Ghancaran
Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia
P-ISSN 2714-8955 | E-ISSN 2715-9132
https://ejournal.uinmadura.ac.id/index.php/ghancaran/index
https://doi.org/10.19105/ghancaran.v20i2.26266

OPEN ACCESS

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Marriage, performance, and refusal: Three regimes of gendered power in Indonesian historical fiction

Sri Lestari[1]*, Hary Sulistyo[2], Ika Martanti Mulyawati[3], Ria Kasanova[4], Bagus Santosa[5].

[1,3]Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Mas Said Surakarta, Surakarta, Indonesia
[2]Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
[4]Universitas Madura, Pamekasan,Indonesia
[5]Sekolah Tinggi Agama Budha Smaratungga, Boyolali, Indonesia

***Corresponding Author**
srilestari@staff.uinsaid.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Studies of women in Indonesian fiction have traced how gendered domination operates and how women resist it. Less attention has been paid to how works can be compared by examining who justifies the demands made on women and how the narrative reveals what happens when women respond. This article takes up that question through a comparative close reading of selected sequences from Pramoedya Ananta Toer's *Gadis Pantai*, Ahmad Tohari's *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk*, and an extract from Y. B. Mangunwijaya's *Rara Mendut*. It examines who claims authority, what grounds they give for their demands, what choices the women have, and how each narrative presents the consequences of their decisions. In *Gadis Pantai*, the protagonist's status as a wife gives her little say in her separation from her daughter. In *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk*, Srintil weighs whether to return to dancing, a decision she makes within a role that others help shape. In the *Rara Mendut* extract, Mendut refuses marriage and sells cigarettes under conditions that Wiraguna continues to impose. Across the three works, women exercise agency even when others retain substantial control over what follows. By attending to narrative perspective, dialogue, and when readers learn what follows each decision, the article distinguishes a woman's capacity to act from her authority to shape the terms and consequences of her actions.

Keywords: gendered authority, women's agency, comparative close reading, Indonesian historical fiction, feminist narratology

ARTICLE HISTORY
Received: September 30, 2026
Accepted: October 28, 2026
Published: November 15, 2026

LICENSE

Copyright © 2026 The Author(s). This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY 4.0) License.
https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/.

How to Cite This Article

Lestari, Sri, et al. (2026). Marriage, performance, and refusal: Three regimes of gendered power in Indonesian historical fiction. *Ghâncaran: Journal of Indonesian Language and Literature Education*, Special Edition Lalongét VII. 908-922. https://doi.org/10.19015/ghancaran/v20i2.26266

INTRODUCTION

A woman may accept a role her community values and still have little say in its terms. Even when she refuses a demand, the person who made it may retain authority over her. In fiction, readers judge the scope of a woman's agency by what the narrative lets them see of her options, her reasoning, and the consequences of her actions. A marriage, for instance, may appear to offer the bride an opportunity before she learns what will be expected of her. A community may celebrate a performance, while the narrative gives more space to that celebration than to the performer's reasons for accepting or declining the role. These differences in emphasis raise a question about narrative form. How does a story lead readers to see some demands as legitimate, and what does it reveal about the choices women have and what those choices cost them?

This question informs the comparison of Pramoedya Ananta Toer's *Gadis Pantai*, Ahmad Tohari's *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk*, and Y. B. Mangunwijaya's *Rara Mendut*. In *Gadis Pantai*, marriage confers a new status on the protagonist while giving an aristocratic household considerable power over her relationships. In *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk*, Srintil's recognition as a dancer opens opportunities for public performance and creates obligations to those who organise and depend on it. In the extract from *Rara Mendut* examined here, Mendut's rejection of Wiraguna's marriage proposal is followed by a financial demand backed by his political and military standing. Each work situates women's choices within historically specific relations of authority. The comparison treats those settings as mediated through literary representations of the past (Sears, 2013) .

Research on these novels has established how class, communal norms, and discourse shape women's positions. Windiyarti (2017) links objectification in *Gadis Pantai* to social stratification and women's unequal position in the family. Yulianeta and Ismail (2022) situate the protagonist within a wider study of women's struggles in Pramoedya's fiction, while Rosyidi and Puspita (2024) examine how language constructs gendered roles and interactions in *Gadis Pantai*. In studies of *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk*, Wardani et al. (2023) analyse hegemonic masculinity and characters' efforts to confront it. Meiliana (2026) draws on the novel and interviews with dancers to examine cultural violence associated with ronggeng performance, while Nirmalawati et al. (2026) compare Srintil's public role and constrained domestic prospects with women's roles in *Bekisar Merah*. Studies of *Rara Mendut* have examined the language of objectification and resistance (Dwitaningsih et al., 2024) and the representation of women through liberal feminism (Astriyani et al., 2025) .

