

Silenced Sovereignty: Reclaiming Dedes' Agency in a Patriarchal Narrative

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the representation of patriarchy in 13th-century Javanese feudal society through an analysis of *Arok Dedes* by Pramoedya Ananta Toer. The research centers on the character of Dedes, symbolizing gender oppression. Although Dedes holds the high position of queen, she remains constrained by the patriarchal system, positioning her as a tool of male authority. This dynamic is evident in her forced marriage to Tunggul Ametung and her political involvement with Arok. Utilizing both sociological and historical perspectives, the research reveals the ways in which the patriarchal structure, understood within its historical context, shapes the social and political positioning of women. Additionally, the study incorporates hypergamy theory, demonstrating that Dedes' marriage was not merely a personal decision but a strategic political maneuver reinforcing male dominance. The findings offer valuable insights into the continued influence of patriarchy in modern society, encouraging discussions on women's empowerment and the pursuit of gender equality. Ultimately, this study contributes significantly to feminist theory and power studies, offering a fresh perspective on the portrayal of women in Indonesian history and literature.

KEYWORDS

Patriarchy, Oppression, Pramoedya, Arok Dedes, Feminism



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Gender Dynamics and Patriarchy in Arok Dedes

The understanding of gender and patriarchy has long been an important subject of study across various social science disciplines, including sociology, history, and politics [1], [2], [3], [4]. While much of the existing literature focuses on patriarchal dominance in modern societies [5], [6], [7], [8], [9], there has been limited attention to the forms of patriarchy embedded in historical social structures. Patriarchy is commonly defined as a system in which men occupy the central position of power, with women relegated to subordinate roles across different areas of life, ranging from politics to economics [3], [10], [11], [12], [13], [14]. Although many studies have explored gender-based power dynamics in contemporary contexts, there is a notable gap in understanding the forms of patriarchy that evolved in traditional and feudal societies, as well as their effects on women's positions within these societies.

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A crucial approach to bridging this gap involves examining the representation of patriarchy in literary works depicting feudal societies, where power structures and gender relations are intricately linked to social dynamics. In *Arok Dedes*, Pramoedya Ananta Toer offers a critical examination of the patriarchal system in 13th-century Javanese society, focusing on the character of Dedes, embodying gender oppression within the feudal power structure. Despite her elevated status as *Paramesywari* (queen), Dedes is trapped within a patriarchal system that reduces her to an object of power. She is forced into marriage with Tunggul Ametung against her will and endures suffering and degradation within a system that disregards her rights as an individual.

This study examines the patriarchal system implemented in 13th-century Tumapel society, as depicted in *Arok Dedes*, offering new insights into the academic discourse on the relationship between gender, power, and androcentrism. The novel reveals power dynamics based on clear gender inequality, where women's positions are not only socially subordinate but also politically marginalized. In this context, the author identifies the ways in which the character Dedes, positioned within patriarchal power relations, serves as a symbol of broader gender oppression and influence within the feudal social structure. Furthermore, this analysis uncovers the connection between patriarchy in feudal societies and the forms of gender oppression that emerge in modern power systems, such as in the context of political authoritarianism in Indonesia.

This research makes a significant contribution to our understanding of the historical construction of gender and power, which plays a key role in shaping existing social structures, as well as its relevance to contemporary discourse on gender equality. The study significantly contributes to our understanding of the historical construction of gender and power, which has played a central role in shaping current social structures, and its relevance to contemporary debates on gender equality. The study not only enriches our knowledge of women's roles in Indonesian history but also offers a critical perspective on the persistence and adaptation of patriarchy within modern social systems. As such, the results of this research are anticipated to be an important reference in feminist studies, power theory, and historical studies, offering more profound insights into the relationship between history and contemporary social issues.

This study employs literary text analysis, using sociological and historical approaches to uncover the structural influence of patriarchy in the feudal society depicted in *Arok Dedes*. The analysis will center on the characterization of Dedes, the relationships that define her role in the story, and the dynamics that mirror wider social patterns in Indonesian society. The article will be organized into key sections, beginning with a literature review on patriarchy theory, followed by a detailed analysis of the character Dedes, and concluding with a discussion on the relevance of these findings in Indonesia's contemporary social and political context. Therefore, this research not only focuses on the historical or literary aspects but also engages with social issues relevant to

contemporary gender conditions, offering critical insights that can enrich broader academic and political discussions.

