

## Javanese women's resistance to masculine domination in *Palaran* Short Story

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### ABSTRACT

In patriarchal culture, women have always been given a disadvantaged place. It is often expressed in many ways, including in literary works. This study examines how masculine domination is exercised over women and the forms of women's resistance to it in the *Palaran* story. Pierre Bourdieu's theory of masculine domination is applied to dissect the short story "*Palaran*," from the collection "*Iblis Ngambek*" (2003) by Indra Tranggono. Data were collected through a literature review and, drawing on Bourdieu's theory of masculine dominance, analysed using a textual analysis method. The results of the study show that the masculine domination exercised by Adipati Anom over Nyi Adipati comprises two types: physical violence and symbolic violence. The resistance carried out by Nyi Adipati as a representation of Javanese women was to take Adipati Anom's life because she could no longer resist the masculine dominance that she had suffered. The study's results underscored the importance of public awareness of masculine dominance over women. Further research can examine the form of radical resistance exercised by the feminine against the masculine in literary works.

**Keywords:** Masculine dominance; *Palaran*; patriarchal culture; women's resistance

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### INTRODUCTION

Masculine domination often occurs in the real world, as seen in various aspects of life. For example, many jobs are more accessible to men, while women mostly do domestic work. Pierre Bourdieu's theory of masculine domination discusses forms of male domination of women, physical violence, symbolic violence, and forms of women's resistance to men (Bourdieu, 2001). Masculine domination can occur due to gender inequality. This aligns with Butler (1990) and Irigaray's (2004) findings that language, power, and domination exhibit gender-neutral tendencies. This can occur because it is supported by the

masculine image that exists in society, where men are in a position of power and are generally given more privileges than women. Critical research worldwide has shown that masculine domination is closely linked to patriarchal culture, which privileges men in both the private and public spheres (Collinson & Hearn, 1994; Connell, 1998; Hearn, 2004; Hearn & Collinson, 2018; Messner, 1997). Masculinity can also be characterised by qualities such as control, competition, aggression, and physical strength (Day et al., 2003). Gender research and studies have become popular in response to the gender gap that occurs (Morgan & Pritchard, 2019).

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Excessive masculine domination will eventually cause resistance from the female side. As reported by Newman (2011) and Nielsen (2019), a patriarchal society's culture, which is strong with masculine dominance, limits women's rights to education and economic opportunities. Lower-class women are often placed in low positions and sometimes not paid for a particular job (Chesler, 2018; Nielsen, 2019). Women are also more likely to rely on men or social welfare programs to support their survival (Showalter, 1980; Spencer-Wood, 2009). Consequently, women who experience the fate described above can sometimes revolt against unfair treatment. Women's resistance can take many forms, such as separating from men or fighting on their own without men's help. In the context of Javanese life, patriarchal culture remains highly visible and widely influential across many aspects. This is supported by Soedarwo's (2014) research on the influence of Javanese cultural-political ideology on the lives of women politicians in Indonesia. The study's results demonstrate the enduring notion that women are better suited to household responsibilities and less suited to political positions. Men are expected to pursue professional careers in the workplace, while women are expected to stay at home and take care of their children and household duties. The actual situation is that most women will continue to be housewives, while men have more influence over wealth and careers (MCLaren, 2002).

The process of organising human experience in a dialectical relationship between the imaginative world of texts and surrounding societal structures gives rise to literature, which can be understood as a symbolic representation of social reality. Literary works reflect the spirit of the times shaped by historical contexts, customs, and particular social systems, while also depicting social life full of values, conflict, and cultural dynamics (Sapiro, 2016; Suantoko, 2019; Sujarwa, 2019). Authors, as social subjects involved in societal networks, internalise collective experience, customs, and social institutions, then transform them into aesthetic forms through imaginative language. Within this framework, literature functions not only as a social mirror but also as a cognitive, communicative, and creative medium that responds to, communicates, and recreates social reality (Kuntowijoyo, 2006; Nagarajah & Yaapar, 2023). Through these functions, literary works can depict social tensions, hopes, and dissatisfaction, while simultaneously building empathy in readers and playing a role in the educational process and in understanding human existence in social relations (Ashari et al., 2024; Müller, 2015). Therefore, literary works cannot be understood autonomously but must be studied in the socio-cultural context that produces and

perceives them, because literary meaning is formed through complex, reciprocal interactions among text, author, society, and readers (Baihaqi, 2015; Carmona & Miranda, 2023; Damono, 1979).

