

The Morality of the Protagonist in *Calabai: Perempuan dalam Tubuh Lelaki* Novel by Pepi Al-Bayqunie



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ABSTRACT: This research aims to identify the protagonist's morality in *Calabai: Perempuan dalam Tubuh Lelaki* novel by Pepi Al-Bayqunie. It was driven by a moral theory by Franz Magniz Suseno. All data about the protagonist's morality were collected using documentation, reading, and note-taking techniques. Data were analyzed by identifying, analyzing, interpreting, and summing up. Research results revealed the example of each morality: a) good conduct (honesty, authenticity, responsibility, independence, courage, modesty, realistic, and critical); b) justice (fairness in behaving and decision-making), and; (c) self-respect (awareness and self-respect). In conclusion, the morality in the aforementioned novel comprises three principles.

KEYWORDS: morality, protagonist, novel, literary works, prose

INTRODUCTION

Literary works are, in essence, depict human social life. Social life strongly influences the process of creating literary works. In conveying the message, a literary work is originated from the imagination or life reality of an author through language. An author is a person who attempts to create their views of the world by observing social indications around them and putting them in a work.

In literary works, an author divides several genres of literature, including prose, drama, and poetry. A novel is among the types of prose. This is consistent with Aziez and Hasiem (in Didipu, 2018: 7) opining that novels are a literary genre that comprises the main form of prose with a considerable length that can fill one or two small volumes and portray reality in a quite complex plot. Novels serve as fictional works containing life problems experienced by the characters.

As a form of literary work, writing a novels is useful for delivering beautiful and entertaining ideas and presenting life and moral values. Morality, in literary works, is a message reflecting the author's view of life on the values of truth. Such values intend to give positive examples to readers. The author directly or indirectly delivers morality through the characters' activities.

Today's morality issues put in a novel are more varied; for instance, the morality conceptualized by Franz Magnis Suseno. According to Suseno (1987: 13), morality is teachings, advice, preaching, standards, and rules on how humans should live and behave to become decent ones. Suseno has divided the concepts of morality into three principles, as follows: (a) good conduct as the basis in human psychological structure; (b) justice, achieving goals without violating other people's rights; (c) self-respect, humans must treat themselves valuably.

One of the novels that delivers the morality in its story is *Calabai: Perempuan dalam Tubuh Lelaki* by Pepi Al-Bayqunie. The novel is unique in terms of its main character, Saidi, who is described as a man but acts like a woman. The author presents the life story of Saidi with different problems that can attract the readers to feel the sadness and struggle he goes through in reaching his dream.

The aforementioned novel was selected because it does not only tell about a usual love story, but also the values of life, including the issue of gender. The problem is also delivered using a good and easy-to-understand language, making it easier for the readers to find moral values in the novel. On this ground, the present study aims to explore the morality of the main character of *Calabai: Perempuan dalam Tubuh Lelaki* novel by Pepi Al-Bayqunie, from the good conduct, justice, and self-respect perspectives.

METHODOLOGY

A qualitative approach was employed to analyze the data by finding facts through a correct interpretation. This descriptive study attempts to describe the forms of morality of the main character, from the perspectives of good conduct, justice, and self-respect principles in the *Calabai: Perempuan dalam Tubuh Lelaki*, a novel by Pepi Al-Bayqunie. Data were the forms of the main character's morality, from the perspectives of good conduct, justice, and self-respect principles in the novel mentioned earlier. Further, data collection techniques involved documentation, reading, and note-taking. The data were then analyzed by identifying

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the forms of morality in the novel, classifying the forms of morality from the perspectives of good conduct, justice, and self-respect, analyzing and interpreting the forms, and concluding the results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results explain morality from the perspectives of good conduct, justice, and self-respect in the novel entitled *Calabai: Perempuan dalam Tubuh Lelaki* by Pepi Al-Bayqunie.

Forms of Morality from the Good Conduct Principle

Honesty

Honesty is the fundamental trait of humans. An honest person is the one whose act and statement are true. It also involves being open and fair. The following data prove Saidi's honesty.

