



The Existence of Universal Humanism in the Reform Era of Indonesian Literary Criticism

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Abstract

The aesthetic of universal humanism is a cultural production of power struggles in the arena of Indonesian literary criticism. The agent who played an important role in achieving universal humanism was the Cultural Manifest (Manikebu), which extended into the Jakarta Arts Council (JAC). This study highlights the reality of literary criticism in the reform era, without undermining the aesthetic history of universal humanism as a medium or discourse echoed by the Cultural Manifest group and succeeded after the collapse of the Old Order. JAC as an agent currently controls the arena of Indonesian literary criticism seeking to cultivate economic, social, cultural, and symbolic capital. These capitals are used as a tool in carrying out the practice of symbolic violence in the arena of literary criticism. This then it establishes a *habitus* which aimed at enacting the aesthetic standards of universal humanism literary criticism. The *habitus* space is seen through the contest and literary criticism class conducted by JAC. The contest initiates enactment on parties involved, both the contestant jury and/or supporters of JAC's literary criticism class, as well as participants who take part in the literary criticism contest.

Keywords: *Aesthetic Criticism; Capital; Cultural Manifest; Habitus; Jakarta Arts Council; Universal Humanism; Symbolic Violence*

1. Introduction

The universal humanism aesthetic in Indonesian literature emphasizing individual freedom remains perpetuated by the continuation of the Cultural Manifest. Susanto (2018, p. 151) noted that humanist and structural criticism was carried out by the Cultural Manifest group as a counter-discourse on socialist realism carried out by the People's Cultural Institute (Lembaga Kebudayaan Rakyat/Lekra) camp. Contradictory aesthetic discourse occurred in the period 1950-1965.

The aesthetic standardization of literary criticism is a cultural production contested in the arena of literary criticism. The struggle for domination of position to place ideology took place continuously in the Indonesian literary arena. The aesthetic politicization of literary criticism is typical symbolic violence elaborated by agents in a planned, structured, and systemized.

Santosa (2017, p. 91) mentioned that criticism of Indonesian literature in the period 1917-2017, a period that showed the peak achievement of H.B. Jassin as a "pope" and/or literary critic and the effects of his work, even though he has passed away, but is experiencing development and not stagnant. HB Jassin's century development is shown through several tendencies, namely 1) the outbreak of general and practical literary criticism in print and electronic media, 2) academic literary criticism in the field of philology in the academic realm, 3) appreciation and interpretation of literary works in journals scientific literature, and 4) the literary theory development (Santosa, 2017, p. 95-102). This needs to be rethought, bearing in mind the dominance of H.B. Jassin has been marked since the Indonesian literary period, the new poet force until it was ordained as a literary "pope" by Gajus Siagian, inseparable from the process of consecration and legitimacy that Jassin had struggled in the Indonesian literary arena and/or the arena of Indonesian literary criticism.

The aesthetic of socialist realism reached its peak during the Old Order (1945-1965 or the era of Ir. Soekarno's leadership), while universal humanism as a counter-discourse experienced its glory when the Old Order collapsed and changed into the New Order (1966-1998 or Suharto's era of leadership). The inculcation of anti-communist concepts was greatly ruined in the period leading up to the transformation of the Old Order into the New Order. The planting even extended to the Reform era (1998-present). That is, the inculcation of anti-communist concepts not only involves political campaigns but also cultural campaigns. Symbolic violence on the face of culture is both guerrilla and open. Violence is implanted in cultural products, such as art, dance, music, literature, and/or literary criticism. Herlambang (2019, p. 6-10) mentioned that the universal humanism ideology was used as a process of legitimacy on the allegation of the coup attempt to eliminate seven military officers by the Indonesian Communist Party in 1965, which was interpreted in terms of culture, economy, and politics.

Based on a search of cultural doctrine conducted by Zurmailis and Faruk (2017, p. 46), the JAC is referred to as a rejection of Lekra's socialist realism applied to art constellation projects with typical modernity motives being a banquet product accommodated by JAC. As a cultural institution, JAC puts the mouthpieces of voices to carry out the ideology through holding some activities, one of which is to write criticisms over the Indonesian literature.

The practice of power struggles took place, additionally, in the French literary arena. Sapiro (2016, p. 5) mentioned that the Académie Française has been named a literary institution that blesses literary works. Al-Fayyadl (2015, p. 145) explained that the Académie Française as an intellectual institution appointed by Louis XIV under Cardinal Richelieu's authority brokered the literary polemic in France. Literature in France was established based on dictating the "taste image" of literary critics standardized by the institution. It was on these tastes that Boileau later excavated the classical aesthetic of Greko-Roman Latin into the tastes of the aristocrats (Al-Fayyadl, 2015, p. 146). In the United States, there is a ranking of literary writers through the bibliometric system, namely collection of bibliographic data from OCLC WorldCat in 2007-2014 by applying Lotka's law, thus, the order of quality of literary writers can be done (Friedman & Bernstein, 2017, p. 180). Such literary politics can occur considering the arena of literature and/or art is inseparable from political and economic activities.

