

The Social Criticisms of Rah(i)m Poetry by Kedung Darma Romansha

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Abstract

An expressing media with literature work could indirectly convey various social criticisms toward a certain phenomenon. The most frequently occurring social criticism is the social reality portrayal of a community. This study aims to describe the form of social criticism contained in the book of poetry entitled *Rahi(i)m* by Kedung Darma Romansha. He is a poet and novelist born in Indramayu who is prolific in creating literary works, such as novels and poetry. *Rahi(i)m*'s poetry collection book tells the image and life of women, the life of a mother with various family, marital, spiritual, normative, and socio-cultural problems. Using qualitative methods and a literary sociology approach, especially social criticism, this study reveals the author's worldview of phenomena that occur in society. The study results show that the author of poetry criticises social situations, namely: the author's criticism of poverty, crime, family disharmony, juvenile delinquency, violation of norms, and environmental problems. Social criticism also reveals the author's disappointment, annoyance, anger, and regret towards the arrogant and unfair performance of government officials in responding to socio-cultural problems that occur in society.

Abstrak

Kritik Sosial Puisi Rahi(i)m karya Kedung Dharma Romansha

Media ekspresi melalui karya sastra dapat menyampaikan kritik sosial terhadap fenomena yang terjadi secara tidak langsung. Kritik sosial yang paling sering terjadi adalah penggambaran realitas sosial suatu komunitas. Penelitian ini bertujuan mendeskripsikan bentuk kritik sosial yang terdapat di dalam puisi *Rahi(i)m* karya Kedung Darma Romansha. Ia adalah penyair dan pengarang novel kelahiran Indramayu yang cukup produktif dalam menciptakan karya sastra, seperti novel dan puisi. Buku kumpulan puisi *Rahi(i)m* menceritakan citra dan kehidupan perempuan, kehidupan seorang ibu dengan berbagai permasalahan keluarga, perkawinan, spiritual, norma, dan sosial budaya. Dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif dan ancaman sosiologi sastra, terutama kritik sosial, penelitian ini mengungkap pandangan dunia pengarang terhadap fenomena-fenomena yang terjadi di dalam masyarakat. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pengarang mengkritik situasi sosial, yaitu: kritik pengarang terhadap kemiskinan, kriminalitas, ketidakharmonisan keluarga, kenakalan remaja, pelanggaran norma-norma, dan masalah lingkungan hidup. Kritik sosial juga mengungkap kekecewaan, kekesalan, kemarahan, dan penyesalan pengarang terhadap kinerja aparat pemerintah yang arogan dan tidak adil dalam menanggapi masalah-masalah sosial budaya yang terjadi di dalam masyarakat.

Kata Kunci:

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1 Introduction

Literature work is an author's creativity due to the author's combined imagination and personal experience. The creativity becomes a portray structure to criticize and understand. Literature works describe the occurring phenomena in social life (Meyer, 1997). The works are written in various modes, such as story, novel, and poetry, as expressive realizations. The expressive literature works are useful for the criticism realizations by the authors. Literature works involve various life of a community in the social life aspect, such as environmental community tolerance. Thus, literature works may involve any issue from the community and the objective intention of the authors. The expressive tendency of the authors may include the degraded values in the community, starting from the degraded religious, cultural, family, and community values. Thus, literature works have the tendency that refers to the conveyed intention (Ghilarducci, 2022).

An expressing media with literature work could convey various social criticisms toward a certain phenomenon indirectly. The most frequently occurring social criticism is the social reality portrayal of a community. Social criticisms are responses or satires addressed to a phenomenon in the community. This type of criticism becomes the author's strategy to respond various situations and phenomena (Rohma & Qur'ani, 2022). The social criticisms occur due to real-life dissatisfaction and disharmony, for example, the violation in the community (Marzuki et al., 2020). The contents of social criticisms are not only reproaches and censures but also negative responses. The criticism refers to innovative suggestions for the social system to be better. The social criticisms are actual and happen in the community. The criticisms reflect the facts. Boutilier (2021) explains that social criticisms are facts of humans that consist of social empirical phenomena, for example, the socio-economic aspect as the conventional indicator.

