

SOCIOLOGY OF WRITER AS THE BASIC ELEMENT TO COMPREHEND D.ZAWAWI IMRON'S POEMS

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Abstract

D.Zawawi Imron is one of an outstanding poet in Indonesia with his contemporary poems style. His life background, his culture, and his place where he lives are much affected to his works. This study is aimed to observe the influence of his life background to comprehend his works focusing on D. zawawi Imron poems. Because it is hard to comprehend and understand the messages and also the contents of his poems without observing his life background in Madura. His cultural identity as Madura people gives many contributions to his works. Not only giving the contribution, but it is also using as the main elements in all of his works, such as Dari Andulang ke Batang – Batang and Di Pintu Bandar. He always uses Madura culture and nature as the identity in his poems. The imagery, alliteration, simile, and other figurative languages refer to Madura culture and nature can be analyzed as the basic elements in D.Zawawi Imron's poems. Thus, the sociology of writer is one of an appropriate approach to comprehend D.Zawawi Imron's poems. Because by using sociology of writer, it can uncover the relationship between the writer's/the poet's life background, the creative process, and the content of the poems.

Keywords: *Sociology of writer, contemporary poems, Madura Identity*

Introduction

Geographic condition in Madura affects the characteristics and culture in this island. Generally, the geographic area can be divided into two areas, both in the seashore and in the mountain area. Usually the people who live in the mountain area has softer dialect than the people who live in the seashore. In eastern part of Madura island, the nature is mountainous, green, fertile. It differs from the western part of Madura, which is dry, and mostly consist of lowland. The eastern part of Madura is much influenced by Javanese culture, because there was the Kingdom from Majapahit era. Like Jogja in Java, Eastern part of Madura, *Songenep*, now Sumenep is suggested as the center of culture in Madura. The language that teach in the schools refer to *Songenep* style, because their language has the highest level among others. The characteristics of the people and the style of language also give influence in literature.

Further discussing sociology of writer, it cannot be separated with the social status and social ideology (Wellek and Warren, 1990). The social status of the writer and ideology often affects to his works, such as Charles Dickens who come from the low class family. It automatically reflects to his style delivering his ideas in his works. He uses satire to criticize the high class people life style, humor, and optimistic utterances in his works like in *David Copperfield*, *Oliver Twist*, and *A Christ-*

mas Carol. In his novella, a *Christmas Carol*, Charles Dickens tries to criticize the changing of life in industrial revolution in England where many people have forgotten to celebrate the Christmas because of materialism. Another writer who is much influenced by his social writer context is Adrienne Rich, American poet. Her ideology as the feminist is shown in her poems. Mostly her works tell the movement of feminism. Because she is struggle related with the feminism. Adrienne Rich is the feminist writer, thus her works such as her poems use the feminism themes, like motherhood, woman's oppression, and sexuality (Harits, 2012).

Unlike other poets in Indonesia, Zawawi Imron poems have different characteristics, such as using free form like other contemporary poems, telling the natural phenomena, describing social condition, and depicting the local culture as the special features in his poems. Mostly his poems explore the situation and the condition of the village as the reflection of his life. Zawawi Imron lives in the village in *Songenep*, Madura. The village in Madura has an exotic situation, refer to its mountain, its beach, its sea, its life, its people, and its natural view. Such situation inspires many people including Zawawi Imron to write the poems according to several features above. Besides the social aspects, Zawawi Imron poems are also much influenced by the religious values in Madura

and he is a part of it.

In line with the religious aspect, Harits (2014,p.244) states that Madura is much influenced by Hinduism and Islam. Both religions have contributed to form Madura society and culture. Such acculturation gives the different perspective in Madura, for an instance, Madura society holds Islamic ceremony tightly, like *Maulid* (the birth of Muhammad SAW). They celebrate it, but the celebration is much influenced by Hinduism tradition. It is something normal, because in the past time, Madura is a part of Majapahit, the center of Hindu kingdom in Indonesia. Arya Wiraraja, the first king in Madura is the ambassador from Majapahit. He gets Madura as the gift from Raden Wijaya (Majapahit founder) because he helps RadenWijaya to beat his enemies. After Hinduism era, it changes to Islamic era, and Madura is under control of Islamic Mataram kingdom. Surely, the acculturation is happened and consequently, it affects to other aspects of life, like literature.

Mostly literary works in Madura try to show their religious values or at least it will use the religious values as their basic themes. It is because religion is used as the breath of life. Likewise in Zawawi Imron poems, he tries to penetrate Madura deeply and look for the identity of Madura. Telling about the identity, it must be discussed according to the social construction rather than biological construction. Waters in Chaves and di Brito argues that Ethnic identity is often considered a social construct as well (1999, P.40). Here, the identity is connected with culture, values, social system, language, literature, and other local wisdom that are developed in one society. Thus, according to the definition previously, the identity refers to characteristics of the social life and all of its elements. The social construction will give the different attribute to a group of people and the society that make them differ from others. Their cultural attribute like the local wisdom becomes the pride of the people that live in their community. Further Chandra defines it as the ethnic identity, he tells the ethnic identity as a subset of identity categories in which eligibility for membership is determined by attributes associated with, or believed to be associated with, descent (p.3). They will show it as their identity, sometimes it will be reflected in their social system, such as family system, heritage, marriage and somehow it will be shown in their

tradition system like traditional clothes, dance, ceremony, language, and literature.

