
Women in Novels Regarding Japanese Occupation: A Study of the Sociology of Literature

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ABSTRACT

The Japanese occupation government in the Indonesia carried out propaganda using various media, including literature. The propaganda often depicts the condition of women at that time. This study examines the picture of women in the Japanese occupation that has been reflected in four novels published in two eras: during and after the Japanese occupation. Novels published during the Japanese occupation were *Palawidja* by Karim Halim and *Cinta Tanah Air* by Nur Sutan Iskandar. Meanwhile, the novels published after the Japanese occupation were *Dan Perang pun Usai* by Ismail Marahimin and *Kembang Jepun* by Remy Sylado. The novels were approached by the sociology of literature by Alan Swingewood and Diana Laurenson. The research prove that the four novels have a different picture of women in the Japanese occupation. Women in novels written during the Japanese occupation are described as having a fate full of suffering, for example, in the novels *Kembang Jepun* and *Dan Perang pun Usai*. Meanwhile, women in novels written after the Japanese occupation are described as having a luckier fate, as seen in *Palawidja* and *Cinta Tanah Air*. These depictions came to differences in the activities, authorship background, and time interval of the writing of the four authors.

Keywords: *Indonesian novels, the fate of women, Japanese occupation, Sociology of Literature, depiction of woman*

INTRODUCTION

Reading literary works will deal with the form of experience or new thinking the author tries to put forward. Through literary works, the author discloses problems that occur in society and with which the

author himself is engaged (Kumalayanti, Artawan, & Sutresna, 2017: 2). As a member of the community, authors certainly have opinions about important social and political issues and follow the problems

of their time (Wellek & Warren, 1993: 114). Authors' life experiences and thoughts are then experienced and interpreted. The result is then manifested through the medium language, both connotatively and denotatively after imagination is embedded into a work of literature, in the form of novels, poetry, or drama. Rather than words, meanings may be literal or figurative (Aziz, 2011: 38).

Literary work, as a representation of life, can describe the situation and condition of society (Wahyuni, 2020: 188). Literature is created to be enjoyed, understood, and used by the community. An excellent literary work can reflect the condition of a society and its culture. Hence, literature can be used as a reflection to see the face of society and its culture. Therefore, by reading literature, we should be able to see and understand society and culture (Damono, 2020: 1). In addition, literature can be considered a means of understanding culture or society. In good literary works, we find information that helps us broaden our knowledge. As we get a sense of various events created by the characters, we can feel and perceive the characters' minds, which picture human problems.

Creation literature often describes the processes, atmosphere, and dynamics of a society historically in nature, representing the process of culture, thought, community, and even ideology within a certain period (Surajaya, 2002: 192). Literature as a symbol system has a relationship with life. The author reveals things from the view of life and the power of imagination, which cannot be separated from the socio-cultural elements. Many scholars say that literature is not born from a vacuum of culture and social systems in society (Effendy, 2012; Kleden, 2004; Teeuw, 1984). It means that literary works are community conventions.

The values in society are processed in such a way by the author through the power of imagination by using language as a medium of expression. Through literary works, it can be known the existence of the life of a society in one place at a particular time, although only on certain sides. This was later formulated by Kuntowijoyo (2006: 29) that writing literature is a structuralizing of experience, imagination, and values. One of the critical periods in the history of Indonesian literature was during the Japanese occupation (Rosidi, 2013: 89). Some of the works produced during this period are cultural treasures that deserve to be

studied by the next generation (Yudiono KS, 2010: 94).

However, literary research related to the Japanese occupation of Indonesia is essential research. Based on data from the *Asia Raya* newspaper from 29 April 1942 until 07 September 1945, Mahayana (2013) states that the newspaper did not fully implement the political policies of the Japanese ruling government in the cultural sector, especially literature, to gain the support of the Indonesian people in the Pacific War. Nugroho and Saefurohman (2019) discuss the image of the role of Indonesian women in the Japanese era in newspaper advertisements. The study shows three images: household, dandy, and career women. Among the three, the image of a household woman is widely used. This role was part of Japanese propaganda. They wanted women to stay at home and not to join the war but to become soldiers, as in Western society such as British and American.