"Apa kamu melakukan sesuatu yang membuatmu merasa hina?" Puang Saidi terperangah. "Saya menyukai Sutte, Puang. Bahkan pernah merasa jatuh cinta kepadanya meskipun saya tidak pernah memperlihatkan atau menunjukkan rasa suka itu kepada Sutte. Saya tahu itu salah, Puang, tapi saya tidak sanggup mengingkari perasaan saya. Yang bisa saya lakukan hanyalah menekan dan menahan perasaan cinta itu agar tidak menjadi cinta berahi. Nah, inilah mengapa saya merasa hina dan tidak layak menjadi Puang Matoa. Tak seharusnya saya menyukai Sutte". [Eng: "Have you done something that made you feel humiliated?" Puang Saidi is astonished. "I like Sutte, Puang. Even I once felt in love with him, although I never showed it. I know it is wrong, but I cannot deny my feeling. I can only hold it back to keep away from a passionate love. That is why I feel humiliated and do not deserve the position of Puang Matoa. I am not supposed to like Sutte"] (Al-Bayqunie, 2016: 269).

After attending a customary court, Puang Matoa Ma'rang asked Saidi about his feeling for Sutte. Saidi tried to hide his feeling at first, yet he realized that Puang Matoa had inwardness in reading the occult or hidden things. Feeling shocked and ashamed, Saidi finally told the truth to Puang Matoa Ma'rang. Saidi being open to the *bissu* (ancient Bugis priest) has a good impact on him, making him feel relieved. He also receives a lot of good advice and input from Puang Ma'rang.

Authenticity

Authenticity is one's attribute of being real. An authentic individual is able to be oneself without imitating or following someone else's orders in their principles. Saidi's authenticity is proven by the following data.

Ia tidak bisa berpura-pura menjadi tegap seperti laki-laki. Ototnya pun tidak bisa tumbuh berkembang sebagaimana lazimnya lelaki seusianya, meskipun setiap hari selalu diajak Ayah untuk ikut mencangkul di sawah. Ia malah merasakan sakit luar biasa ucap kali pulang dari kebun. Otot-ototnya kaku. Cangkul tak mengintiminya. Kebun tak menggodanya. Dia asing di tempat seperti kebun, sawah, atau hutan. [Eng: He cannot pretend to be as sturdy as a man. His muscles cannot grow like other men at his age, although his father always invites him to hoe in the field. Instead, he is in a excruciating pain after getting back from the farm. His muscles are stiff. Hoeing and farming do not help much. Farm, field, or forest are not his things.] (Al-Bayqunie, 2016: 22)

Since he was a child, Saidi often questioned his mother about his character as a man but looked like a woman. Saidi, who felt different, could not pretend to be someone else, although his surroundings treated him differently. Saidi did not know how to be a man. He even did not have an Adam's apple and muscles like other men. He preferred cooking to hoeing. Fate placed him in a world between a man and a woman. To sum up, Saidi has authenticity within himself.

Responsibility

Responsibility means that one sacrifices and is responsible in performing duties. By being responsible, they will carry out their duties as good as possible since they are bound to complete such. Saidi's responsibility is proven by the following data.

"Ada tugas yang harus Saidi kerjakan, Bu." [Eng: "I have work to do, Mom."]

"Tapi, tidakkah kau kasihan pada kami di sini?" [Eng: "But, do you not feel sorry for us here?"]

"Nanti saya kemari setiap bulan. Ayah dan Ibu tidak usah cemas, Kak Nur akan menemani Ayah dan Ibu. Saya harus kembali ke Segeri karena saya memikul tanggung jawab sebagai Puang Malolo. Saya tidak bisa meninggalkan Segeri, Bu. Jika uang saya sudah cukup, saya akan membawa Ibu dan Ayah tinggal bersama saya di Segeri." [Eng: "I will come to you and dad every month. No need to worry. Sis Nur will stay with you both. I need to go back to Segeri as I should bear my responsibility as Puang Malolo. I cannot leave Segeri, Mom. If I have enough money, I will take you and dad with me there."] (Bayqunie, 2016: 327).