Beauty, Power, and Obedience: The Paradox of Dedes' Role in Feudal Java

The 13th-century Javanese history depicted in this story reflects a social structure profoundly shaped by the feudal system, where rigid patriarchal norms govern the relationships between rulers and their subjects. In Javanese feudal society, power is typically concentrated in the hands of men, serving as political and spiritual leaders. Meanwhile, women are relegated to symbols of social status or treated as objects within marriage negotiations and political unions [15], [16], [17], [18], [19].

Women frequently lack the agency to control their destinies in such a society. Dedes, although a queen of high rank, remains ensnared by the patriarchal laws that govern her life. She has no say in choosing her husband, and her powerful relationship with Tunggul Ametung mirrors the male dominance within the social and political frameworks. This condition is illustrated in the following narrative:

"Hari yang ke empat puluh adalah hari selesainya wadad pengantin, ia menggigil membayangkan seorang lelaki sebentar nanti akan membawanya ke peraduan."

Translate:

"On the fortieth day, the wedding ceremony concluded, and she trembled at the thought of a man soon taking her to the bridal chamber."

This dialogue highlights Dedes's powerlessness as a woman, despite her reluctance to marry and inability to refuse the union. The dialogue also reveals the extent to which the patriarchal system controls women's destinies, with the decision to marry and choose a partner lying not with the woman but with the men around her (Tunggul Ametung and the broader society). The following statement further underscores the objectification of women within marriage:

"Tak pernah Yang Mulia melakukan wadad kecuali hanya untukmu."

Translate:

"His Majesty has never conducted the wedding ceremony except for you."

This line emphasizes that Dedes is treated as an object in the marriage, subjected to male authority (specifically, Tunggul Ametung). The phrase "has never conducted the wedding ritual except for you" highlights that a woman's role is regarded merely as satisfying male desires rather than as an individual with the freedom to make her own choices or have control over herself.

Later, when Dedes is forced to submit to decisions made by Tunggul Ametung and Yang Suci Belakangka, she shows submission and powerlessness in participating in her

marriage ceremony. In this section, Dedes is depicted as simply going along the path dictated by the patriarchal system, unable to oppose it.

"Berkata Yang Suci: 'Basuhlah kaki Yang Mulia.' Dedes tak juga bangkit dari berlutut."

Translate:

"Yang Suci said: 'Wash His Majesty's feet.' Dedes remained kneeling, unable to rise."

This dialogue illustrates that, despite Dedes' high social status, she must still bow to men with greater power than her. When asked to wash Tunggul Ametung's feet, Dedes feels coerced and has no option but to comply with the order. This condition represents the symbolic nature of patriarchal domination, positioning women in a deeply subordinate role, where even during significant life events like marriage, women remain powerless over their own lives.

On the other hand, Dedes experiences a dilemma, revealing her sense of being trapped within the patriarchal system through her thoughts on marriage. Despite being admired for her beauty, she perceives her role as a wife as nothing more than an addition to the powerful men, as shown in the following dialogue:

"Aku tidak harus mati karena racun, ia yakinkan dirinya sendiri, yang lain bisa, Dedes tidak! Ia harus hidup."

Translate:

"I don't have to die from poison," she tells herself, "others may, but not Dedes! She must survive."

This shows that, although she feels confined by patriarchal norms, she fights to survive, even within the constraints of her role as a wife. Dedes realizes she is part of a larger system that controls her life, and she struggles to maintain her survival, even though she must protect many aspects of her existence.

However, despite marrying Ken Arok, Dedes continues to be subjected to patriarchal control and is used as a political instrument. This is demonstrated in the following dialogue: Arok (to Dedes):

Arok (kepada Dedes): "Aku adalah yang membuatmu bisa berdiri di sini. Semua yang kau miliki adalah karena aku, Dedes."

Translate:

"I am the one who made it possible for you to be here. Everything you have is because of me, Dedes."

This dialogue reflects Arok's emotions, demonstrating that, although he loves Dedes in his own way, he perceives her as his property and a tool for achieving his objectives. Although Dedes comes from a respected family, her position remains under Arok's control due to his power as a man. He perceives Dedes' role as his wife as his

entitlement after seizing power, illustrating patriarchy's role in placing women within men's acquisition of power.

After Arok managed to eliminate Tunggul Ametung, he assumed the position of ruler. Though not directly involved in the political decision, Arok decided to marry Ken Dedes and found herself having to obey his commands and decisions. This is shown when Arok forces Dedes to accept his marriage proposal despite Dedes not having chosen him at that point.

