

**SOCIO PSYCHOLOGICAL
ANALYSIS ON NIKKI-ROSSA'S
CONTEMPORARY POEM**

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READING short stories, novel, poems, or watching the play performance is the very clear example of literary appreciation found in neighboring daily life. Producing and writing about literary topic or work is entitled a creative activity. It is called a creative one because writing whose the meaning of composing something in written needs much thinking to complete. Appreciating the literary works means doing action to have intercourse with the creation of literature wholeheartedly. Therefore it will grow the understanding, respect, sensibility to the critic thought, and worthy feeling of sensitivity to the creation of literature.¹

Effendi has his inference that they are many activities be accomplished in appreciating the creation of literary works namely prose, play, and poetry.²

Following are activities thoughtfully attained:

1. Read many kinds of literary works as much as possible.

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2. Learn the literary theory as much as possible.
3. Learn literary essays and criticisms as much as possible.
4. Learn history of literature as much as possible.

Poetry is defined to be the plural form of poem. According to Laurence Perine poetry is kind of language that says more and says more intensely than does ordinary language.³ Consequently to understand a poem is not easy as short story because poem possesses four dimensions i.e. intellectual, sensuous, emotional and imaginative. Simply, the power of poetry is in the word. It is by virtue of regarding to the diction, the intense of rhythm including the composition of rhyme.

William Wordsworth, an English romantic poet, said that poetry be stated as a spontaneous overflow of powerful meaning.⁴ Poetry is a concise expression of extreme emotion or experience. In a very few carefully chosen words, a poem can communicate something seriously powerful. Meanwhile Horatius, a critic from Rome, has two conditions in explaining the meaning poetry namely, primarily poetry should be beautiful and entertainment (*dulce*), in addition poetry should be also useful and teaching something (*utile*).⁵ Briefly it brings to an end that poetry is *dulce* and *utile*, to entertain and give benefit to the readers. It

is not surprise any longer that poetry therapy could be implemented in medical treatment for patients' recovery as the prove for poetry is useful due to the health professionals had successfully used poetry with patients suffering from anxiety, depression, bereavement, terminal illnesses, post traumatic stress, and eating disorders.

The Definition of Social Psychology

The term of psychology is more familiar than social psychology in view of the first mentioned is invented earlier than the second. It is not only about the age that makes them different but also about the object examined. The object of psychology is people and their activities while the social psychology is the social activities. However, social psychology is actually the development of the new knowledge and a branch of psychology.⁶

Furthermore besides the term of social psychology there are many more branches of psychology such as psycholinguistic, psychoanalysis, psychology of education and so forth. The knowledge of social psychology elaborates the activity of human in relation to the social situation such as group and mass situation including the interaction among the people and the culture. This interaction covers the relationship between individual and in-

dividual, individual and group or group and group. The essence of this interaction is individual and group or group and group can work successfully or not.

Hubert Bonner in his book says that social psychology is the knowledge learning the human behavior. He stressed in the human behavior not the social behavior. Whereas Sherif & Sherif in the book of *An Outline of Social Psychology* defines that social psychology is the behavior of the individuals in relation to social stimulus situations. Here the simple definition from Abu Ahmadi is to be used in this written: The knowledge studying about individual as the group member of society. It is emphasized that the lastly said is the terminology to be applied in examining the true story of Nikki-Rossa contemporary poem.

About The Writer

The contemporary poets of America are for both the white people and the black ones. It is happened because the American citizens at that time in the early of 20 century were mostly consisted of the two-difference color white and black although there are some people from other continents too such as Asia and Europe. Therefore the white and black have the equivalent opportunity to express their feeling, something felt inside their heart about the condition that their ex-

perience, or their thought, idea or opinion produced by thinking concerning emotional situation in the form of poetry.

After World War II ended American black poets searched for the particular impression toward the readers, through the social life.⁷ They discussed about the relationship among the human being within individual or in a group. Reference to the human character as the social creature: rely on the other to fulfil his needs in all aspects of lives in favor of surviving. Don L. Lee, Nikki Giovanni, and Etheridge Knight, both of them except (Knight) use the modernist form as developed by Whitman, Olson, and Cumming.