Madura society is the unique community that hold the social and tradition system tightly. If talking about Madura, it does not only refer to Madurese who live in Madura island, but also Madura people who live all over of Indonesia. Madurese who live in Madura island is only 30 % from the whole of Madurese in Indonesia. Although, they do not live in Madura, but they live with their own old tradition as the heritage from their predecessor. Usually they live with their communal and they bring their identity as Madurese in their new places. In special day, for an instances, *Maulid* (the birth of Prophet Muhammad SAW), *Isra' Mi'raj*, *Ied Adha* they will return to Madura island to visit their family and relatives in there. They use the term "*toron*" (down), this term refers to the tradition of Madura people while they back to their homeland.

Tradition, social life, and environment, all of them are the inspiration for Zawawi Imron, the poet of *clurit emas* (gold sickle), the title refers to his golden and shinning works, and also refers to his origin. He tries to express his identity, his love, his sympathy, his happiness, his sadness, and all of his emotion about Madura through his works. His contemporary poems are not only depicting the beauty of Madura but also showing the identity through the symbol, allegory, simile, metaphor and other figurative languages. Mostly, his works use imagery about Madura, it can be its people, its nature, its society, its tradition, bits occupation to represent Madura identity. One of his anthology of poems, *Madura Akulah Darahmu*, it is very clear to describe his love about Madura, *darah* is blood, it is used to show his feeling about Madura, because blood is the most important part in human life, blood flows in the human body and blood is human identity, because the different human has the different blood type. The analogy that Madura likes the blood in human life will raise the pride to have an identity as Madurese.

Reality: Natural and Social Based

Discussing about Zawawi Imron's works, it cannot separate with his life background in Madura. It has been mentioned before that he lives in *Songenep* (today, Sume-nep), the most fertilized part in Madura. This

place is the combination between farming and fishing, mountain and sea, hot and cold. There is very difficult to find coconut trees, palm trees, sugar palm trees, and rice fields in other parts of Madura, because of its geographic condition, but such trees and rice fields will be easier to find in Sumenep, the place where Zawawi Imron lives. The depiction of the social life and its relationship with the nature can be found in his poem, *Di Pintu Bandar*, here the poem

Di Pintu Bandar

Di pintu Bandar, kesegaran bermekaran di pasir pantai

Senyummu di sampan mengaduk gelegak gelombang

Di kejauhan

Dan memang tak boleh batal

Nyanyian nelayan pada malam yang mandi jelaga

Sauhmu yang kulempar ke laut

Diam – diam berangkat ke langit, kesela bintang gemintang

Menjadi layang – layang gaib yang mengagumkan

1975

In this poem, it shows clearly Zawawi Imron brings his social and natural icons in his works. From the title till the end of this poem, he uses the analogy which are closest with his social and natural background. *Bandar* (port), *pasir pantai* (beach sand), *sampan* (boat), *gelegak gelombang* (wave), *nelayan* (fisherman), *jelaga* (carbon black), *sauh* (anchor) are very familiar and famous terms for the people who live in Madura. They involve with all of those items every day. Zawawi Imron uses all of such terms in this poem to give the characteristics and the natural effect in his works. His pride and admiration to his environment has inspired him to express it in his poems.

The poem *di pintu Bandar* reflects his admiration to the motivation, toughness, and firmness of the fisherman in his lovely land, Madura. Like in the second line, *senyummu di sampan mengaduk gelegak gelombang*, it symbolizes the great motivation of the fisherman, this line is opened with the word “*senyummu*” (your smile). Certainly, your smile here is the smile of the fisherman while they go to the sea, there is depicted no fear, no sadness, and the only one is hard work although they must attack the big wave (*gelegak gelombang*) in the sea and even

in the ocean. Then, in line 5, it is also shown the happy and glad situation as the reflection of their motivation even though they must work very hard. While, the word *nyanyian* (song) is used to describe the internal situation in the fisherman’s mind. They are happy, very happy to carry out their profession as the fisherman. The bathing of carbon black (*mandi jelaga*) uses to express the challenges as the fisherman in the sea. But, it cannot reduce their motivation go to the sea and ocean to fulfill their holy duty as the fisherman.