Beside newspaper, the media also used theater for propaganda. Steele (2012) shows in two theaters, as his research sources. The first case is the Takarazuka production, which aims to relieve the Indonesian people's anxiety about the impending Japanese colonial aggression. The second tells the story of a broken romance between a Japanese soldier and an Indonesian dancer. In the two theaters, it is seen that the Japanese seek to provide an understanding of the need for Asian unity as a nationalism desired by the occupation government.

Based on these studies, the researcher wants to see how the condition of women is shown in the four novels as the source of the research, namely *Palawidja* (1944) by Karim Halim, *Cinta Tanah Air* (1944) by Nur Sutan Iskandar, *Dan Perang pun Usai* (1979) by Ismail Marahimin, and *Kembang Jepun* (2003) by Remy Sylado. Previous researchers have shown the condition of women in Japanese propaganda; the novelty done by researchers is to see how the conditions of women are depicted in novels and compare how these images appear in novels written in the Japanese era and novels written long after the Japanese occupation. The abovementioned purposes of literary works background the present study to understand the women of the Japanese colonization age. That helps us obtain some information by reading various literary works of time, place, and culture at that time. The works portraying the Japanese colonization under investigation are the novel *Palawidja* (1944) by Karim Halim, *Cinta Tanah Air* (1944) by Nur Sutan

Iskandar, *Dan Perang pun Usai* by Ismail Marahimin (1979), and *Kembang Jepun* (2003) by Remy Sylado.

Those novels are dense with social and political information on the Japanese occupation of Japan, including the position of women at that time. As a reflection of society, these works can represent society and culture during the Japanese occupation. The researchers tried to compare literary works created during Japanese colonization and those written after the colonization to find out the descriptions of women in the Japanese colonization reflected by the four novels. Literature may not be said to echo many features of social conditions in a particular era because of the author's one-of-a-kind nature, which often influences the selection and appearance of the social facts embedded in his work (Damono, 1979: 5).

The four novels discussed in this paper are written by authors of different authorship activities. During the Japanese colonization, Karim Halim and Nur Sutan Iskandar took part in *Gunseikanbu Kokumin Tosyokkyoku*. Authors who joined this institution also composed some writings adorned with propaganda. In addition to *Palawidja*, Karim Halim wrote a short story laden with propaganda entitled *Aroes Mengalir*. At the same time, Nur Sutan Iskandar wrote *Cinta Tanah Air* and composed a short story with propaganda entitled *Putri Pahlawan Indonesia*. Remy Sylado and Ismail Marahimin were not involved in a particular authorship institution or institution demanding specific goals in producing a literary work. Therefore, Remy Sylado and Ismail Marahimin were freer to pour their observations and opinions about the life of the Japanese colonization. Hereunder are some pictures of women in the four novels.

In the story *Palawidja*, Karim Halim tried to introduce harmony between indigenous people and Chinese during Japanese colonization. The novel set in Rengasdengklok, a small-town east of Jakarta, tells about the romance between an indigenous man, Noemardi, and a Chinese woman, Soei Nio. Their love story began with the animosity between indigenous people and Chinese ethnic in the city. Soemardi, a young teacher, strived to unite the Indonesian and Chinese nations in various ways, including establishing a People's Committee whose members consisted of two groups. His own sister-in-law and regional wedana initially resisted the effort. Soemardi was imprisoned for no apparent reason but ultimately released due to his brother-in-law's actions, who were aware

of Soemardi's attempt. After getting out of prison, Soemardi got more support from the surrounding community. Their marriage further reconciled the relations between indigenous people and Chinese communities. Soemardi was eventually appointed as a member of the Regional Representative Council representing Rengasdengklok (*Syuu-Sangi Kai*). In contrast, his wife was appointed the Indonesian and Chinese's Women Movement supervisor, *Fujinkai*. When there was a chance to be a soldier, Soemardi enlisted to defend the homeland. His wife also took part in protecting the country from the back line.