Nikki Giovanni, the author of Nikki-Rossa poem, was born in Knoxville, Tennessee, in 1943 and grew up in Lincoln Heights, Ohio, a black suburb of Cincinnati. She entered Fisk University at sixteen, was expelled, then was readmitted, worked at the University's writer's workshop, and finally completed her degree eight years later in 1967. Meanwhile in Cincinnati, she organized the city's first Black arts Festival. She studied briefly at the University of Pennsylvania graduate school while writing the poems collected in her first book, *Black Feeling, Black Talk* (1968), which was published by Dudley Randall's Broadside Press. She shares with many other poets,

black and white, a vocation for teaching, and recently taught black literature and poetry at the Livingston campus of Rutgers University.⁸

The poetry made by contemporary poets is also considered as the modern poetry, which can be recognized from the form, namely free verse. The poets express their feeling and thought in the form that is not tied up in association the regulation or the rule occurred in traditional poetry. The very famous model of traditional poetry form is sonnet. It is a fourteen-line poem with the pattern of iambic pentameter rhyme. The existing regulations are such as the number of the lines in every stanza, the consistency of rhyme and the pattern of syllable to create the rhythm. Moreover, the characteristic of modern poetry is romantic, wiel- ding imagination.

The basic principal of romanticism and imaginative current style is to describe the fact of life in beauty without disgrace.⁹ Supposing the written is about the happiness, it should be perfect. In contrast, if the description is about sadness, the writer wants the readers' tears are drained. That is way the romanticism has always been connected with sentimental portrait or response. Sentimentality here is depicted to the excessive emotion, especially excessive pity, treated as appropriate rather than disproportion-

onate. The priority in romanticism is feeling. In the meantime the rational is not remarkably important. For end result character of romantic works customarily rock the readers.

In accordance to the imaginative people, the reality must be described in visual imagination, which is clear and bright. The words are selectively chosen to describe the fact as unadorned. The language used or the diction is intensely daily thereupon the poetry created by imaginative people utilized the narrative style or more or less close to prose.

Social Psychology Of Nikki-Rossa's Poem

The poem of Nikki-Rossa was written in 1969. It was precisely seven years after the speech of Martin Luther King, jr eventuated on August 28,1963. He is an American black prominent hero whose the speech became very momentum. Through his speech the America people realized that the black, in the past as Negro slaves, experienced injustice treatment of social behavior for living.¹⁰ This injustice treatment made the social situation become uncomfortable for the black since they become the second priority after the white. There is as an assumption that was roughly estimated about the process of this poem had been inspired by the said

speech on account of the similarity idea that is speaking the black versus the white.

This poem is one splendid literary work of others noteworthy poems by Nikki Giovanni apprising the readers about the social situation of how the black people run their life at the time when Giovanni was a child. What makes this poem become greatly distinguished is to inform her truly feeling and thought from the writer her own as the point of view along with the flash back of the poet' childhood story. Since the writer herself like the black people experienced the real condition of social discrimination that is the different rights among the racist. This was befallen in the era of below 1960's and practiced evidently by the American. For instance in the bus that the black sit at the back and the white are in the front. Even for more intolerable is the issue of humanity i.e. the white were not allowed to get married with the black. Those who have this kind of marriage would oppose the law. Thus, the readers are served the actuality not only something beyond the poet's imagination or fiction. She can describe about the social behavior for the poem setting in detail and eventually it becomes very impressive and emotional. This poem goes as follows:

Nikki-Rosa

1. childhood remembrances are always a drag
2. if you're Black
3. you always remember things like living in Woodlawn
4. with no inside toilet
5. and if you become famous or something
6. they never talk about how happy you were to have your mother
7. all to yourself and
8. how good the water felt when you got your bath from one of those
9. big tubs that folk in Chicago barbecue in
10. and somehow when you talk about home
11. it never gets across how much you
12. understood their feelings
13. as whole family attended meetings about Hollydale
14. and even though you remember
15. your biographers never understand
16. your father's pain as he sells his stock
17. and another dream goes
18. and though you're poor it isn't poverty that
19. concerns you
20. and though they fought a lot
21. it isn't your father drinking that makes any difference
22. but only the everybody is together and you

23. and your sister have happy birthdays and very good Christmases
24. and I really hope no white person ever has cause to write about me
25. because they never understand Black love is Black wealth and they'll
26. probably all about my hard childhood and never understand that
27. all the while I was quite happy

In the development of this poem adopted the language that is comfortably grasped by the readers because the poet is could be categorized as the follower of imaginative current who had tendency to apply simple language. Moreover no many collocation, regular combination of words, noticed in that poem. The capital letters are not occupied in this poem instead the small letters, exceptionally the word black. The use of capital letter for the word black has intention to be 'eye catching' which leads to the additional meaning. It means that black become the central polemic with others explanation go through that social condition and the phenomena of black people activities in this poem. Lastly, the typography or the poem's visual performance is unique because it plays the length of lines that are

not monotonous to beautify the story presentation.