Saidi had been in Lappariaja, his hometown, for three months because his mother was sick so that he needed to take care of her. As a son, Saidi believed that he was responsible for serving his parents. However, he could not abdicate his responsibility as Puang Malolo in Segeri. He then explained it to his mother and father with kind words. Deep down in his heart, he still wanted to stay with his parents and take care of them as a responsible son. Even so, Saidi still prioritized his duty as Puang Malolo.

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Moral Independence

Moral independence means that a person always forms their own judgments and principles without following moral views in the environment. Saidi's moral independence is shown in the following data.

Bagaimana mungkin tempat seperti ini disebut tempat bersenang-senang? Lalu ia melihat Wina menyodorkan segelas minuman kepadanya. "Air apa itu?" [Eng: How can you have fun at a place like this? He then sees Wina handed him a glass of drink. "What is that?"

"Bir." [Eng: "Beer."]

"Air putih?" [Eng: "Mineral water?"]

"Bukan," dengus Wina. "Minuman beralkohol..." [Eng: "No," said Wina. "Alcoholic drink..."]

Saidi menggeleng. [Eng: Saidi shook his head.] (A-Bayqunie, 2016: 199).

Saidi, Wina, and Rince, Wina's *calabai* (feminine man) friend in Makassar, went to a nightclub. At first, Saidi did know that they would be in such a place. In the salon, Wina turned into a gorgeous, graceful woman. They continued hanging out and stopped at a nightclub. Saidi was so awkward. Seeing Saidi that way, Wina came to him with a glass of beer. Saidi firmly shook his head and refused to drink it. On this ground, Saidi has his own principle of what he can and cannot do.

Moral Courage

Moral courage is a trait that shows determination to defend what is believed and willingness to take the conflict risk. Saidi's moral courage is proven by the following data.

"Kenapa, Nak? kau sudah tidak senang bersama Ibu?" [Eng: "What happened? Are you not happy being with me?"

"Bukan begitu, Bu." [Eng: "It is not that, Mom."]

"Lalu?" [Eng: "Then?"]

"Sudah waktunya saya pergi..." [Eng: "It is time for me to go..."]

"Kasih Ibu alasan!" cecar ibu [Eng: "Give me reasons!" said Saidi's mother.]

"Tidak tahu, Bu..." [Eng: "I do not know..."] (Al-Bayqunie, 2016: 40).

After his father allowed him, Saidi also conveyed his wishes to his mother. Saidi's decision to migrate to another region could lead to conflict between him and his mother. His mother only lived alone with his father since his two sisters left home after married, following their husbands. The youngest, Saidi, now intended to also leave his mother. She loved him so much. She always worried about the fate of her youngest son. She could not even imagine if Saidi would not be by her side. This was why Saidi's mother strongly opposed his decision to migrate. Nevertheless, he was so determined to go. All in all, Saidi also has moral courage, besides moral independence.

Modesty

A modest person does not mean that they should demean themselves; yet, they should see who they really are, their strengths and weaknesses. One with modesty is aware of their limited strengths, so that they will accept their identity and quality. Saidi's modesty is proven by the following data.

"Tidak, Puang Nani. Saya masih terlampau muda. Saya masih perlu banyak belajar. Mungkin suatu saat saya akan menjadi Puang Matoa, tetapi yang paling tepat menjadi Puang Matoa saat ini adalah Puang Nani." [Eng: "No, Puang Nani. I am too young and need to learn more. I will probably be Puang Matoa one day, but now, Puang Nani is the most appropriate one to be Puang Matoa."] (Al-Bayqunie, 2016: 376).

