Cultural Identity and Female Representation in Indonesian Women’s Magazines*

Intan Paramaditha

Abstract Dewasa ini banyak media massa cetak diterbitkan oleh dan untuk perempuan. Majalah yang demikian lazim disebut majalah wanita. Sebagian besar majalah wanita diterbitkan oleh orang Indonesia (majalah wanita Indonesia); sebagian yang lain merupakan majalah asing yang diterbitkan di Indonesia (edisi Indonesia). Dalam tulisan ini dimuat perbandingan isi kedua kelompok majalah wanita tersebut, yang dikaikan dengan isu tentang perempuan. Dari perbandingan, tampak bahwa isu modernitas, yang terutama diusung majalah wanita asing edisi Indonesia, mempengaruhi tampilan isi majalah wanita Indonesia.

Kata Kunci Cultural identity, gender, female representation, magazine.

Indonesian people have been introduced to the portrait of an ideal family since they first learned a sentence model in Bahasa Indonesia Elementary Student’s Book: Bapak membaca koran dan Ibu memasak di dapur (‘Father is reading the newspaper and mother is cooking in the kitchen’). Indonesian student generations—at least until those who went to the elementary school in the 80’s like me—know by heart the members of this family. It consists of the father (he has no other names but ‘Father’) who is sitting in the living room with the newspaper in his hand, his wife—a woman usually illustrated in Javanese traditional kebaya—who is either sewing or cooking, their children: Budi, Tuti and Sudin. The 80’s was the age where Kartini Day had already been made famous by the New Order government as “Indonesian women’s emancipation day”. At the same time, the traditional depiction of gender roles is still (intentionally) preserved based on the interest of Indonesian patriarchal and political system: men as the center and women as the supporters helping them maintain their position. “The result of this

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One of the examples is the establishment of women’s organization Dharma Wanita which positions housewives as the supporters of their husbands’ activities in politics (e.g. in organizing campaigns). Details can be seen in Rudiah Primariantari’s “Negara Birokrat dan Ibu (Bapak) Pejabat” (Beaurocratic Country and Executive Wives) in Primariantari et.al.eds. Perempuan dan Politik Tubuh Fantastis (Women and Fantastic Body Politics) (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 1998), p. 50.