In literary works, there are aspects of social life and society, especially those related to the study of women and feminism. The view of feminism has a special place in society at large. Currently, much literary research is conducted with an analytical knife, in the form of feminist literary criticism. This aligns with the opinion of Wignall et al. (2023), who argue that their paper explores how a gradual revisioning of TVET can be mobilised to challenge broader gender inequality and discrimination in precarious settings. Through feminist literary criticism, researchers seek to explore the deeper meanings of literary texts, identify representations of women, and invite readers to question generally accepted norms. This is consistent with Bezdoode's (2024) assertion that women are portrayed as subversive in Nahai's novels and short stories. In this regard, feminism invites us to delve deeper into the social, cultural, and political factors that shape gender development, using it as a tool to dismantle and challenge current patriarchal structures. In addition to providing a platform for gender-based analysis, feminist literary criticism can support group initiatives to advance justice and equality across society. This is in line with the opinion of Mallick (2023), who states that the 'woman question' raised here shows the falsity of marriage, the contrast between ideals and their implementation, the perpetual crisis, and the frailties of the great genius. In this regard, feminism makes a significant contribution not only to the literary world but also to efforts to achieve gender equality in all spheres of life.

In many stories, women are portrayed as passive and confined by traditional norms that restrict their freedom (Gosse et al., 2024; Velte, 2024; Wood & Fabian, 2024). Their studies focused on the position of women in traditional culture and the violence they experience, particularly in the sexual sphere. However, the Palaran story contains elements of masculine domination, symbolic violence, and forms of female resistance. This resistance arises because women feel they have the same rights as men, but they are always treated unfairly and often ignored in decision-making that affects their lives. In this short story entitled "*Palaran*", women are not only victims, but also actors who are active in changing their fate, which in this context is represented in the character of Nyi Adipati. She faces various challenges and obstacles in her life, but still strives to fight for justice and equality, and to resist the domination exercised by the masculine party, which, in this case, is represented by the figure of Adipati Anom. This resistance demonstrates that

women are actively working to alter current narratives and create a new history that is more inclusive and equitable, while also accepting their status as subordinates. The narrative of “*Palaran*” offers hope for a time when women can take concrete action to alter their destinies. Recently, society has assumed that masculine domination is a normal part of society. However, excessive masculine domination can create gender inequality, fuelling women’s resistance to male domination. This study aims to examine how masculine domination is carried out against women and the forms of women’s resistance to it in the *Palaran* story.

**METHOD**

This research was qualitative in nature. Qualitative research can also be understood as a study that does not rely on calculations to justify its epistemology (Baihaqi, 2017; Bowen, 2009; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Tracy, 2010). This method is appropriate for the current research because it seeks to reveal

masculine dominance, symbolic violence, and a form of female resistance found in literary works through language. This study of the short story *Palaran* emphasizes linguistic aspects rather than numerical analysis. Data collection was conducted using the literature review method. The data source is the short story “*Palaran*” by Indra Tranggono (2003), included in the collection “*Iblis Ngambek*,” published by the Jakarta Kompas book publisher. The collection “*Iblis Ngambek*” contains 15 short stories, and only the “*Palaran*” story explores the phenomena of masculine domination, symbolic violence, and female resistance. Data were obtained by reading several sections of the *Palaran* story related to masculine domination and women’s resistance to it. After that, the data were coded using MD (Masculine Dominance), SV (symbolic violence), and R (resistance). Data unrelated to the research objectives was reduced. The reduced data was then analysed using textual analysis, as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1**  
*Data Analysis Example*