These studies explain how class and gender hierarchies operate, which social roles women can inhabit or contest, and what forms objectification and resistance take. Across the studies reviewed here, the relationship between the justification of a demand, the alternatives a protagonist can exercise, and the narrative disclosure of consequences remains underdeveloped as a basis for comparing scenes. A woman can decide how to respond even when someone else has the power to decide what happens next. When a protagonist protests, readers may hear her judgement while the decision remains in someone else's hands. When she returns to a role her community expects her to fulfil, her decision may follow careful deliberation even if others still set the terms of that role.

Relational accounts of autonomy help explain this distinction by situating capacities and choices within relationships of dependence and obligation (Mackenzie & Stoljar, 2000) . Mahmood (2005) questions the identification of agency with opposition to prevailing norms. Velji (2024) extends this discussion by examining the capacities that may develop through participation in normative practices, while Lundquist and Adams (2023) draw attention to the ambivalence of agency under unequal conditions. Taken together, these accounts ask what a protagonist can realistically do and how much say she has in what happens next. What her apparent agreement signifies depends on what she knows, whether she can realistically decline, and what refusal would cost her. Feminist critiques of consent raise a related question. When agreement is used to justify an unequal arrangement, can the person who agreed realistically leave it (Tirosh, 2024).

Narrative form shapes how readers come to recognise these conditions. Feminist narrative theory links questions about gendered experience to the organisation of narrative (Roof, 2018), and recent work extends that inquiry through attention to voice, the space afforded to characters, and plotting (Lanser, 2024). Research on ethical narrative and moral choice in Vietnamese fiction offers a regional point of comparison for examining how literary form shapes the interpretation of characters' choices (Ngo, 2026). In *Gadis Pantai*, the protagonist's limited knowledge shapes readers' encounter with the rules of the household and their later understanding of her marital status. In *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk*, Rasus's account of the *bukak-klambu* ritual and later passages that give closer access to Srintil's deliberation provide different grounds for interpreting her actions. In *Rara Mendut*, dialogue places Mendut's refusal alongside the practical concerns of women who recognise the risks she faces.

This article addresses three research questions.

1. How do the three narratives represent the ways claims over women's choices are justified?
2. How do the narratives represent women's compliance, negotiation, and refusal?
3. What does the comparison reveal about the scope and costs of women's agency?

Through comparative close reading of selected scenes and sequences, the analysis asks who claims authority, how they justify their demands, and what options the protagonist has. It then considers how she responds and how the narrative presents her response and its consequences. The comparison centres on marriage, performance, and refusal. In each case, gendered power operates through social relations that allow some actors to set the terms on which women make choices. Household rank, communal authority, and political and military standing give those actors different grounds for exercising that power.

The article contributes a distinction between a protagonist's capacity to act and her capacity to determine the terms and consequences of her action. In *Gadis Pantai*, the protagonist protests her separation from her daughter, but the household retains the power to enforce its decision. Srintil deliberates about returning to dance within a role that others help organise. In the *Rara Mendut* extract, Mendut's refusal is followed by an income-generating initiative that remains subject to Wiraguna's payment requirement and restrictions on contact with buyers. Reading these actions alongside changes in perspective, the distribution of dialogue, and the timing of disclosures shows how agency can coexist with limited control over outcomes. The comparison thus connects an interpretation of what each woman does to an account of who can set the terms of her action and how the narrative makes that distribution of power visible.

Method

Research design and corpus

This study uses qualitative comparative close reading to examine how three Indonesian novels represent gendered authority and women's agency. The primary materials are the Indonesian texts of Pramoedya Ananta Toer's *Gadis Pantai* (Toer, 2000), Ahmad Tohari's *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk* (Tohari, 2009), and the available extract from Y. B. Mangunwijaya's *Rara Mendut* (Mangunwijaya, 2008). The works were selected because each places a woman's choices within relationships in which others can make demands and set conditions. The works differ in their historical settings and in how they tell their stories.

