



## STRUCTURAL GENETIC INTERPRETATION OF THE NOVEL "NEW CATATAN HATI SEORANG ISTRI" BY ASMA NADIA

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### ABSTRACT

This study explores the genetic structure in Asma Nadia's novel "New Catatan Hati Seorang Istri", focusing on the relationship between the elements that construct the text and the social context that underlies the author's creative process and the readers' reception. This study focuses on the representation of human facts in the story and how the author's worldview is articulated through themes, characters, plot, and other narrative constructions. Thus, the analysis is conducted to reveal the interconnection between the intrinsic structure of the novel and the social reality that is presented and responded to by readers. The research method is qualitative-descriptive, with a text analysis approach assisted by structural and sociocultural theoretical frameworks. The results show that the main theme of the novel focuses on women's struggles in facing domestic dynamics and conflicts. Female characters are portrayed as patient, strong, and religious individuals. The mixed plot, domestic setting, and emotional style of language reinforce the moral message of the story. Analysis of the author's worldview reveals a deep empathy for women's inner struggles, while readers perceive the social reality of the emotional burden, injustice, and determination of a wife in maintaining family unity.

**Keywords:** *Catatan Hati Seorang Istri, genetic structure, intrinsic elements, worldview*

### ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengkaji struktur genetik dalam novel *New Catatan Hati Seorang Istri* karya Asma Nadia, dengan fokus pada hubungan antara unsur-unsur yang membentuk teks dan konteks sosial yang mendasari proses kreatif penulis serta penerimaan pembaca. Penelitian ini berfokus pada representasi fakta-fakta manusia dalam cerita dan bagaimana pandangan dunia penulis diungkapkan melalui tema, karakter, alur cerita, dan konstruksi naratif lainnya. Analisis dilakukan untuk mengungkap hubungan timbal balik antara struktur intrinsik novel dan realitas sosial yang disajikan dan direspons oleh pembaca. Metode penelitian bersifat kualitatif-deskriptif, dengan pendekatan analisis teks yang didukung oleh kerangka teoritis struktural dan sosiokultural. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa tema utama novel berfokus pada perjuangan perempuan dalam menghadapi dinamika dan konflik domestik. Karakter perempuan digambarkan sebagai individu yang sabar, kuat, dan religius. Alur cerita yang campuran, setting domestik, dan gaya bahasa yang emosional memperkuat pesan moral cerita. Analisis pandangan dunia penulis mengungkapkan empati yang mendalam terhadap perjuangan batin perempuan, sementara pembaca memahami realitas sosial beban emosional, ketidakadilan, dan keteguhan hati seorang istri dalam mempertahankan keutuhan keluarga.

**Kata kunci :** *Catatan Hati Seorang Istri, Struktur Genetik, Unsur Intrinsik, Pandangan*

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## INTRODUCTION

Literary works are produced as a reaction to various social phenomena (Rosenberg & Turner, 2017). Literature is produced as a reaction to the author's experiences, so it is often associated with the author's life. The existence of literary works in the development of human civilization is very common, and literature is even accepted as one of the realities of human cultural development. One reason why literature is said to be a reality of human cultural development is because literature can be accepted conditionally in line with cultural development. Another reason why literature is said to be a reality of human cultural development is because literature cannot be separated from things related to the author's background (Tsvetkova et al., 2021).

Authors construct their imaginary ideas, which are naturally laden with meaning (Robinson & Rundell, 2016). For authors, literature is expressed using language as the primary tool to support communication between readers and authors. Communication between authors and readers will run smoothly if authors are able to utilize linguistic symbols in codes that can be interpreted by readers. Readers will grasp the meaning of every text written by the author based on their understanding and knowledge of the language codes used by the author. The role of language in a literary work is very important because it functions as the main medium for expressing imagination (Hasan, 2024). Thus, the language codes used by the author become a bridge for effective communication between readers and authors.