No	Data	Code
1	Half-naked, Nyi Adipati woke up. Her face was pale as she saw her husband rolling over on the bed while <b>continuing to scream</b> . Nyi Adipati tried to calm her husband down. <b>“Who... who is that brazen! Who dares to play the game? Who has dared to challenge me?”</b> said the Adipati Anom, a bit stuttering. Nyi Adipati, who was astonished, did not understand her husband’s words. <b>“I don’t hear the sound of the gamelan, Kang Mas. Maybe Kang Mas is just disturbed by nightmares”</b> . <b>“No. The gamelan is clearly audible”</b> . The gamelan continued to play in the quiet morning. Throwing a palaran, which contains challenges and signs of war. The song that made Adipati Anom’s ears turn red. <b>“Did you hear that voice?” Adipati Anom looked at his wife. The one asked shook his head. The question was repeated over and over again, but the Adipati shook his head.</b> Page 57-58.	MD & SV/ p.57-58
2	Adipati Anom ordered his subordinates <b>to confiscate all the gamelan and arrest the people who chanted the gending</b> . He also ordered the soldiers <b>to arrest all the descendants and families of Adipati Sepuh</b> . Page 59.	SV/ p.59
3	Nyi Adipati screamed and said that her <b>husband died</b> . Page 62.	R/ p.62

Data analysis used a textual analysis method. Textual analysis can be applied to visual, written, or recorded texts to investigate the message depicted in media, literature, the public press, or personal interviews (Hawkins, 2017). This textual analysis aims to provide a deeper understanding by describing and interpreting messages in the short story *Palaran* regarding masculine domination, symbolic violence, and women’s resistance. Bainbridge (2015) discusses the use of primary and secondary texts in textual analysis. The primary text is the short story *Palaran*.

Meanwhile, secondary texts function to support the primary text or add information found by the researchers. These secondary texts include scientific works and books on masculine domination, symbolic violence, and women’s

resistance to it. An example of masculine dominance and symbolic violence is found in the following sentence: “*Semprul. You only know how to make macak and manak!*” Adipati Anom snapped angrily (p. 58). This sentence contains elements of masculine dominance and symbolic violence because when Adipati Anom was feeling afraid, he said the sentence to his wife. The words “*semprul, macak, and manak*” contain curses and negative impressions towards a woman because women are considered only able to make *macak* and *manak* because they cannot calm their husbands when there is a problem.

**FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

This session will provide an in-depth explanation of the research findings and a comparative discussion

with other research results contained in the *Palaran* story. These findings cover masculine dominance, symbolic violence, and forms of resistance by Javanese women against male domination.

### **Masculine Dominance and Symbolic Violence**

In the *Palaran* story, men's dominance is not just about physical strength or obvious things. It is more about the subtleties of everyday conversation and feelings, and how society expects women to play certain roles. In this case, Pierre Bourdieu's concept of symbolic violence is especially pertinent. This idea illustrates how harsh language, evoking strong feelings, and making it seem normal for women are examples of how power is used. People are unaware of this dominance because it is ingrained in large structures, making it seem normal. Because of the more patriarchal nature of both domestic and global events, masculine dominance endures. We can observe how these symbolic components uphold patriarchal power by concentrating on specific passages in the *Palaran* text. Women's options are restricted by patriarchal power, which effectively prevents them from having a direct voice. We'll talk about issues of symbolic violence and male dominance below.

*"Adipati Anom ordered his subordinates to confiscate all the gamelan and arrest the people who chanted the gending. He also ordered the soldiers to arrest all the descendants and families of Adipati Sepuh." (p. 59)*

This directive exemplifies how male dominance permeates the public and political domains as well as the home. Adipati Anom uses coercion to deal with his anxiety, not by discussing it or thinking about it, but by putting pressure on people to uphold his authority. According to Bourdieu's theory, this concerns symbolic power, which enables symbolic violence by normalising masculine dominance through official roles. Symbolic violence itself is not directly related to physical violence, but it can create a social order in which male authority feels normal and is almost never questioned. This order maintains patriarchal control even within the family.

Masculine dominance is also a subconscious understanding that resides in the minds of men and women in a social order. This phenomenon aligns with Mendick et al. (2021), who argue that the masculinity of geek entrepreneurs currently legitimises masculine dominance and capitalism. This phenomenon not only reflects a patriarchal social structure but also shapes widely accepted and internalised norms. Similarly, the research by Simon and Hasan (2025) examined gender inequality and the status of women's empowerment in contemporary Indian society, with a focus on the influence of widespread patriarchy. Furthermore, this masculine domination is actually invisible

violence and is then perpetrated on women, but the woman does not realise or even be proud and approve of it. In this context, a process of socialisation shapes the views and behaviours of each gender, with women often confronted by standards that require them to play a role in line with traditional expectations. For example, a woman is praised for her feminine nature if she has carried out the concept of society as a good wife, namely a wife who is only in the domestic area and becomes a devoted housewife, obedient, and able to please her husband because she is good at cooking, good at dressing up, and good at arranging the house.