Arok (dengan penuh keyakinan): "Kau tidak punya pilihan, Dedes. Perintah ini adalah keputusan yang sudah ditentukan."

Translate:

Arok (confidently): "You have no choice, Dedes. This decision has already been made."

This dialogue illustrates that in a patriarchal system, women are frequently placed in a position where they have no control over their own decisions. Arok views himself as the ruler entitled to decide not only life and death but also the personal lives of others, including Dedes. The decision to marry Dedes was a political one, far greater than personal emotions, demonstrating the patriarchal view of women as objects to be treated without consideration for their feelings or individual rights.

Arok further exhibits patriarchal dominance by controlling Dedes' body. Upon marrying Dedes, Arok claims her body as his own and uses her status to flaunt his power to others. One instance of this is when Arok compels Dedes to prove her loyalty through symbols tied to sexuality and virginity, marking her status as his wife:

Arok (dengan tegas): "Perawanmu adalah simbol dari kuasa yang kita miliki. Tidak ada yang bisa merampasmu dariku."

Translate:

Arok (forcefully): "Your virginity is a symbol of the power we possess. No one can take you from me."

In this dialogue, Arok employs Dedes' body as a symbol of power and control, highlighting patriarchal hegemony where women are regarded as objects used to demonstrate dominance, both in political and sexual contexts. Dedes is forced to submit to the rules and control imposed by Arok, functioning as the male authority in this patriarchal structure.

Even though Dedes is treated as an instrument of power in her relationship with Arok, there are moments in which women like Dedes, though constrained by patriarchal norms, try to challenge and question the system. Nevertheless, Arok, with his power, perceives himself as entitled to decide Dedes' fate.

Arok (menanggapi upaya perlawanan Dedes): "Kamu tidak bisa melawan takdir, Dedes. Apa yang sudah ditentukan, harus terjadi."

Translate:

Arok (in response to Dedes' resistance): "You cannot fight destiny, Dedes. What is meant to happen will happen."

This dialogue highlights Arok's control over Dedes' life, as he tries to dictate her decisions within a patriarchal framework that forces women to obey the will of men in power. In this system, Dedes becomes a victim of the social structure that traps her, where the overpowering patriarchal force of Arok subdues her attempts to resist and assert her own choices.

Dominance over Dedes from a Feminist and Patriarchal Perspective

These dialogues demonstrate how the patriarchal system dictates Dede's social role and shapes her self-perception. The first dialogue illustrates her powerlessness as a woman, describing her trembling at the thought of being "taken to the bridal chamber by a man." This moment underscores Dedes' inability to reject the decisions made by Tunggul Ametung and society, reflecting a patriarchal system that controls women's destinies without their consent or agency. Despite holding a high status as queen, Dedes is denied the right to choose her husband, a privilege that remains exclusively with men in this social structure.

In *The Second Sex*, Simone de Beauvoir [20] asserts that women have historically been viewed as "the other" in patriarchal societies, defined by norms and roles established by men. Beauvoir argues that throughout history and culture, "humanity" has been equated with men, while women have been seen merely as an adjunct to men's existence. De Beauvoir claims that women have been objectified and, as a result, have never been considered full subjects with autonomy.

In the case of Arok Dedes, Dedes serves as a perfect example of this perspective. Even though she is a queen and holds a high rank, her status merely symbolizes the male power surrounding her. As seen in her dialogue, which demonstrates her powerlessness: "a man will soon take her to the bridal chamber." Dedes' marriage is not her choice but a decision made by Tunggul Ametung and Arok. Even though Dedes holds a high social status, she still lacks the freedom to control her destiny. In this context, de Beauvoir would view Dedes as "the other," shaped and controlled by men, regardless of her status in the social hierarchy.

De Beauvoir further asserts that women live in a "constrained" condition, where they are confronted with choices over which they have limited control. They are often compelled to accept roles imposed upon them by the social structure. Despite holding a high social status, Dedes is not free from the roles prescribed by patriarchy. In this

regard, de Beauvoir suggests that women's liberation can only be achieved if women can free themselves from the roles imposed by a patriarchal system that positions them as objects of male power. This is reflected in Dedes' powerlessness, as she appears to serve merely as a complement to male power through her marriage to Tunggul Ametung and Arok's perception of himself as the "creator" of Dedes' position in society.