1109/5000 More classically, literary events can be drawn in the fourth century when Plato's Law dominated the life of philosophy, as narrated that there was a synthesis of ancient and contemporary criticism, thus literary criticism was considered merely a philosophical performance incorporating elements of social and political authority through evaluation of texts based on criteria of objectivity and independence. Thus, Plato's Law offers a hybrid model of contemporary critical practice as an extension of ideal political and moral philosophy into the context of philosophical performance (Folch, 2013, p. 557). In Victoria, a study of ideas spearheaded by Morgan (2017, p. 466) regarding materialist aesthetics in science and literature, which states that modernist revision and the emergence of new criticisms of Victoria are considered to be immaterial and unscientific. The African-American tradition is rooted in the

life of polemic literacy which addressed human rights laws, thereby influencing the formation of literary communities. The centrality of African-American rhetoric becomes a cultural narrative in the literary arena (Schur, 2018, p. 465).

The social world in the literary arena is closely related to agents' motivation in establishing a *habitus* through symbolic violence. There was a battle between agents in controlling the arena at stake. Literature is not much different as a commercial commodity to achieve the agents' goals. That is marked by the degree of inheritance of book products which is based on long-term consecration according to the continuation of autonomy in addition to short-term profits by making books as commodities (Pouly, 2016, p. 32). Bourdieu mentions that there are two models of art, namely pure art and commercial art (qtd. in Dubois & François, 2013, p. 502). The commerciality of art and/or literature can also be reviewed through the process of building a reputation in its arena. Dubois and François (2013, p. 505) see contemporary Francophone poetry as a highly structured social space, containing consensual and hierarchical recognition.

Motivations underlying agents' actions in each arena need to be observed. In the Indonesian literary criticism arena, visible efforts are normally set up to dominate space by establishing a distinction in the established *habitus*. To see this possibility, this article studies the aesthetic practices of universal humanism in the arena of Indonesian literary criticism by applying Pierre Bourdieu's Sociology theory.

The theory reveals a practice of power through economic, social, cultural, and symbolic capital. *Habitus* in Bourdieu's perspective was formed as an agent of legitimacy by creating symbolic violence. This study focuses on the Cultural Manifest strategy which extends to the JAC in internalizing its capital through the arena of literary criticism of universal humanism. Thus, the elaboration in research questions more about matters that are historical to the reality of literary criticism in the Reform era framed by literary criticism of universal humanism.

2. Methodology

The type of this research is qualitative. Object material is the aesthetic of universal humanism as a cultural product in the Indonesian literary criticism. A Formal object is the aesthetic practice of universal humanism in Indonesian literary criticism. Data comes from relevant information of the universal humanism aesthetics in the Indonesian literary criticism, such as information on agents of practice that dominate the arena of literary criticism, both the originator of universal humanism and rival agents, especially related to the genetics of universal humanism aesthetic in the reform era. The data sources from any documents relating to the aesthetic practices of universal humanism in the Indonesian literary criticism. Data interpretation is examining the aesthetic standardization of universal humanism applied by agents, especially the Cultural Manifest (Manikebu) and the Jakarta Arts Council (JAC). From this interpretation, strategies can knowable for capitalizing on the positions of universal humanism authority in the Indonesian literary criticism. Theory in this research applies the theory of literary sociology of Pierre Bourdieu to analyze *habitus* as a strategy of carrying out internalized practices through the capital.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Indonesian Literature Criticism in the Reform Era

Literary criticism is a cultural product used as a practice by an agent. This practice involves a genetic structure of social processes in such a way, where its presence enables the creation of ideal literary criticism by an agent accompanied by acts of legitimacy carried out by many other parties to

master the mobility of Indonesian literary criticism. Darmanto Jt. notes that ideal literary criticism is that which is in line with the cultural function of criticism, that is, bridging between connoisseurs and literary works (qtd. in Yudiono K.S., 2009, p. 7-8). Damono explained that literary critics are divided into two, namely literary critics in academic circles who are then used by academics as well as literary critics among anyone who is used by anyone (qtd. in Yudiono K.S., 2009, p. 7).

