



Sitti Nurbaya: Kasih Tak Sampai

Marah Rusli

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Marah Rusli adalah contoh sastrawan besar Indonesia yang benar-benar melampaui zamannya. Ia terus hidup, bersama keindahan cinta Sitti Nurbaya dan Samsulbahri, bersama kenangan dan kebencian orang-orang terhadap peringai Datuk Meringgih yang licik, akan tetapi sekaligus memesona.

Berkali-kali buku Sitti Nurbaya dibaca, berkali-kali pula ditemukan keindahan yang berbeda. Berkali-kali novel ini diperbincangkan, berkali-kali pula ditemukan misteri yang tak sama. Benarkah Samsulbahri adalah tokoh yang baik? Mengapa Datuk Meringgih yang digambarkan jahat pada akhir cerita menjadi patriot yang membela tanah air, dan kemudian wafat dengan darah membasahi ibu pertiwi? Siapakah sesungguhnya yang menjadi pahlawan?

Inilah novel tentang cinta yang indah, tentang patriotisme, dan tentang perjuangan nilai-nilai kemanusiaan yang selalu ada pada tiap zaman. Karena itulah, novel ini menjadi abadi.

Joni Ariadinata, redaktur Majalah *Horison*

Apabila kita membaca kembali novel *Sitti Nurbaya* karya Marah Rusli maka sangat boleh jadi kita akan menemukan makna-makna baru.

Maman S. Mahayana, Kritikus Sastra

Sitti Nurbaya: Kasih Tak Sampai Details

Date : Published 1965 by Balai Pustaka (first published 1922)

ISBN : 9794071676

Author : Marah Rusli

Format : Paperback 295 pages

Genre : Asian Literature, Indonesian Literature, Novels, Fiction, Romance, Classics, Literature

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Hasan says

Buku lama yang wow bangetlah. Baca pertama kali pas SMA, terus baca lagi beberapa kali setelah itu. Entah sekarang masih ada atau nggak jualannya di toko buku.

Kelly says

This review is going to have some spoilers, although nothing you wouldn't get from reading the introduction. That being said, the fact that this book is often described as the Indonesian Romeo & Juliet should give you some pretty serious clues about how the story turns out, so I'm probably not ruining a whole lot for you by discussing the conclusion here.

At a superficial level, I can see the comparison: Sitti Nurbaya is about a pair of star-crossed lovers who die untimely deaths and has probably inspired generations of ill-advised teenagers to find suicide romantic. However, I'm not sure Shakespeare would be flattered by the comparison. Sitti Nurbaya, for one thing, falls very squarely into the category of melodrama, with a villain more reminiscent of Much Ado About Nothing's Don John (or, let's be honest, Snidely Whiplash) than any character from R+J. Then, too, while Romeo and Juliet certainly can be read as adolescent wish-fulfillment in the everyone-will-be-so-sorry-when-I'm-dead variety, that's far from being the only valid interpretation (there's also, for instance, the theory that the play was intended not as a tragedy, but as a farce about stupid teenagers making lust-driven decisions, or my current personal favorite, the "Romeo is the Villain" interpretation). That's one of the things that makes Shakespeare great--you can read his plays so many different ways and find textual support for all sorts of crazy theories (I'm remembering a story I heard from one of my theater friends or relatives--I can't remember who told me, so if you happen to be reading this, speak up!--about an actress who was cast as Ophelia and then found out that she was pregnant. She was terrified to tell her director, thinking she'd be fired, but he was delighted--Ophelia is pregnant! Of course! It makes complete sense!). But Sitti Nurbaya does not have this flexibility; in fact, much of the subtext is actually just text, usually dialogue in the mouths of Rusli's main characters. Every theme of the book is hashed out in discussions, and there is really no way to read the plot except as pure unmitigated melodrama.