One of the reflective literature works is poetry. Poetry expresses the authors' thoughts to establish and simulate the readers' curiosity and sense-imagination. Poetry can be also an instrument or a tool to criticize social situations and phenomena (Chukwueloka, 2011). Poetry can be a recorder and an interpretation of vital human experience in the form of impressive-expressive mode (Jung, 2021). Aditya et al. (2018) analyzed a literature work with social criticism approach. The investigated literature work was the poetry by Taufiq Ismail. The poetry criticized the world and the surrounding environment based on the author's perspective, starting from the community's fidget feeling due to the country's situation. Marzuqi et al (2020) analyzed a novel titled "*Panjang Tentang Jarak Kita yang Jutaan Tahun Cahaya*" by Dewi Kharisma Michella. The researchers discussed the criticisms in the forms of realism, such as Indonesia's government, human rights, and cultural-religious criticisms.

The current research reviewed poetry titled *Rahi(i)m* by Kedung Darma Romansha, published in 2020. Kedung Darma Romansha is a literateur born in Indramayu. The literateur also has many masterpieces and awards. Kedung Dharma is an active practitioner that provides many socializations for commercial sex workers in Indramayu. The poetry written by Kedung Dharma is inspired by ancient and contemporary literary works, such as a drawer named Eddy Susanto and a tale titled *Janda Miskin* and *Do'a Ikan Gabus* from Western Java. The poetry *Rahi(i)m* by Kedung Darma tells about a woman's life, a mother, with her various social, norm, and environmental problems. Sonya et al. (2021) explain that Kedung Darma's poetry has a sensitive language style toward the female image, marriage, spirituality, and social aspect in each civilization. The set of the poetry revealed and took very different personalities, identities, and life experiences from males. However, the poetry did not only tell women as the subject of expression. The poetry also used social and cultural problems of Indonesia, such as poverty, criminality, disharmony, juvenile delinquency., norm violation, and environmental problem.

Some researchers also did the similar study about social criticisms. Arianto (2022) revealed the social criticism in Rendra's poetry, "Nyanyian Angsa." The researchers applied Riffatere's semiotic reading theory and found the social criticism realizations. The first realization was the expression of satire to the reality while the second one dealt with the medical institution service.

Subiyakto et al. (2021) applied social criticism in Hijaz Yamani's poetry literature. By applying descriptive method, the researchers found social criticism on the distortions of establishment in which people had to accept the establishment. Rohma & Qur'ani (2022) also did a social criticism study with descriptive qualitative method on a poetry. The researchers found the realizations of social criticisms, such as the social criticisms upon the arrogance of the apparatus, the social criticism in a family disorganization, and 3) social criticism toward the government's injustice. Handayani (2022) applied inter-textual review theory to elaborate the relevance principles among literature texts. The results showed three social criticism aspects. They were social criticisms upon avarice, criminality, and oppression. Yunandi et al. (2022) examined a poem to reveal the social criticisms. The researchers applied qualitative descriptive research with sociology literature approach. They found that the poetry described the social problems of children and most community levels. The researchers also found that the author's of the poetry wanted to share suggestions and keep the community's behaviors and attitudes. Laili & Qur'aini (2022) applied literature sociology approach to reveal the social criticisms on a poetry titled "Jakarta 17 Agustus 45 Dini Hari." The researchers found the social criticisms on some community levels and social problems. They were the criticisms of life freedom, colonialism, and oppression. Umboh et al. (2022) conducted a social criticism research on a poetry of Epitaph for the Race of Man by Edna St. Vincent Millay. The researchers found the criticisms in the forms of human behaviors on the natural environment.

