement, "He has made maximum efforts to maintain good relations with Arum. If you have tried your best, your heart will feel calm and you just have to surrender to Allah SWT." [2].

### **3.5 Honoring Visiting Guests**

Many guests visited the Darus Sakinah Islamic boarding school or pesantren, some from Pak Nur and some from Rifa. The existence of a good attitude that is reflected in their behavior when someone visits is to glorify them, such as giving food and helping anything that can be done. Mrs. Ririn is Rifa's school teacher in high school, one day she held an international seminar with the help of Rifa and her friends. Mrs. Ririn's arrival was

welcomed by Rifa's family. Likewise, what happened to Fiona and Louise, they were both Rifa's friends when Rifa attended an exchange student in America. His arrival was well received without any unkind behavior.

## 4 Conclusion

The novel *Merindu Baginda Nabi* by Habiburrahman El Shirazy is full of hegemony on the role of the environment, especially the pesantren environment in shaping the characters in the novel. It is proven that the existence of a positive environment is able to influence the character of positive characters. Because it will not just happen that a character becomes good or a protagonist without the role of a good and positive environment. Thus, a place of learning or a positive environment that fully supports the growth of characters to become protagonists, such as being patient, caring for others, humble, hardworking, and of course not having a vindictive nature (always forgiving). The character has the character and nature to always put forward the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad SAW so that he has love and affection for others.

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