

## Conference Paper

# Social Conflict in Hamka's Novel *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van Der Wijck*

**Winda Syafitri**

Master's Program, Fakultas Sastra, Universitas Islam Sumatera Utara, Medan, Indonesia

### Abstract

This research focuses on social conflict reflected in Hamka's novel entitled *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van Der Wijck*, aimed at revealing the causing factors of social conflict in the novel. The story revolves around a young man's fighting spirit, though he has to suffer so much because his love is rejected by his lover's family. Then he gets up from all the grief and opens a new page in his life, becoming a famous and successful writer. He narrates his loyalty and love in such an eloquent way. He knows that his lover is unhappy in the family life. And without hate or resentment, he continues to help his lover. Truly the true love will continue to bloom in the heart to the end of life and this is really the reflection of his love. Soekanto (1982) states that social causing factors can be divided into four namely: (1) Cultural Difference and (2) difference of interest. The method used is descriptive qualitative by (Meleong, 2005: 4). The result shows that all the four factors causing the social conflict proposed are found in the novel. However, the dominant social conflictw found in the novel are cultural difference and difference of interest.

**Keywords:** Social conflict, Cultural difference, Individual difference

Corresponding Author:

Winda Syafitri

windasyafitri840@gmail.com

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## 1. Introduction

Literature is social institution using language as media. The language itself is a social creation. Literature describes the real life of human beings, always giving influence to society. The problem that occurs to humans can be disclosed by an author in a literary work. Conflict that occurs can be described clearly through the messages given by an author. Soekanto in Huky, (1986) explains that conflict is a social process of individuals or groups who seek to fulfill the purpose by challenging the opposition which is accompanied by threat or violence.

The conflict in a novel can generate a sense of emotion so that novel will be interesting. Taum (1997: 13) states that literature is the expression of various problems that occur in the life of the community by using language as median. Literature will continue

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to grow every day because in life there must be a problem that may happen to person. One can describe the result of his observation from his experience into a work of art. This will describe a person's feeling.

The novel *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van Der Wijck* narrates the life of the main character opposed in *Minangkabau* because of the cultural difference and social status. When he wants to get married with a *Minang* girl, he is opposed because of matrilineal system and low status social and he is underestimated by the girl's family but he has a great spirit to change the social status.

Nurgiyantoro (2009: 124) claims that conflict occurred due to social interaction between individuals, or problems occurred due to the relationship of individual. Walgito (2004) states that frustration occurred because of conflict occurred in life. A lot of human beings certainly ever have conflicts in their life. Conflict can make human frustrated. Based on the explanation above, the purposes of this research are (1) to describe the cultural difference and (2) to describe the difference of interest.

## 2. Literature Review

Wiyatmi (2006: 79) states that conflict in Literature refers to a series of exploitable images based on a plot explaining the various types of challenges of protagonists' face in literature. The meme replaces the images of the comic with something in popular culture. It is a necessary element of any story, driving the narrative forward and compelling the reader to stay up all night reading in hopes of some sort of closure. Most stories are written to have characters, a setting and a plot, but what sets apart a truly great story from the one that might not finish reading is conflict. And this is supported by Soekanto (1982) stating that conflict is a social process of individuals or groups trying to get their aims in life.

Basically, one can define conflict as a struggle between opposing forces, two characters, a character and nature, or even an internal struggle and conflict provides a level of tragedy into a story that engages the reader and makes him or her invested in finding out what happens. Walgito (2004) claims that the factors which may cause conflict to happen are: (1) culture difference: conflict that occurs owing to cultural context, and (2) difference of interest: this is a matter of one's or a group's interest in a certain purpose.

## 3. Research Method

This type of research is qualitative research by using descriptive method and this is stated by Bogdan and Taylor in Meleong (2005: 4) that the research intends to

understand the phenomenon of experiences in descriptive holistic way in the form of words, and language, at a specific context. It means that the research is not too focused in numeral but in imagination of the concept of discussion to give the conclusion through the specific characteristic in a text with systematic objective.

## 4. Discussion

### 4.1. Cultural difference

Cultural difference can be seen in the novel *Tenggelammnya Kapal Van Der Wijck*. The conflict occurs when the relationship of love between Zainuddin and Hayati is known by Hayati's family that is his sweet heart. Hayati's family cannot accept Zainuddin because he is deemed to be in a low social standing with no clear cultural background. Then Zainuddin is not born of a true *Minang* family. His mother does not come from *Minang* family, and as the people of *Minangkabau* holds a matrilineal system, automatically Zainuddin is considered to an outcast, though his father is a *Minang* man.