Concerning the criticism of Indonesian literature, Situmorang (2018, p. 14) precisely revealed that Indonesia was hit by a crisis of literary critics, this was quoted in the essay "*Dicari: Kritik(us) Sastra Indonesia*" that the crisis of literary critics has existed since the Balai Pustaka period to the emergence of cyber-punk CD poetry or cyber-poetic internet in 2002, and even continues today. There is a need to explore the aesthetics of literary criticism to reap polemics in such a way from (even) literary critics.

In the arena of universal humanism literary criticism, the JAC which establishes authority as an institution of arts-literature-culture in the vanguard acts to control the growth and development of Indonesian literary criticism. This practice is carried out by raising capital force; therefore, it enables to carry out the climate or aesthetic criticism of universal humanism literature in Indonesia. Thus, it is necessary to examine further the journey of Indonesian literary criticism since Balai Pustaka, as a legacy of Netherland colonialism encapsulated in ethical politics, to highlight the agents who fight in the arena of literary criticism, as follows.

In the early twentieth century, literary criticism Russian formalism marked the beginning of the birth of academic literary criticism, but it was only recognized by the world in the 1970s (Faruk, 2012, p. 59-65). The arena of criticism of Indonesian literature at the beginning of its development was dominated by literary works that had idealistic realism, materialistic realism, and psychological realism. In writing his criticism, the three structures are classified by Faruk as literary criticism of modernism. The latest literary criticism which accordingly is a literary criticism of postmodernism, namely the world is the result of social construction (Faruk, 1997, p. 16).

The aesthetic criticism of Indonesian literature in the 1920–1955 era was impressionistic, they were classified into expressive and pragmatic types. In the mid-1950s, there were many academic criticisms or scientific criticisms termed as "Rawamangun Literary Criticism" which was fronted by academic critics of the Rawamangun campus, Faculty of Letters UI, such as Umar Junus and J.U. Nasution. In the same period, because they did not agree with academic criticism that was analytic, there was a counter-critique called the literary criticism of the Ganzheit method followed by Arief Budiman (Soe Hok Djinn) (Pradopo, 2013, p. 99-102). In 1950-1965, criticism of Indonesian literature as an arena for power struggles was dominated by critics of Sociological Literature and Structural Literary criticism pioneered by academic intellectual circles (Susanto, 2016, p. 110-111). This happened because Marxist-style sociological literary criticism carried the aesthetic of socialist realism in the spirit of the Old Order government. As for structural studies dominating the arena, it was supported by intellectual academics in addition to being supported by H. B Jassin as a vanguard critic of humanist aesthetics who began to draw closer to structural concepts.

Saidi (2000, p. 120-129) in his writing "Kritik Sastra Indonesia Pokok-pokok yang Tak Kunjung Tercerahkan" explains the near-death of literary criticism after H.B. Jassin's death. Saidi highlighted Jassin's strategy as a literary critic, timeless, namely through the role of public media which is no longer applied today. Saidi suggested that literary academics (literary scholars) are the most appropriate party in carrying out and reviving literary criticism.

Satrya H.D.D. (2015, p. 132-142) in "*Arena (Kritik) Sastra Indonesia: Studi Kasus pada Jurnal Poetika FIB Universitas Gajah Mada*" highlights the contribution of literary scholars to the development of Indonesian literary criticism through the *Poetika* journal. It is stated that *Poetika* is a symbolic and

cultural power that appears as a strategy used by agents or capital owners in mastering the arena (criticism) of literature, thus it continuously perpetuates the practice of legitimacy. A literary scientist who is the manager of studies in the Master's Program in Literature and general manager of the journal, Faruk, is a capital owner who has an interest in the study of literature, philosophical, and historical history. This structured the *Poetika* journal bidding process with new studies and the existence of practitioners who at the same time academics used studies on post-structuralism, post-colonialism, and postmodernism.

Studies related to criticism of Indonesian literature depart from postmodernism not only occur in academics but also occur in literary groups that refer to postmodernism literary criticism as a discourse offered to the public literature. Literary criticism of postmodernism is evident through the thematic winners of the literary criticism contest held by JAC. The contest was held biannually. However, it can be done in 2007, 2009, 2013, 2017, and in 2019 the JAC is in the middle of returning to the literary criticism contest.

The 2007 literary critic contest took the theme "Indonesian Literature Entering the 21st Century" with US Laksana as one of the judges. In the 2017 contest, AS Laksana returned to being a jury with Ari J. Adipurwawidjana and Martin Surajaya after attending the JAC literary criticism class which was first held in 2016.