These differences allow the study to compare how household rank, communal expectations, and political and military standing lend force to the demands made on women. The analysis draws on secondary scholarship to develop its framework and clarify historical references. It reads fictional events as literary representations of the past (Sears, 2013).

Unit of analysis and analytical framework

The unit of analysis is a scene or connected sequence in which a claim is made over a protagonist's actions, relationships, body, or social role. Its boundaries follow the development of the demand, the protagonist's response, and the consequences the narrative discloses. A sequence may extend across chapters when later passages clarify the conditions or effects of a decision. Each sequence is examined through five questions.

1. Who claims authority over the protagonist's choice?
2. How is the demand justified within the fictional world?
3. What alternatives are available to the protagonist?
4. How does she respond?
5. How does the narrative frame her response and its consequences?

The comparison centres on marriage, performance, and refusal, which can overlap within a single work. The analysis asks what the protagonist can do and how much control she has over the terms of her actions and what follows. To assess which alternatives are open to her, it considers what she knows at the time, whom she depends on, and what the text suggests it would cost her to refuse a demand (Mackenzie & Stoljar, 2000).

Close reading and comparative procedure

The analysis proceeds in two stages. In the first, each work is read on its own to identify sequences in which a demand is proposed, imposed, negotiated, avoided, or refused. Each sequence is then read alongside the surrounding passages to see how the wording and dialogue support the interpretation (Kramnick, 2023). The analysis examines who speaks and whose perspective shapes how readers encounter events (Abbott, 2021). For each sequence, the analysis notes who makes the demand, what reasons they give, what options the protagonist has, and how she responds. It also traces how and when readers learn the consequences of her response. Examining these details in turn helps clarify how the narrative presents a character's account of what she or others are obliged to do.

Second, the study uses the same five questions to compare how authority operates across the selected sequences, while attending to differences in the historical settings and social relations that give each demand its force (Felski, 2013). The comparison examines

recurring mechanisms of authority and differences in the scope and costs of women's responses. It also considers passages that complicate emerging interpretations. A protagonist may weigh her options before going along with a demand. Even when she openly refuses, others may still have the power to set the terms of what follows. The analysis considers who holds authority in each case and what the narrative reveals about the consequences of her response.

Interpretive boundaries

The analysis distinguishes what the text shows from what can be inferred from it. When a scene allows for several readings, the surrounding passages and any consequences revealed later in the narrative help establish which interpretation the text best supports. The study's claims concern how each work represents gendered authority and agency in its own setting. For *Rara Mendut*, the analysis covers only the choices and consequences depicted in the available extract, including the conditions imposed after Mendut refuses.

Ethical considerations

The study draws on published literary texts and secondary scholarship. It did not involve human participants, the collection of personal data, or interaction with users on digital platforms. Quotations are attributed to the editions listed in the references and accompanied by page numbers. The authors' English translations are identified as such and referenced to the corresponding pages of the Indonesian editions. Published translations are credited to their sources.

Results and Discussion

Marriage and Household Authority in *Gadis Pantai*

The opening of *Gadis Pantai* presents marriage as a decision whose effects reach the protagonist before its terms are available to her. She is married through a *keris* that represents Bendoro, a man she has never seen (Toer, 2000 pp. 2–3). The object allows the absent groom to be represented at the ceremony, while the bride must leave her family and travel to his household. Bendoro and the young woman enter the marriage with unequal power to shape what happens. Bendoro can act through a representative, while the young woman comes to understand the arrangement as she makes the journey it requires of her. By following her fear and uncertainty along the way, the narrative shows what it is like for her to enter the marriage knowing less about the arrangement than Bendoro does.

Her arrival at Bendoro's house shows how that inequality is sustained through routine exchanges. Questions about her readiness for marriage concern her body, yet they are

addressed to her parents and communicated through others (Toer, 2000, pp. 12–13). Her family and the village head respond to the authority of the household, whose rules she is still learning. Her request to return home receives little consideration. Read in sequence, these details show how the possibility of declining is narrowed through the conduct of the people around her. Her position is shaped by who is consulted, who can speak on her behalf, and whose wishes are treated as grounds for reconsidering the arrangement. The scene locates the problem of consent in these conditions of participation.