Here's the thing. For all my criticism, I have to be impressed by what Marah Rusli achieved with this book. He had an almost impossible brief: he was writing for Balai Pustaka, a publishing house devoted to spreading literature in "high" Malay that would compete with the wildly popular pulp literature written in "low" Malay. From the translator's introduction by George A. Fowler:

"Balai Pustaka had strict publishing criteria: no writing critical of Dutch rule, partial to a particular religion or portraying heterodox moral standards in anything but an unequivocally negative light would be accepted. Furthermore, writings had to be of a didactic nature. In regard to its Malay literary output, Balai Pustaka's editorial policies have been criticized for imposing a rigid uniformity of style... To some degree, this reflected the ideas about proper High Malay of the predominantly Minangkabau writers themselves or their counterparts on the Balai Pustaka editorial staff."

Within that rigid framework he managed to create a story that—despite its stilted dialogue and melodramatic

plot—was both revolutionary enough that it got him disowned by his father, and classic enough that it's still required reading in Indonesian high schools. There's extensive use of the classical Indonesian poetry forms *pantun* (quatrains of rhyming verse consisting of two parts that seem unrelated but contain some symbolic meaning—for example, "Pandan Island lies far out at sea/ its sight by Angsa Dua Isle conceals/ However broken the body may be/ Kindness is always the balm that heals.") and *syair* (four rhymed lines, more direct in meaning, usually with some sort of moral or explanation, and generally sung rather than recited).

And while not all of the author's ideas toward women read as feminist by current standards, many of his theses—his opposition to arranged marriage, his emphasis on the need for education for women, his rejection of tradition for tradition's sake ("If it's clear that a tradition is wrong," Nurbaya asks, "why isn't it just done away with?")—were extremely progressive at the time and still hold up pretty well today (and while it would be nice to think that society has moved on so much that all of Rusli's arguments would seem dated or at least unnecessary today, as per the introduction, "The issues of injustice and indignities suffered by women that this novel raised and which clashed so sharply with Minangkabau adat traditional law, continue to be debated to this day in West Sumatra"). The cultural influence of Sitti Nurbaya is clear in works ranging from the mid-century literary classic *This Earth of Mankind* to the shock lit/magical realism tour de force that is *Beauty Is a Wound*.

One final note, which is really not germane to any of the foregoing discussion, but was interesting enough that I wanted to include it: this book introduced me to the origins of the phrase "run amok." There is a scene early in the book where alarms begin to sound; "usually," the author explains, "it meant that someone had gone amok and was causing a disturbance." I never knew this was a phrase with a literal meaning, nor did I realize it was a word borrowed from Indonesia. According to Wikipedia (and I know this is lazy of me but I'm just not up for in-depth etymological research just at the moment), people (generally men) who ran amok were believed to be possessed by an evil tiger spirit that caused them to run around armed with a sword or kris and kill or injure everyone they came in contact with. Usually the episodes would end with the attacker being killed or committing suicide. Although this is considered a "culture-bound syndrome" it bears obvious similarities to modern mass shootings and vehicular killing sprees—which are far more common than running amok ever was in Indonesian or Malay culture. The only thing that has changed is the weapon, the justification, and, sadly, the frequency.

This review is also published on my blog, *Around the World in 2000 Books*.

Kana Haya says

this story is identical with arranged-marriage. however, the main idea isn't about it. however, it is siti nurbaya herself who accept datuk mariggi's proposal. so where the arrangement for the marriage, actually?

somehow, i dont like what siti nurbaya did by marrying datuk. but its a choice. and it makes my rate lose one star from "i really like it" to only "i like it"

Michiyo 'jia' Fujiwara says

Romeo and Julietnya Indonesia, Roman dan Tragedi kisah anak manusia bertempat di kota Padang tahun 1896, Sepasang remaja anak dari bangsawan Sam/Samsulbahri/Sjamsulbahri, 18 tahun anak dari Sutan