These forms of praise are often accompanied by negative evaluations of women who choose to pursue careers or take part outside the domestic sphere. A growing stigma holds that a good wife works until evening, cannot cook, cannot take care of the household, and so on. It shows how masculine dominance serves to maintain a gender hierarchy that is detrimental to women. It aligns with Atkinson's (2024) research, which illuminates the elaboration and reconstruction of Pierre Bourdieu's brief description of interpersonal love within masculine domination. Psychologically, this also affects women's self-esteem because they often feel under pressure to live up to these standards and give up their own goals to uphold society's perception of the ideal wife.

Furthermore, male dominance frequently fosters an atmosphere that leaves little opportunity for discussion or opposing viewpoints. Women have long been seen as incapable of making their own decisions. They are mostly disregarded by society, limited to household chores, and seldom acknowledged, which frequently results in the normalisation of widely accepted emotional and psychological violence, wherein women are instructed to repress their desires and ideals to conform to the social norms established by masculine dominance. It is consistent with research by Yang and Siu (2025), which claims that women's involvement challenges gender norms and unintentionally creates new forms of masculine dominance in contemporary China by reshaping perceptions of gendered bodies.

There is an urgent need for a deeper comprehension of masculine dominance and how it affects women's lives. According to research by Drenten et al. (2023), women have accounted for nearly half of this market, which is a limited indicator of gender-based progress, but masculine dominance still exists. It entails a critical evaluation of current conventions and initiatives to dismantle the systems that impede the advancement of gender justice. The finding is consistent with research by Brincat and Lindermann (2024), which argues that false recognition can undermine overall decision-making rationality and contribute to international conflict, international inequality, neocolonialism,

and masculine dominance. Masculine dominance as a social construct can be challenged and changed as long as it aspires to a more just and equal society, in which every individual, regardless of gender, has the right to determine their way of life without being shackled by rigid norms that may be detrimental to some parties.

In the discussion of masculine dominance according to Bourdieu (2001), several factors need to be considered, including the role of symbolic violence. Bourdieu (2001) discusses how the concept of gender-based division of labour arises from the social construction of the body, symbolic violence, and the power contained in existing structures. It supports what Praphan (2022) highlights, that patriarchal violence in the form of slavery can destroy a person's life.

In the short story *Palaran*, Indra Tranggono implies that men dominate women in a household. It is visible when Adipati Anom yelled at his wife when she tried to calm him down when he was having nightmares. Adipati Anom asked about the *gamelan palaran* that he had heard, but Nyi Adipati did not know about the *gending* at all. The action angered Adipati Anom, and he yelled at her. He also said that Nyi Adipati was a wife who was not good; Nyi Adipati could only be *macak* and *manak*, or, in other words, dress up and give birth to children. It can be seen in the sentence "*Semprul. You only know how to make macak and manak!*" which is contained in the *Palaran* story on page 58. The words from Adipati Anom are included in the category of symbolic violence and can offend, humiliate, and degrade Nyi Adipati. It is in accordance with what was conveyed by Gilbert et al. (1998) and Poulston (2007), who conveyed that discrimination and gender-based violence can offend, humiliate, or degrade the victim.

In daily life, men have an important role in the household. It is in accordance with Wasino et al. (2021), who stated that the highest social stratification in Javanese society is the king and that almost all Javanese kings are men. Rahman and Ahmad (2017) also state that a king is admired for his remarkable origins and courage. With this understanding, dominance is more evident in men because kings are synonymous with them. In the life of Javanese women, we often hear the terms *masak*, *macak*, and *manak*, which mean good at cooking, good at dressing up or makeup, and capable of giving birth. It seems not far from the well, kitchen, and mattress business.

### **Masak**

Javanese women not only play a role in cooking and food preparation but also serve as essential providers of nutrition in the household, helping create a healthy and prosperous family. In cooking, a woman must be able to do more than combine ingredients. She must be able to mix, unite, and combine various ingredients with deep knowledge

and skills to produce food that is not only delicious but also nutritious. Understanding the nutritional value of each ingredient, using proper cooking methods, and being creative to create a variety of dishes that appeal to family members are all part of the process. It is a way for a wife to show her love and care for every member of the family; each dish is meant to bring happiness and emotional intimacy in addition to satisfying hunger. A woman can foster a harmonious home environment by involving all family members in cooking and instilling values of warmth and unity. As a result, women play a crucial role in this situation, as the food they prepare serves as the link between family harmony, happiness, and health.