The title *Mas Nganten* marks a material and social change. The protagonist is dressed and attended in ways unfamiliar from her life in the fishing community, and the comforts of the house register the difference in rank between the two settings (Toer, 2000, pp. 14–17) . At the same time, the people who introduce her to these privileges explain how she must conduct herself. The title grants her recognition within an existing hierarchy, and that hierarchy shapes her access to the benefits the marriage provides. Windiyarti (2017) links the protagonist's objectification to class stratification and women's unequal position within the family. This sequence shows how household rank sustains that inequality. The household can give the protagonist a new social identity while retaining the power to decide where she goes and on what terms she may live there.

The separation near the end of the novel tests what that status can secure. After giving birth, the protagonist learns through her father that Bendoro has divorced her and that she must leave. She asks why she is being sent away and appeals to remain with her daughter. Bendoro asserts his claim to the child and orders the protagonist to depart (Toer, 2000, pp. 218–221). As at the beginning of the marriage, she learns through another person about a decision already made on her behalf. This time, however, she articulates a claim of her own. Her questions and protest establish what she wants and why it matters to her, even as the household demonstrates its ability to enforce the separation (Toer, 2000, pp. 218–227). The later attention to her thoughts about her daughter's future adds a further tension. The rank that may provide advantages for the child can also distance her from her mother's origins (Toer, 2000, pp. 228–229).

The connection between the opening and the separation clarifies the contribution of the novel's sequencing. As the protagonist learns the rules of the household, readers see what privileges come with being recognised as a wife. The later decision shows how easily those privileges can be withdrawn and who has power over the relationships they seemed to secure. Rosyidi and Puspita (2024) show how language in *Gadis Pantai* helps construct

gendered roles and interactions. Read alongside the protagonist's questions, the decisions relayed to her show how much room she has to challenge the household. She can voice her judgement and contest its decision, though her words carry little weight in determining what happens next. The exchange shows how class authority operates within the marriage. The household can recognise her as a wife, decide what privileges that status brings, and determine when she must leave.

Performance and Communal Authority in *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk*

Srintil's first public performance places her at the centre of a collective occasion. Kartareja prepares the event, Nyai Kartareja dresses her, and villagers gather after years without a *ronggeng* (Tohari, 2009, pp. 18–19). Their anticipation establishes the value attached to Srintil's public role. It also reveals how many people have a stake in what she does. The organisers make the arrangements that enable Srintil to perform, and the villagers see her presence as important to Dukuh Paruk. These two sources of authority reinforce each other. The organisers make decisions about her role, and the villagers' expectations help justify those decisions.

The preparations for *bukak-klambu* show how little control Srintil has over the terms of a performance in which she is the central figure. Kartareja prepares the room, sets the terms, and spreads word of the contest. The men discuss what they must offer to take part (Tohari, 2009, pp. 51–58). In these exchanges, others arrange and negotiate an event presented as a requirement of becoming a *ronggeng*. Wardani et al. (2023) identify hegemonic masculinity in the novel and examine characters' efforts to confront it. Meiliana (2026) situates the novel alongside interviews with dancers in a study of cultural violence associated with the performing art. The literary finding here concerns how the narrative makes an obligation intelligible through the arrangements surrounding it. A valued public role supplies a reason for treating decisions about Srintil's body as matters in which organisers and prospective participants can intervene.

Rasus's account is central to how readers encounter the preparations. His distress draws attention to the stakes of the ritual, while the perspective through which the episode is presented limits what readers can infer about Srintil's own understanding of it. The distinction between who speaks and whose perspective shapes the presentation of events is therefore consequential for the interpretation of her agency (Abbott, 2021). Later scenes provide evidence of Srintil's judgement through her words and deliberation. Read together, the episodes show why a character's assessment of the ritual, the organisers' account of its requirements, and Srintil's understanding of her choices have to be considered separately.

The pressure surrounding Srintil's return to dancing makes the community's interest in her role more explicit. Her withdrawal concerns those around her partly because a *ronggeng* is tied to the village's public identity (Tohari, 2009, pp. 140, 158). Nirmalawati et al. (2026) show how communal expectations concerning Srintil's public role constrain her prospects for domestic life. The selected sequences clarify how expectations also bear on specific decisions. Srintil turns down the proposed outing despite pressure from both Kartareja's household and the prospective visitor (Tohari, 2009, p. 148). That refusal establishes that she can turn down a particular demand. The continuing expectation that she should perform shows the difference between declining one request and determining what the role will require of her over time.