Giovanni, the author, is a social person. It is recklessly seen and understood that she would like to reflect herself turning an individual who becomes a group member of society. In this case it is a black society which is not integrated with white since the country, America, had an official government policy of racial segregation. This policy was introduced and known widely as apartheid. Apartheid was complementing the idea of procuring the poem comprehensively. At that time when the apartheid had broken transparently for the author it was emerged in this poem to be the setting. The setting of this poem is both for the time and the place occurred. She retains the story to be highly biographical by reason of her real memory for the illumination. In other word from social psychology analysis Giovanni shared her experience during childhood according to her own witness. In this discussion she is deemed as the persona of black community within the social activities that she and the people have rendered hand in hand to keep alive in unfriendly situation around their environment. Moreover, she discoursed about her particular memories of her, the family and the factual situation in enumerating that. The exactness is the memory she keeps be-

longed to her exclusively respected as the part of black people.

The poet composed the plot of poem by exploiting the conjunction word, 'and', as well as the augmentation to the use of small letters. The materialization of numerous 'and' is planned to ease the story line working smoothly without some obstructions. It looks like she would not to split the flow of her narration into many parts. Thereupon this narration could be enjoyed and concluded as the chronological order, one happening comes to pass after another. This kind of story narrative is similar in the form of prose. Hence it is should be read from the first word to the end continuously, without pauses yet in single, because it was recorded in one stanza and the afterward recital has dependence to the previous in reporting.

Paying accurate attention to the title of 'Nikki-Rossa', it has a to be the realization of herself because she used her real fist name as the doer and later the word I is turned out in the poem to replaced her. Rossa is predicted as her friend or even best friend since the hyphen is there between those two names. Isn't that this to interpret the intimate relationship between them in parallel to each other for the reason that to be a member of society? Rossa surely represents white. Indirectly, this positively

illustrates that the human being, due to the fact that God's creature, who live in this universe is the same, equal, no superiority of one racist to another. Besides as Giovanni' best friend Rossa is intended to be the readers, including non white color of readers' racist, in the act of proven by the use of pronoun 'you'. It seems that it is an invitation for readers to have emphatic feeling of what she had experienced to be a color person by means of sharing the memories on account of author's memory is badly significant to reveal. This style of narration is like a daily conversation where the words you and I have taken place as the manifest the intimacy of human relationship in social activity every day. Besides the to be abbreviation exposed in many lines is existed too and automatically give the effectiveness to build to nature of the speaking.

It could be investigated that the poem followed the free verse style by ignoring the rule consistency of rhythm and rhyme pattern. Correspondingly it is written in just one stanza to create the story unity, one line has exact connection to one another. In the first and second lines structured "childhood remembrances are always a drag, if you're Black". The truth is those statements are for the white people that they see and remember rightly color people's childhood

in terms of social activities always unpleasant by reason of the white and black have different apprehension to undergo the encountered condition. These lines are one more time to exhibit the contradiction social perception between the black and the white. How that can be drawn? Lines in the following generally bestow the every day language that is easy to be understood for obtaining the emotion feeling in the poem. As a result it does not need to do paraphrase, a restatement which set forth an idea in diction other than of the original or reword, to go to learn the poem entirely.

Succeeding lines will clarify unpleasant social conditions both for physically and mentally severely tense like living in Woodlawn, a black suburb in Cincinnati where to be perceived as the crowded and uncomfortable region to live in, the domicile where there is no toilet inside. They never talk about how happy you were to have your mother if you become famous or something, all to yourself and, how good the water felt when you got your bath from one of those, big tubs that folk in Chicago barbecue in and some other things. This recounting was reinforce with the presence of tone, the poet's attitude to the readers, is delight to show the gladness. The tone simply could be felt after the readers dissolved