Meanwhile, through the character of Amiruddin in the novel *Cinta Tanah Air*, Nur Sutan Iskandar tells about a youngster, Amiruddin, who watches the night market and is amazed to see the pictures that show the mighty soldiers of the Japanese army. Coincidentally, Amiruddin exchanged a handkerchief with a girl who bought an embroidered handkerchief. This handkerchief exchange then attributed Amiruddin to a girl named Astiah, and somehow it turned out their parents were best friends. In addition to picturing love affairs, the novel *Cinta Tanah Air* describes Indonesians when the Japanese reached Indonesia for the first time. The presence of Japan brought fresh air for the sons and daughters of Indonesia, whom the Dutch had long colonized. At the very least, they viewed Japan as an example of success in wars against the Americans and Europeans. It fosters motivation for a country guy like Amiruddin to advance to the frontline of the battle to defend his homeland by being a member of PETA. However, he must leave his mother, younger brother, and his newly married wife, Astiah. By contrast, Hardjono, his schoolmate, did not join PETA because his wife would leave if Hardjono got involved in PETA.

By contrast, the novel *Dan Perang pun Usai*, a work by Ismail Marahimin, raised the theme of human destiny consisting of three nations: the Dutch, who became Japanese prisoners; Indonesians, who were taking advantage of the chaotic situation for their benefit; and Japanese soldiers were ready to sacrifice for their emperor but were also made to surrender over their defeat. The story begins with the proposal of Wimpie, one of the Dutch Prisoners in the Terakak Buluh, to escape from the village. This proposal was only accepted by some prisoners. They split into two sides. One side agreed with Wimpie's suggestion, while the other agreed with Van Roscott's proposal

or 'Pastor' to wait for the war to end. The escape plan was supported by Kliwon, a former *romusha* who did not want to escape but was afraid of his disgrace being known to the residents of Teratak Buluh.

In reaching Teratak Buluh, Kliwon had an affair with a married woman. It angered the local people, so Kliwon was frightened. In Teratak Buluh, Kliwon had a love affair with Lena, Haji Zen's daughter. Kliwon did not want Lena and her parents to know his past. However, unknowingly he had told them about Wimpie. Kliwon was afraid that Wimpie told his past to the people of Teratak Buluh. This escape attempt was considered as his fear of people knowing his history. When the prisoners fled, Lieutenant Ose, the Japanese commander at Teratak Buluh, held a flag ceremony for the last time in the area. After the ceremony was over, they realized that his prisoners were running away. Lieutenant Ose then ordered all the Japanese soldiers to look for them. Finally, they captured Pastoor, Kliwon, and Lena. The three of them were immediately shot dead.

The novel, entitled *Dan Perang pun Usai*, won the second prize in a contest of romance works organized by the Jakarta Arts Council in 1977. In 1984, the novel was awarded by The Pegasus Prize Oil Corporation in the United States, an institution that attempted to introduce a country's literary works to the international world. Two years later, the novel was translated into English by John McGlynn under the title *And the War is Over* by Louisiana Press, and in 1988 the novel was translated into Japanese.

Remy Sylado in *Kembang Jepun* told about a geisha named Keke, also known as Keiko, who came from Manado. She was sold by his brother to Kotaro Takamura, the owner of Shinju, a restaurant in Surabaya, which was a place of 'legal prostitution.' His association with Tjak Broto, a journalist of the nationalist *Tjahaja Soerabaja* newspaper, dominated the whole story, unraveling the national history through three periods, including the Dutch colonial era, the Japanese colonial period, and the independence era. Although this novel told about the story of an Indonesian geisha figure, the setting takes the history of conflict-laden Indonesia, various ethnic groups, struggles, and feelings like love, jealousy, and affection. This novel was published as a serialized story in *Surabaya Post*, 1990-1991. Overall, the four novels were concerned with women during Japanese colonization. The depictions in the four novels serve as

a basis for probing into the attitudes and views of the four authors with different backgrounds, the temporal distance of their writing, and circumstances.