### **Macak**

*Macak* is makeup, but its meaning goes far beyond mere physical enhancement of one's appearance. In a broader sense, *macak* encompasses initiatives to adorn and enhance residential structures with aesthetic qualities that are not readily apparent. This implies that creating a peaceful, cosy, and loving environment within the family is another aspect of *macak*. As a result, *macak* comes to represent effective household management, in which every family member tries to respect and encourage one another.

Furthermore, *macak* serves as a tool for mental beauty, which is crucial for forming a person's personality and character. Noble traits like gentleness, sincerity, compassion, patience, and a willingness to put in a lot of effort must be developed during this process. These qualities provide a strong basis for day-to-day living, both at home and in the larger community. By instilling these values, people not only enhance their physical appearance but also their soul and body, giving off a positive vibe that others around them can sense.

As a result, the definition of *macak* encompasses not only physical appearance but also the development of moral character and the maintenance of peaceful family relationships. In this situation, *macak* serves as a form of accountability, with each person actively contributing to creating a lovely and caring environment. Because of this, *macak* is a long-term investment in social and emotional life, which can benefit the growth of individuals, families, and the community at large.

### **Manak**

*Manak* is the term for giving birth. This process encompasses several deeper, more comprehensive elements, in addition to the husband and wife's collaboration in starting a new life. *Manak* describes a process that starts with conception, where two people work together to create a fetus that develops inside the mother's womb. To create the best possible environment for the fetus's development, a

mother must maintain both her physical and emotional well-being throughout her pregnancy.

Following childbirth, a new challenge emerges where a mother's and father's responsibilities extend beyond simply giving birth. They must care for, support, and educate children to the best of their abilities. To guarantee the child receives adequate affection, a secure environment, and a high-quality education, time, effort, and thought must be sacrificed. Educating children entails providing them with the proper guidance so they can comprehend societal norms and values.

*Manak* entails moulding a child's traits and personality and providing for their physical needs. Children's interactions with others are shaped by the moral, ethical, and social skills that parents instill in them. Because every child is different and has a distinct learning style, this process requires perseverance and consistency. Thus, *the responsibility of the mother* is a long journey that requires a high level of dedication and commitment from parents to ensure that the child grows up to be a full human being, not only academically intelligent but also empathetic, honest, and of strong character.

The concepts of *masak*, *macak*, and *manak* serve as gendered habits that shape women's roles and attitudes in the patriarchal household in the Javanese cultural context. These guidelines legitimise male authority in public life and decision-making while also normalising women's confinement to reproductive and affective labour. According to Bourdieu's theory (2001), these standards function as *doxa*, or accepted truths that make dominance imperceptible and unquestionable. Adipati Anom's statement in *Palaran* that his wife "only knows how to *macak* and *manak*" is an example of symbolic violence because it delegitimises Nyi Adipati's moral and emotional agency and reduces her subjectivity to culturally acceptable functions. These statements, rather than being isolated insults, are part of a larger social logic that reproduces and internalises masculine dominance in regular marital interactions. In addition, Javanese women are also required to be *gemati* (attentive devotion) and *sumarah* (sincere submission).

### **Gemati**

Taking care of what the husband likes is a form of attention and affection that a wife can show. *Gemati* is more about the attention and affection a wife gives her husband and family. The affection and attention a wife gives her husband and family can manifest in many ways, including providing everything the family needs, such as food, drinks, and funds. In this context, the provision of food and drink becomes very important, since food is not only a physical necessity, but also a means to establish a warm relationship within the family. Therefore, a

wife who understands her husband's tastes will strive to provide dishes that suit his preferences, whether it is traditional cuisine or trending modern menus.

In this case, many Javanese women are known to have expertise in cooking, which is one of the added values in maintaining household harmony. This ability to cook is an expression of profound love as well as a useful skill. Presenting carefully prepared food fosters a cosy and close-knit family environment. Sincere affection is expressed in every dish served, every aroma inhaled, and every spice added.