Based on its general function, language is the most appropriate means used to support the achievement of communication. In literary works, language is used by an author to convey messages and inner experiences to readers (Freeman, 2019). This is different from the language used in literary works, which is greatly influenced by the author's capacity. In fact, the language used by authors sometimes reflects their professions and activities. Historically, literature has always been synonymous with diction and the choice of beautiful words used by authors to enchant and give pleasure to every reader of their literary works (Deane, 2020). If we interpret the function of the use of beautiful words in a literary work, it is solely about the author's desire.

Novels, for example, are created by authors using distinctive language that appears different from other works such as scientific articles, research reports, laboratory reports, and others. In a novel, the language used by the author can create certain effects on readers, including the use of language variants that impact readers' emotions and inner sensitivity (Koopman, 2016). Through the effects and variants of distinctive language use, readers will be able to understand various meanings of the text, including things related to the construction of the author's and reader's lives. In relation to cultural dimensions and social aspects, for example, authors and readers cannot be separated from each other. Readers will interpret a literary work in various dimensions, such as things that surround the reader's life. It may be that readers of literature such as novels will be

associated with the inner experiences of the reader. Boerdieu 2012 argues that in order for literature to be fully understood, it must be linked to a system of social relations.

As a form of aesthetics, novels are reading materials that can provide readers with a wealth of useful information. Readers will gain satisfaction and enjoy the aesthetic effect, which can also be used as material for reflection on the readers' and authors' views of the world and the social conditions that surround them (Chou et al., 2016). When read and studied, novels provide readers with a unique sense of satisfaction. It may be that not every reader is able to fully understand the message contained in a novel, but a novel may nevertheless sensitize its readers to its ability to connect with the realities of their lives. Novels give rise to the perspectives of readers and authors because they cannot be separated from the social conditions surrounding their authors. .

This study specifically focuses on the analysis of the novel *New Catatan Hati Seorang Istri* by Asma Nadia, employing a genetic structuralism approach. This approach is selected because it enables an exploration of the relationships between the author's human experiences, the collective values influencing her creative process, and the worldview embedded within the novel. Therefore, the research examines the narrative not merely as a linguistic product but also as a reflection of the author's perspective within the literary structure. The analysis is directed toward the main aspects of genetic structuralism, particularly the interplay between the reader's worldview and the author's worldview.

Using the genetic structuralism perspective, the study treats *New Catatan Hati Seorang Istri* as a totality constructed from interconnected intrinsic elements, including plot, characters, theme, setting, and point of view. The research focuses on two primary objectives: first, to identify and describe the intrinsic elements that constitute the novel's structure, and second, to reveal Asma Nadia's worldview as manifested through narrative patterns, conflicts, and the representation of values within the story. At the end, the study provides a comprehensive understanding of the novel's structural integration and its relation to the author's vision. The findings are expected to offer theoretical and practical contributions, serving as a reference for the application of genetic structuralism, as a comparative resource in literary studies, and as a tool for readers to better understand the structural and value-laden dimensions of *New Catatan Hati Seorang Istri*.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **a. Genetic Structural**

Lucien Goldmann introduced the theory of genetic structuralism as one of the theories that can be used in literary analysis by linking it to the social structure and historical context that underlies the birth of a literary work. Lucien Goldmann views a literary work as being born from the social practices that surround an author (Fuchs, 2018). Writers cannot escape their social lives, so their imagination can be completely influenced by their daily living conditions. In a novel, for example, authors tend to present characters that are constructed from real experiences and poured into their imaginary ideas. Authors seem to want to express various messages in their literature by presenting social facts that are played out by the characters they present (Potter et al., 2023).

Genetic structure was coined by Lucien Goldmann to explore literary works through their intrinsic structures, such as themes, plots, characters, and stylistic elements (Irmayani et al., 2021). This view is not without reason. For Lucien Goldmann, it is through intrinsic elements that a literary critic can understand the meaning of a literary work. Goldmann realized that a literary work can only be understood if its structure can be explored and linked to the historical and social background of the author. From this perspective, literary works cannot be separated from the environment in which they are produced and the social conditions of the author. Literary works have a complete structure created by their authors, so that in order to capture the meaning of this complete structure, it is necessary to read beyond the dimensions of the structure itself.

