

Character Analysis
Analysis of Deconstruction on the Character of Kiran
in ‘Tuhan Izinkan Aku Menjadi Pelacur!’ Novel by Muhidin M Dahlan

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the deconstruction form of Kiran's life, the main character in the *‘Tuhan Izinkan Aku Menjadi Pelacur!’* novel, by Muhidin M Dahlan. In this study, the novel itself served as the source of data and it was analyzed by using Jacques Derrida's deconstruction method. This study shows how the main character's desire to struggle against a religious culture is being deconstructed. She ultimately carried out the destruction and rebellion in the construction that he had previously accepted and solemnly believed in because of the disappointment felt by God and men. A reversal situation of someone who was once quite religious, to someone who no longer obeys his religion and God. She even disregarding His teachings and eventually losing faith in God's power. There are attempts to shake, break, and destroy Kiran's resistance in this instance.

Keywords: *Deconstruction, character*

INTRODUCTION

Social life has become a part of everyday interactions with different public relations that cannot be avoided. For instance, the interactions among people, people with nature, with God, and with themselves. Similarly, it must be recognized that everyone experiences conflicts in their lives; the complicated picture of life is depicted in many Indonesian literary works. The novel *"Tuhan Izinkan Aku Menjadi Pelacur! Memoar Luka Seorang Muslimah"* by Muhidin M. Dahlan is one of them. This *TIAMP* novel generated controversy because it was thought to disclose one's flaws, ugliness, and shameful aspects of their personal life. Because it is well known that this book is based on the real-life of an old friend of the author who was once a devout religious but subsequently turned to prostitution.

A literary work's life is characterized by the author's attitude, educational background, beliefs, and other factors. Since a novel is a literary work that develops

human thought based on the author's own observations and experiences of human existence, it has a very tight relationship with people (Pradopo). Welleck and Warren appear to concur with this assertion, stating that the author has the freedom to combine elements of reality and imagination in the roles of the characters (Welleck and Warren 1989: 95).

This is confirmed by the author's statement in the prologue of the novel in the 13th printing:

"Terimakasih kuucapkan kepadamu yang telah mengizinkan aku untuk masuk dan mengupingi jalan hidupmu lalu membiarkanku secara bebas merekamnya, menranskripnya, mengulur kalimat, menciptakan kata baru yang tak kalah serunya dengan jalan hidupmu. Aku hanya pengantara dari memoar lukamu. Aku hanya menuliskan kembali. Dasar cerita sepenuh-penuhnya didasarkan pada liku perih hidupmu yang bercadas-cadas, kering, dan penuh lubang luka. Kaulah yang menciptakan alur dan plot dan aku... aku hanya menggarut dan memoles dan menyambung-nyambung retak-retak kisahmu menjadi cerita "utuh" yang kemudian

kuberi judul: Tuhan, Izinkan Aku Menjadi Pelacur! Memoar Luka Seorang Muslimah. Namun demikian, walaupun isi buku ini merupakan rekaman atas kisahmu, tapi tanggung jawab penulisan mutlak dan sepenuhnya berada di tanganku. Terima kasih. Terimakasih. (Dahlan, 2008: 18).

"I thank you for allowing me to enter and eavesdrop on your life path and then let me freely record it, transcribe it, stretch out sentences, create new words that are no less exciting than your life path. I am just an intercessor from your wound memoir. I just rewrote that. The basis of the story is completely based on the painful twists of your life that is rocky, dry, and full of wounds. You are the one who created the plot and I... I am just scratching, polishing, and splicing your cracked stories into a "whole" story that I later gave the title: God, Allow Me to Be a Whore! Memoirs of Wounds of a Muslimah. However, although the contents of this book are a record of your

story, the responsibility for writing is absolute and entirely in my hands. Thank you. (Dahlan, 2008: 18).

Man, in Sartre's view, is free. Humans are free and independent, demonstrating that existence comes before essence. People can design their own nature thanks to that freedom. Man is only as good as his deeds. This is where human action's first step toward attempting to explain the purpose of its existence begins (Muzairi, 2002: 5).

Sartre in his book *La Literature Engag  e* discusses the responsibility of literature: he is responsible for bringing freedom to his readers. This responsibility is carried out as long as the author knows the existence of writing (*what is writing?*); why did the author write (*why write?*); and knows to whom the writing is addressed (*or whom does one write?*). In his view, literature is a means of carrying awareness of the world. The author has a social calling that must be carried out with written media (Supriono, 2014: 102: 89, 93).

Furthermore, Wellek & Warren explain that the main cause of the birth of literary works is the creator himself: the

author. That is why the explanation of the author's personality and life is the oldest and most established method of literary study (1995: 82).