Being appointed as Puang Malolo made Saidi feel that he bore more responsibilities. He even thought he was an ordinary *bissu*, was too young, and inexperienced in leading. Saidi, who had just been appointed as a *bissu*, was suddenly appointed as Puang Malolo. The *bissu* and *toboto* (a person who devotes himself to a *bissu*) who attended the meeting were also surprised and looked at each other for Puang Matoa Ma'rang's decision to appoint Saidi as Puang Malolo. Saidi's appointment as Puang Malolo was based on the *pammase Dewata* (God's blessing). Puang Nani, the elderly *bissu*, had even finally approved Puang Matoa's decision. However, Saidi argued that he was yet to deserve to accept the position of Puang Malolo. He thought he was too young and incomparable to other experienced elderly *bissu*. In short, Saidi has the modesty trait within himself.

Being Realistic and Critical

Realistic and critical traits are inextricably linked. Being realistic and critical means that human does not necessarily accept reality for what it is; yet, they should learn the situation as realistic as possible to be adjusted with basic principles. Saidi's realistic and critical traits are proven by the following data.

"Lalu" sergah Puang Sompo, "bagaimana dengan adat kita?" [Eng: "Then?" Puang Sompo contradicted, "what about our tradition?"]

"Adat tidak seharusnya membelenggu hidup kita. Kita memang bertugas menjaga adat, tetapi yang harus kita utamakan adalah menjaga masyarakat. Itulah alasan bissu ada. Itulah adat yang berlangsung sejak dahulu kala, sejak bissu pertama diturunkan Dewata ke muka bumi. Bagaimana kita bisa menjaga masyarakat bila kita sendiri tidak akrab?" [Eng: "Tradition is not supposed to confine our lives. Indeed, we are responsible to maintain our

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tradition, but we must prioritize the community, protecting them. That is the reason why a *bissu* exists. That is the tradition we have been upholding since the beginning, since the first *bissu* was sent down by *Dewata* (God) to the earth. How can we protect the community if we ourselves are not close to each other?"] (Al-Bayqunie, 2016:374-375)

Saidi's position as Puang Malolo, may be revoked because the *bissu* assumed that he had been negligent in carrying out his duties as Puang Malolo. Some of the *bissu*, especially Puang Nani, was angry with him. Saidi was considered to focus more on pursuing his career in art staging than on his duties to maintain tradition and protect the community. Despite this, Saidi did not mind and handed over his position to another *bissu*. Puang Somplo, who had been on Puang Saidi's side from the beginning, questioned the tradition being violated for replacing Puang Malolo with another *bissu*. This was contrary to the tradition. Instead, Saidi answered Puang Somplo's question to not stick to the tradition that much because protecting the community was the priority.

Forms of Morality from the Justice Principle

Fairness in Behaving

Fairness in behaving refers to determining and acting fairly in any situation. Saidi's fairness in behaving is proven in the following data.

Ibunya kembali membujuk. "Ayahmu sudah bisa menerima keadaanmu, Nak. Kamu sudah membuktikan bahwa kamu anak yang berbakti meskipun kamu tak perlu membuktikan apa-apa." [Eng: His mother tries to persuade him. "Your dad can accept it, Son. You have proven that you are a devoted son, although you do not need to prove anything."]

"Istirahatlah dulu, Ibu. Kondisi Ibu masih lemah. Tidak usah berpikir berat. Saya tidak mungkin melupakan Ibu dan Ayah. Ibu dan Ayah selalu ada di hati saya." [Eng: "Take a rest, Mom. You are still weak. No need to think hard. I will never forget you and dad. You both are always in my heart."] (Al-Bayqunie, 2016:323-324)

Saidi had been staying with his mother for more than a month. Since returning home and finding his mother lying weak in bed, even rushed to the hospital due to typhoid, Saidi decided to stay longer until she completely recovered. One day, his mother persuaded him not to go back to Segeri. She did not want Saidi to leave her. Saidi remained silent because he had not found the right answer for his mother. He preferred not to respond further to the talk about his return to Segeri. He did not want to burden his mother if he said he had to get back to Segeri. In conclusion, Saidi is fair in behaving.