It's also crucial to serve the husband beverages he enjoys, such as tea, coffee, or other fresh beverages. When the husband enjoys drinking, these beverages can complement him and help them have more special times together. This modest but significant gesture demonstrates how a wife prioritises her husband's and her family's comfort and happiness. In everyday habits, providing the husband's and family's favourite foods and drinks can be a ritual that strengthens the emotional bond between the couple and the family.

Furthermore, maintaining the husband's and family's pleasure is not limited to the culinary aspect. Any act that shows support and attention, such as reminding the husband and family of the little things they like, providing space to relax, or accompanying him in activities he enjoys, is also part of the effort to maintain happiness in the household. Every effort made wholeheartedly, whether preparing meals or providing positive support at certain times, creates a positive and loving environment in the family. Sincerity in upholding the husband's and family's preferences can create a solid basis for a peaceful and beneficial partnership.

### **Sumarah**

The word "*Sumarah*" carries deep, intricate meaning in Javanese culture. *Sumarah* signifies both resignation and a genuine acceptance of the husband's choices and intentions. In a culture steeped in traditional values, a wife is expected to comply with all her husband's requests and directives without questioning or arguing. As a result, the wife is viewed as a devoted follower and the husband as the head of the household.

Javanese women who disobey their husbands are frequently labelled as bad wives because they are thought to have broken the relevant conventions. The public believes that this non-compliance affects not only the woman's social standing but also the harmony of her family. A wife is expected to uphold domestic harmony by being obedient and patient, and the application of *sumarah* values is frequently seen as a sign of respect and devotion.

Additionally, *Sumarah* has spiritual significance in Javanese culture. Accepting

everything that God has given you through your husband is seen as a sign of sincerity and humility. As a result, women who value anger are expected to follow their husbands' instructions and incorporate this mindset into their spiritual development. Although leading a home life may occasionally be difficult, this process is intended to foster thankfulness and inner serenity.

In this situation, *sumarah* transcends mere obedience and becomes a reflection of Javanese society's ideals, in which each person has a distinct role. The idea of anger has been discussed and reinterpreted over time, particularly in relation to gender equality. However, from a traditional perspective, *sumarah* has become a powerful and revered concept in Javanese daily life.

In Javanese gender ideology, *sumarah* (sincere submission) and *gemati* (attentive devotion) serve as moral standards that women's emotional labour upholds male authority in marriage. Rather than representing voluntary love or spiritual virtue, these ideals serve a *doxa* that normalises women's subversiveness and discourages them from questioning male authority. Nyi Adipati's steadfast tolerance and emotional support for Adipati Anom in *Palaran*, in spite of verbal abuse and psychological intimidation, demonstrate how internalised compliance sustains symbolic violence. This kind of compliance, according to Bourdieu, is the outcome of a gendered habitus that makes endurance morally admirable while suppressing women's capacity to express dissent. As a result, *gemati* and *sumarah* become important tools for reproducing dominance and misinterpreting it as marital virtue, harmony, and loyalty.

"Nyi Adipati screamed and said that her husband died by suicide" (p. 62). Nyi Adipati's cry announcing Adipati Anom's death is both a concrete expression and a reflection of prolonged symbolic violence. This statement reflects an internal understanding of power relations in which maintaining social order and masculine reputations takes precedence over women's safety. According to Bourdieu, this silence is an example of misinterpretation, in which domination is maintained not only by violence but also by the dominated subject's complicity in upholding the authority's legitimacy. The social logic that has shaped Nyi Adipati's married life continues to limit her freedom even after Adipati Anom's death.

In addition, symbolic violence in its sense is a model of cultural and social domination that takes place unconsciously in people's lives, which includes acts of discrimination against certain groups/races/ethnicities/genders. Bourdieu (2001) alternately uses the terms 'symbolic violence', 'symbolic power', and 'symbolic dominance' to refer to the same thing (Kurniasih & Aunullah, 2009).

Symbolic power is a form of power that is imposed on the body directly, like magic. The power is imposed on the body without the use of any physical restraint. However, it will not work unless it is supported by dispositions that are already stored in the innermost parts of the body, such as springs. Symbolic power can work like an activation button, that is, with very little energy use. It happens because symbolic power simply activates the dispositions cultivated and formed by that work in the man or woman who gives themselves to be mastered by it (Bourdieu, 2001).