3.2. The Universal Aesthetic Humanism of the Reform Era

Universal humanism is an idea that is inseparable from the history of Western thought, particularly European and American. At the end of the 18th century, Immanuel Kant formulated enlightenment, namely the existence of an independent human being, daring to express reasoning thoughts, and freeing himself from all attachments. Inauguration of humans as the subject is a marker of the appearance of the Renaissance or the age of enlightenment. The subject in question is the individual who becomes the centrality of the interpretation of nature and freedom of reason. Kant's thinking is inseparable from Eurocentrism bearing in mind Kant is a world thinker who has never moved from the city where he once lived.

The term humanism in Indonesia has been sticking out since Sutan Takdir Alisyahbana has scheduled modernization, that culture which was originally oriented to customs should be drawn to future orientation so that it is necessary to form ideals for change and improvement in the life field. Sutan Takdir Alisyahbana suggested a way of viewing the Western Renaissance as an experience in implementing rational and straightforward attitudes (discipline, accuracy, etc.). Kurniawan (1999, p. 118) further argued that Sutan Takdir Alisyahbana was the first to adopt Maxim Gorki's thoughts on socialist realism by opposing art for art or individualism that advocated social commitment in literature.

Universality in human life is manifested in the ratio of free thought even though humans are essentially limited in space and time. Universality according to Slavoj Žižek (qtd. in Goenawan Mohamad's lecture entitled "*Berangkat dari Humanisme Universal*" [Departing from Universal Humanism]) can be specifically realized through an approach; among others; 1) rationality in the form of an abstraction of human existence which is fostered universality, 2) Marxism's review of the appointment of the proletariat to universality, and 3) hegemony of a perspective of universality, which is the social reality of the existing antagonisms that occur as an equivalent of hegemonic struggles, then from that, the ruler who wins the arena can do universality (Salihara, 2016, They Might Be Giants 00:45:15).

The term universal humanism has been widely reported when there was a struggle against the ideology of socialist realism in the 1960s. Kurniawan (1999, p. 119) asserted Pramoedya Ananta Toer as

one of the masterminds in socialist realism discourse rejected the presence of universal humanism carried out by the Cultural Manifest (later slipped into Manikebo which means 'buffalo sperm') as a group with abstract humanism that calls itself universally. Lekra denied that humanism should side with the people of workers, factory workers, and peasants, and therefore felt more appropriate when applying proletarian humanism than universal.

Wiratmo Soekito as the writer of the Cultural Manifest script wrote that universal humanism emphasizes national interests which lead to international interests. The manuscript was published in a magazine *Sastra* No.9/10, September 1963 as well as newspapers *Berita Republik* in "Forum" Literature and Culture No. 1 Year. I, 19 Oktober 1963 (qtd. in Kurniawan, 1999, p. 121). The Manuscript of Cultural Manifest explains the disagreement that universal humanism confuses friends and foes, culture reflects national values in addition to universal.

The statement by the Lekra leader, Bakri Siregar (in the report of the Lekra plenary session in Surabaya, September 3, 1963), was questioned because it was considered universal humanism initiated by the Cultural Manifest to eliminate the line between friends and opponents of the revolution. The Cultural Manifest was accused of serving the opponents of the revolution for it was allegedly an anti-communist group that received covert support from soldiers who presented themselves through aesthetic disguises (Kurniawan, 1999, p. 122).

Goenawan Mohamad in *Tempo*, the May 21, 1988 edition revealed that the Cultural Manifest thought took distance from the domination of power (qtd. in Kurniawan, 1999, p. 123). The Cultural Manifest seeks to establish new powers even though they are not aligned with the hegemonic power. However, attacks on the Cultural Manifest were continually launched by Lekra. The fight between magazines *Lentera* and *Sastra*, between the ideology of socialist realism and universal humanism which both led to the banning of the operation of the Cultural Manifest, was initiated by Sukarno which further impacted the restrictions on the members of the Cultural Manifest to voice thoughts.

The New Order period reversed Lekra's victory in taking the cultural arena in Indonesia. Everything related to the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) was suppressed. The emergence of the JAC in 1968, after the ex-Manikebuis (former members of the Cultural Manifest) joined the JAC by promoting universal humanism, did not necessarily support all policies of the central government during the New Order. Nevertheless, the concept of universal humanism is accepted in the hands of the regime so that it can survive and hegemony to the present.

Taman Ismail Marzuki is a laboratory space created by JAC as a cultural stage which is at the same time an art worker's obedience. This also occurs in France, which is the existence of *salons littéraires* as literary chambers formed by aristocrats (Al-Fayyadl, 2015, p. 145). The purpose of forming these spaces is to baptize the achievements of literary arts workers in expressing their works on the condition that must be in line with the agents' aesthetic tastes. The JAC emphasizes the aesthetic of universal humanism in presenting works production.