The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative with a sociology of literature approach—a procedure for collecting data by reading carefully and repeatedly so that no data is missed. The first step in data collection is the researcher determines the data source, which guides the data collection as stipulated by the nature of the research problem. The primary data were Indonesian novels of Japanese background, including *Palawidja* (1944) by Karim Halim, *Cinta Tanah Air* (1944) by Nur Sutan Iskandar, *Dan Perang pun Usai* (1979) by Ismail Marahimin, and *Kembang Jepun* (2003) by Remy Sylado. The second step, the researcher collected and classified the data. Details pertinent to the novel backgrounds, set in the era of Japanese colonization, were collected and classified, further followed by interpreting the embedded sociological meaning. After collecting data, the next step is analyzing the data using the theory of sociology of literature proposed by Alan Swingewood and Diana Laurenson in their book entitled *The Sociology of Literature* (1972). Swingewood presents three concepts in his literary approach, namely, literature as a reflection of the times, literature is seen from the production process of its authorship, and history literature (Swingewood & Laurenson, 1972).

To support the qualitative research method, theory pertinent to the sociology of literature was operative as the reading strategy aimed at revealing new meanings and producing different interpretations when coupled with other methods. The sociology of literature, in this sense, includes various approaches, each grounded in a particular attitude and theoretical one. Using this approach causes the meaning of literary works to move on formal and intrinsic matters and provide a more complete and comprehensive sense. Thus, literary works are a unique, engaging, and multi-meaning cultural product.

Swingewood said that literary works are socio-cultural documents that can be used to see a social phenomenon at that time. It is the term academic documentation, which refers to the reflection of the times (Swingewood & Laurenson, 1972). According to Damono (2020: 1), a writer is a member of society, and thus bound by specific social rules. That is why literature can be seen as a particular social institution that uses language as its medium. Language is a social

product and an arbitrary sign. The literature presents a picture of life, which is a social reality.

Damono (2020: 4-5) reminds us that the reflection needs to be more specific and, therefore, susceptible to being misinterpreted and misused. Literature reflects the society during which the writing is underway. This is because many of the characteristics of community manifest in literary works are no longer valid when they are written. Literature, which seeks to display social circumstances as accurately as possible, may need to be more trusted as a reflection of society. Likewise, on the contrary, literary works not intended to describe society closely may still be used to unravel social reality. The author's social view must be considered when judging literary works as a reflection of society.

Social engagement, attitudes, and ideology of an author play a role in the process of creating literary works. These elements can be learned through their works and biographical documents (Wellek & Warren, 1993: 113-114). Furthermore, they explain that author's biography denotes the primary source. Still, we can gather information about the author's background, the family's economic background, and the author's economic role not only from his biography (Wellek & Warren, 1993: 119). As a citizen, an author has a social position in society. The author's position can be explored clearly in history. Grappling with literary works, the author, with his social life, influences both form and the content of his literary works.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Women experienced a dark period during Japanese colonization. The war made them suffer, and the Japanese attitude toward women made even darker days for them. That was confirmed by Keke, also known as Keiko geisha from Shinju, a female character in the novel *Kembang Jepun*.

“Living as a Japanese, I should not worry about Kotaro Takamura's view of women as Japanese everywhere. Almost all men viewed women as inferior to men. Later, Kotaro Takamura and the other Japanese views were simply the remains of the past.”