From the background, this research showed the author's criticisms of the social situation. The criticisms addressed poverty, criminality, norm violation, and environmental problem. The current research is different with the previous studies because the researchers took the poetry from a poetry set of *Rah(i)m*. The title of the poetry became the novelty of this research because the title indicated a related matter about woman's roles. The researchers reviewed the social criticisms with the socio-literature approach found in the poetry, bound in a socio-community situation. Socio-literature refers to objective and scientific literature review about humans in a community within the aspects of social and social processes (Raharjo et al., 2017). This research described the author's criticisms of the social situation. The criticisms addressed poverty, criminality, norm violation, and environmental problem.

2 Methods

The applied method was the descriptive-qualitative method with a socio-literature approach (Alfahaid et al., 2018; Larsen et al., 2021; Sipayung et al., 2016). The data were in the form of words. The researchers collected, processed, and arranged the data in text form for further analysis and discussion. The data source of this research was the poetry set, *Rahi(i)m*, written by Kedung Darma Romansha. The book was firstly printed in 2020 and consisted of 25 pieces of poetry. The researchers collected the data with literature, reading, and noting techniques. Here are the steps of collecting the data: (1) reading carefully, (2) marking the relevant data with the focus, (3) screening the data based on the focus, (4) grouping the data and categorizing the data based on the research focus, (5) checking the data adequacy. The researchers analyzed the data by (1) categorizing the data based on the groups; and (2) analyzing the poetry with a socio-literature review. The researchers grouped the data, in the form of poetry texts, to facilitate the research. The researchers understood and grouped the data based on the socio-criticism theory. The researchers grouped the data descriptively.

3 Results and Discussion

Literature works are the social and cultural reflection to represent the criticisms based on the author's perception of certain occurring social phenomena. In this research, Kedung Darma



Romansha's poetry provided some descriptions of the social criticism representation. The social criticism reality consists of some types, such as environmental, criminality, norm violation, war, and population problem criticisms.

The social criticism found in Rahi(i)m's poetry can be seen in table 1.

Table 1: Social Critic

No	Data	Social Critic
1.	<i>tak bisa membedakan yang mana barisan dan yang mana antrian</i>	Social Status
2.	<i>sesudah itu dilupakan dan menikam satu sama lain</i>	Social Status (increased influential factors, such as the population, unemployment, competition to obtain a privilege, conflict, and related problematic issues in the community)
3.	<i>besi-besi tumbuh lebih cepat</i>	The Urban Situation (Crowded)
4.	<i>lebih lebat dari keinginan-keinginanmu yang layu dan menyedihkan itu</i>	The personal attitude of an individual may lead to sadness, obsession, and certain influential effect.
5.	<i>mulut-mulut membuka diri</i>	individual feelings and behaviors
6.	<i>Dan jalan-jalan macet oleh catatan belanja</i>	the social community condition and activity
7.	<i>Dengan senyum yang ramah, dengan kepala yang resah</i>	the people living in the middle of the era of advancement
8.	<i>Kota menyimpan bangkai angka-angka Di kantor, mall, bar, pabrik Kafe, bioskop, diskotik</i>	actions violate social norms
9.	<i>Di tempat itu Orang menjual dirinya Dan membeli dirinya</i>	social norm and joining prostitution and problem structures of the government and the community
10.	<i>Malam sudah lama menelanku Mulutnya yang kotor dan yang gelap itu Melumat rahimku</i>	criticizes the disrespectful social life and applies the integrated norms for every individual, for example, religious and moral norms
11.	<i>Malam tidak telanjang Ia mengenakan sumpah serapah orang-orang Di taman kota, kafe, bar, diskotik, Dan tepi-tepi jalan, aku tak suka mereka Yang bersembunyi dari kesepian Dengan tawa yang palsu</i>	individual interaction and behavior describe the social issues in the community
12.	<i>Dan tepi-tepi jalan, aku tak suka mereka Yang bersembunyi dari kesepian Dengan tawa yang palsu</i>	the social problems and norm violations in the community, such as juvenile delinquency, poverty, and life problems in urban areas