Srintil's conversation with Sakum gives the reader a more direct basis for interpreting her return. She distinguishes what her body can do in performance from what her heart feels about doing it (Tohari, 2009, p. 165). When she later tells Goder of her decision, the narrative presents her uncertainty alongside the maternal relationship she values (Tohari, 2009, pp. 167–168). Her return can accordingly be read as a decision reached through deliberation, with reasons and attachments that exceed the community's account of why she should dance. The decision also takes place within an arrangement in which others continue to organise and depend on her performance. By distributing knowledge across these scenes, the novel makes both aspects available to the reader. Its representation of agency turns on Srintil's ability to decide about particular requests and on the continuing influence of those who claim a stake in the role.

Refusal and the Terms of Work in *Rara Mendut*

In the available extract from *Rara Mendut*, the prospect of marriage to Wiraguna is presented through competing assessments of what the match would offer and what Mendut would have to concede. Ni Semangka invokes Wiraguna's wealth and standing while acknowledging the women's vulnerable position as people taken from elsewhere (Mangunwijaya, 2008,p. 119). As she sees it, the proposed marriage offers some security in circumstances neither woman can control. Mendut's reply distinguishes what can be taken from her by force from what she is willing to give. By contrasting body and heart, she names a limit to what coercion can secure. The dialogue makes that position legible alongside Ni Semangka's concern for her welfare. The two women recognise the risks of the situation and judge the acceptable response differently.

The recollection of Nyai Ajeng's marriage gives this exchange a wider context within the narrative. She is informed that she will marry a man chosen by her parents and is expected to regard the arrangement as fortunate (Mangunwijaya, 2008, p. 74). Her experience differs from Mendut's, but the two passages reveal a shared argument through which a match can be justified. Those who present marriage to a powerful man as an advantage may use that argument to give less weight to what the woman herself wants. Dwitaningsih et al. (2024) examine how language contributes to both objectification and resistance in *Rara Mendut*. Read together, these scenes show how appeals to security and social advancement can reinforce pressure to marry, even when they come from women who recognise the risks. Mendut's reply challenges the assumption that the benefits of the marriage are reason enough for her to agree.

The financial requirement that follows makes the cost of refusal concrete. When news of Wiraguna's decision reaches Ni Semangka, her concern turns to how Mendut will obtain the three *real* required each day (Mangunwijaya, 2008, p. 134). The demand shifts the immediate problem from the proposed marriage to the means of meeting a continuing payment. Its effect is disclosed through a woman who must reckon with what the amount requires in practice. Mendut pursues cigarette selling, but permission to do so comes with conditions. Wiraguna retains the payment requirement and specifies that a curtain must separate her from buyers (Mangunwijaya, 2008, pp. 152–153). The sequence distinguishes the initiative of finding a way to earn money from the authority to determine the terms on which that work can proceed.

The market scenes show how Mendut acts within those terms. With help from Ni Semangka and Genduk Duku, she sells cigarettes from behind the curtain and makes the screen part of a performance that attracts buyers and onlookers (Mangunwijaya, 2008, pp. 155–160). Her use of the curtain gives it a function in the encounter with the public beyond the separation Wiraguna prescribed. The episode also makes the cooperation behind her initiative visible. Ni Semangka, who earlier questioned her refusal, helps make the alternative practicable. That development complicates any assumption that disagreement about the best course of action prevents women from supporting one another in carrying it out. The resulting livelihood depends on their cooperation and remains subject to the payment and restriction.

Astriyani et al. (2025) examine representations of women in the novel through liberal feminism. The present reading specifies what Mendut's assertion of choice changes within

the extract. Her refusal and subsequent work redirect the immediate course of events and create a way of acting with others. Wiraguna retains the capacity to attach costs to that course of action. The narrative renders these effects visible through the progression from dialogue to the announcement of payment and then to the market. The evidence supports an account of the immediate conditions and consequences of refusal. Any judgement about Mendut's ultimate fate would require evidence beyond the extract analysed here.

Comparative Contribution to the Study of Women's Agency

The comparison identifies three ways in which claims over women's choices acquire force. Bendoro's household uses rank to determine the conditions of marriage, residence, and separation. In Dukuh Paruk, organisers exercise direct control over arrangements for the *ronggeng*, while villagers give those arrangements social weight through expectations about the role. Wiraguna's political and military standing allows him to impose a payment and regulate the work through which Mendut tries to meet it. The demands are justified on different grounds. Marital status promises social recognition, performance is valued for what it contributes to the community, and marriage to a powerful man is presented as a way to gain some security. As each narrative reveals the obligations and costs that accompany these promises and expectations, readers can reconsider the reasons given for the demand.