(Sylado, 2003: 7-8)

In addition to the intention of controlling the

people's crops, the Japanese Government also strived to make Indonesian women sex slaves (Kumalayanti et al., 2017). Women are humans that need to be protected and to be far from violence. Nobody may insult these women for whatever reasons. During the colonization, the Japanese army was so intrigued by young women. They would undoubtedly pursue and rape them. The fear also caused Keke to be dressed ugly to give the impression of an old woman and make her face with a mixture of charcoal, *lerak* (sapindus rarak), and garlic, rather than using available powder. She did that as she had to accompany Tjak Broto to the Blitar market, selling the rest of what Japan had taken. However, Keke was powerlessly raped by Kobayashi, the Japanese soldier who interrogated Tjak Broto, her husband, who was arrested for being considered a PETA rebel. The treatment was closely related to the concessions military leaders gave their troops since it emphasized on their ability and endurance on the battlefield. Therefore, the government granted anything to help the Japanese army win the war (Ilma, 2016: 7).

Not only did Keke suffer from the foul deed of the Japanese, but she also felt an interesting religious experience showing her the path to God. During her childhood in Minahasa, she only knew God at a Sunday school organized by the church. On Sunday school, the pictures of Jesus were distributed. Jesus in the picture was a Dutchman because the drawings were a painted by Dutch painters: Rembrandt, van Eyck, or Rubens.

As Minahasans, Keke found it difficult to abandon animist habits, and therefore the image of God was also the *opo-opo*, a red cloth packet that had to be kept at the waist. When she became a geisha, she was introduced to the Shinto teachings—the spirits in various objects the Japanese should worship—and the Zen Buddhist view underlying Japanese manners. When she married Tjak Broto, she uttered the *shahadah*, the Muslim profession of faith, believing that there is no other God but Allah and that Muhammad is the apostle of Allah. As a good wife, she showed the same sincerity as her husband's belief. As such, she always mentioned God's name in all crises and hardships, including the moment of suffering she often experienced during the Japanese colonization. Although sometimes, violence against women is also due to social and cultural traditions prevailing at a time (Adhha, Jahar, Kamarusdiana, & Subchi, 2021: 59).

Bad conditions surrounding women also happened to Satiyah, a widow, in the novel *Dan Perang pun Usai*. She had been educated even though she only graduated from *Angka Loro* school (equal to elementary education). Before the Japanese colonization, Satiyah lived in decent economic circumstances. As revealed in the following excerpt, she helped her sister pay her monthly school fees.

“Before the Japanese came to power, Satiyah could give money to her mother every month and help her sibling pay her school fees. Before Japan came to Indonesia, the teacher’s salary at *Angka Loro* School her husband, received was more than enough to meet anything they wanted. However, not long after the Japanese arrived, his salary had no value. His father’s salary earned from working as a machinist at *Seraju Dal Spoorweg Maatschappij* railway company was just enough to meet their needs. This economic situation was entirely different during Japanese colonization.”

(Marahimin, 1979: 88-89)

Her parents could still support Satiyah’s economic downturn, so her family could still manage their living. At the time, *Ndoro* Alimin, her husband, was assigned to go after education, and Satiyah decided not to rely on her parents. She sold goods from one village to another. Her income was not much, but it was enough to support her family. It was her job, which led her to meet Misran, one of her neighbors. He urged her to have sex. Satiyah was forced to do so because Misran was a *Kempeitai* member. He said he would threaten her husband if Satiyah did not accept it. However, their relationship was known to the villagers. The uproar among the villagers of Mersi caused the death of *Ndoro* Alimin. As she became horrendous, Satiyah fled from the village of Mersi. She went to Jakarta, seeking a job as a housekeeper. However, upon her arrival in Jakarta, she was sold to the Japanese army and brought to Sumatra. Major Shinji, the Japanese soldier who took her to Sumatra, intended to rape her during the voyage. However, he failed as Satiyah would commit suicide with his bayonet if he did the deed.