"He has no clear cultural background; in fact, an outcast. He cannot be called *Minang* man; while Hayati comes from a noble family. Their descendants are far different and they are surely not matched. When they get married, there will be a disaster not only for their families but for the whole people here. Everyone will get a bad fate owing to their marriage. Therefore, they should not get married". (Hamka, 1984: 56)

Owing to cultural difference, Zainuddin has to let Hayati go and he has to end his love to Hayati as nearly everyone there opposes their relationship. Then the people cannot easily abandon their tradition that has been passed down from one generation to another.

"His father is of the same line with us", said a young woman, "Do not talk further of this matter. You do not know how important our custom is to us. It has been given to us from such a long generation before us and we have to preserve it. We know that his father is Batipuh but unluckily his mother is coming from nowhere, a place unknown to everyone of us here. This is really complicated. Personally, I don't want to his sister-in-law". (Hamka, 1984: 58)

Cultural identity is very important for the people of *Minang*, especially at that time. And owing to the unclear status of Zainuddin, he is easily opposed and rejected by the family of Hayati as well as by the community. People are jeering at him by saying that his mother comes from nowhere; though they also know that Zainuddin's mother

comes from Makassar. But for the sake of their custom preservation, they are ready to do anything, though they have to deny a reality.

## 4.2. Difference of interest

In novel *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van Der Wejck* it is seen that Zainuddin is not a wealthy person while Hayati comes from a rich family. Apart from having cultural difference, there is also a matter of interest in the rejection of Zainuddin by Hayati's family.

"You have to realize and remember well the husband to be that you are going to marry," said the mother. "He is coming from a poor family and his cultural background, as said by many, is revealed. What do you expect from his? Do you think that he will be able to support you financially? There is Azis, who is going to propose you, why then? Choosing someone that is not clear?" (Hamka, 1984: 53)

Hayati knows that Zainuddin is driven out by her mother, but Hayati tries to defend Zainuddin. But Hayati's mother keeps on saying that she dislikes Zainuddin as she thinks that Zainuddin is inappropriate for Hayati. Zainuddin is poor so Hayati's mother drives him out. And Zainuddin hears that Hayati will be married to a man named Azis, a rich man.

Zainuddin gets dissatisfied and is hurt so he loses the spirit of life. Fortunately, his friend approaches him and gives support to him. His true friend, Muluk, asks Zainuddin to go to Java and learn to become a writer. And finally, Zainuddin accepts his friend's idea and to everyone's surprise, Zainuddin becomes a famous writer, leading a prosperous life.

## 5. Conclusions

Zainuddin's father comes from Minang and his mother from Bugis. At that time, the structure of *Minang* people manages the ancestry from maternal lineage. However, Zainuddin strengthens his heart to remain there with a beautiful girl named Hayati. Zainuddin's descendant is again being the obstacle of their romance. Zainuddin is forced to leave the village because their relationship deemed unfit. However, Zainuddin and Hayati promise to love each other.

The problems get bigger when Hayati is proposed by a wealthy man of pure Minang descent, Aziz. Forced by her family, Hayati accepts the proposal and breaks her relationship with Zainuddin. Zainuddin chooses to leave *Minang* and ventured to Java after

his heart has been broken. With his talent as a writer, Zainuddin manages to gain fame as well as material happiness. Meanwhile, the destiny between Zainuddin and Hayati does not necessarily stop. Inadvertently, Zainuddin again meets with Hayati who has now become the wife of Aziz. As might be expected, their love then starts burning again but ends in a tragedy.

Cultural difference and difference of interest hinder their relationship. This conflict is also determined by individuals' perceptions of goals, resources, and power, and such perceptions may differ greatly among individuals. One determinant of perception is culture, the socially inherited, shared and learned ways of living possessed by individuals in virtue of their membership in social groups. Conflict that occurs across cultural boundaries thus is also occurring across cognitive and perceptual boundaries and is especially susceptible to problems of intercultural miscommunication and misunderstanding. These problems trigger the conflict, no matter what the root causes of it including strictly material interests, may be. In this sense culture is an important factor in many sorts of conflicts that at first may appear to be exclusively about material resources or negotiable interests.

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