Surat buat emak,
Di sini
Kita tak lagi bisa membedakan
yang mana barisan dan yang mana antrian
upacara tak lebih dari kewajiban beribadah
dalam agama,
berpura-pura hormat dan sedih
sesudah itu dilupakan
dan menikam satu sama lain.
(Page 5)

The stanza describes the current social status. One of them is a formality in life. This formality has regulations to follow by all people subconsciously. The underlined formal regulation in the poetry is observable in the excerpt of *tak bisa membedakan yang mana barisan dan yang mana antrian*. In the Indonesian language, the excerpt is translated to "being unable to differentiate which one is a marching line or which one is a queue." The formality indicates that each objective has a specific plan for a specific group or organization to involve the community in reaching the objective. The poet implies that regulation does not only apply in a marching line. The same regulation also applies in a queue to facilitate all people in obtaining their needs. The news about the long queue and the expected activities from the government seemed not to come to an end. The analogy indicates that the community is still waiting for the logistic aids, assistance, and the realized promises by the government for the community. The other excerpt, *upacara tak lebih dari kewajiban beribadah*, analogies an individual's response toward the given responsibility and obligation. In this research, the excerpt is equally translated to 'a ceremony is merely an obligation to worship.' In the next line, the excerpt of *sesudah itu dilupakan dan menikam satu sama lain*, analogies that people can be a better human with the given obligation. However, once they are out of control, they may commit violence, such as stabbing other people, murdering, inciting, and committing violence. The line describes the frequency of people with low integrity and lack of earning. These situations may lead to an increased population with increased socio-economic cases. This portrayal is also observable in the third line with the equivalent meaning as explained in *Surat Buat Emak*.

Dapur
Di kota,
Gedung-gedung menyimpan halimun
Jalan-jalan hilang ingatan
Harapan macet di setiap simpang
Dan lalu-lalang kendaraan
besi-besi tumbuh lebih cepat
lebih lebat dari keinginan-keinginanmu
yang layu dan menyedihkan itu
(Page 9)

In this stanza, the poet describes the crowded urban situation with a high frequency of traffic on the road. In the fourth stanza, in the first line, *besi-besi tumbuh lebih cepat* or 'the irons grow faster,' explains the infrastructures are established quickly. Thus, the infrastructures could alter the perspective patterns and the mindset of the people. This stanza is still connected with the following stanza, titled *surat untuk emak* or 'a letter for mother,' and the line of *dan menikam satu sama lain* or 'stabbing each other.' The contexts are connected due to the increased volume and population in the urban area. Thus, the area also receives increased influential factors, such as the population, unemployment, competition to obtain a privilege, conflict, and related problematic issues in the community. The quantity of the population becomes the potential matter or burden for a country's



development. The quantity becomes the potential matter if the population, the resources, and the life quality are balanced (Romaioli & McNamee, 2020). Thus, excellent life quality refers to the community's capability to provide the life needs excellently. The last part of the stanza is:

*lebih lebat dari keinginan-keinginanmu
yang layu dan menyedihkan itu (Page 9)*

This stanza describes the matters and expected intention to realize the dreams. However, dreams cannot be reached and tremendously saddens an individual. The personal attitude of an individual may lead to sadness, obsession, and certain influential effect.

Anjing-anjing Lapar
*Ketika matahari membuahi pohon-pohon
Dan jalan-jalan macet oleh catatan belanja
Mulut-mulut membuka diri
Di kamar-kamar, rumah-rumah
Kantor-kantor, mall-mall, hotel-hotel
Dan orang-orang masuk
Dengan senyum yang ramah
Dengan kepala yang resah (Page 11)*