Luckily, in Sumatra, Satiyah was given to Lieutenant Ose, Japan Commander, who was gentle, friendly, patient, and generous. He possessed every single character she saw in her husband, *Ndoro* Alimin.

However, due to cultural differences, Ose could not take her to his homeland. Ose thought that Satiyah would be made a mockery by Japanese society as a lowly woman from a country with no culture or tradition. Moreover, his family probably would not dare leave their house for several weeks because they were embarrassed to meet the neighbors who would talk about her.

In the novel *Dan Perang pun Usai*, Satiyah is portrayed as a faithful woman to her religion, although she became a concubine of the Japanese army. That strong faith was taught by *Ndoro* Alimin, her well-known pious husband, a teacher at *Angka Loro* school. Every fasting month, she had to endure hunger all day even though she had to wake up alone for her meal before fasting among the Japanese soldiers, the Dutch, and the *romusha* (laborers). Fasting for Satiyah had its meaning in her heart.

In addition to being religious, Satiyah was described as a gentle woman who calmed things down. People in the village of Teratak Buluh demeaned and suspected her. The people assumed that Lieutenant Ose and Satiyah violated religious norms since Satiyah worked as Lieutenant Ose’s assistant and lived in the same house. Living with a beautiful woman was created suspicion among the villagers. Satiyah was also aware and she tried to convince people that she was a good woman, as shown by her respectful attitude to Haji Usman’s family, a respected family in Teratak Buluh.

“Conspicuously, Satiyah bought more items than usual on a Wednesday. She also bought leaves and flowers for bathing and washing her hair. Yasin got extra wages. In the afternoon, Kliwon was asked to deliver some food, *opor ayam* (Indonesian chicken curry), to Haji Usman’s food stall.

“Is he still going to be insulted today?”

Yasin welcomed her and took the two baskets she was carrying.

“Are you fasting?” Asked the youngster at the age of twelve or so.

“Yes, I am; what about you?” Satiyah replied with questions as well.

“Hopefully, you complete your fasting,” he replied modestly.

Then the young man hesitantly said, “Datuk Haji asked you to stop by before you go home. Grandma has made something for your fast-

breaking meal.”

(Marahimin, 1979: 95-96)

It turned out that the tranquility Satiyah lived with Lieutenant Ose did not last long. After the Allies won, then the Japanese army had to surrender their power to the Allies. Satiyah also realized she would be apart from Lieutenant Ose.

The female characters in *Palawidja* were more fortunate than those in other novels. They did not suffer like Keke and Satiyah. The female characters Soei Nio and Soemarsih were described as educated women. This was especially true for Soemarsih, a woman who gained teacher education and taught at a school founded by her brother. Soei Nio and Soemarsih were women who actively upheld women in Rengasdengklok. They were entrusted to lead the Indonesia and Chinese's women movement, named *Fujinkai*. The relationship between Soemarsih and Soei Nio symbolized the friendship between indigenous women and the Chinese. During the Japanese colonization, several women, including the leaders of the national movement, participated in *Fujinkai* with the consideration that the experience gained in the association would be helpful to gain national independence. Also, it was the only women's organization granted by the Japanese authorities (Jovani, 2014: 23).

On the other hand, another female character, Astiah, in the novel *Cinta Tanah Air* was a solid educated female character even though she had to be apart from Amiruddin, who just married her. Instead, she encouraged her husband to become a PETA soldier. She had enrolled as a volunteer nurse secretly. Contrast from Hajati, Hardjono's wife, who threatened not to return to Hardjono if he registered as a PETA member.

