

Social Problems In The Novel Bumi Manusia By Pramoedya Ananta Toer (A Sociological Review Of Literature)

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine the social problems in Pramoedya Ananta Toer's novel Bumi Manusia and to uncover the social issues contained within the novel. The purpose of this study is to increase readers' knowledge of literary studies, particularly the sociology of literature, and to enhance readers' understanding of the social problems contained in Pramoedya Ananta Toer's novel Bumi Manusia. The method used in this study is descriptive qualitative. This type of research is library research. Based on the findings of this study, there are seven social problems contained in Pramoedya Ananta Toer's novel Bumi Manusia: poverty, crime, family disorganization, youth issues in modern society, war, violations of norms, and bureaucracy. Each of these social problems is cited. After conducting this research, we can see how difficult it was to live as an indigenous person during that era.

Keywords: Social Problems, Bumi Manusia, Pramoedya Ananta Toer

INTRODUCTION

A literary work is generally based on a human life story and the realities of life or events that have occurred. These life stories and realities or events can be from the author himself or from the lives and realities or events of others. This is in accordance with Tarigan's opinion (2011: 45), who defines a novel as a story with a long plot in a book that depicts an imaginative story

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derived from the life stories and realities or events of characters. Therefore, literary works have their own world, born from the observations and analysis of a writer. The results of these observations and analysis are then written into a literary work.

A literary work will be born in various forms such as poetry, prose, drama, novel and so on. The literary works that will be discussed in this research are novel literary works. Novel literary works usually show the socio-cultural background of a society. According to Waluyo (2002:51) a novel will show the background of a society including, ways of life, customs, habits, attitudes, traditional and religious ceremonies, local conversions, manners, etiquette, and relationships in society. Therefore, the novel uses this social background as the source of the story in a novel.

Etymologically, the word novel comes from the Latin word novellus. The word novellus is derived from the word novus, which means new in English. The novel is said to be the newest form of literature because it is a work of literature that comes later than other literary works. According to Nurgiyanto (2012: 4), a novel is a literary work that presents an imaginative world containing a longed-for life, a life set against the backdrop of events experienced by oneself or other characters, built from various intrinsic elements such as events, setting, plot, characters, point of view, and others.

The sociology of literature is an interdisciplinary science, capitalizing on the common objects of sociological and literary theory: humans and society. Essentially, sociology can be defined as a pure social science, abstract yet empirical and rational. These two characteristics limit it to what happens, not what should happen. It examines the general principles and laws of human interaction, as well as the nature, form, content, and structure of human society (Soerjono Soekanto, 2005: 15-23).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is qualitative. Therefore, the appropriate method to use is descriptive qualitative. According to H.B. Sutopo (2006: 40), descriptive qualitative research is a qualitative research activity involving a collection of literary works. Words, sentences, or images that have meaning and can become factors in generating a more concrete understanding than simply presenting numbers or frequencies, serve as the primary data.

DISCUSSION

Poverty

One of the most common social problems we encounter is poverty. In fact, it is one of the



most pressing issues for the state. Poverty can be defined as a situation where a person is unable to meet their own needs, resulting in a lack of basic necessities such as food, clothing, and shelter in their daily lives. According to Eka Kurniawan (2008:7), poverty is defined as a situation where there is an inability to meet daily needs, even basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter, education, and healthcare. This can be seen from the statement:

That's it, Ann, the simple ceremony of how a child is sold by her own father, the scribe Sastrotomo. I was the one being sold: Sanikem. From that moment on, I completely lost all respect and appreciation for my father, for anyone who had ever sold their own child. For whatever purpose or intention. (Pramoedya Ananta Toer, p. 123).

From the quote above, it can be concluded that poverty will drive someone to do anything to change their fate and escape poverty. Of course, this kind of behavior will cause others to suffer losses. The benefits they obtain. They should avoid behaviors that cause harm to others.

Crime

According to Sutherland (2005: 408), a person behaves evilly in the same way as they behave non-criminally. This means that evil behavior is learned through interactions with others, and the person acquires evil behavior as a result of interactions with people who behave in a way that tends to violate existing legal norms. Similarly, Ichwan Muis (2008: 2) states that crime is formally defined as an act for which the state punishes it. Crime is considered a violation of criminal law.

At first, Robert sold whatever he could from the warehouse, kitchen, house, and office, selling it for himself. His mother expelled any workers he ordered to steal for her own use. Then, she forbade Robert from entering any room except his own bedroom and the dining room. (This Earth of Mankind, p. 153)

From the quote above, it can be concluded that Robert Mellema's behavior was fully conscious, as he was committing theft in his home. This behavior constitutes a crime.

