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CONFLICT IN HAMKA'S NOVEL MERANTAU KE DELI: A SOCIOLOGY OF LITERATURE APPROACH

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Abstract

This research aims at defining and describing conflicts faced by the protagonist, Leman, in Hamka's Novel Merantau ke Deli. Hamka through the novel tells about Minangkabau ethnic group and its customary law which adopts matrilineal system. The system adopts the family ties of mother. The system puts the position of men under the women in many aspects of life such as considered as guest (urang sumando) in his own house, and no power in deciding his daughter's marriage. This research conducted uses descriptive qualitative method proposed. Conflict theory proposed by Pickering which divided conflict into social conflict, interpersonal conflict, and intrapersonal conflict is applied. Sociology of literature approach is used to reveal kinds of conflict, causes of conflict, and solutions of the conflict. The results show that the protagonist, Leman faced social conflict about the customary law applied in his community. As a Minangkabau man, he has to marry a Minangkabau woman to be considered in the society although he has married a Javanese woman and to be allowed in using an honorific title in Minangkabau society. The interpersonal conflict faced by the protagonist is between he and his wife, Poniem. And the intrapersonal conflict is when he decided to marry Mariatun, a Minangkabau woman, to be his second wife.

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1. Introduction

Conflict is competition or conflict between parties that are not compatible with each other, contradictory circumstances or behaviors (such as disagreements, interests, or conflicts between individuals), disputes, and conflicts (Webster, as cited in Pickering, 2006). Novels as a reflection of society illustrate the reality of the community in terms of social, economic and cultural activities that are developed in the community because literature is inseparable from the real life of society. Literary works always intersect with the people in the era where the literary work was created, as well as the novel *Merantau ke Deli* by Haji Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah or known as Hamka, a novel that tells the story of a pair of young men who are in love but are surrounded by customs embraced so that they must harbor love for each of them. This novel has been adapted into film twice with high school titles in 1981 and 2011. This novel began to be written in 1935.

The social life of the people embraced in the novel is Minangkabau. Minangkabau is one of the tribes in Indonesia which is a tribe that adheres to the matriarchal system. The matriarchal system is a kinship system traced from the mother's side so that the mother has the greater power in terms of her inheritance and matchmaking. Husbands, in Minangkabau customs, are only considered guests or termed *Sumando*. The rules that apply in these customs will of course cause a person to suffer conflict with themselves, with fellow followers, or also with adherents.

Hamka's novels, many of which have traditional background in Minangkabau culture, can be said to be a reflection of society in their time. As a study related to society, the sociology of literature is used to examine the social conflicts that occur in the novel *Merantau ke Deli*. Damono (1978) states that the study of sociology of literature explains that literature is a reflection of its era. Simple interactions from one group to another are a conflict in the study of sociology of literature. Conflict grows and develops because there is a reciprocal relationship between one group and another group. Sociological approaches can be used to resolve existing conflicts.

The focus of this research is to uncover the types of conflicts, causes of conflict, and how to resolve social conflicts experienced by the main character in Hamka's Novel *Merantau ke Deli*. Hopefully, this research can be one of the references in the literature on sociology, especially those related to social conflict in literary works which are a reflection of society.

Turner (2006) states that the form of conflict is based on three concepts which are divided into nine main points, namely the social system is composed of a number of interdependent units, there is an inequality of the main distributions that are valuable from each unit, units that feel Such inequality begins to question the legitimacy of the existing social system, the unit that feels such inequality begins to realize the existence of an interest from the unit that has more distribution, the lacking unit starts to emit emotions over the inequalities, emotions that are allowed to emerge the frustration experienced by the units lacking the distribution, the intensity of their involvement in the conflict increased and the involvement was increasingly emotional, various attempts were made to organize the involvement of groups that did not have interests included in these emotional interests, and finally open conflict between groups a and non-possessed groups.

The level of conflict resolution expressed by Turner (2006), the two conflicting parties solved it in their own way. The way in which conflict is resolved is one of the distinctive features of the conflict itself.

Applied in the object, the level of resolution is how the two parties can eliminate the conflict because indeed before Wasripin's arrival the two parties were not hostile to each other. The approach expressed by Jonathan Turner regarding conflict resolution takes precedence over how the level of emotionality of the community members. In the phenomenon, conflicts are resolved in an unpleasant way. This is due to the level of emotionality of the people in the story which is still classified as having a very high level of emotionality. It is indicated that there is still a lot of violence that occurs and lack of communication so that the realization of peace in the story in the novel.

Wellek and Warren (as cited in Nurgiyantoro, 2007) state that conflict is something dramatic, referring to a battle between two balanced forces which causes the main action and retaliatory action. According to Pickering (2006), conflict can be in the form of human conflict with himself, human conflict with humans, human conflict with society, and human conflict with nature.