The female characters in the novel *Palawidja* and *Cinta Tanah Air* were educated, beautiful, charming, noble, and devoted to the motherland. In line with the aspirations of Asia Raya, they were excited and supported the arrival of Japan in Indonesia. Meanwhile, the female characters featured in the novel *Kembang Jepun* and *Dan Perang pun Usai* were portrayed as the victims of Japanese colonization. They were described as having bad luck during Japan's reign in Indonesia. The following is an excerpt from the novel,

“Mother and Atati are here, and me? Brother

became a soldier; I became a soldier too. You love your homeland; I also love the nation and all humans. That's why my brother will attend officer training; tomorrow, I will go to the hospital to become a nurse. “

“Astiah,” said Amir, his blood going up and down.

“Brother, calm your mind. Don't divorce us. Brother. Going to the battlefield as a national hero, I stepped forward to send you as a nurse ... Brother. This is my class letter.” He opened the stitching box and took a letter from inside, indicating that he had been accepted as the nurse.

(Iskandar, 1944: 180)

The female characters featured in the novel *Kembang Jepun* and *Dan Perang pun Usai* were unfortunate female figures and victims of Japanese colonization. Keiko in the novel *Kembang Jepun* was a geisha who suffered much during the Japanese colonization. After her love journal from one man to another, she eventually met Tjak Broto, a newspaper journalist at *Tjahaja Soerabaja*, as her soulmate. The same story happened to Satiyah, a female character in the novel *Dan Perang pun Usai*. She was a Japanese mistress in the Teratak Buluh area. Satiyah also suffered, as Keiko. After escaping from *Kempeitai* Misran, she fell to Major Shinji, a Japanese commander who took him to Sumatra. Luckily, she was given to Lieutenant Ose, a Japanese commander who was not as cruel as any other Japanese soldiers. She lived happily with Lieutenant Ose, although only for a while. However, Lieutenant Ose had to return to his country because eventually Japan lost the war.

The female characters in *Cinta Tanah Air* and *Palawidja* were luckier than those in the novel *Kembang Jepun* and *Dan Perang pun Usai*. They represented the image of a dream woman, a hard-to-find image in the real world that does not exist. They did not feel the pain of the Japanese colonization. During the colonization, they became important figures in the society, which became the setting in the two novels. Soei Nio and Soemarsih in the novel of *Palawidja* and Astiah in the novel of *Cinta Tanah Air*, were beautiful, educated, devoted, sweet-spoken, passionate, and always striving for the aspirations of *Asia Raya*. *Asia Raya* they dreamt was surely different from the ideals dream of Tan Malaka (Yang

& Samsudin, 2017: 14). *Asia Raya* forces to embody an independent Malay region; free from imperialism and the control of other nations. The force was bound to that goal.

These figures were created only to facilitate propaganda (Mahayana, 2013). The ideal figures were only the author's instrument to convey all the doctrines made to ensure that the people of Indonesia opened their doors to the Japanese. Since women being part of the propaganda, the authors hoped that the youth could be inspired.

CONCLUSION

The four novels describe women in the era of Japanese occupation. However, those novels do not merely present raw facts. Some authors in the four novels have interpreted the facts so that these novels provide diverse portrayals of women in the Japanese occupation. Women in the Japanese occupation endure great pain as depicted in the novels written during the Japanese occupation i.e., *Palawidja* (1944) by Karim Halim and *Cinta Tanah Air* (1944) by Nur Sutan Iskandar. Meanwhile, the novels published after the Japanese occupation, *Dan Perang pun Usai* (1979) by Ismail Marahimin and *Kembang Jepun* (2003) by Remy Sylado, described woman who had a luckier fate. The differences are due to the different authorship activities and conditions. During the Japanese colonization, Karim Halim and Nur Sutan Iskandar became part of *Gunseikanbu Kokumin Tosyokyoku*. Remy Sylado and Ismail Marahimin were not involved in any particular authorship institution that demanded specific goals in producing a literary work. Therefore, Remy Sylado and Ismail Marahimin have more liberty to express their observations and opinions about life during the Japanese colonization.

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The author herewith declare that this article is totally free from any conflict of interest regarding the data collection, analysis, and the editorial process, and the publication process in general.

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