Fairness in Decision-Making

Fairness in decision-making means that a person can make a choice based on some considerations. Thus, the decision will lead to a feeling of relief and not harm other people. Saidi's fairness in decision-making is proven in the following data.

"Sebaiknya saya pergi, Nek," bisik Saidi pelan kepada Nenek Sagenia. [Eng: I better go." Saidi whispered softly to an old lady, Sagenia]

Perempuan renta itu menarik napas dengan berat. Matanya basah. "Iyek, Nak. pergilah..." [Eng: That old woman takes a deep breath with tears. "Yes, my dear. Just go..."] (Al-Bayqunie, 2016:70)

Considering the situation in the village that was not conducive for him and Sagenia, Saidi finally decided to leave Mallawa village, his new place of living. The anger of the villagers made him unable to do anything else. Threat after threat he got made him decide to leave. It was not because he was scared of the threat, but to protect Sagenia. If he did not leave the village, that old lady would be in danger. The villagers' anger against him would impact her safety. Although it was so hard for him to leave Sagenia whom he loved so much like his own mother during his emigration, he ended up deciding to leave. Accordingly, Saidi has proven that he is fair in making a decision.

Forms of Morality from the Self-Respect Principle

Awareness

Awareness is the state of not letting something hurt oneself nor allowing oneself to be in torment. Saidi's awareness is proven by the following excerpt.

Sekolah justru tempat bagi batinnya untuk belajar menerima hinaan dan risakan. Sesekali ia menantang dan mengajak berkelahi siapa saja yang menghina dan merisakannya. Kadang menang, kadang kalah. [Eng: School is instead a place for him to learn to accept insult and bullying. Every now and then he challenges anyone who insults and bullies him to fight. Sometimes win, sometimes lose.] (Bayqunie, 2016: 24)

Saidi regarded school as a place for him to get bullied and insulted, not to study. His character as a *calabai* (feminine man) made him poorly treated by other people, including those at school. He was harassed and bullied by his friends over and over again. Therefore, Saidi could not keep his temper sometimes. He lost his patience. He picked a fight with anyone who bothered him. Sometimes he won, but sometimes he did not. He finally decided to drop out of school and study at home, although his father strongly opposed his decision. All in all, Saidi has the state of being aware.

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Self-Respect

Among the forms of self-respect principles is respecting oneself by doing something valuable. For instance, humans do not allow themselves to be neglected. They are not only responsible for others, but should also pay attention to and treat themselves. The following data prove Saidi's self-respect on a daily basis.

Upacara pembukaan Festival Budaya se-Indonesia berlangsung ramai. Hampir seluruh daerah mengirimkan utusan. Bagi Puang Saidi, ini pengalaman yang sangat berkesan. Dia bisa bertemu banyak hal yang menarik dan memikat hatinya. [Eng: The opening ceremony of the Indonesian Cultural Festival is lively. Almost all regions send representatives. To Puang Saidi, this is a very memorable experience. He can find many interesting and captivating things.] (Al-Bayqunie, 2016: 288)

The opening ceremony of the Indonesian Cultural Festival was lively. Saidi did not waste his opportunity to take part in the event in Surabaya with other *bissu* and *calabai*. He participated in the performance by performing the Tari Maggirik Mamata, a dance that is usually performed for ceremonial purposes or traditional rituals. This time, the performance was broadcast live on a TV station. It was his first experience, so that he did not waste such an opportunity by showing his talent greatly. The audience was delighted and entertained, including his father and mother, who watched their son's performance with the villagers. To sum up, Saidi has self-respect in his daily life.

CONCLUSION

This research concludes that the main character of the *Calabai: Perempuan dalam Tubuh Lelaki* novel by Pepi Al-Bayqunie has three forms of morality, including good conduct (honesty, authenticity, responsibility, moral independence, moral courage, modesty, being realistic and critical); justice (fairness in behaving and fairness in decision-making); self-respect (fairness in behaving and self-respect).

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