Mahmud Syah, seorang penghulu di Padang dan Nur/Sitti Nurbaya/Sitti Noerbaja, 15 tahun anak dari Baginda Sulaiman saudagar kaya, mereka berdua adalah tetangga sekaligus teman satu sekolah. Mereka mulai jatuh cinta, takdir memisahkan mereka, mereka bersatu kembali, takdir memisahkan mereka untuk selamanya (Nurbaya mati karena diracun), Samsulbahri mencoba bunuh diri sebanyak dan sekurang-kurangnya 4 kali tapi gagal (1. menembakkan pistol dikepala, meleset, 2. Gantung diri, tiang roboh, 3. Minum racun, gelas pecah tertembak musuh, 4. Terjun dari sungai dan tenggelam, ada seseorang yang menyelamatkannya) dan pada akhirnya Samsulbahri mati akibat luka dikepalanya karena duel dengan Datuk Meringgih dalam satu pertempuran karena masalah *Belasting* (Pajak mata pencaharian) di Padang, Samsulbahri berhasil membalas dendam, ia pun membunuh Datuk Meringgih dengan menembakkan pistol tepat didadanya, dan cerita berakhir.

Seperti halnya cerita roman klasik lainnya, Ada persamaan ketika pemeran antagonis mencoba mengakhiri hidup pemeran protagonis contohnya: ketika *Snow White* mati suri karena apel dari ibu tiri yang jahat, *Sleeping Beauty* tertidur 100 tahun karena kutukan jarum pintal dari Peri yang lupa diundang orangtuanya dan Sitti Nurbaya mati karena lemas beracun dari mantan suaminya. Perbedaannya, *Snow White* dan *Sleeping Beauty* pada akhirnya hidup lagi dan hidup berbahagia selamanya, sedang Sitti Nurbaya sebarangpun besar cinta yang diberikan oleh Samsulbahri tak akan mengubah kenyataan, ia tak akan pernah hidup kembali.

Robert says

Sebuah buku klasik paling populer dari kesusastraan lama Indonesia. Saya membacanya waktu kelas 1 SMA. Isi ceritanya sangat bagus sekali, meskipun terlihat perbedaan yang terlalu jelas antara karakter antagonis dengan protagonis. Datuk Meringgih digambarkan sebagai tokoh yang berperawakan buruk rupa, culas, dengki, mata keranjang, suka menghalalkan segala cara, mata duitan, pelit, tetapi juga merupakan saudagar kaya dengan kelakuannya yang kampung. Andai kepalanya sendiri bisa dijual mahal, barangkali ia akan melakukannya.

Klimaks cerita terjadi saat Pemerintah Belanda berniat mengadakan pajak *belasting* (pajak penghasilan) dari semua warga sebagai penghasilan negara dan juga untuk membangun daerah-daerah lain. Datuk Meringgih yang merasa bahwa kekayaannya akan tergembosi segera memprovokasi warga untuk menolak, bahkan menghubung-hubungkannya dengan penjajahan dan kekafiran Belanda. Akhirnya warga terpancing dan bangkit melakukan kerusuhan. Samsulbahri yang ditunjuk sebagai kapten pasukan Belanda, ditugaskan untuk memadamkan kerusuhan tersebut.

Di tengah-tengah kekacauan, Samsulbahri berhadapan dengan Datuk Meringgih, sosok pria tua yang telah merenggut semua impiannya bersama Siti Nurbaya. Di sanalah, duel maut antara keduanya pun tercipta. Akhir cerita berakhir gemilang, karena Datuk Meringgih harus menemui ajalnya. Tetapi Samsulbahri juga terus hidup dalam rasa frustasinya sendiri akibat kehilangan Siti Nurbaya. Akhirnya ia mati dalam kekecewaan dan dikuburkan di sebelah makam Siti Nurbaya.

Meskipun ini adalah novel fiktif, tetapi Siti Nurbaya yang populer telah menjadi legenda di daerah Sumatera Barat, sampai-sampai ada sebuah makam tua yang diberi nama, "Makam Siti Nurbaya". Sebagai anak Indonesia, rasanya Anda harus membaca salah satu sastra terbaik nasional ini!