Muhidin M. Dahlan, an immigrant from Palu, Central Sulawesi who currently resides in Bantul, Yogyakarta, is the author of the *TIAMP* book. He grew up during his childhood near mosque and in an Islamic environment. He has read the Qur'an and other religious texts like the fiqh and has inculcated an anti-Pancasila, anti-Western, and anti-non-Islamic mentality. Muhidin, therefore, decided to relocate and confront the hardships of living in the Student City. He participates in a number of Islamic organizations, including the Islamic Student Association, the Indonesian Islamic Student Movement, and the Indonesian Islamic Students, all of which are abbreviated PII and PMII, HMI respectively. Muhidin is a writer who has the guts to raise controversial subjects. Most of the public criticism, slurs, and accusations of blasphemy directed at her originate from

various Islamic organizations and experts. He was charged with defaming, damaging, and insulting the Qur'an. Very similar to his piece *TIAMP*, which also received a lot of criticism.

From those explanations, the researcher was interested in choosing this novel as the object of research to be analyzed using deconstruction theory. Moreover, the focus of the researcher was on the main character in this novel, named Kiran.

Deconstruction is a theory that seeks to dismantle the idea of the dominant, central, fundamental, and dominating elements. In order to persist indefinitely, this reversal approach is implemented in both temporary and permanent instability (Sahal in Santoso, 2016: 253).

The deconstruction approach is used under the premise that Western philosophy can only preserve the concept of the center as a pure presence by suppressing the metaphorical and figurative influences that define language (Santoso, 2016: 253).

Kiran is a devout Muslim figure. She had deeper knowledge about Islam than her friend, Rahmi. However, after only a short while together, Rahmi had to leave the hut. Kiran is lonely because she has no friends with whom she can interact. Up until Kiran finally bumped across a man, Dahiri, who urged him to join one Jemaah, a staunchly conservative Islamic group that sought to find *Daulah Islamiah Indonesia*. Although she was proud of her hard-line organization, she was genuinely disappointed in it. There are many inconsistencies and lies in the congregational system, which lacks transparency. She also invited her relatives and friends from her community to join the group before being exiled from her village for promoting heretical doctrines. She thought that she had obeyed God's commands and avoided breaking His prohibitions, but she was sad because she felt that God had abandoned her. She was disappointed, frustrated, and engaged in promiscuous sex as a result. She learned a very startling fact about hypocrisy from her sexual experience: all the men she had affairs with were pious and idealistic

figures. She eventually lost faith in men, marriage, love, and even God. She attempted to stand up, not wanting to lose, despite sentiments of scorn, desperation, rage, and disappointment. She seeks justifications that will fortify her spirit and enable her to stand tall and confront reality and the world. In the end, she became established herself to be a prostitute.

Based on this review, the researcher wants to know how the religious life of the main character in the novel "*Tuhan Izinkan Aku Menjadi Pelacur!*" by Muhidin M Dahlan and how the form of deconstruction experienced by the main character in this novel..

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative descriptive research method, with a deconstruction approach to the main character, Kiran in the novel *TIAMP!* by Muhidin M Dahlan. Qualitative research is an approach that describes and analyzes each individual based on one life and thoughts. Researchers who use this qualitative approach must be able to interpret all phenomena and objectives through an explanation (Syamsudin et al,

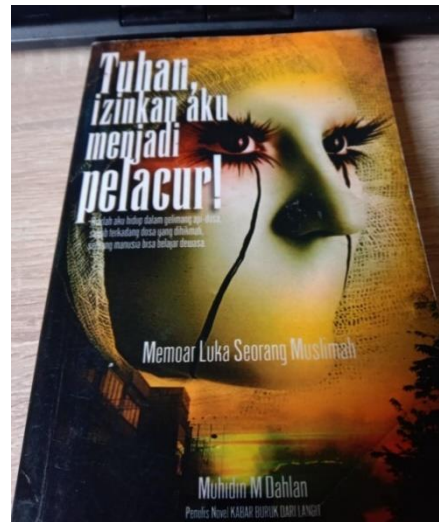
2011:73). To comprehend it easily, the researchers present the analysis results of *TIAMP!* By Muhidin M Dahlan descriptively instead of numbers. The research object is the analysis of Kiran's deconstruction in novel *TIAMP!* by Muhidin M Dahlan. It was the 13th printing on July 2008, published by *Scripta Manent* in collaboration with *Melibas*. The data collection technique used by the researcher was through documentation either by analyzing some articles, books, documents, or websites that may provide information about this research).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

1. Analysis of Kirani's character.

Characters that an author creates typically have differences. This difference serves a variety of purposes. Therefore, claiming that the novel's characters are people who are similar to people in real life is not appropriate (Furqonul et al, 2010: 63). The author's descriptions of the characters may be based on his personal experience, observations from his community, and even reading influential literature. Many pieces of literature

are hyograms of previous works. However, many are also works of fiction based on the author's own experiences. Reactions to the local community's conditions are also varied (Herman, 1994, p. 51).