Family Disorganization

Family disorganization is a problem that occurs within the family. There are various causes of family disorganization, including separation or divorce between parents, the failure of the head of the family to function effectively, and a lack of interaction between family members. Meanwhile, according to Soerjono Soekanto (2013: 56), family disorganization is the breakdown of a family as a unit due to its members' failure to fulfill their obligations consistent with their



social roles.

"No, that's fine. Let everything be broken up. The wounds to my pride and self-esteem won't go away. When I think back to how I was sold, I can't forgive Sasrotomo's greed and his wife's weakness. Once in a while, a person must make a decision. Otherwise, they become nothing." (Bumi Manusia, p. 138)

The quote above depicts the anger of a mother who tells of her grandfather's greed for wealth, which led him to sell his child. This was done to make the grandson hate his grandfather.

War

War is an action by a group or country aimed at controlling a territory. According to Ichwan Muis (2008: 6), war is both physical and non-physical action. In the narrow sense, it is a state of hostility involving violence between two or more groups of people to assert dominance in a contested territory.

They ran and ran. One could not predict what was being prepared beyond the approaching swarm of ants. The Acehese were skilled at deception. They could suddenly appear with new troops. They could only run and run, taking as many victims as they could. The victims were treated at the Company hospital (Bumi Manusia, p. 100).

From the quote above, it can be concluded that the Acehese army had a strategy that was difficult for the enemy to predict, thus causing concern among the Company soldiers. The Acehese troops were very enthusiastic in their fight to free themselves from colonial rule.

Problems of the Youth Generation in Modern Society

Adolescence is a time filled with choices and determination. Young people often make wrong decisions, thus going against the rules. Based on the novel Bumi Manusia one of the causes of this problem is the difference in social class between indigenous and Indo-European youth. According to Kurniadi (1987), the youth generation is a segment of society with a strategic age and function.

Should I be thrown out like a dog from this luxurious house, amidst Robert Suurhof's laughter? I've never felt this anxious. Suurhof's gaze pounced on my neck. The young man Mellema's gaze was still uninterested, he didn't even blink (Bumi Manusia, p. 29).

Robert Suurhof's reason for inviting Minke to the Mellema family home was to humiliate him, especially in front of Annelies. This quote illustrates the gap between indigenous and Indo-European youths.



Violations of Norm

According to Pranomo (2017), those who violate norms will receive abuse and criticism from the local community. Common violations of societal norms include: prostitution, child delinquency, alcoholism, and homosexuality.

a) Prostitution

A Chinese-style house with a spacious, well-maintained courtyard and a hedge. The front door and windows are closed. The paint is all red. It doesn't appeal to my sense of beauty. And who doesn't know whose house it is? A pleasure house, a sacred house, owned by Babah Ah Tjong (Bumi Manusia, p. 24).

The quote above depicts a house owned by a Chinese man named Babah Ah Tjong. He runs a prostitution business that is well-known throughout Surabaya. He also has a Japanese prostitute named Maiko.

b) Alcoholism

"What do you drink, Nyo? What do you usually drink? Wisli, Blandy, Cognag, Bolsh, Ciu, or just regular arak? Sausages? White, yellow, warm, or cold. Or malaga? Or keeling?" (Bumi Manusia, p. 243)

From this quote, Robert Mellema has never drunk alcohol, and it's clear he doesn't know the different types of alcoholic beverages. But Babah Ah Tjong forced Robert Mellema to drink.

Bureaucracy

According to Sedarmayanti (2009: 67), bureaucracy is a government system that aims to regulate the running of a country by involving civil servants under the supervision of law. In other words, bureaucracy is a hierarchical organization rationally established to coordinate the work of people for the purpose of carrying out administrative tasks.

"I also said, 'My daughter is married. She's someone else's wife.' The man just smiled imperceptibly and replied, 'She's not married. She's still a minor. Even if someone were to marry her, the marriage would be invalid. Did you hear that, Minke, son? It's invalid.' I was even threatened with a violation for not reporting the unauthorized marriage, and accused of being an accomplice in rape (Bumi Manusia, pp. 488-489).

From the above statement, it can be concluded that European Court law, particularly in the Netherlands, prohibited marriages between indigenous people and people of European descent. Indigenous people were not permitted to marry people of European descent; if they did, they would be punished for rape.



CONCLUSION

The results of this study, related to the social problems contained in Pramoedya Ananta Toer's novel *Bumi Manusia*, reveal numerous behaviors and actions that violate the law, human rights, and norms. However, the most violations were found to occur against women. This illustrates the difficulty of living as a woman during that era.

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