Sekilas seperti: diajak kembali berkelana ke suasana "*Indonesia tempo doeloe*".

Willy Akhdes says

Boleh saya bilang sebagai masterpiece dari Marah Rusli dan tonggak sejarah penting dalam khazanah sastra Indonesia. Roman ini sebagai penanda lahir dan berkembangnya era Balai Pustaka. Sangat menggambarkan kondisi socio-politik pada masanya yang membuat kita sebagai pembaca di zaman modern sekarang merasakan kehidupan masyarakat Indonesia pada masa kolonial. Ditulis dengan sangat apik oleh Marah Rusli dengan gaya bahasa Indonesia lama dengan pengaruh Minang yang sangat kental, membuat saya betah berlama-lama larut dan tenggelam dalam alunan diksi dan metaforanya yang sangat indah.

Nurila says

~Sitti Nurbaya~

Oleh : Marah Roesli

Penerbit : Balai Pustaka

Penyandur : Ragdi F. Daye

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Dia si Nur, alias Sitti Nurbaya. Seorang gadis Padang yang berayahkan Baginda Sulaiman. Kekasih dari Samsul Bahri dan kemudian menikah dengan Datuk Maringgih.

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Pernikahan itu bukan salah ayah. Sungguh ada hal lain yang membuat Nurbaya harus menikah dengan Datuk Maringgih.

Padahal ia sudah berjanji kepada Samsul Bahri untuk menjadi istri dunia dan akhiratnya. Bagaimana bisa ia menikah dengan orang yang tak dicintainya? Bagaimana nasib Sam yang sedang merantau di Jakarta?

.

Perpisahannya itu adalah awal mula kehidupan Nur yang diuji dengan silih berganti. Ini memang kisah Nur dan Sam, juga tentang adat-adat pada jaman itu. Kisah keduanya hingga campur tangan Datuk Maringgih yang tiada henti-hentinya.

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Mungkin raga seseorang bisa terpisahkan, tapi hati, cinta yang tak pernah sampai akan tetap terjaga dalam sebuah kesetiaan.

Suka. Tidak bisa berkata-kata. Yang bisa ku dapatkan adalah kenyataan bahwa Nurbaya bukanlah dipaksa dijodohkan oleh ayahnya.

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Kok bisa? Jawabannya ada di dalam novelnya yaa gamau spoiler wkwk

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Banyak pantun-pantun indah, berasakan dari hati yang terdalam.

Pantun-pantun perpisahan yang menunjukkan kesedihan benar-benar terasa.

.

Meski aku bacanya novel sanduran, tapi apa yang ada di dalamnya tidak berbeda dari novel aslinya. Hanya saja bahasa yang digunakan lebih mudah dicerna dan mudah dipahami tanpa meninggalkan kesan yang selama ini sudah tertanam.

Marchel says

It tells about the people of minang and all their tradition. Especially, a unique and unmoral behaviour to force a father's will to his daughter to marry someone else. It's because the father had a lot of debt to that person.

cindy says

Di pelajaran Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia, buku ini bagai buku wajib yang harus dihafalkan. Benar, DIHAFALKAN judulnya, nama pengarangnya, temanya, dll, dll. Tapi jarang sekali ada guru bahasa yang mewajibkan murid-muridnya untuk benar-benar membacanya, halaman demi halaman. Jadi, sampai sekarang, kalau ada anak SMA --sekarang sudah gak ada ya, sudah ganti SMU??-- yang ditanyai apa isi buku ini, saya jamin 99% akan menjawab kawin paksa, titik.

Padahal buku ini menuliskan banyak sekali hal selain itu. Rasa kebangsaan, menjunjung tinggi adat dan kehormatan, monogami vs poligami (yes, kamu gak salah baca!), kesulitan pernikahan di usia muda bagi wanita, keberanian, tanggung jawab, dan seribu satu hal lain. Sayang sekali, kalau anak-anak bangsa sampai melewatkan buku yang satu ini.

NB: Siti Nurbaya tidak pernah dipaksa untuk menikah oleh sang Ayah....