A relevant study was conducted by the titled "*Analisis Strukturalisme Genetik Novel Rindu Yang Membawamu Pulang Karya Ario Sasongko*". They employed Lucien Goldmann's perspective to explore how the novel reflects "human experiences, collective subjects, and worldview" (Chairunisa, Sulistyowati, & Dahlan, 2022). In this study, the author's worldview is depicted through the representation of discrimination against the Chinese community and the efforts of the character Ling as part of the community's struggle to advance their nation (Chairunisa et al., 2022). Thus, the use of a genetic structuralism approach in their research demonstrates how a literary text functions not only as an individual narrative but also as a reflection of social conditions, collective identity, and the author's ideology a perspective that is highly relevant for the genetic structural analysis of other novels, including the one examined in this study.

Literary research must involve theories that are capable of accommodating the emergence of a study without encountering any fundamental limitations (Jannah & Tasnimah, 2023). In genetic structuralism, Goldmann combines the structural approach with the genetic approach. Structuralism can involve the building blocks of literature, while the genetic aspect views literary works from the historical and social processes that surround them. Genetically, literature is born from portraits of humans in their various routines and creative endeavors. Humans are steeped in cultural practices that accompany the various phases of their lives (Jensen Arnett, 2016). Humans experience shifts in their lives, perspectives, and lifestyles that can be influenced by various factors, including shifts in time and culture. Humans tend to respect and welcome cultural shifts without abandoning the culture they were born into.

A proper theory will help researchers study literature without making scientific mistakes. When looking at existing literary theories, Lucien Goldmann's genetic structuralism has its own advantages over other theories. Genetic structuralism tries to reveal the structure of literature and the historical and social dimensions surrounding the author (Utami & Sayuti, 2019). Stylistic theory, for example, focuses on how literary works are studied from a semantic perspective and the use of language as a whole. According to Atmazaki, the stylistic approach uses linguistics as the basis for study. In stylistic studies, the main focus is on the effect of the language used by the author in their literature. According to Sujiman, stylistics is a science used to study the rules of language found in literature used by authors to convey their messages.

## **b. Humanities and Genetic Structural Facts**

In genetic structural theory, human facts are understood as the result of human group activities or behavior, both verbal and physical, which are sought to be understood by science (Abbas et al., 2023). Human facts can take the form of certain social activities of a community, whether in the form of works of art or things related to human creativity. In its various forms, human facts can in principle be divided into two types, namely individual facts and social facts. Social facts play a role in the history of human life, while individual facts do not. The former are only the result of individual behavior, such as inherited physical traits and personal actions. Goldmann argues that every human fact is a meaningful structure built within a human phenomenon (Kobis, 2019). For Faruk, human facts have a certain structure. Therefore, understanding human facts must take into account their structure and meaning. Human facts can be said to have meaning because they are responses from collective or individual subjects.

Connected to Piaget's psychological theory, Lucien Goldmann views the tendency toward the above human facts as natural behavior within a community. As Piaget argues, humans and their environment are always in a process of reciprocal structuring that is both contradictory and complementary (García, 2018). These two processes are assimilation and accommodation. Under certain conditions, humans always try to assimilate their surroundings into their minds and ideas, which are implemented through actions. However, these efforts and implementations are not always successful because they are faced with various specific conditions. Humans as subjects only have ideas, but social structures greatly influence the life processes that are built in their lives.

The existence of individuals in a community gives rise to a process of equilibrium, transforming their social and physical environment and creating a process of structuration. Society as a whole, or individuals within it, as portrayed by the author in a work of literature, become part of the structure of that work. The author realizes that only by portraying the role of the community can the message he wishes to convey to the reader be actualized. At this level, a structuration process is established. It is in this structuration process that a literary work becomes a fact of humanity, as a result of human cultural activity. This process is also the genesis of the structure of the literary work. Literary products must be understood as reactions to various human phenomena that an author recounts imaginatively. This is why literature is always synonymous with the construction of human life.