Within the context of patriarchy theory, Sylvia Walby [21] argues that patriarchy is not merely a social system focused on male dominance in personal relationships but also a deeply embedded structure organized across various social, economic, political, and cultural institutions. Walby states that patriarchy regulates women's lives in various aspects, obstructing their autonomy and placing them in a continuously marginalized position, even when they hold high social status. Dedes' marriages to Tunggul Ametung and later to Arok can be seen as part of the power dynamics within the family and the political power structure within the framework of patriarchy as outlined by Walby. Although Dedes holds the queen status, her role remains controlled by the men around her. When Arok says, "I am the one who made you stand here. Everything you have is because of me, Dedes," this statement reflects male dominance, viewing women as objects acquired to strengthen their position. In this context, Dedes not only becomes a symbol of Arok's power but also remains under the control of the patriarchal system that regulates all aspects of life, from personal relationships to political ones.

It is important to note that the patriarchal system not only governs individual relationships but is also structured within various social, cultural, and religious layers that pressure women to remain in subordinate positions. For example, in the religious context, patriarchal ideologies are often reinforced through divine imagery dominated by male representations and doctrines of female submission. Pevey et al. [22] observe that women in certain communities, such as the Southern Baptist, must navigate between maintaining their identity and surviving within a patriarchal structure that requires them to submit to male authority. In *Arok Dedes*, we can see the influence of patriarchal doctrine reflected in the relationships between Dedes and Tunggul Ametung and Dedes and Arok. In both relationships, Dedes is required to submit to the decisions of men, both in spiritual and social aspects.

Patriarchy operates not only in personal relationships but is also embedded in larger organizational structures. Acker [23] states that organizational structures are inherently gender-biased and are often associated with male bodies and masculinity, which directly places women in lower positions. Although Dedes holds a high status as a queen, she remains within a broader patriarchal framework that obstructs her autonomy. Her social and political status does not grant her the freedom to determine her fate, and she remains positioned as a symbol of power contested by men rather than as an individual with control over her life.

Overall, patriarchal dominance in *Arok Dedes* is evident not only in the treatment of women in personal relationships but also in the social and political structures that constrain women's freedom. In a patriarchal world, women are often viewed as objects acquired through male power, and despite holding high social positions, they remain subordinate to men. This patriarchal system governs women's destinies, even in the most personal decisions, such as marriage and sexual relations. Dedes, despite being a respected queen, remains trapped within a social structure that limits her autonomy. This reflects that patriarchal dominance not only governs everyday life but also instills a worldview that limits women from determining their fate.

Love, Power, and Conquest: The Gendered Politics of Arok's Rise

Dedes is depicted as having a captivating appearance that mesmerizes Tunggul Ametung. Her beauty surpasses even the queens of Kediri, as illustrated in the following dialogue:

"Betul yang dikatakan orang," kata pria itu dari atas kudanya, "lima atau sepuluh Paramesywari Kediri masih kalah dibandingkan dengan kau seorang, Dedes. Mari, Permata, demi Hyang Wisynu, akan kududukan kau di singgasana mendampingi aku. Mari, mari...."

Translate:

"What people say is true," said the man from atop his horse, "five or ten Paramesywari of Kediri are still no match for you, Dedes. Come, Gem, by Hyang Wisynu, I will place you on the throne beside me. Come, come...."

Arok realizes that Dedes is the valid symbol of Tumapel. He believes that Dedes possesses charisma, intellect, and spiritual abilities, which allow her to serve as both an object and validation in Arok's mind to justify his rule over Tumapel. This is illustrated in the following lines:

Arok mengangkat muka dan mengagumi kecantikan Dedes. Dalam hati ia membenarkan Tunggul Ametung mendudukkannya pada tahta Tumapel. Ia adalah mahkota untuk kerajaan mana pun, karena kecantikannya, karena pengetahuannya, karena ke-brahmanaannya, karena ketangkasannya, karena keinginannya untuk mengetahui persoalan negeri.

Translate:

Arok raised his gaze and admired Dedes' beauty. In his heart, he justified Tunggul Ametung's decision to place her on the Tumapel throne. She is a crown for any kingdom because of her beauty, knowledge, Brahmanic nature, agility, and her desire to understand the country's issues.