The article's main conceptual contribution is to distinguish a woman's capacity to act from her authority to decide the terms on which she acts and what follows. Relational accounts of autonomy direct attention to how choices are formed within dependencies (Mackenzie & Stoljar, 2000) , and feminist accounts of agency question the assumption that its significance can be measured by the visibility of opposition (Lundquist & Adams, 2023; Mahmood, 2005; Velji, 2024). The three readings bring this question into comparative literary analysis by tracing who can choose, who can enforce a decision, and what changes when a woman acts. In *Gadis Pantai*, the protagonist's protest makes her claim as a mother explicit, while the household retains the power to separate her from her daughter. Srintil can turn down a request or decide to return to dancing, even as others help define her role. Mendut refuses marriage and uses work to reshape her immediate circumstances, though Wiraguna continues to set the conditions under which she works. Together, these cases show how agency under constraint can take different forms. The question in each case is how far the woman's response changes the relationship in which she acts.

The interpretive contribution concerns how readers obtain evidence for that distinction. Feminist narrative theory connects the organisation of telling to the representation of gendered experience (Roof, 2018). Here, the comparison identifies three ways in which that organisation matters. In *Gadis Pantai*, the delayed disclosure of the limits of marital status gives the separation scene its force. In *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk*, the movement from Rasus's account of the ritual to scenes that disclose Srintil's deliberation changes the grounds for interpreting her participation. In *Rara Mendut*, dialogue gives different judgements of the marriage a hearing, while the market sequence shows initiative and continuing constraint within the same activity. These differences in narrative form shape what readers can infer about why each woman acts as she does, what options she has, and how much say she has in what happens next.

Following a demand from the reasons given for it to the consequences of a woman's response helps connect a close reading of a scene to the distribution of power in the wider narrative. This approach brings out similarities across scenes while attending to who exercises authority in each case and how readers come to see it. Marriage, performance, and refusal can overlap within a single work. Srintil refuses particular demands made of her as a performer, and Mendut uses performance to earn a living under conditions imposed after she refuses marriage. The findings apply to the selected sequences and the relationships they depict in their respective settings. Within that scope, the comparison shows that the significance of each woman's response depends both on what it changes in practice and on how the narrative reveals those changes.

Conclusion

In *Gadis Pantai*, *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk*, and *Rara Mendut*, a woman can decide how to respond even when others set the terms of her actions and retain considerable control over what follows. That power draws on household rank, communal expectations, or political and military standing. A protagonist may weigh her options before complying. Refusal can change the course of events while leaving others free to impose conditions. What each response achieves depends on which choices are open to the protagonist and how far her actions change what others can decide.

For feminist literary analysis, the comparison shows how narrative form makes the distinction between acting and deciding what follows visible. Narrative perspective shapes what readers learn about each woman's reasons, dialogue brings competing views of what she owes others into view, and the consequences revealed in each sequence show whose

decisions take effect. Read together, these features link a woman's response to the distribution of decision-making power within the story. The findings apply to the selected sequences. In *Rara Mendut*, they concern only the choices and consequences depicted in the available extract.

DECLARATIONS

Ethical considerations

Not applicable.

Use of artificial intelligence (AI)

The authors used ChatGPT (OpenAI) during manuscript preparation to assist with outlining, drafting, and language editing, as well as organising the comparative argument and checking bibliographic details. Its use therefore extended beyond grammatical improvement. The authors are responsible for verifying the textual evidence and references, evaluating all interpretations, and approving the final manuscript. ChatGPT is not listed as an author.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

Funding

This research did not receive any financial support.

REFERENCE

Abbott, H. P. (2021). *The Cambridge introduction to narrative* (3rd ed.). Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108913928

Astriyani, Salsabila, W. A., & Putri, I. R. (2025). Representation of women in the novel Rara Mendut by Y. B. Mangunwijaya: A study of liberal feminism. *Deiksis: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Indonesia*, *12*(1), 73–83. https://doi.org/10.33603/dj.v12i1.9961

Carly Rosyidi, B. N., & Puspita, A. R. (2024). Representasi gender dalam penggunaan bahasa: Analisis sosiolinguistik pada novel Gadis Pantai karya Pramoedya Ananta Toer. *BASINDO: Jurnal Kajian Bahasa, Sastra Indonesia, Dan Pembelajarannya*, *8*(2), 338–350. https://doi.org/10.17977/um007v8i22024p338-350