## **c. Literary Works as a Reflection of Society**

Literary works are not merely products of individual imagination but often serve as reflections of society. They portray social experiences, values, and norms within the communities in which they are created. As Soekito (2004) asserts, literature functions as a portrait of society, with authors shaping their imagination based on social experiences. Similarly, Atar Semi (1989) argues that literature allows readers to understand human life and emotions more deeply, while Tang (2008) emphasizes that literature emerges from the author's creativity and their response to life phenomena. In a more recent study, literature has been described as "a mirror reflecting

society," capturing values, norms, and cultural identity within social contexts (Aulia, 2023). These perspectives collectively highlight that literary works are intricately connected to social realities, making them relevant objects of sociological and cultural analysis.

In addition, literature not only reflects society but also contributes to shaping social consciousness and cultural understanding. Through literary texts, readers can observe political, economic, and social realities and interpret the dynamics between individuals and their surroundings (Atar Semi, 1989). Chairunisa, Sulistyowati, and Dahlan (2022) demonstrate this in their analysis of the novel *Rindu Yang Membawamu Pulang*, showing that the narrative conveys the author's worldview through social experiences, collective values, and the representation of discrimination and societal struggles. Contemporary studies further support this view, arguing that literary works play an important role in fostering cultural identity, raising social awareness, and engaging with contemporary societal issues (Wahyuni et al., 2024; Mahardika et al., 2025).

Novels, in particular, are closely tied to the social conditions of their settings, revealing the life of society during specific historical periods and often conveying critical messages regarding social inequality, injustice, or cultural conflicts. Tang (2008) underscores that literature is a social product arising from the interplay between the author's creativity and their response to life phenomena. Similarly, Lagonah, Baga, and Usu (2023) find that novels can mirror social hierarchies and human behavior, providing readers with insights into societal values and norms. Through the study of characters, narrative structures, and thematic elements, novels serve as both artistic and sociological mediums, capable of reflecting, critiquing, and influencing the social realities of their time.

#### **d. Novel as Literary Works**

A novel is a long prose narrative that imaginatively represents human experience through a connected sequence of events, involving complex characters, multiple settings, and intertwined themes. Modern scholarship emphasizes that novels function as cohesive systems, integrating plot, character, and setting into a unified whole to reflect the complexity of human life and society (Maldonado, 2021). Literature studies continue to frame novels as social and cultural mirrors, capable of depicting moral, political, and psychological dimensions of human experience (Aulia, 2023; Lagonah, Baga, & Usu, 2023). These characteristics highlight the novel's capacity not only as an artistic creation but also as a tool for social observation, enabling readers to interpret and engage with the realities of their world.

In addition, novels are distinguished by their stylistic language and structural organization. The use of distinctive narrative language allows authors to create immersive atmospheres, nuanced characters, and compelling plots, fostering emotional engagement and interpretive depth (Wahyuni et al., 2024). A well-structured novel with a clear beginning, development, climax, and resolution ensures that the thematic messages, conflicts, and character development are logically and meaningfully conveyed (Mahardika et al., 2025). This structural and stylistic complexity, combined with imaginative storytelling, allows novels to serve as both artistic and sociological

instruments, offering insight into human behavior, social relations, and cultural values (Stanton, 2020; Tang, 2008)

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This study employs a qualitative descriptive research design to systematically examine the novel *New Catatan Hati Seorang Istri* by Asma Nadia, published in 2014 and comprising 300 pages, using a genetic structuralism approach. The research design follows the principles of qualitative descriptive methods, which involve collecting, processing, reducing, analyzing, and presenting data objectively in accordance with the realities depicted in the text. The study begins by analyzing the novel's structure to identify the interconnections among its elements, ensuring a cohesive and holistic understanding, and then investigates intrinsic elements, human facts, and the author's worldview, linking the unity of literary components to the genetic structure.

