

Satire in *Le familie de kere*: A Reflection of Urban Society

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Abstract. Urban communities often regarded as the periphery in big cities. They are the people who considered a lower-class society. *Le familie de kere* is a satire short story by Juslifar M. Junus that raises the issue of urban people. The literary sociology and identity theory approach used as an analytical tool to examine the life issues of urban people who are looking for their identity. The search is for the identity of this lower-class community discussed in this study. They look for the meaning of identity amid a problematic life and get an answer that they only have an identity as a poor community in the middle of the big city of Surabaya.

Keywords: identity, satire, short story, sociology of literature, urban society

1 Introduction

The problems of urban communities living in big cities are often related to poverty, the bitterness of life, and shortcomings. All these problems are closely related to negative issues that make their existence increasingly marginalized. The problems of urban society's life then encourage the emergence of literary works in the form of short stories, novels, films, and theater stage that raise issues of social problems. A literary work that portrays social issues with their environment accompanied by changes that occur, and the impact is very close to the sociology of literature.

Sociology of literature is the knowledge that can connect human work with life in society [1]. Therefore, various literary works that succeeded in raising the issue of the life of urban society are very close to the study of literary sociology. Their works

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felt to be able to highlight the human relationship with the work created. The community can adapt their work, and in the original form [2]. These literary works become a reflection of the phenomena occurring in society.

Various problems in big cities inspired many writers to put them in the themes of their writings. Some writers became phenomenal because they successfully raised the urban issues that were considered taboo in Indonesia. Some of them are Moammar Emka with *Jakarta Undercover* (2005), *Jakarta Undercover 2 (Carnival Night)*, *Jakarta Undercover 3 (Forbidden City)*, *In Bed with Models* (2006) and several other works. Hereafter is Threes Emir with the work of *Nyonya Besar* (2012), *Tuan Besar* (2012), *Simpanan Nyonya Besar* (2014).

Emka raised the issue of the lives of artists and celebrities that are full of controversial stories. Likewise, Emir is portraying the lives of socialites who live in big cities. The work of Emir *Simpanan Nyonya Besar* is the real social reality because it based on a true story [3]. If the two writers are more interested in raising the issue of sexuality and the lives of socialite elites in metropolitan cities, as a contradiction is Juslifar M. Junus, who raises the theme of urban society in the lowest strata social or poor people in a collection of short stories entitled *Kerebritis*. In this study, one short story was chosen and become the main corpus entitled *Le familie de kere*.

The short story of *Le familie de kere* raises the issue of marginalized urban communities in Surabaya [4]. The title *Le familie de kere* is unique because it is a combination of French (*Le familie*) and Javanese language (*kere*). *Kere* has poor meaning. Various issues of inequality were raised by the author using the style of satire. The issue of the social reality of the lower class and upper-middle-class society reflects that in big cities, there are significant differences in class, social strata, lifestyle, needs, and daily habits. The problem raised in this study is the identity of the lowest classes in Surabaya.

Satire contains criticism of humans [5]. Satire is primarily a form of attack, including to laugh at the stupidity of people, society, practices, habits, and specific institutions. Satire simply can be understood as a choice of words used in communicating to express criticism subtly, namely in the form of satire. Because it is often used and widely circulated in the community, the satire also affects the people's lifestyle. The presence of satire in literary works is one of the exciting things to study.

This research uses a sociological approach. The principle of this approach is to analyze humans in society with a process of understanding ranging from society to individuals. This approach also considers literary works as belonging to the community [6]. In literature, as image quality, every human being can imagine himself becoming a wealthy person, a king, or God. Moreover, the author can take the opposite position, namely the poor, marginalized, and neglected people—these unlucky group of people raised by the author. The concept of identity of Stuart Hall states that identity is a process of becoming not a process of being [7]. Identity is the essence marked through several signs such as taste, beliefs, attitudes, and lifestyle.

Damono (2003: 1) revealed that literature displays a picture of life, and life itself is a social reality [8]. In this sense, life encompasses relationships between people, between people and people, between people, and between events that occur within a

person. However, events occurring in a person's mind, which are often the material of literature, are reflections of one's relationship with others or with society, foster individual social attitudes, or even trigger certain social events.

Pradopo (1993: 34) stated that the purpose of sociological studies in the literature is to get a complete picture of the relationship between authors, literary works, and society [9]. Endraswara, in his book *Metodologi Pengajaran Sastra*, gives an understanding that the sociology of literature is research focused on human problems because literature often reveals the struggle of humanity in determining its future, based on imagination, feelings, and intuition (2003: 79) [10].