Symbolic violence is institutionalised through the intermediary of agreements that the dominated party cannot make with the dominant party, when the dominated party has nothing but the instruments of knowledge that are also owned by the dominant party. When you want to think about the dominant party, to think about yourself, or to think about your relationship with the dominant party, these instruments of knowledge are a manifestation of the formation of dominance relations, thus making the relationship seem natural. In other words, symbolic violence is institutionalised through the mediation of agreements that the dominated party cannot give to the dominant party (Bourdieu, 2001).

A wife whose husband constantly yells at her will feel unable to fulfill her obligations. In this case, Nyi Adipati always receives symbolic violence in the form of psychological violence. As a Javanese woman, Nyi Adipati remained patient despite all the treatment her husband administered. Nyi Adipati continued to serve and accompany Adipati Anom when he slept. The dominance and symbolic violence in the short story are evident in the following quote.

Half-naked, Nyi Adipati woke up. Her face was pale as she saw her husband rolling over on the bed while continuing to scream. Nyi Adipati tried to calm her husband down.

"Who... who is that brazen! Who dares to play the *game*? Who has dared to challenge me?" said the Adipati Anom, a bit stuttering.

Nyi Adipati, who was astonished, did not understand her husband's words.

"I don't hear the sound of *the gamelan*, Kang Mas. Maybe Kang Mas is just disturbed by nightmares".

"No. *The gamelan* is clearly audible".

*The gamelan* continued to play in the quiet morning. Throwing a *palaran*, which contains challenges and signs of war. The song that made Adipati Anom's ears turn red.

"Did you hear that voice?" Adipati Anom looked at his wife. The one asked shook his head. The question was repeated over and over again, but the Adipati shook his head.

*Semprul*. You only know how to make *macak* and *manak*!

(pp. 57-58)

From the quote (Her face was pale as she saw her husband rolling over on the bed while

continuing to scream, page 57. *Semprul*. You only know how to make *macak* and *manak!*, page 58) above, it can be seen that a wife whom her husband always yells at will feel that she cannot carry out her obligations properly and be full of confidence, this can erode her sense of self-esteem and ability to manage the household. In this case, Nyi Adipati consistently receives treatment that can be categorised as symbolic violence, whose manifestation is more profound in the form of psychological violence that has an impact on her mental and emotional state. As a Javanese woman who has a strong cultural background and traditional values, Nyi Adipati shows extraordinary resilience by remaining patient in facing and accepting all the unpleasant and painful treatment inflicted by her husband. Despite experiencing internal pressure and unfair treatment, Nyi Adipati continues to fulfill her role with full dedication, always serving and accompanying Adipati Anom in every aspect of life, including personal matters, such as sleep. It shows Nyi Adipati's extraordinary devotion, even in difficult conditions, and she received domination and symbolic violence from Adipati Anom.

#### **Forms of Resistance**

This *palaran* story actually has an intertextual relationship with Ken Arok's story. If analysed more deeply, the death of Adipati Anom was actually not caused by suicide but was killed by Nyi Adipati. It could be that, when Adipati Anom was not in power, Nyi Adipati was actually a member of the family, or that she was Adipati Sepuh's wife. Nyi Adipati felt that during her time as the wife of Adipati Anom, she was never treated well. She always received rough treatment that had an impact on her psychological condition. Despite receiving rough treatment, Nyi Adipati still served and tried to be a good wife. This is in line with research conducted by Chakraborty (2023), which states that the home is actually a space for various forms of violence against women. However, as time went on, Adipati Anom showed no change in attitude. His attitude towards Nyi Adipati is even more rude. It was marked by the words of Adipati Anom, who cursed Nyi Adipati with a shout of "*Semprul*. You can just *be macak* and *manak!*" The Adipati Anom's treatment filled Nyi Adipati with fear. It supports Day's (2001) statement that women face a considerable risk of violence (including sexual violence and domestic violence) in both private and public spaces.

The fear Nyi Adipati felt over Adipati Anom's actions for a long time bred hatred. This further added to the hatred felt by Nyi Adipati, which made her commit the murder of Adipati Anom. The murder can also be interpreted as revenge because Adipati Anom killed Adipati Sepuh, who was the husband of Nyi Adipati before. Chakraborty (2023) emphasized that in the late 1970s, there was the first

organised women's movement after India's independence to fight dowry-related murders and other forms of domestic violence. After killing Adipati Anom, Nyi Adipati shouted for the guards to come. She said that Adipati Anom had committed suicide to cover up her actions.