3.3. JAC in the Arena of Universal Humanism Literary Criticism

The Jakarta Arts Council (JAC) is an independent institution established in 1968 and was initiated by artists in Jakarta who specifically established partnerships with the governor of Jakarta. The duties of the JAC include formulating policies, fostering and developing arts and/or literature within the scope of Jakarta. However, as an institution located in the capital, JAC additionally monitors and develops arts and/or literature in Indonesia. On the other hand, JAC has to introduce Indonesian art and/or literature abroad, or vice versa.

JAC's efforts in fighting for reputation (especially in the arena of Indonesian literary criticism) can be dissected through Pierre Bourdieu's theory which focuses on practices that are not determined objectively or free will as a result of the dialectical relationship between structure and agency. Bourdieu labeled a reflection of an interest in dialectics between structure and ways in which people construct social reality as "structuralist structuralism", "structuralist constructivism", "genetic structuralism" (qtd. in Ritzer and Goodman, 2010, p. 578-579). Structuralism is different from the Lévi-Straussian structuralism perspective on symbolic systems, but about objective structures that are independent of the consciousness and will of agents who can direct and hinder their practice in the social world. Bourdieu introduces social origins consisting of schemes of perception, thoughts, and actions (which he termed later as *habitus*) and concerning the origin of social structures leading to social arenas and classes.

The workings of *habitus* show the established social position. *Habitus* produces objectively classifiable practices and representations through social conditioning that produce them but only identifiable by agents who master the code (classification schemes) needed to understand the social meaning. *Habitus* can be formed ideally by the capital offered. Practice takes place based on the quality of capital owned by the agent following the contested arena. Capital in nature is divided into four types, namely 1) economic capital in the form of means of production, material, and money, 2) cultural capital in the form of overall intellectual qualifications that can be produced through formal education or family inheritance, 3) social capital owned joint agents with other parties in power, and 4) symbolic capital in the form of prestige, status, authority, and legitimacy that accumulates in the agent.

JAC is the owner agent of these capitals. Economic capital — which is at the same time social capital — is collected from supporters of funds. It should be underlined that JAC is a partner institution of Jakarta's governor. That is, JAC as a cultural institution is inevitable from political clutches under the supervision of the JAC Jakarta government. Thus, the actors involved in the JAC performance system indirectly follow the government's vision and mission because of the source of funding that marks. In the arena of literary criticism, symbolic capital was formed through the historical origins of the JAC. The names of the founders who have been featured in the Indonesian literary arena are separate claims for JAC. The cultural capital in the literary criticism arena is the class existence of literary criticism held by JAC. The class mission is to deepen the theory, history, and literary criticism methods, then practice embodied in authorship. Should be a class, the centrality of thinking is likely to occur. In other words, speaking of the aesthetic standard of literary criticism of universal humanism can be instilled through the continuation of JAC's literary criticism class as a new *habitus* developed by institutions through power. The creation of the class of literary criticism embodies the inculcation of symbolic violence from the voices of universal humanism ideology, the JAC, to the sixteen participants who were educated intensively as students in the literary criticism class.

Symbolic violence is a term introduced by Pierre Bourdieu underwent by social agents in society without triggering any resistance. Society does show conformity behavior since the social legitimacy of the agent. The power that occurs as if it is natural and without question—then forms a social order in an individual society in a stable and bound to the tradition of creation—is the embodiment of *doxa* deliberately processed by agents to practice the peak of symbolic violence. In other words, *doxa* is the people's views towards the justification that occurs unconsciously.

JAC's track record proves that the cultural institution allows the institution to legitimize those involved. As a lighthouse that is now very calculated in the cultural arena, JAC attracts people to symbolically follow the offered discourse, namely universal humanism. The authority mobilizes the universal humanism aesthetic in the Indonesian literary criticism arena.

Conclusion

The Indonesian literary criticism arena was overwhelmed with the aesthetic of universal humanism. The Jakarta Arts Council (JAC) dominates the arena of Indonesian literary criticism through a series of capital-gathering strategies, among others; economic, social, cultural, and symbolic capital. The economic and social capital was realized by making both interaction and affiliation with the Jakarta government. Symbolic capital can be the embodiment of historical heritage from the established Jakarta Arts Council. The cultural capital was exercised through procuring competitions and classes of literary criticism. JAC functions its strategy through practicing symbolic violence embodied through inculcating the universal humanism aesthetic to the participants. The continuity of these activities is a *habitus* that established the JAC through internalizing the owned and acquired capital.

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