Zawawi Imron is also shown that the journey of the fisherman is the borderless journey. It is very long trip and they do not know what kind of the dangerous threat will come to them . Such as in the 7th line, *diam – diam berangkat ke langit, kesela bintang gemintang*. The sky (*langit*) is the place without border, the very large place, no ending place. The sky is also symbolized never ending effort, although they face the hard life, but they (Madura people) must try harder to gain their aim. Thus, this poem really shows the toughness and the firmness of Madura people to get their aim. The sky is the place where it can be found a lot of danger, and the danger cannot be predicted. But, Madura people are ready to face it and get their aim, they will fly in the sky like the kite (*menjadi layang – layang gaib yang mengagumkan*).

This poem, *di Pintu Bandar* is full of social life experience, it is truly the mirror of Madura society. It has been happened in their daily life since in the past till today. When we go around Madura island, this land is surrounded by the sea, therefore it is quite normal, if the majority of profession for Madura is fisherman. This poem expresses the life of fisherman, their toughness when they face the danger and their habit. Zawawi Imron wants to send the message that Madura people that are reflected by the fisherman are the brave people who are ready to face the danger and challenge. The title *di Pintu Bandar*, symbolizes the gate, the way from the land to the sea, the symbol from something with border to the borderless things.

The Pilgrim and soul journey

In Indonesia, Madura is very famous to have a lot of Islamic boarding school. In every village, it can be found 2 – 4 Islamic boarding school. The people are much more believe to send their son to Islamic school

comparing to send in the public school. In Madura Islamic boarding school hold an important role in the society. The kyais (the moslem spiritual leader) have a great appreciation from the society. They are the role model for his santris (students in the Islamic boarding school). This boarding school is also the place to learn everything, such as reciting Al – Qur'an, learning Islamic and general subjects, farming, and writing including literature. Zawawi Imron is the poet who was born from the process in the Islamic boarding school. Thus, many of his poems are telling about religious experience, the pilgrim and the soul journey to get the real happiness in human life. One example of his religious poem is *Dari Andulang ke Batang – Batang*.

This poem expresses the journey, the spiritual trip. This is started with the journey from *Andulang*, it is the name of small village in Sumenep. This place is agriculture place with the fertile land. This is a peaceful village where the society lives and unifies with its nature. While, *Batang – batang* is another small village, it is the place where Zawawi Imron lives. It is the religious place, Zawawi Imron lives in the Islamic community. Most of his works are inspired from his religious milieu, *Batang – Batang*. This place is a part of his life, thus till today he lives in this small village and with several of moslem scholars, he makes and develops an art community. In this poem, it is clearly stated the journey of life, the spiritual trip, and an soul experience.

Kususur jalan

*Dari Andulang ke Batang – Batang
Sambil mengunyah manisan jiwa*

The imagery, *manisan jiwa* shows the essence of life. It reflects the surrender of the life to Allah SWT, through the praying, the human must give his fate, his life, his future only to Allah SWT. If they (the human) trusts in Allah (*tawwakkal*), they will get the happiness in their life. Although a lot of challenges and problems in human life, but they can overcome and get the solution from all of their problems. The description of the situation where the human get Allah SWT mercies can be shown in these lines

*Anak putu siapa, hai, daun jati
Orang – orang bergulingan di atas duri
Mereka bergulingan, tapi talk uka
Sebab langit dalam hatinya*

These lines show the religious values, the spiritual experience. The phrase *di atas duri* describe the problems of human. It can threaten their life, it can disturb their life, but if the human trust and surrender to Allah SWT, they can get the problem solving for every problems that they will face in their daily life. The human aim is to get Allah SWT blessing and mercy through their praying. The calamity, the kindness, and the trust are only got by the human through his believe in Allah SWT. The trust and the kindness are sourced from the human heart, if their heart is good, it can determine their attitude including their relationship among the human, and their relationship with Allah SWT (*hablumminnanas, hablumminnallah*). Such messages can be found in these lines

*Daun lalang tajam – tajam
Tumbuh di seladoa
Sekerat daging coklat di balik iga
Menjelma harum melati*

The surrender and the trust to God (Allah SWT) will bring and lead to the happiness in the human life. The metaphor, *menjelma harum melati* (changing into rose fragrant) proves the result of the human spiritual journey and experience.

This poem also reflects the homage and high appreciation to mother. Many of folktales in Madura, such as *Air Mata Ebu, Bangsadcara and Ragapadme*, and The origin of Madura show the role of women, especially mother in the daily life. Mother is the most appreciated women. Her mercies are Allah SWT mercies, and her praying will give much energy to her son to undergo the life. Every steps of our life must be got the mother's blessing and approval.

*Aduhai! Langit menyusun warna
Aku melangkah
Dari daun ke daun
Mencari embun hati ibunda*

Conclusion

Telling about D. Zawawi Imron poems, it has close relationship with the nature and religious values as their basic characteristics. His life in small and peaceful village, *Batang – Batang, Sumenep, Madura island* gives him much inspiration to his works. The religious values, the life experience, the appreciation of

mother, the social life become the basic themes in his poems.

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