Specifically, the research involves several steps. The first step is identifying human facts, understood as expressions of human activity in response to socio-cultural conditions, by marking events, character behaviors, and themes that illustrate how individuals confront life realities. Next, the collective subject is determined, tracing the social groups that form the basis of the author's consciousness and mapping their historical and social context. The worldview is then analyzed, defined as the mental structures, values, and collective vision lived by the collective subject and articulated by the author, by examining recurring ideas such as justice, oppression, morality, freedom, and humanity to capture how the work projects social responses to reality. Finally, structural coherence is examined to ensure that the relationships between literary elements (characters, plot, conflict, theme) and the worldview are consistent and form a unified totality, allowing the text to be interpreted as a logically interconnected system rather than isolated components.

Data for this study consist of all genetic aspects found in the novel, collected primarily through library-based documentation, including repeated readings of the text, noting relevant sections, and compiling story elements that reflect intrinsic and social aspects. The analysis involves selecting pertinent quotes, examining genetic aspects, linking them to the research focus, and formulating the findings into descriptive results supported by textual evidence. This methodological approach provides a comprehensive understanding of how the novel's structure, characters, plot, and themes collectively reflect both the author's worldview and the social realities represented within the narrative.

## **FINDING**

Capturing the relationship between literary works and their origins, including the author's biography, social and cultural background, and ideology, it is necessary to examine the intrinsic elements consisting of themes, characters, plot, setting, style, and point of view in Asma Nadia's novel *New Catatan Hati Seorang Istri*.

### a. Theme

The theme related to the main idea or message that the author wants to convey through the story in the novel *New Catatan Hati Seorang Istri* by Asma Nadia is the struggle of a wife in facing various phenomena of domestic life that she encounters. A wife faces domestic violence, her husband's infidelity, and how a woman seeks solutions to maintain her household. In the novel *New Catatan Hati Seorang Istri*, we find themes about a woman's loyalty and love in maintaining the harmony of her household and how a woman fights for her children. The following are findings relevant to the theme: The figure of women as wives who are strongly committed to building their households is reflected in the data below:

*\*Sanggupkah dia, dalam kecewa, dalam kemarahan, dalam kesedihan, tetap memainkan peran sebaik mungkin sebagai ibu? Tetap bermain, tetap berjuang agar batin anak-anak sehat agar mereka tumbuh dalam atmosfer yang utuh sekalipun compang-camping?*  
(Asma Nadia: 4)

The above data excerpt reflects how a mother struggles for her children and her household in the face of various challenges. Disappointment is not an obstacle for a mother in pursuing her household goals. In order to prevent her children's mental health and character from being negatively affected, a mother strives to create positive conditions for her children. Furthermore, data relevant to the theme is quoted on page 9 of the novel *New Catatan Hati Seorang Istri* by Asma Nadia.

*Lalu apakah mereka dijodohkan, sehingga pernikahan yang terjadi memang di luar kehendak suami? Itukah yang mendorongnya bersikap kasar. Mungkinkah itu caranya menyalahkan istri yang menjadi penyebab dia tidak bisa menikah dengan perempuan yang benar-benar dicintainya?*  
(Asma Nadia: 9)

The data excerpt on page 9 confirms the theme of the novel *New Catatan Hati Seorang Istri* (A Wife's New Diary) about perseverance and patience in facing a husband's abusive behavior. Abusive behavior can be interpreted as domestic violence as experienced by a housewife in the story in the novel. A wife is cornered by her husband's selfishness, who blames her for the various problems he faces. The following data is relevant to the theme of this novel:

*Sementara dengan hati suram, bagaimana saya bisa memaksimalkan merawat anak-anak dan suami? Belum lagi mengerjakan order-order ilustrasi yang sering datang tiba-tiba?* (Asma Nadia: 16)

The data cited on page 16 of the novel *New Catatan Hati Seorang Istri* (New Notes from a Wife's Heart) reinforces the novel's theme of a wife's determination and the enormous struggle she must endure to maintain her household.



