

Culture in the Pesantren Environment in shaping Figures' Character in Novel *Merindu Baginda Nabi* by Habiburrahman el-Shirazy

Fajrul Falah*

Indonesian Literature, Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University, Indonesia

Abstract. This research is based on the indication that the environment has an influence in shaping the character of a character or person. The purpose of this study is to reveal the culture in the pesantren environment in shaping the character of the characters. The object of this research is the novel *Merindu Baginda Nabi* by Habiburrahman el-Shirazy. This research is in the realm of the sociology of literature, with a Gramscian hegemonic approach. The research method used is descriptive qualitative. The steps of the research work carried out were to make a questionnaire related to the culture of the pesantren and distributed to representatives of the students community. Then in-depth interviews with representatives of the student community. Data analysis includes the interpretation of words, sentence phrases, texts, and discourses in the novel *Merindu Baginda Nabi*. 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 of the study indicate that the pesantren environment forms students who have religious values. The figure who represents this value is Rifa. Rifa is a child who diligently worships, studies, and achiever. He also has a culture of hard work in achieving his goals. Other figures such as Mr Nur also have a humble character. The relationship and hegemony between the characters in the novel went well and peacefully. The values of kindness and culture in the pesantren (religious, humble, and hard working) are able to bind the relationships of the characters in the novel into harmony.

1 Introduction

Culture and environment are indicated as arenas for the formation of power. There are characters who have strength or power because they are supported by the environment. On the other hand, there are figures who are actually inferior because they are in unsupported areas. Power and the form of hegemony are also reflected in fictional characters or novels. Even though the novel is fiction, it is indicated as the author's reflection on the reality he refers to [1]. The results of the author's work are also influenced by profession, way of life, and the environment [2]. The author designs the characters and characters in such a way, to show the power and position of the character. The power of the character also moves and changes depending on the situation and context that follows it [3]. The fiction or novel that is indicated to be full of hegemony and interesting to study is the novel *Merindu Baginda Nabi* by Habiburrahman el Shirazy.

The novel *Merindu Baginda Nabi* (hereinafter abbreviated as *MBN*) is full of students culture and is set in a pesantren environment. This novel is one of several other works by Habiburrahman such as *Ayat-Ayat Cinta* (2004), *Di Atas Sajadah Cinta* (2006), *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih* (2007), dan *Bidadari Bermata Bening* (2017), dan *Kembara Rindu* (2019). Most of these novels contain a setting in Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) and in general the main characters have positive characters (handsome, intelligent, and kind). The *MBN* novel was published by Republika in 2018 [4]. How is the main character shown in the *MBN* novel? Why is each character in the novel able to dominate (dominate) the other characters? Why is it that the characters who are ruled are willing to accept it voluntarily? Is the educational environment or pesantren in the novel able to make the characters positive? These questions and the problems in the *MBN* novel are interesting to answer and express. This research is interesting because the novel is indicated to contain the culture in the pesantren environment and there is a practice of hegemony. In addition, the results of this study are expected to be used as a reference or material for the study of fictional stories, introduction to literature, and comparative literature. The research approach used is Gramsci's hegemony.

* Corresponding author: fajrulfalah.fib@live.undip.ac.id

Based on literature studies and searches on google and online journals, research on MBN with Gramsci's hegemonic approach has not been found. However, there are other studies with MBN or related objects. Falah, examines the novel *Ketika Cinta Bertasbih*, by Habiburahman with a hegemonic and ideological approach [5]. Abidin (2019) studied *MBN* based on deixis [6], Sholiha et al (2019), reviewed the same novel with a focus on the study of code-mixing forms [7]. Yuwafi, examines social issues in the *MBN* novel [8]. Novala et al (2020), examines the ethics of humanization in the *MBN* novel [5]. These studies have not revealed aspects of culture, character and hegemony in MBN novels. The purpose of this study is to reveal how the culture and hegemony in the pesantren environment in shaping the characters in the *MBN* novel by Habiburahman el Shirazy. The approach used is Gramsci's hegemony.