This second stanza interprets the social community condition and activity. Since the morning, the people are already busy. However, in the third until the last lines of the stanza, the excerpt of *mulut-mulut membuka diri*, analogizes individual feelings and behaviors. The mentioned places are bedrooms, hotels, houses, and malls. These places are full of people. The situation makes the road crowded and noisy. *Dengan senyum yang ramah, dengan kepala yang resah* (with the kindest smiles and fidget feeling), these lines describe the people living in the middle of the era of advancement. They go to hotels and malls to obtain joy and happiness. However, the surrounding people may not realize what these people are thinking. They do not know whether the people feel happy or sad so they look for joy. Although they are alone, they do not know what to do even in glamorous places. The employers, the employees, and the laborers are working to make a better living for their families. They fidget while working as if they were hungry people. Every day, the workers have a specific burden to support their family needs and responsibilities. They work to provide the best life for their families. The author attempts to describe the daily observed-surrounding-concerning situations. The poetry titled *anjing-anjing lapar* can be connected with the poetry on page 40, titled *puisi yang lupa jalan pulang dan kota-kota yang berjalan*.

Puisi yang lupa jalan pulang dan kota-kota yang berjalan
*Di jalan yang retak
Kota menyimpan bangkai angka-angka
Di kantor, mall, bar, pabrik
Kafe, bioskop, diskotik,
Di tempat itu
Orang menjual dirinya
Dan membeli dirinya.
(Page 40)*

In this stanza, the social event in the urban community is quite different from the suburban areas. This matter leads to social degradation. From the cultural aspect and the lifestyle, the social event makes people's life means to do anything they want. A city is an arena between cultures to discuss. A city has some buildings and places that are inseparable from economic, political, environmental, and socio-community contexts (Feng et al., 2022). A city has a broader meaning with expressive

realizations by a human. However, in cities or urban areas, many citizens do not pay attention to the norms, for example, the high frequency of unfit urban interaction.

Thus, the violation of the applied norms increases.

*Kota menyimpan bangkai angka-angka
Di kantor, mall, bar, pabrik
Kafe, bioskop, diskotik*

Many people come to the offices, malls, cafes, and clubs with many problems and burdens in their minds. They released all those burdens by playing gambling games or being drunk. These actions violate social norms. Senjaya (2022) explains that gambling does not only against social norm but this activity does not have any advantages because the players are tricked by the bookies. *Bangkai-bangkai* or these people should have been aware of their problems. They should have been aware that they violate the applied norms and disturb social wellbeing. The author also mentions these matters in the last line.

*Di tempat itu
Orang menjual dirinya
Dan membeli dirinya.*

The problems in a community are observable. For example, the factors that make women commit inappropriate actions by violating the social norm and joining prostitution. Dimala & Galantica (2022) also found that commercial sexual workers occurred due to unhandled problems felt by women. The poetry satirizes the government with the policy of eradicating poverty. Poverty is an urgent matter for the government and the government must find solutions for the community. The author expresses many social criticisms about the urban problems.

The author also describes the related problem structures of the government and the community. The author also expresses his thoughts about prostitution on Page 45.

*Telumbuk (tentang seseorang yang aku lupa namanya)
Malam sudah lama menelakanku
Mulutnya yang kotor dan yang gelap itu
Melumat rahimku
Anak-anakku menjerit dari masa lalu
Sementara bapak dan emakku
Sudah lama tidur
Di ranjang yang pernah basah oleh ciuman.
(Page 45)*

The stanza describes a family situation. Here are the first and the second stanza.

*Malam sudah lama menelanku
Mulutnya yang kotor dan yang gelap itu
Melumat rahimku*

Along these lines, the author criticizes the disrespectful social life and applies the integrated norms for every individual, for example, religious and moral norms. The religious norm should be based on divine regulation. The same matter also goes for the moral norm of respecting, treating excellently, and not disturbing other people. However, the reality is different from the described situation by the author. The author attempts to provide comprehensive meanings related to social issues.

The author describes a job activity during the night and dark atmospheres. In this case, the female figure that works at night is very limited. *Mulutnya yang kotor dan yang gelap itu* in the stanza indicates many people come to the place with a lot of problems. The author describes the feeling of the women clearly. They come to the place to release their problems in the middle of the night of the city.