the poem chiefly signify relating to the social activities in sensation. It is determined shockingly in the lasted line 'all the while I was quite happy'. Even further the poet explains more demonstratively by conducting imagery to embellish the tone. The manipulation of figurative language is simile. It explicitly makes a comparison for example by using as and like as shown in line 3, you always remember things like living in Woodland, and 13, as the whole family attended meetings about Hollydale. The apparent imagery is visual and tactile. These two imageries are for strengthening the power of story telling whose connection to the description of the situation being pictured as perfect. The visual or sight effect is obviously stated in the line of 3rd, you always remember things like living in Woodland, 4th, with no inside toilet, and 9th, big tubs that folk in Chicago barbecue in. Otherwise the tactile imagery is something to be felt. For example it feels wet when touch the water and it is hot when the sun always shine brightly.¹¹ Here the tactile imagery is almost beautify the way of expression in order to bring about the readers to feel the narration direct to the point too. The lines that are included for defining this imagery elucidated in the 6th, they never talk about how happy you were to have your mother, 8th, how good

the water felt when you got your bath from one of those, 12th, understood their feeling, 15th, your biographers never understand, and 25th, because they never understand Black love is Black wealth and they'll.

Black for the initial is always written in capital letter even though this word position is not in the beginning of a sentence. By using capital letter signs the stress on color people, the word Black, for the primarily contention. It would like to make clear that Black is Black, a racist that is impossible to be changed into another, and always in spotlight because of the color recognition which is identical to be something miserable such as grief and discomfort. Nearly all color people prominently Giovanni holds a faith and a strong character which is elucidated in 25th line, because they never understand Black love is Black wealth and they'll, that can be precisely comprehended by the black people themselves. The white people will never understand about the authentic conditions and what are indisputably being perceived, they solely give assertive for the sorrows. As the matter of fact when the black people exceeded those sorrows is not the pain, but the happiness that decorates their journey of life when they were kids. This is emphasized by the employment of word diction, the choice of vo-

cabulary and sentence structure, in the 18th and 19th lines as quoted, "and though you're poor it isn't poverty, that concerns you". These lines could be translated in the statement that for the exactness is to live in poverty is not the indescribable thing to be regretful or even less mourned.

Common people are prevalent to have dream in place of their near future achievement usually the dreams will be direly tenacious due to the rough social activities or oppressed condition. This conjuncture made a reason for Giovanni as a person who is a member of black society to dream, to have ideal situation for her and others. That dream is pleasant and contains possibility to come into physical existence not merely imagining something unrealistic. Psychologically, to have dream like author's dream affects one's mind to be optimistic, expecting the best in handling the problem. This provides a positive impact to one who has dream. She had dream to reach that give her to be ceaselessly spirited in challenging the situation and condition surround her and the community. The line 17th, and another dream goes, reveals it. Toward people dreams are supposed to grant the courage and along with keep them alive as the longing for black at that lastingness.¹²

Aside from dreams Giovanni also possesses hope, deter-

mined in 24th line: 'and I really hope no white person has cause to write about me'. This statement came out from her bottom of heart that she does not desire white person has written about her inattentive the motive to deal with it. The big reason is she knows well the white will specify without completely understand approaching the rigidity of her childhood differ from the black will cite. Indeed the story of childhood is part of her rich memories owned by the black alone and can be proud for engraving the history.

The knowledge of social psychology elaborates the activity of human in relation to the social situation or activity such as group and mass situation. This knowledge is inserted in the line of 13th and 24th. Respectively about the family meeting, called Hollydale. It seems that Hollydale is a kind of social family gathering to enjoy as the family event and explicated how important was that family meeting, a ritual ceremony, where the affinity bound them so tightly. It sounds that the meeting is obligatory to attend by the whole family due to its significant event for the contented tradition. Besides it is an honor to perpetuate the culture as part of social activity in black community life. Second a talk about the celebration of her and her sister's happy birthdays and very good Christ-

mases in the children' eyes of recording come every year. Those celebrations are the fact of the social events. For Giovanni they were interest and certainly she was also joyful to deal with the events because they have given the people the very shining moment as experienced also by the white. Above all the understanding of those two social events as a matter of fact belong to the people around the world in this earth regardless of they are color or not.

It reviews that the knowledge of social psychology elaborates the activity of human in relation to the social situation such as group and mass situation including the interaction among the people and the culture. The Fascinating idea here is the speaking about the human relation. Assuring that this poem established the relationship among the family, group consisting of parents and their children, such as the words for mother, the word of family itself, father and sister. Each of them is represented separately in line 6, 13, 16 and 21, and 23.