The *Palaran* story can be described as a deconstruction of the Ken Arok and Ke Dedes stories. In Ken Arok's story, Ken Dedes is the wife of Tunggul Ametung, who is a leader in the *Tumapel* area. Ken Arok wants to control *Tumapel* and seize Ken Dedes from Tunggul Ametung. Therefore, he joined and became a bodyguard for Tunggul Ametung. At night, when Ken Dedes and Tunggul Ametung were asleep, Ken Arok secretly killed Tunggul Ametung, but Ken Dedes knew of it. After this murder, Ken Arok vowed to become a leader in the *Tumapel* area and married Ken Dedes. Previously, Tunggul Ametung and Ken Dedes had a child named Anusapati. Later, when Anusapati grows up, he will kill Ken Arok because he was treated unfairly and knew that his biological father was Tunggul Ametung, whom Ken Arok had killed. This story is related to the *Palaran* story because it shares similar characters and plot.

From Bourdieu's theoretical perspective, the stories of Ken Arok and Ken Dedes illustrate how male dominance continues to be reproduced through symbolic and political power embedded in history and myth. In this instance, Ken Dedes seems more like symbolic capital. Rather than being viewed as a person with her own will, her possession validates male authority and political succession. Murder, marriage, and retaliation are examples of gender-based customs that alter power and normalise women's subservient roles. This is consistent with Chakraborty's (2023) example of habitus in research, which argues that habitus, such as the belief that women are less adaptive in life, is a cultural construct that, over time, is perceived as natural, even biological, and subjugates women. It is a bit difficult to understand this fully. *Palaran* deconstructs such structures, disrupting the assumption that women serve only to transmit power from one man to another. Through the role of Nyi Adipati, who causes the collapse of masculine authority, *Palaran* reveals patriarchal dominance maintained through misunderstanding and symbolic violence. Masculine dominance is reproduced through symbolic power, but in *Palaran*'s story, it adds to the symbolic foundation of male sovereignty rather than reinforcing it, creating a distinct narrative even though it still contains elements of myth.

In the *Palaran* story, the perpetrator of the murder is Adipati Anom's wife, not Adipati Sepuh's son. Because, viewed logically, Adipati Anom only slept in the same room with Nyi Adipati, and no one else was in the room. If linked to Adipati Anom's harsh treatment, that night was the right time for Nyi

Adipati to free herself from the bonds of masculine domination and symbolic violence that Nyi Adipati had experienced. The form of resistance carried out by Nyi Adipati falls into the category of radical resistance that may not be replicated in the real world. This is in line with research conducted by Day et al (2023), which suggests that when women often experience masculine domination and violence, one day they may experience a state of loss of control and do radical things. After Nyi Adipati killed Adipati Anom, she felt relieved and free from all the shackles that bound her. No one would shout, speak harshly, and treat Nyi Adipati badly anymore. This is evident in the following quote, which serves as a metaphor for freedom and relief.

*“The wind blew again. The leaves fall off. Megamega unravelling. The moon is bright, shining. The light swayed, reflected from the river water that continued to flow. The wind announces that morning has come. The life of the Duchy of Padas Lintang rises, as usual. They considered Adipati Anom’s death common. The sound of silent gamelan was no longer heard, since the death of the Adipati.”* (p. ...)

## CONCLUSION

This research reveals that in domestic life, the masculine dominates the feminine. This study also shows that symbolic violence embedded in everyday language, emotional behaviour, and internalised gender norms is a primary means of maintaining masculine dominance in the short story *Palaran*. The analysis uses Bourdieu’s concepts of masculine dominance, habitus, and symbolic violence to demonstrate how women’s silence and patience function as socially constructed dispositions that conceal the coercive nature of patriarchal authority. Theoretically, this article advances feminist literary studies by depicting resistance as an ambivalent and tragic form of agency that emerges when masculine dominance closes off all acceptable channels of response, rather than as a progressive or emancipatory outcome. Nyi Adipati’s radical actions expose the structural constraints on women’s agency within the patriarchal system rather than offering a solution. This perspective advances readings of gender, masculine dominance, symbolic violence, and Javanese women’s resistance in literary narratives influenced by Bourdieu’s theory. Future research should explore more deeply the factors that correlate with radical resistance as an effort to counter masculine dominance, which is often detrimental.

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