*Melumut rahimku
Anak-anakku menjerit dari masa lalu
Sementara bapak dan emakku
Sudah lama tidur*

Rahim or a womb is the vital reproduction for a woman and is the firm organ of a woman. Heuvel (2022) explains that a womb is important for fetal growth and the first medium to bring the fetus in to the world. The author describes the womb in a broader meaning related to women. In the line, *melumut rahimku*, or devouring my womb, has an equal meaning to taking out the purity of a woman or damaging the womb. Thus, the womb cannot grow the embryo. This line indicates the author's sadness about a woman's feelings due to the job. In poetry, *rahim* or the womb is also defined as ideals, intentions, and dreams for women. Unfortunately, many women do not receive suitable positions to fight for their identities. The author explains that woman's jobs may bring negative effects. The jobs do not bring excellent well-being for the women and the surrounding people. The jobs may destroy their dreams. However, in the third and fourth lines, the poetry tells about the late father and the late mother of a woman. The expression of this situation is *sudah tidur lama* or 'have been sleeping for a long time.' In this context, the words and the time reference indicate that the parents have passed away. The stanza explains that individual interaction and behavior describe the social issues in the community. They are the norms and the behaviors of the individual.

The next stanza, the second stanza of the poetry, is titled *Aku Ingin Kamu tak Memakai Lipstik*, or 'I want you not to put lipstick.'

*Malam tidak telanjang
Ia mengenakan sumpah serapah orang-orang
Di taman kota, kafe, bar, diskotik,
Dan tepi-tepi jalan, aku tak suka mereka
Yang bersembunyi dari kesepian
Dengan tawa yang palsu
Page 48*

Lipstick becomes a woman's important matter years to years. However, lipstick in the poetry, reveals a sentimental meaning related to social life. A lipstick symbolizes a specific morality, such as profession and life class in social life. Maghfira et al. (2022) also found that lipstick might be the symbol of career independence. In poetry, many people with outdoor activities or jobs violate the norms or the applied customs. In the evening, the atmosphere is full of glamor and provides various chances for people to commit unexpected things. This situation becomes the source of the community's problems. The written places by the author include a cafe, bar, discotic, and many other places in cities. The places prove that social activities will develop and influence the environment with socio-cultural matters. Bennardi et al.(2022) also found that social activities had a strong correlation with socio-cultures. The community will keep doing the same things in their life.

*Dan tepi-tepi jalan, aku tak suka mereka
Yang bersembunyi dari kesepian
Dengan tawa yang palsu*

The stanza can be defined as the panorama and the atmosphere in the cities and on the roads from late midnight to the morning. Many women work as commercial sex workers and receive many customers. These persons have various thoughts about current social life. They have various mimics as described in the poetry. Every person that comes expects joy. However, they forget about the family disrespect that becomes a sickness in urban areas. Thus, the author responds to the situation by providing a systematic imaginary stanza to provide meaningful social criticisms on each stanza. The criticisms include the social problems and norm violations in the community, such as juvenile delinquency, poverty, and life problems in urban areas.

4 Conclusion

From the analysis results, the poetry conveys various meanings to the readers, such as disappointment, regret, and annoyance. The evidence is observable from the socio-criticism analysis in the community. Previous research examined the social conditions of society with various perspectives, of course, there are many elements that occur in society. Ranging from social criticism, crime, culture and even those that violate norms can reflect the society in it. Criticism of the arrogance of the apparatus, family disorganization, and government injustice is one example of socio-political criticism described in literary works. Here are many gaps in social criticism that have not been analyzed in depth regarding several topics and issues in literary works. They are poverty and norm violation based on the socio-literature theoretical approach. Kedung Dharma encourages the community to share their arguments and concerns toward the nation, Indonesia, as a developing country. The written criticisms provide alternative solutions for various problems. Thus, the literature works provide amusement and hope for readers to cure various sicknesses in the community. For this research, the author hopes that it can be a motivation and innovation in further research

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