Giovanni, as a person who live in the society, ordinarily feel unimpeded to talk about society structure in detail as she had apperceived. This was affirmed by uncover the family meeting including their members, as explained earlier, side by side with their feeling. The confirmed

statements are based on the mentioned lines like they never talk about how happy you were to have your mother, as the whole family attended meetings about Hollydale, your father's pain as he sells his stock, it isn't your father drinking that makes any difference, and then you and your sister have happy birthdays and very good Christmases. Twice she mentioned about father and once for mother and sister. It determined that the cross relationship in family namely the emotion fondness between a daughter (a poet) and her father by reason of there is not astonishment in every day of social life a daughter more often tells about her father rather than her mother or vice versa. She was able to feel deeply about her father's agony, extreme mental or physical suffering, of selling his stock. Moreover about his father drinking suggested to be the value of pride. These document the evidence that she has sharp ability in explicit her feeling calmly.

Conclusion

Nikki-Rossa is one example of contemporary poem with the characteristic of highly biographical and was written by an American black poet. It is considered as a modern poem with one feature recognition that its form is free verse. The author has exploited simple language in

expressing her feeling. Therefore it does not need to do paraphrase in order to understand the poem completely because there is no many difficulties of chosen words.

The socio psychological analysis is utilized to demonstrate a member of a group society with the activity of human in relation to the social situation. The point is the poem recounts about the memory of her childhood as a persona of black community exclusively that is not integrated with the white because the apartheid had broken apparently and be inspired as the setting of the poem. Consequently the illustrations are about the discrimination treatment that is accepted by the black in spite of it was the practice of injustice.

The author would like to emphasize about her feeling as a real black man with its own memory, different from other's childhood memory. The story of the poem reveals the spirit of the author to be a person whose strong character. The truth is that memory in the white people eyes is something miserable such as grief and discomfort. In contrast in the black people eyes is their own happiness something blessedness and merriment in view of the sweet or bitter of someone's life could be felt as truth for him who deals with it. Consequently the white people will never understand about the

authentic conditions of black and what are indisputably being perceived.

Catatan Akhir

1. S. Effendi, *Bimbingan Apresiasi Puisi* (Jakarta: PT dunia Pustaka Jaya, 2002), p. 6
2. Ibid. p10
3. Pemine Laurence, *Literature: Structure Sound And Sense. Second Edition* (New york: Harcourt Brace Javanovisc, 1974), P. 3
4. Melani Budianta, *Membaca Sastra* (Magelang: Indonesiatara, 2002), p. 40
5. Ibid
6. Abu Ahmadi, *Psikologi Sosial* (Semarang: Rineka Cita, 1990), p. 1
7. Ellman Richard and et. *Modern Poems An Introduction to Poetry* (USA:W.W Noron Company, Inc, 1982), p. 496
8. Ibid. p. 483
9. Herman J. Waluyo. *Teori dan Apresiasi Puisi* (Jakarta: Erlangga, 1995), p. 33
10. I am happy to join with you today in what will go down in history as the greatest demonstration for freedom in history of our nation. Five year a go, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand today, signed the Emancipation proclamation. This momentous decree came as a great beacon light of

hope to millions of Negro slaves who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice. It came as the Joyous daybreak to end the long night of their capacity. (The speech of Martin Luther King, Jr) S.Ando, P.Schneider et al. New stream. Second Edition (Japan: zoshindo 1998) , p.116

11. Siswanto , *Apresiasi Puisi-puisi Sastra Inggris*, Surakarta:Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta: 2002..p. 55
12. Ibid. p. 117

I say to you today, my friends, so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in American dream. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up, live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self evident, that all men are created equal..."

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave-owners, will be able to sit down together at table of brotherhood. I have a dream that one day even the State of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering wish the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. I have a dream today

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الرَّجُلُ الْعَالِمُ بَيْنَ مَنْ لَا يَعْرِفُونَ مَنْزِلَتَهُ .

Seorang laki-laki alim berada di tengah-tengah orang yang tidak mengerti statusnya.

الْحَازِمُ يَعْمَلُ فِي شَبَابِهِ لِكِبَرِهِ .

Seorang yang berwawasan luas bekerja di masa mudanya untuk menyongsong hari tuanya.

الْمُذْنِبُ لَا يَرْبِيهِ النَّصِيحُ إِلَّا سَمَادِيًّا .

Pendosa itu tidak mempan oleh nasihat, melainkan hanya makin bertambah santer dalam dosanya.

الْمُتَرَدِّدُ فِي الْأُمُورِ يَجْذِبُهُ رَأْيِي هُنَا وَرَأْيِي هُنَاكَ

Seseorang yang bimbang dalam banyak hal terombang-ambing pendiriannya ke sana dan kemari.