Dedes is portrayed as a symbol of power over Tumapel, surpassing Tunggul Ametung. Arok uses his marriage to Dedes to solidify his power, making women a political tool to gain greater legitimacy and strength. Their relationship is not merely a marriage between two individuals but also a representation of gender roles within a power

structure where men have full access to the public sphere and political power. At the same time, women are relegated to the domestic and symbolic realm.

Women are frequently perceived as objects to be possessed, utilized, and manipulated in both social and political spheres. This is especially apparent in the use of women's bodies as symbols of power across different social contexts, including the one presented in this narrative. As Quiñones-Otal [24] discusses in art study, women's bodies are often used as metaphors to represent territorial boundaries or symbolize patriarchal power. The portrayal of women's bodies in art as symbols of resistance to male dominance demonstrates their transformation into an ideological battleground, challenging and critiquing patriarchal values. In *Arok Dedes*, Dedes' body is positioned as a political tool, employed to acquire power through marriage and sexual relations, reflecting the broader patriarchal system at play.

Within the context of hypergamy theory, which describes the practice of men marrying women with higher social or economic status to achieve greater social mobility, Dedes' marriage to Tunggul Ametung and later to Arok was not merely a romantic decision but a strategic move benefiting both parties.

According to Kim [25], hypergamy often conceptualizes women's bodies as assets in social contracts, where physical beauty and the role of women as wives serve to strengthen their social position. In this case, Dedes' captivating body is a tool for Arok to gain higher status in the Tumapel kingdom, a position once held by Tunggul Ametung. By mastering Dedes, Arok gains more than just a beautiful woman; he acquires social and spiritual power that is socially legitimized.

In the context of *Arok Dedes*, Dedes is not merely viewed as a captivating physical object but also as an entity that provides political legitimacy to Arok. This emphasizes that hypergamy can function within a broader social structure, where marriage, particularly to a woman with a certain status or beauty, serves as a means to gain greater power validation. In patriarchal societies, women are often positioned in roles that objectify them, even though they hold significant influence in achieving men's strategic goals [26].

According to Dommaraju [27], the practice of hypergamy in Southeast Asia, where women often marry older men or those with higher status, highlights the stark gender inequality, positioning women as instruments to gain both social and political power and legitimacy. In this case, Dedes' body holds equal value, both captivating and tied to the spiritual legitimacy of Tumapel, becoming an asset for Arok to solidify his position in the kingdom despite his lowly origins. This underscores that women's bodies are not only symbols of aesthetics but also points of intersectionality where male power can be acquired.

Dedes, as a woman of exceptional beauty and high status, serves as a vehicle of legitimacy for Arok. Meanwhile, Arok, with his power, elevates Dedes to a higher position within the social structure of the kingdom. However, as noted by Mougoué [28], although women's bodies are used as symbols of power within the patriarchal system, there are also possibilities for deconstructing this narrative. Women like Dedes, although positioned within a system that objectifies their bodies, can leverage their positions in social and political negotiations to gain personal benefits, even within the framework of dominant male power.

Through the relationship between Dedes and Arok in *Arok Dedes*, it is clear that the patriarchal system positions women as political tools to reinforce male power. Although Dedes holds a high status as a queen, she is trapped within the patriarchal system that uses her body as a symbol of power. Her marriage to Arok is not merely a romantic gesture but a political strategy to gain legitimacy over Tumapel. Hypergamy theory explains that while women may be viewed as social assets, they are still positioned in subordination, serving to solidify male power. Although patriarchal norms constrain Dedes, her presence remains crucial in the politics of power, indicating that women, although positioned in subordinate roles, have the potential to influence larger systems.

Androcentrism in History and Literature: A Critical Perspective on the Representation of Women

Androcentrism, centering male perspectives and experiences in historical narratives and literary works, has long influenced our understanding of gender and power dynamics. In both history and literature, women's roles are frequently defined within the framework of male-dominated social structures [29], [30], [31], [32]. This critical analysis seeks to examine the influence of androcentrism on the representation of women, rendering them as passive figures or placing them within a patriarchal framework. The primary objective is to explore the ways these gender representations reinforce broader power imbalances, often ignoring the voices, autonomy, and agency of women. We critically analyze these historical and literary depictions to challenge the dominant patriarchal structure and propose more inclusive and equitable representations.