Human Conflict with Himself

Pickering (2006) states that human conflict with itself is a conflict that occurs in the heart or soul of a story character. This conflict is more of an internal problem and is a fight against itself. Internal conflict is an emotional disturbance that occurs in a person because it is required to complete a job or fulfill an expectation, while experience, interests, goals and values cannot fulfill it.

This type of conflict occurs if an individual is uncertain about what work is expected to be done by him, if certain demands of the existing work, collide with other demands, or if the individual is required to carry out things that exceed his ability (Winardi, 2007).

Human Conflict with Humans

Pickering (2006) states that inter-human conflict is a conflict caused by the existence of contact between humans and humans or problems that arise due to human relations. Everyone has basic psychological needs that can trigger conflict not fulfilled. According to Winardi (2007), this conflict occurs because of differences in personality. Often such conflicts arise because pressures are related to the role or the way people personalize conflict.

Human Conflict with Society

Human conflict with society is a conflict caused by the existence of social contact between humans and other humans in the structure of the wider community. Human conflict with society is a conflict that occurs to individuals within a group (community, team, department, company, etc. (Pickering, 2006). According to Winardi (2007), human conflict with society is often related to the ways of individuals facing pressures to achieve conformity, which is emphasized to them by their groups, this conflict is something that is common in the community because of disagreement with rules, values, norms, customs and culture adopted.

Human Conflict with Nature

Human conflict with nature is a conflict caused by a clash between characters and natural elements. A fight that is carried out by a character or human individually or together against the forces of nature that threaten the life of man himself.

Meredith and Fitzgerald (as cited in Nurgiyantoro, 2013) explain that conflicts in literary works are something of an unpleasant value that occurs or is experienced by story characters where when these figures are welcome to vote, the character chooses not to accept and will undergo that event. Furthermore, Soekanto (1982) explains that social conflict is as an individual social process or group that seeks to fulfill its objectives by way of opposing opponents accompanied by threats or violence. Conflict can happen to someone individually or in groups. These conflicts involve strong personal feelings of truth. Nurgiyantoro (2013) explains that events and conflicts are closely related to one another which results in an interesting event in a literary work. Conflict in a literary work is inseparable from the storyline.

Literary sociology as an approach is used to examine conflicts that occur in the storyline of literature. According to Laurenson and Swingewood (as cited in Endraswara, 2013), there are three perspectives relating to the sociology of literature. Research that looks at literary sociology as a document and historical evidence of developments in society, research was conducted to examine how the background of an author and view the literature, and research was conducted to make the document a historical record of social and cultural.

2. Problem Statement

Novel *Merantau ke Deli* by Hamka tells about Minangkabau ethnic with their customs and traditions. Minangkabau people wherever they are always upload their custom and traditions under the matriarchal system. The system itself creates some conflicts especially for those who are living at the overseas.

3. Research Questions

The research questions are formulated as follows.

1. What conflicts exist in the novel *Merantau ke Deli* by Hamka?
2. How the conflicts influence the life of Minangkabau people in the overseas?

4. Purpose of the Study

The purposes of this study are as follows:

1. To find out about the conflicts exist in the novel *Merantau ke Deli* by Hamka.
2. To elaborate how the conflicts influence the life of Minangkabau people in the overseas.

5. Research Methods

This study uses a qualitative method with a sociological approach. Qualitative methods are used to examine an object in depth and with interpretations in the form of descriptive. The sociological approach

is used because the conflict studied is the social aspects that become the reference in the study of the conflict.

Novel *Merantau ke Deli*, the eighth print of Hamka's work published in 157 pages in 1982, becomes the primary data source in this study. The data used in this study are words, phrases, clauses, sentences, or paragraphs that indicate the existence of a conflict of the main characters contained in the primary data source. The data obtained is not data that still does not really exist so that the qualitative method used will prove that there is data suspected of conflict in the novel.

Data were collected by observation and documentation techniques. Observation techniques are used to find data using the sense of sight to read novels. Then the documentation technique was applied to record data obtained in one special writing media. However, to make the study focusses, the limitation made only discusses about human conflict with her/himself and Human conflict with other human.

6. Findings

Soekanto (1982) looks that conflicts happen at the personal attitudes or group of people that aware about the differences which create a disagreement. Feeling has so important role in sharpening the differences that every people or community beats each other. The feeling can be in the form of anger and hatred which causes incitements to hurt or against other. In the novel *Merantau ke Deli*, the conflicts are not only with him/herself, human or society but also with the custom that tie up.

6.1. Human Conflict with Him/Herself

Leman, the protagonist is a Minangkabau young man who wanders to Tanah Deli. He trades goods in the tobacco plantations. When he traded his wares, he saw Poniem and fell in love. Poniem is a Javanese woman. She was a concubine of great foreman in the tobacco plantation. He dares himself to ask Poniem if she would like to marry with him. Poniem actually likes and fell in love with Leman also. However because they have different ethnic group, Poniem does not directly accept about the marriage. She was afraid about the different customs they have. It becomes a conflict within herself. The customs between Javanese and Minangkabau are really different since Javanese adopts Patriarchal system meanwhile Minangkabaunese adopts Matriarchal system. The conflict itself is portrayed in the following quotation.