## **b. Actor**

In addition to female characters, this novel also features male characters who play the role of husbands. Husbands generally become the center of conflict, whether through acts of infidelity, lack of responsibility, emotional immaturity, or authoritarian attitudes. Husbands in novels are not depicted as single characters, but as representations of various types of men in real life, each with their own weaknesses and shortcomings. The characters in the story and their traits. The main character is a wife, portrayed as steadfast, patient, and faithful.

Because this novel is a collection of real stories sent to Asma Nadia, each story features characters with different names, some of whom have had their identities disguised. These characters are typically portrayed as women struggling to maintain the integrity of their families amid complex issues such as infidelity, polygamy, domestic violence, and crises of trust. In general, they are depicted as patient wives who try to remain strong, but who also experience deep inner conflict.

In addition to female characters, this novel also features male characters who play the role of husbands. Husbands generally become the center of conflict, whether through acts of infidelity, lack of responsibility, emotional immaturity, or authoritarian attitudes. Husbands in novels are not portrayed as single characters, but as representations of various types of men in real life, each with their own weaknesses and shortcomings. Asma Nadia's novel *New Catatan Hati Seorang Istri* raises various domestic issues experienced by women. Through the stories presented, this novel depicts the reality of married life, which is not always harmonious. Various issues such as infidelity, the husband's desire for polygamy, and difficulties in having or raising children are part of the dynamics that the female characters in the novel must face.

Overall, this novel centers on the inner journey of women in facing the complexities of marriage and the dynamics of family life. Issues such as infidelity, polygamy, and the challenges of raising children become points of concern that evoke the reader's empathy, while also revealing the psychological depth of the characters who struggle to remain strong and sincere in their family lives. This novel not only portrays sadness, but also emphasizes that fortitude and sincerity are an important part of a wife's journey.

## **c. Plot**

The plot of the novel *New Catatan Hati Seorang Istri* is a collection of stories that record the various experiences and inner struggles of women in their married lives. Through a series of stories drawn from the outpourings of wives' hearts, Asma Nadia presents a portrait of married life that is far from ideal. These stories question the meaning of love, loyalty, and faith when marriage is tested by difficult and often painful conflicts.

This novel covers various problems faced by a wife: from a husband who strays to another woman, the threat of polygamy, physical and psychological abuse, lack of attention, to issues of financial support and faith. Through these situations, readers are invited to witness a woman's struggle to remain steadfast in maintaining her marriage, even though she often finds herself on

the brink of despair. The presence of stories about a husband who converts to Islam and tries to strengthen his faith, as well as the story of a woman who becomes a second wife, adds a new dimension to understanding the complexity of married life.

Although full of pain, the stories presented do not only depict suffering. This novel also presents stories of loyalty, sincere love, and the resilience of husbands and wives who are able to endure until the end of their lives. Through this combination of sorrow and hope, *New Catatan Hati Seorang Istri* emphasizes that maintaining a marriage requires fortitude, patience, and strong will from both parties. This novel not only conveys the emotional experiences of wives, but also invites readers to reflect on the essence of struggle, sincerity, and the power of love in a sacred bond.

## **b. Setting**

The setting of the novel *New Catatan Hati Seorang Istri* is built through descriptions of domestic spaces and social environments that represent married life. The setting in the novel centers on the household as the main space for conflict, emotional exchanges, and the dynamics of the husband-wife relationship. In addition, the story also takes place within the extended family and the surrounding community, which play an important role in providing social pressure, advice, or support to the characters. The time setting is modern and relevant to contemporary life, marked by events that depict the journey of marriage from its harmonious beginnings to the emergence of conflict. The narrative, which makes use of flashbacks, shows that time in the novel does not run linearly, but rather follows the characters' reflections.