Before joining Ki Ageng's Islamic boarding school, the character Kiran in the book *TIAMP!* is depicted as a woman whose life is far from religious value. This can be seen in the following quote: *"Because I walked almost silently, I just followed, yes I followed an atmosphere that was completely far from the environment that had raised me. An atmosphere that seems strange"* (23). The quote illustrates that before entering Ki Ageng's Islamic boarding school, Kiran's upbringing was characterized by a highly nonreligious milieu. Until Kiran ultimately decided to come to

Ki Ageng's Islamic boarding school to transform her life and take on more religious life. She wants to learn deeper about her religion, be more solemn in worship, and get closer to God.

This is demonstrated in the following statement: "Without hesitation, I consented to participate in the study because I wanted to change my life. As previously, I want to cleanse my soul of all the stains of this world. I want to get as close to God as I can. I do not want my life to be meaningless, therefore no. I expected a change. I do not want many pointless relationships to lock my heart away." (24) The quote expresses Kiran's sincere desire to transform and become a more pious servant of her God. She appears to want to stop doing things that are only enjoyable temporarily since she no longer finds them to be worthwhile.

Kiran's figure can now truly transform into a religious figure. Even the way she dresses now shows how obedient she is to her religious teaching. As seen in the quote, "*The sun's rays heat my skin covering by a robe. The smooth surface of my bare flesh was*

caressed by the raging street dust from Kaliurang that was flying through the air, landing on the hijab (35)". From this statement, it can be inferred that Kiran has actually transformed into a person who abides by Islamic law in terms of both her physical appearance and her clothing choices. She wants to show and prove her devotion to Islam by covering her entire body with a huge robe and a hijab. The main character in this story is not interested in living a religious life in devotion to God half-heartedly. While staying in Ki Ageng's Islamic boarding school, she was determined to show her loyalty in all of her actions and everyday tasks.

Kiran grew more and more determined to persuade herself that her faith was solid. Under the persuasion of a male classmate named Dahiri, she eventually joined a *Jemaah* association to form a *Daulah Islamiyah Indonesia* because she wanted to accomplish a lofty religious aim. The *Jemaah* that Kiran would join, according to this story, is an organization that seeks to found a state based on Islam, but this *Jama'ah* is regarded as being opposed to the official government.

Kiran's roommates repeatedly say *"That is dangerous! That is subversive! It is against the legitimate government!"*.

When Kiran heard this, she hesitates at first, but eventually she decided to join the assembly that Dahiri meant because his doctrines had deeply affected her soul and mind. This can be seen from the quote, *"I once or twice talked about my doubts to Mas Dahiri and he responded to my objections with holy verses. He hunts me down with some extremely convincing doctrine. Moreover, once more, I fell for it. My faith says that what he said was true and pure, a truly noble aspiration. Thus, I spontaneously said that I would join"* (40). This dialogue excerpt demonstrates how Kiran's choice to ultimately join a teaching that the community regarded as a hard-line group, based on the doctrine of a classmate, resulted from her decision.

Kiran is becoming more and more religious. It appears as though they are no longer interested in the material world. This is seen in the quote, *"I changed completely as a result of the doctrines he poured in*

my face and into my heart. I resemble Ms. Rahmi from Ki Ageng's Islamic boarding house in many ways. I read a Qur'an, complete with its translation, in my daily routines. I spend almost all of my time praying. Not just the required ones, but also the circumcised ones, like the required prayers and other things. While waiting for the midday prayer, I received confirmation that I was facing Allah at the Duha prayer in the morning. That night I built my bones in tahajjud to Him. Those evenings that cause my eyes to water with adoration and love for God" (41). It sounds like Kiran has truly transformed into a very religious woman based on her previous statement. She abandons all types of worldly pursuits and concentrates solely on God in her heart and thoughts. She constantly bases her decisions on the religious rule she follows. After genuinely supporting the extremist groups that aimed to form the *Daulah Islamiyah Indonesia*, her conviction got deeper.

Even when she tried to spread the teachings in her village, and it was not well received, Kiran was willing to be expelled from her

own hometown, from her family, but that did not stop her from continuing to preach. She said, "*That poor village, the poor people kicked me out, expelled their own biological children, just because I was trying to straighten out their creed, which was clearly infidel and influenced by occult teachings, misleading heretical teachings. I know, I failed. I stumbled. But that is okay, I have already started. The heartache of failure is still there.*" (81).