Isn't you going to be blamed later by the your ethnics, because I know, many of them brought their wives to wander here, Oh! I saw the Padang woman clean, everything was similar to Hajj, her hair never opened, the cloth cleaned well. Will they not laugh at you, take the contract coolie of the plantation as your wife? And will not you himself be ashamed to see me mixed in among them Give me first thought of three days, on the twenty-second of the afternoon, we meet again here ...
(Hamka, 1982, p. 13)

However, she faces a conflict with herself, the war between considerations and feelings. Consider saying no, the feeling says accept it. At first she planned to rejected Leman's request properly, but after Leman made the request, she had just granted it. The conflict absolutely influences the live of Poniem. If she rejected Leman's request then she will live as a cocubine of the great foreman for her whole live. If she

granted the request, she will become the wife of Leman and live freely. But, the different culture they have still scared her about her future live.

6.2. Human Conflict with Other Human

When Leman and Poniem decided to be back to Leman's hometown, Padang, Leman never thought that he were asked to marry one more woman, a Minangkabau. According to their custom, if Leman does not marry a Minangkabaunese woman, he can not use the Minangkabau honorific title, *Sutan*. Finally he decided to marry Mariatun, a Minangkabaunese girl to be his second wife. The conflicts happen after he made his two wives live together with him in a house due to the economic matter they faced. Different manners between the two create conflict everyday in the household. The quotation below shows the conflict between Poniem and Mariatun when they were confronting about something concerns with Leman's pants.

You really loss your mind, Mariatun, you hook your bed cloth near my husband's pants. You can do what you like here, but don't cross the line.

Up to me with my possessions. Whatever deeds will be done while he is with me, does it hurt you?" asked Mariatun.

Of course that action hurts me, it was very improperly.

If my husband gives me all kinds of deeds we will do on this house.

But you forget that there is also another woman here, there is also a human who has the right to your husband that you must look at at least the corner of your eyes. (Hamka, 1982, p. 95)

Poniem has the features of Javanese woman. The nature and attitude of Poniem, as the female main character in the novel. She works hard and never gives up; she is also patient with the storms of life hitting her all the time however she is gentle in her attitude from which her modesty is reflected (Pardi & Hariani, 2017). She faces her life without complaining. She never says no for her husband. She did everything patiently although her heart is difficult to accept what her husband did such as married another girl as his second wife and also prepared meals for all of them meanwhile Mariatun take over only to serve to their husband to get praise from her husband.

However, Poniem can not be patient anymore when she is faced Mariatun's attitudes. Mariatun looks Poniem contemptuously. She was very demeaning to Poniem. She considers Poniem as a maid not the first wife of Leman. Poniem was very angry at that time. The following quotation shows how Poniem was very angry to Mariatun.

Up to me, I live on my husband's property. I came here between my ninik mamak, you are maid here.

I will help my husband trade. We are villagers, same hometown, not your kind.

That was what Poniem was waiting for, because he had not yet been repaid.

You are indeed a bitch, and do not like to ask left and right. Don't you know that you are bought then you can come here? Don't you know that all the things in this store are not from your possessions and not from your husband's possessions? Don't you know that my bracelets, eardrops and all diamond jewelry was previously sold and pawned to enforce this trade, so that your husband

who used to sell only on the back could open the shop "You despise the Javanese" Where you can live, How your hands can be wrapped in gold if not Javanese, arrogant child! You say you are with your husband. Yes, that is the woman of Padang, a mercenary eye. ... (Hamka, 1982, p. 98)

The conflicts between Poniem and Mariatun makes Leman frustrates. Another conflict between Poniem and Mariatun made him divorces Poniem. The second marriage between Leman and Mariatun really influences the live between Leman and Poniem. They used to live peacefully. After the divorce, Poniem and Suyono start their new life in Medan. They finally get married dan live peacefully. Meanwhile, Leman becomes poor and takes his wife, Mariatun and his daughter back to Padang.

7. Conclusion

Merantau ke Deli is a novel written by Hamka tells about the social life of Minangkabau ethnic. The custom and tradition adopted are really different than the other ethnics in this country. Minangkabau ethnic adopts matriarchal system which lineage traced from the mother's side. The novel tells about Leman and Poniem, which come from different ethnic, Minangkabau and Javanese ties by marriage. The different customs they have create conflict in their life. The conflicts with her/himself are faced by Leman when he is faced on the decision on his second marriage with mariatun, and also when he divorces Poniem. Poniem also faces conflict with herself when Leman's request to marry her and also when she are asked by Leman to permit him marries another woman from his own tribe. The conflicts with other human are faced by Poniem with Mariatun when they lives at the same house with Leman. The conflicts in the novel influences the future life of the characters in the novel.

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