Missy J says

Often considered as the "Indonesian Romeo & Juliet", I've finally tackled this Indonesian classic. Set in Western Sumatra (Padang) among the matrilineal Minangkabau people, this was very different from the usual Indonesian stories set in Java and Bali. I didn't have any problems with the language, but there were several outdated words used here and there. And I really enjoyed the proverbs, they were beautiful and scattered all over the novel.

Samsulbahri and Sitti Nurbaya are the Romeo and Juliet of this story. They grew up together and Samsulbahri wanted to marry Sitti Nurbaya after he finished his doctor studies in Jakarta. While Sitti Nurbaya was waiting for him, a series of malicious attacks strike her father's business until he is forced to declare bankruptcy. In order to avoid her father's imprisonment, Sitti Nurbaya offers herself to become the wife of the evil and greedy Datuk Meringgih. Samsulbahri is heartbroken when he hears of their marriage, but his love for her doesn't lessen. The tragedy is about to begin.

There are several topics discussed in this novel, which I found very interesting. First of all, the novel is set among the Minang people, who are still considered the world's largest matrilineal society today. At the same time, however, the majority of Minang people are also Muslim. In this novel, this contradiction and the conflicts that arise between two opposing traditions are highlighted. Women still need to submit themselves to their husbands and suffer when the husband decides to take in another wife. In fact, men are encouraged by their families to marry multiple times, because the female's family has to pay a dowry for the man. There

is a lot of discussion in this novel regarding gender relations and roles. Another factor which increased the tragedy of the story is the Muslim's fatalistic attitude towards life. Really depressing stuff. Finally, the novel also discusses the root of all evil - greed. At that time, Padang had a treaty with the Dutch, which was supposed to save them from being colonized. However, towards the end of the novel, it becomes clear that the Dutch were set on imposing taxes throughout the entire Indonesian archipelago, including Padang.

There are a few things that I didn't like about the novel. Maybe it's because of the language, but I didn't enjoy the "poetic dialogue" that occurred between Sitti Nurbaya and Samsulbahri. But that's my own fault. There is a major twist towards the end, which was a bit unbelievable, but the author did manage to make a point why the story went that way. A lot of the drama feels very exaggerated, but I've learned that in the Indonesian language things are just expressed that way, even if it sounds redundant in English.

Overall, I'm really happy to have finally finished this novel. One of my reading goal for this year was to start reading Indonesian books and this is a really big achievement.

Ira Nadhirah says

First of all, kenapa buku ni judul dia letak nama Sitti Nurbaya? Sebab aku rasa Samsu punya kasih lagi tak sampai. Mungkin sebab adat perempuan dipaksa kahwin oleh ibubapa kot. Cerita sedih sepanjang hayat. Cuma part gembira satu malam sebelum Samsu sambung belajar di Jakarta. First time aku baca cerita yang hero dia tak ada roh spiritual yang kuat. Hero selalunya digambarkan sebagai watak yang takkan terkalahkan dengan apa pun. Tapi buku ini, nyatanya beda ya. Heronya pingin mati aja. Faham je perasaan rasa boleh tak nak mati sekarang sebab patah hati. Tapi tu lah, sebenarnya banyak je perkara-perkara terindah terselit dalam setiap duka. Contohnya, jatuh cinta dengan orang yang kita tahu dari awal lagi orang yang salah. Kan?

ice says

Cukup menarik untuk dibaca...
agar kita nggak asal bilang...'kayak zaman Siti Nurbaya ajaaaaaaa'

Syeirli mutyarani says

very good

Hasanuddin says

Putus cinta tidak harus mengorbankan segalanya, termasuk bangsanya sendiri...

Kunthi Hastorini says

suka di bagian marah rusli membicarakan tentang pernikahan dan perempuan di awal-awal cerita, namun di akhir-akhir cerita terasa ada inkonsistensi, yaitu pembagian peran wanita dan pria yang menjadi kaku, tidak secair di awal cerita.