According to the authors of cultural studies, identity should be understood not as an entity but as an emotionally charged description [11]. It means we should not understand identity as "eternal" (timeless). It is better to understand the meaning of being a person as something that is plastic and can change and specific to individual social and cultural nodes.

This text answers the social problems implicit in many literary works as literary responses to social phenomena and the complexity of the problems that surround them. Literature is a product of society.

2 Satire of urban people in *Le familie de kere*

The concept of self-identity becomes the theme in the short story *Le familie de kere* talks about the process of finding "something," which gradually realized to be possessed by a human being. Not all humans can live by accepting the status of identity that has brought since birth. Self-identity is not based on gender, ethnicity, the place where someone was born and grew up, descendants of nobles or bad people, religion taught by the family, level of education, level of the economic establishment, type of hobbies, the reflection of relationships. All do not guarantee a human being immediately finds the primary color of his soul or his real self-identity.

In this text, there are two central characters, Karto and Warip. They are representations of lower-class society. They are poor, do not have enough money, and a steady income. Karto is the type of man who has fewer job skills, while Warip is a security at the market. They both have a less fortunate fate. Poverty and lack of money put them in the category of less affluent urban communities.

The author uses satire in the story by presenting a conversation between angels and Karto before meeting God. The angel questions about Karto's self-identity, which he answered by mentioning his name was considered not answering the question by the angel. The point of the angel's question is not related to the names, but about something that exists in a human being, namely the character, nature, and personality. By presenting Karto's answer in names, the authors intend to convey a moral message that humans see from their educational background, wealth, and social status they have in the eye of God. However, God will only see from the right and positive things that he has done.

The second satire in the text illustrated when these two characters have the habit of being indebted to a poor older woman who is selling *Pecel* (a Javanese salad). Her name is Mbok Ijah. These three people - Karto, Warip, Mbok Ijah - are the portraits

of urban people from the lowest strata of society. The difference, Mbok Ijah has a higher bargaining position, namely, as a seller of *Pecel*, so that she can help Karto and Warip.

The generous and helper characteristic of Mbok Ijah intended to insinuate humans in the current era, which tends to be individualistic and only concerned with themselves, their family, or the group. The wealthy group gets more abundant and more prosperous, and the weak group gets poorer and sufferer. Through the characterization of Mbok Ijah, the reader is aware that being the right person is by generous people. People should not wait to be rich to help the poor; they can do anytime and anywhere.

The third satire is the conversation between Karto and the angel at the end of the story. The angel asked again about Karto's self, and he failed to answer for the second time. Karto answered that he was an essential part of the family. The angel refused his answer by stating this following quote:

"Wah! Berarti kamu manusia yang ndak punya jati diri .. warna kamu bisa semena-mena ditentukan oleh diluar kamu, ditentukan oleh keluarga kamu, .. kamu anak mami!!"

"Wow! It means you are the humans who do not have identity .. your position can be arbitrarily determined by other people, determined by your family, and you are a child of mommy!!"

The quote above reveals that the type of young people nowadays is those who are not independent, highly dependent on the mother's figure, and as a result, they cannot decide essential decisions in their lives. The reality of this human character is deliberately brought up not by the wealthy figure who has this characteristic. However, the writer intentionally attaches this indifferent and lazy nature to the pitiable figure. A paradox searches for self-identity in this short story perfectly illustrated.

Satire in the text *Le familie de kere* can be said to be a reflection of society. Through literary works, an author expresses life problems that the author himself is involved in the story. Literary works receive influence from the community and, at the same time, be able to influence the community. The community often determines the value of literary works that lived in an era, while writers themselves are members of the community related to specific social status and cannot escape the influence it received from the environment that raised and shaped it.

3 Conclusion

The text of *Le familie de kere* is very rich in using satire. It illustrates the reality of urban life that occupies the lowest position in the social strata of society. The author intends to make his work as a satire that shows that self-identity consists of character, nature, character, and personality is the essential thing that must be owned by a human being. His observation of the social reality of urban communities in Surabaya shows a bitter reality of life. People in the lower classes cannot identify their self-identity because they know they do not have any role in the community. They can only accept

bitterness and poverty and are not allowed to complain because they are only the lowest strata of society. This literary works could give a moral message to the reader about finding one's identity. They must start from themselves, to find the true self. The self will naturally be within.

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