Hegemony is briefly interpreted as a form of leadership voluntarily (acceptance, not coercion (dominant)). This hegemony was coined and developed by Antonio Gramsci. Hegemony is carried out politically and ideologically [10]. Power or hegemonic leadership is able to bind other social classes peacefully, not resistance. /resistance. Hegemony in the novel can be manifested in ideology, values, beliefs, and even the character's cultural environment [11]. Culture in this context can have no meaning. First, culture is defined as a choice of actions, such as discipline, hard work. Second, culture is identified with beauty (aesthetics) and art. Third, culture means ideational theory, ways of living and adapting to the environment [12]. The pesantren is an educational institution and is tasked with forming independent students (santri) with good character or morals [13]. Meanwhile, Indonesia is currently experiencing a character/moral crisis [14].

2 Method

The material object used in this research is the novel *Merindu Baginda Nabi* by Habiburahman el Shirazy. The formal object of this research is culture and hegemony in the pesantren environment in shaping character. This research is in the realm of sociology of literature, using Gramsci's hegemonic approach. This research is included in the realm of literature (library research). Primary data sources are novels published by Republika in 2018. Secondary data sources include journal articles, research results, books, and references that are relevant to the material and formal objects of this research. The work steps in this research include (1) data collection, (2) data analysis (results and discussion), and (3) result presentation (presentation). Data was collected through interviews, questionnaires, and interpretation of the novel. Interviews were conducted with representatives of the management and alumni of the pesantren. Questionnaires were distributed to the students community (representatives, administrators, alumni and students). Interviews and questionnaires were conducted to get a picture of the culture in the pesantren environment. Interpretation is based on words, phrases, sentences, texts contained in MBN novels related to the culture, character, and hegemony of the pesantren. The research data was then analyzed based on the study of Gramsci's hegemony. The results of the analysis are then presented in a qualitative descriptive manner.

3. Result and Discussion

Briefly, the novel *Merindu Baginda Nabi* describes the life of the student in the pesantren environment. The main character in this novel which is set in Malang is Rifa. Rifa is the central character who influences the storyline in the novel. Rifa as an outstanding student (champion) who was educated since childhood by Mr. Nur and Mrs. Salamah in the pesantren environment. This pesantren environment has shaped the characters of Rifa, Mr. Nur and Mrs. Salamah. Analysis of culture, character, and hegemony in pesantren is explained as follows.

3.1 Religious Value

Pesantren (Islamic boarding schools) are known as places or means to learn religious knowledge and practice religious values. The essence of religion is how moral values, ethics of goodness, human relations with God and with humans are upheld. The MBN novel provides an overview of the religious values of the characters such as the relationship with God, oneself, and with humans. The form of the religious value of Rifai's character in the MBN novel is gratitude. Rifa is grateful for having been born and educated by Mr Nur and raised in a pesantren environment. The pesantren environment which is full of learning influences Rifa's life. Rifa became an outstanding student. Rifa got the first rank in her class and was able to study abroad.

Rifa's form of gratitude is not just passive words, but active actions. Rifa lives in a boarding school and with her caretaker then does not stay silent, let alone lazy. Rifa was very enthusiastic and proved herself to be an outstanding student. Rifa is aware that her achievements cannot be separated from the intervention of others, especially her educator, Mr Nur. This awareness indirectly makes Rifa's position in control, while Mr Nur dominates. Mr Nur's power over Rifa is not through coercion or expecting something in return. However, due to Rifa's compliance and voluntary compliance with the services provided by the caregiver. In this context, Rifa's class awareness and gratitude become a form of hegemony. The relationship between Rifa and Mr Nur is going well and peacefully. In other words, religious values such as being grateful and doing good to fellow human beings are important instruments for carrying out leadership and hegemonic relations. As a person of merit, Mr Nur does not feel the most valuable. Likewise, Rifa does not feel inferior in front of Mr Nur.

3.2 Humble Culture

Pesantren generally make students and their caregivers humble. It is common knowledge among Islamic boarding schools that humility is always upheld. For example, if a student has knowledge, then he is not the smartest, let alone right. He (students) tends to feel that the knowledge he has is still small and there are many people who have higher knowledge. This humble character is the opposite of being arrogant or arrogant. If a humble attitude is able to attract the heart and full of respect from others. So arrogance drives other people away. Among the characters in the *MBN* novel who has a humble character is Mr Nur.