Meanwhile, the social setting is the most prominent element in this novel. The stories presented reflect the religious and cultural values of Indonesian society, which emphasize patience, loyalty, sincerity, and family honor as guidelines for life. The social relationship between husband and wife is depicted quite realistically, reflecting a society that is still influenced by patriarchy, so that women often face social demands to be more patient and submissive. Various social problems such as infidelity, domestic violence, lack of communication, and pressure from family or society contribute to a complex and tense social setting. The atmosphere created in the novel is predominantly emotional, ranging from sadness, disappointment, and anxiety to the emergence of fortitude and religious hope, which shows the inner journey of the characters in facing life's trials.

## **c. Language Style and Perspective**

The style of language used by Asma Nadia in her novel *New Catatan Hati Seorang Istri* (*New Notes from a Wife's Heart*) shows distinctive characteristics that reflect the consistency of her writing on Islamic themes and family life. In general, the language used is simple, communicative, and easy to understand by various readers. The simplicity of the diction does not diminish the depth of meaning, but rather strengthens the emotional connection between the reader and the main

character, because the choice of words used is close to the daily experiences of Indonesian society. This is reflected in the following excerpt:

*Sanggupkah dia, dalam kecewa, dalam kemarahan, dalam kesedihan, tetap memainkan peran sebaik mungkin sebagai ibu? Tetap bermain, tetap berjuang agar batin anak-anak sehat agar mereka tumbuh dalam atmosfer yang utuh sekalipun compang-camping? (AN: 4)*

The rhetorical device in the above data is marked by the question word *sanggupkah* (can) explicitly in the first sentence and implicitly in the second sentence, but it is understood that the second sentence is also a question that does not require an answer, merely serving to emphasize the point. A rhetorical device is a question whose answer is contained within the question itself. Its purpose is to emphasize the issue being discussed in order to convince or to satirize.

In addition, this novel utilizes a religiously nuanced style of language. Asma Nadia often inserts Islamic teachings, prayers, and spiritual reflections that are an integral part of the main character's inner journey. The presence of these religious elements not only serves as a thematic backdrop, but also enriches the narrative structure by providing a moral and ethical foundation for the conflicts presented in the story. This shows the author's tendency to link family dynamics with values of faith.

The reflective narrative style is also prominent. The main character often expresses self-reflection, inner struggles, and moral evaluations of the events she experiences. This form of reflection is emphasized through the use of the first-person point of view, resulting in an intimate, subjective, and emotional style of language. Through this approach, readers are invited to deeply understand the character's internal processes. In addition, Asma Nadia uses various types of figures of speech to reinforce the emotional nuances in the novel. The use of metaphors, personification, hyperbole, and repetition is evident in the depiction of feelings and other dramatic situations. These figures of speech serve to emphasize the intensity of the conflict and enrich the narrative expression. Overall, Asma Nadia's style in *New Catatan Hati Seorang Istri* combines simple diction, religious nuances, and emotional power to effectively and touchingly convey moral messages. This is reflected in the use of metaphor in the following excerpt:

*Malah pipi cucunya -suamiku sang manager keuangan di sebuah perusahaan multinasional itu- dicubitnya gemas, membuat ekspresi es batu lelaki itu mencair. (AN: 89)*

The reflective narrative style is also prominent. The main characters often express self-reflection, inner conflict, and moral judgments about the events they experience. This form of reflection is emphasized through the use of the first-person point of view, resulting in an intimate, subjective, and emotional style of language. Through this approach, readers are invited to deeply understand the characters' inner processes. In addition, Asma Nadia uses various types of figurative language to reinforce the emotional nuances in the novel. The use of metaphors, personification, hyperbole, and repetition is evident in the depiction of feelings and other dramatic situations. These

figures of speech serve to highlight the intensity of the conflict and enrich the narrative expression. Overall, Asma Nadia's writing style in *New Catatan Hati Seorang Istri* combines simple word choices, religious nuances, and emotional power to convey moral messages effectively and movingly. This is reflected in the use of metaphors in the following excerpt:

*Bagi lima orang anaknya, ibu adalah batu karang kokoh.*  
(AN: 216)

In the data above, the use of the term "solid rock" to describe a mother of five children in the data above who is mentally strong in carrying out her responsibilities as a mother in raising her five children. The strength and greatness of this mother is similar to a solid rock on the beach, which classifies the data as a metaphor.