Dwitaningsih, O., Susanto, D., & Supana. (2024). Objektifikasi dan perlawanan perempuan dalam novel Rara Mendut karya Y. B. Mangunwijaya: Analisis wacana kritis Sara Mills. *Panalungtik*, *7*(1), 1–12. https://doi.org/10.55981/panalungtik.2024.5170

Felski, R. (2013). *Comparison: Theories, Approaches, Uses*. Johns Hopkins University Press. https://doi.org/10.1353/book.72090

Kramnick, J. (2023). *Criticism and Truth: On Method in Literary Studies*. University of Chicago Press.

Lanser, S. S. (2024). Trans-forming narratology. *Narrative*, *32*(2), 215–224. https://doi.org/10.1353/nar.2024.a926177

Lundquist, C. R., & Adams, S. L. (2023). A continuum of women's agency under misogyny. *Hypatia*, *38*(1), 105–113. https://doi.org/10.1017/hyp.2023.34

Mackenzie, C., & Stoljar, N. (2000). *Relational Autonomy* (C. Mackenzie & N. Stoljar, Eds.). Oxford University PressNew York, NY. https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780195123333.001.0001

Mahmood, S. (2005). *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject*. Princeton University Press.

Mangunwijaya, Y. B. (2008). *Rara Mendut: Sebuah Trilogi*. Gramedia Pustaka Utama.

Meiliana, S. (2026). Cultural violence: Feminist power analysis on Ronggeng performing art. *Research in Dance Education*, *27*(2), 223–243. https://doi.org/10.1080/14647893.2023.2258804

Ngo, V. H. (2026). Ethical narrative and moral choices in the Self-Reliance Literary Group (Tự Lực văn đoàn): Reconfiguring modern subjectivity in Vietnamese fiction of the 1930s. *Comparative Literature: East & West*, *10*(1), 62–78. https://doi.org/10.1080/25723618.2026.2654908

Nirmalawati, W., Wahyuningsih, T., Nurhayati, S., & Fauzan, A. (2026). Women between domestication and resistance: Housewifization in Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk and Bekisar Merah. *Journal of Language and Literature*, *26*(2), 445–455. https://doi.org/10.24071/joll.v26i2.708

Roof, J. (2018). The feminist foundations of narrative theory. In M. Garrett (Ed.), *The Cambridge companion to narrative theory* (pp. 72–86). Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108639149.007

Sears, L. J. (2013). *Situated testimonies: Dread and enchantment in an Indonesian literary archive*. University of Hawai'i Press. https://doi.org/10.21313/hawaii/9780824836832.001.0001

Tirosh, Y. (2024). Consent, multiculturalism, and exit: A contemporary critique of religious accommodation and the right to sex equality. *Political Theology*, *25*(6), 651–675. https://doi.org/10.1080/1462317X.2024.2310409

Toer, P. A. (2000). *Gadis Pantai*. Hasta Mitra.

Tohari, A. (2009). *Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk*. Gramedia Pustaka Utama.

Velji, M. (2024). From opposition to creativity: Saba Mahmood's decolonial critique of teleological feminist futures. *Hypatia*, *39*(4), 773–794. https://doi.org/10.1017/hyp.2023.119

Wardani, N. E., Suwandi, S., Ulya, C., Zulianto, S., & Setiyoningsih, T. (2023). Hegemonic masculinity in the novel Ronggeng Dukuh Paruk by Ahmad Tohari. *KEMBARA: Jurnal Keilmuan Bahasa, Sastra, Dan Pengajarannya*, *9*(2), 638–649. https://doi.org/10.22219/kembara.v9i2.28149

Windiyarti, D. (2017). Novel Gadis Pantai karya Pramoedya Ananta Toer: Objektivikasi perempuan oleh laki-laki. *Semiotika: Jurnal Ilmu Sastra Dan Linguistik*, *18*(1), 1–13. https://doi.org/10.19184/semiotika.v18i1.5180

Yulianeta, & Ismail, N. H. (2022). Representasi perempuan dalam novel-novel Pramoedya Ananta Toer. *Semiotika: Jurnal Ilmu Sastra Dan Linguistik*, *23*(2), 107–122. https://doi.org/10.19184/semiotika.v23i2.31472