In historical records, women's roles are often marginalized or reduced to secondary positions, relegated to the domestic sphere, while men are placed as active and public figures [33], [34], [35]. This dichotomy reflects deeply ingrained gender norms in many cultures, including pre-modern societies. In Pramoedya Ananta Toer's novel *Arok Dedes*, the character Dedes serves as a dynamic example, where her high status as *Paramesywari* (queen) does not shield her from the patriarchal norms of her time. Forced marriage and the lack of Dedes' autonomy demonstrate that even women in positions of power are still controlled by male figures, both through political alliances

and patriarchal control over personal choices. Dedes' characterization, although prominent in the narrative, is still defined by her relationships with men, such as her marriage to Tunggal Ametung and later to Arok, both of whom control her fate.

Such representations are common in historical texts, where women's agency is often ignored or diminished. They are typically depicted as objects of male desire or political tools rather than subjects with their aspirations and identities. As Simone de Beauvoir [20] argued in *The Second Sex*, women have long been seen as "the other," defined not by their own experiences but through the needs and desires of men.

Literary tradition also reflects this androcentric bias, with many classical works and media placing female characters as secondary figures behind male protagonists [36], [37], [38], [39], [40], [41]. This is a reflection of the author's bias and a representation of the broader social structure within which these works were written. Literature, specifically and in many cases, reinforces these gender norms by portraying women as symbols of virtue, purity, or motherhood, often without providing them with agency or their voice [42], [43], [44], [45]. In the case of *Arok Dedes*, Dedes' beauty and status are emphasized, but her inner struggles and limited agency are overlooked. The constant manipulation of her body and identity by male characters, whether through marriage or political maneuvering, reinforces the idea that a woman's value lies in her utility to male characters or the patriarchal system.

Moreover, the relationship between women and power is often portrayed in a one-dimensional way in androcentric literature. Women, particularly in historical contexts, are frequently depicted as victims of male authority, with little ability to challenge or redefine their roles. This reinforces the traditional narrative that women's contributions are only valuable when linked to men. Sylvia Walby's [21] analysis of patriarchy emphasizes patriarchy's operation in personal relationships and within cultural, economic, and political structures. She asserts that patriarchy is a deep, multifaceted system that reinforces male dominance, preventing women from fully realizing their autonomy.

Feminist critiques of androcentrism in history and literature suggest a more inclusive representation approach is needed. Instead of placing women in passive roles, the feminist perspective calls for a reinterpretation of history and literature that acknowledges women as active agents with their own stories, desires, and contributions. By analyzing texts like *Arok Dedes* through a feminist lens, we can uncover the hidden power dynamics that shape the narrative and representation of women. Dedes' internal struggle, her efforts to resist and assert her autonomy, despite being suppressed by the narrative, reveals the complex ways in which women navigate and challenge patriarchal structures, even within a repressive environment.

Moreover, feminist scholars contend that gender relations in literature should not be examined in isolation. The intersection of gender, class, race, and social status must be considered to understand the ways in which overlapping power structures shape women's roles. Kimberlé Crenshaw's [46] intersectionality theory highlights the intersection of race, class, and gender in creating unique experiences of oppression, particularly for women marginalized by multiple identities. In this context, a feminist analysis of *Arok Dedes* can reveal the impact of patriarchy and the intersection of gender, class, and power that influences Dedes' fate.

Women's representation in history and literature has long been dominated by androcentrism, which places women as passive objects within the patriarchal structure. A critical perspective on these representations of women demands a re-evaluation of historical and literary narratives that consistently marginalize or silence women's voices. Through a feminist lens, texts such as *Arok Dedes* provide a unique opportunity to explore the ways in which patriarchy operates in personal relationships and the broader social structure. By recognizing women's agency, even within limiting systems, and understanding the intersection of gender with other power structures, we can challenge the traditional narratives that have shaped our understanding of gender and power.

Conclusion

This study reveals the patriarchal system in 13th-century Javanese feudal society, as depicted in Pramoedya Ananta Toer's *Arok Dedes*. This system places women like Dedes, despite her high status as a queen, in a subordinate position as objects of power. Through her marriage to Arok, Dedes is used as a political tool to consolidate power over Tumapel, reflecting profound gender inequality.

This study enhances the understanding of gender dynamics in Indonesian history by integrating patriarchy and hypergamy theories with a feminist approach to examine the impact of patriarchy on social and political structures. Its practical implications provide insights into the significance of women's empowerment and gender equality in contemporary social and political contexts, fostering discussions on the persistence of similar patriarchal systems in modern structures.

This study emphasizes the importance of recognizing women not only as victims but also as agents capable of navigating and challenging the existing patriarchal system.

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