*Sehari dalam seminggu, Jidda menjadi ratu. Itu membuatnya menghadapi enam hari lain dengan penuh cinta.*  
(AN: 273)

The metaphor in the above data is marked by the diction of Jidda becoming a queen. Jidda is likened to a queen once a week. The queen is loved and respected without being bothered by various household chores that could make her tired and lose her beauty.

## **DISCUSSION**

The novel *New Catatan Hati Seorang Istri* by Asma Nadia vividly demonstrates how contemporary Indonesian prose can reflect domestic and gendered realities, portraying women's emotional struggles, marital conflict, and societal pressures within patriarchal and religious contexts. This aligns with recent findings in literary-sociological studies that emphasize novels as mirrors of social inequality and class or gender conflict: for example, a study on *Kami (Bukan) Sarjana Kertas* revealed how literary narrative can represent social inequality and class stratification in modern society (Hafiizh & Nur, 2025). Similarly, research into gender identity and social norms in modern Indonesian novels shows how authors employ narrative to explore oppression, marginalization, and identity struggles (Latifah, Juwinda Lase, & Satya Dewi, 2025). In that sense, the thematic focus of Asma Nadia's novel resonates with contemporary scholarship: it uses fiction to redress real-life issues of gender inequality, family dynamics, and women's resilience.

However, where most recent studies such as those on class conflict or gender discrimination primarily adopt sociological or feminist lenses to analyze the content of novels (what the text says), this research advances a different perspective by applying a genetic-structural approach. Unlike descriptive social critiques, this study traces how structural features of the novel, non-linear plot, episodic narrative, character complexity, internal conflict, and the interplay between private/domestic and social settings, realize and reinforce the author's worldview and social critique. This is a significant distinction from prior works that rarely examine how the intrinsic narrative design contributes to meaning-making and social reflection (Fatimah, 2024; Asmawati,

Ulya & Jasril, 2023). Thus, the novelty lies in linking formal narrative technique with sociocultural content, showing that the structure of the novel itself not only its themes function as a medium for social commentary and gender discourse.

Therefore, the major gap this study fills is the under-explored area of structuralist-genetic analysis in Indonesian feminist/social novels. While extant research often focuses on thematic content (e.g. gender inequality, class oppression), few examine the synergy between narrative structure, character development, and social worldview. By doing so, this study contributes to literary scholarship by demonstrating that novels can operate as complex systems: their structural design, stylistic choices, and intrinsic coherence are not merely aesthetic they are deliberate mechanisms for encoding ideology, social critique, and psychological realism. This approach opens new paths for future research: combining formalist analysis with sociological interpretation to deepen understanding of how literary form and social function intersect.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study using genetic structuralism theory, the novel *New Catatan Hati Seorang Istri* by Asma Nadia contains numerous human facts that are revealed through women’s struggles in navigating complex household dynamics, including issues such as infidelity, polygamy, domestic violence, and crises of faith. These narratives underscore the perseverance, loyalty, sincerity, and emotional resilience of the wives as forms of human responses to an unjust social reality. These human facts are closely related to the collective subject represented by Indonesian Muslim women living within a religious and patriarchal cultural environment, particularly wives who uphold values of patience, faith, and family harmony, as well as a religious society that places the family at the center of moral values.

From this collective subject emerges the author’s worldview, which emphasizes moral and religious values, appreciation for women’s steadfastness, critique of patriarchal relations that perpetuate infidelity and polygamy, and the belief that women’s moral strength forms the foundation of family resilience. Altogether, this reflects the distinctive religious-humanist perspective characteristic of Asma Nadia. This worldview resonates with readers, who respond to the text with empathy, concern, and anger toward the injustices experienced by the female characters. Ultimately, it fosters awareness of structural problems within marital institutions and reinforces the understanding that women hold a critical moral position in maintaining both dignity and family integrity.

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