Mr. Nur's humble character was first shown when he emphasized the meatball profession. On the one hand, Mr Nur is known as a meatball seller to serve orphans. On the other hand, Mr Nur is the founder and caregiver "Pesantren Yatim". When advising his son, r Nur does not arrogantly put forward people who have power and use it for personal gain. This is shown through quotes "Your father is not a kyai, son. You should know that. Your father is a meatball seller who serves orphans", [4, p53]. Humility in the quote is able to make the interlocutor respect, accept voluntarily. Mr Nur is in a position of dominion, while the child is in a position of control. In this context, Mr Nur's hegemonic power actually runs well and peacefully. The child accepts advice well and does not argue or fight.

Mr Nur's second humble character is shown when he refuses to be called "Kyai". Kyai in the pesantren environment is a central figure. The term kyai among the pesantren community is generally addressed to the caretaker of a boarding school and has the lineage of kyai. As the founder and caretaker of the cottage, it is actually natural for the title of kyai to be assigned to him. However, Mr. Nur feels that he is not worthy to be called a kyai because he thinks that his knowledge is still very limited. In fact, as is known in the *MBN* novel, Mr Nur often lectures in front of students and preaches among the general public. Both the students and the community (the congregation) received the lecture from Mr. Nur very well. In this context, the humble character is able to bind the congregation/other people. What if the lecture delivered by Mr Nur is accompanied by an arrogant attitude, for example, often blaming other people's opinions and thinking that he is the most correct? the congregation certainly did not want it. If so, then Mr Nur is actually carrying out hegemonic behavior in his lecture. He is able to bind others with a positive character (humble), so that others accept voluntarily or without coercion. Humble attitudes and behavior are not only personified in the character of Mr. Nur, but also become a culture in the pesantren environment.

3.3 Hard Work Culture

The culture or habit of hard work plays an important role in the success of the santri in the pesantren. Students to reach their goals, must work hard, especially in learning. As is well known, pesantren have a fairly tight and dense study schedule. Therefore, in addition to hard work, also live a disciplined life. The character in the *MBN* novel who shows an attitude of hard work is Rifa. Rifa dreams of joining a student exchange and requires a high TOEFL score (597). Rifa's hard work in studying to achieve a high TOEFL score was also achieved, this is as Rifa's principal said that every day Rifa secretly studied English and worked on TOEFL questions for more than two hours since the second grade of junior high school [4, p42].

Rifa becomes a character who represents the attitude of hard work. He is able to maintain the first rank of his competitors in the class. In Rifa's view, if she doesn't study harder than her competitors, she will either be chased or overtaken. It is also the awareness of this threat that makes Rifa always eager to learn. However, maintaining the first rank for Rifa is considered more difficult. Rifa understands that if her competitor (Arum) studies two hours, then she must study three hours or more. Rifa sees competitors or learning partners as motivation to excel, not putting forward envy [4, p46]. Rifa's hard work is also shown in other activities, the success of organizing an international seminar on neuropsychology in Pesantren Yatim and Dhuafa Darus Sakinah. The seminar with the topic "The Dangers of Pornography", was attended by more than 450 people and presented speakers from Europe, namely Prof. Dr. Ruth Radmann (Professor of Neuroscience, King's College London) and Ridha Ardiyanta, M.Sc. (Doctoral Candidate for Neuroscience, King's College London).

4 Conclusion

The pesantren environment influences and shapes the characters in the *MGN* novel. Pesantren as a means of education, is able to make the students community have a religious character. The religious values shown by Rifa's character are not only obedient and intelligent, but also grateful. As a devout person, Rifai diligently worships and studies. As an intelligent person, he was able to achieve as a student. Rifa is also grateful to have been educated and raised in a pesantren environment by Mr. Nur and Mrs. Salamah. The relationship between Rifa and Mr Nur is also going well and hegemonic. r Nur does not feel high and Rifa does not feel inferior. In addition, the culture in the pesantren environment in the *MBN* novel is humble and hard working. Humble is the personification of Mr Nur's character as a meatball seller as well as a caretaker of a boarding school. Rifa's character shows hard work in his efforts to learn to become high achieving students. Hegemony in the *MBN* novel goes well because these characters, apart from having good characters, are also bound by religious values.

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