2. Kirani Character Deconstruction

The character Kiran is shown in the novel as a profoundly religious woman, who does not want to waste her time on worldly pursuits that, in her opinion, are pointless, based on the analysis provided above. Kiran is a devout follower of powerful religious principles, which drive her to battle valiantly for the organization she is honored to be a part of. She conveys religious life promoted by extremist groups everywhere she goes in the form of *da'wah* and requests for people to join the *Jama'at*

wherever she stops. However, Kiran did not know what and how the true congregation she was following was for a very long time after she joined this one. This doubt is shown in the quote, "*Therefore, I am swimming in the world of secrecy. I know everything there is to know about the Jama'at network. Only a small number of people are aware, and they have held significant positions for a considerable amount of time*" (87). It appears from the passage above that Kiran has some doubts about being a part of the congregation.

In opposition to the religious culture, she had created on his own, Kiran started to hold resistance and rebellion. She believed that since she had been practicing religion for so long, God would defend him. However, after facing numerous hardships and insults from society, as well as being removed from her home, exiled, and feeling as though her faith had been in vain, she realized that God had not come to her aid. She used to think that the

only way to obtain God's love was to struggle for her through the Jama'at, as if everything else was gone.

The opposition, reversal and breakthrough in the initial construction that she built, that God is good, and has great love for His servants who struggle in the way of religion, can be seen in the quote *"Or does God have no power so that he is not able to hold back the dogmas in the slightest? Or maybe God is too weak and the proponents of dogma are too convincing to be dragged down and shown their fallacies?"* (99). It is also further emphasized in the quote, *"Then how can I firmly believe in a God like they preach?"* (99). Based on the two quotes above, it appears that Kiran is making an effort to dismantle the foundation of her conception of God.

In addition, Kiran, who used to read the holy verses of the Qu'ran continuously, felt at ease when she heard God's verses being sung; nonetheless, it seemed as though she was broken because of the

disappointment she felt about it. *"It was not the same as it is now. How the sound of the call to prayer is so painful. How I was traumatized by the pickaxe of the call to prayer. The flick of his bad voice banged and pricked my ears"*, (103). The situation in this quote seems to be a new construction from the deconstruction done by Kiran.

Furthermore, it is a deconstruction of the belief that as a creature of God, one should not waste time on purely worldly pleasures; this can be seen in Kiran's statement, *"When I was still active in the congregation, practically the streets were terra incognita, no man's land. It became the vomit of my accusations as a place to waste time in vain and an area where sins and various infidel morals congregate. Now the feeling is reversed. In fact, I can no longer feel at home in my room, as three or four years ago, I accepted that the best place for women is in the room, at home. Today, my home is like a torturous prison. And I do not want to die in a depressed state*

there. No!" (112). The sentences above represent rebellion, reversal, and demolition of the construction of beliefs in social norms of life that have been embraced by Kiran.

Another statement that shows the deconstruction of Kiran's thoughts and attitudes about men is, "*Now I am becoming more confident that I have the power to conquer many things, especially men. The strength that I never expected, because in the past when I was with men, I was dragged by their wills, crying cryptic under the cares of their power*" (224). It is strengthened again by the following quote: "*I used to bow to you, prostrate to you because of my smallness, because I was dependent. Now I have found my strength and I know who I am. I am a woman who can subdue many of your people. Let's see later*". (224).

The two consecutive remarks above show that Kiran once believed women were inferior to men in strength. Women must always be dependent on and

submissive to men. Kiran, on the other hand, revolted against her own framework for understanding masculine dominance. For Kiran, breaking through in the form of a change in perceptions of male authority was incredibly simple. Men, in Kiran's opinion, are not as strong as she had previously believed. She showed that women are capable of having greater strength and power than men. "*And I tell you men; I will seize power and subdue you to crawl under my crotch and feet. And I really believe that I can achieve that.*" (225)

CONCLUSION

From the female character's deconstruction analysis, Nidah Kirani in the novel "*Tuhan Izinkan Aku Menjadi Pelacur!*" by Muhidin M Dahlan, it was found that the main character wanted to fight against a religious culture. Because of the disappointment, she felt towards God and men, Kiran finally tried to demolish and revolt against the construction that she previously believed in.

A reversal of the situation from a very religious figure, to a person who no longer obeys her

religion and God, even ignores His teachings, until she no longer believes in the power of God. A rebellion against the construction that men are always stronger and more powerful than women are, and this is reflected in the main female character named Nidah Kirani in a literary work, the novel entitled "*Tuhan Izinkan Aku Menjadi Pelacur! Memoar Luka Seorang Muslimah*" by Muhidin M Dahlan. Kiran's resistance here is an attempt at deconstruction because in it there are attempts to shake, break, and reverse.

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