

Samih al-Qasim's Poem 'Kama Nasya' as a Representation of Palestinian Social Reality: A Sociology of Literature Study

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ABSTRACT

Palestinian poetry, particularly the works of Samih Al-Qasim, constitutes a form of artistic expression that cannot be separated from the socio-political realities surrounding it. As noted by Jayyusi (1992), Palestinian literature emerges from a collective historical experience marked by oppression, alienation, and the struggle to preserve identity. In this context, poetry functions not only as an aesthetic expression but also as a medium for articulating the social and political consciousness of the Palestinian people. Samih Al-Qasim, as one of the most significant Palestinian poets, consistently presents poems that reflect the relationship between the individual and the community. His works represent the tension between personal experience and the collective suffering endured by his people. This article aims to analyze the poem "Kama Nasya" by Samih Al-Qasim using the sociology of literature approach proposed by Lucien Goldmann (1964). This approach is chosen because it enables literary works to be read as expressions of the worldview of a collective subject, rather than merely as products of an individual poet's creativity. The research employs a qualitative-descriptive method with interpretative analysis techniques focusing on the poetic structure, including diction, metaphor, and patterns of intersubjective relations. The structural analysis is then connected to the social and historical contexts that underlie the poem's creation, as suggested in sociological studies of literature. Thus, this study seeks to systematically relate the structure of meaning in the text to the social conditions of Palestinian society. The results of the analysis indicate that the poem "Kama Nasya" not only expresses individual emotional experiences but also reflects the collective voice of the Palestinian people who have experienced marginalization and structural oppression. The relationship between the lyrical subjects "I" and "you" in the poem can be understood as a symbolic representation of the individual's relationship with the community and the homeland. Through metaphorical language and reciprocal, egalitarian relations, the poem articulates values of solidarity, the resilience of identity, and the continuity of life's meaning. Therefore, as emphasized by Said (1979), poetry functions as an important medium for social and cultural critique in the context of colonialism, while simultaneously serving as a means of symbolic resistance against domination and the erasure of collective identity.

Puisi Palestina, khususnya karya-karya Samih Al-Qasim, merupakan bentuk ekspresi artistik yang tidak dapat dilepaskan dari realitas sosial-politik yang melingkupinya. Sebagaimana dikemukakan Jayyusi (1992), sastra Palestina lahir dari pengalaman historis kolektif yang ditandai oleh penindasan, keterasingan, dan perjuangan mempertahankan identitas. Dalam konteks ini, puisi tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai ungkapan estetis, tetapi juga sebagai medium artikulasi kesadaran sosial dan politik masyarakat Palestina. Samih Al-Qasim, sebagai salah satu penyair penting Palestina, secara konsisten menghadirkan puisi-puisi yang merefleksikan relasi antara

individu dan komunitasnya. Karya-karyanya merepresentasikan ketegangan antara pengalaman personal dan penderitaan kolektif yang dialami oleh bangsanya. Artikel ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis puisi "Kama Nasya" karya Samih Al-Qasim dengan menggunakan pendekatan sosiologi sastra yang dikemukakan oleh Lucien Goldmann (1964). Pendekatan ini dipilih karena memungkinkan pembacaan karya sastra sebagai ekspresi pandangan dunia suatu subjek kolektif, bukan sekadar hasil kreativitas individual penyair. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah kualitatif-deskriptif dengan teknik analisis interpretatif terhadap struktur puisi, meliputi diksi, metafora, dan pola relasi antarsubjek. Analisis struktural tersebut kemudian dihubungkan dengan konteks sosial dan historis yang melatarbelakangi lahirnya puisi, sebagaimana disarankan dalam kajian sosiologi sastra. Dengan demikian, penelitian ini berupaya mengaitkan struktur makna teks dengan kondisi sosial masyarakat Palestina secara sistematis. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa puisi "Kama Nasya" tidak hanya mengekspresikan pengalaman emosional individu, tetapi juga mencerminkan suara kolektif masyarakat Palestina yang mengalami peminggiran dan penindasan struktural. Relasi antara subjek "aku" dan "engkau" dalam puisi dapat dipahami sebagai representasi simbolik dari hubungan individu dengan komunitas dan tanah airnya. Melalui bahasa metaforis dan relasi timbal balik yang setara, puisi ini menyuarakan nilai solidaritas, keteguhan identitas, dan keberlanjutan makna hidup. Oleh karena itu, sebagaimana ditegaskan oleh Said (1979), puisi berfungsi sebagai medium penting untuk kritik sosial dan kultural dalam konteks kolonialisme, sekaligus menjadi sarana perlawanan simbolik terhadap dominasi dan penghapusan identitas kolektif.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Palestinian literature represents a complex reflection of the long-standing struggle of its people to preserve identity, nationalism, and existence amid continuous colonial pressure. Literary works function not merely as aesthetic products but also as cultural documents that record the collective experiences of a nation. In the Palestinian context, literature becomes a crucial medium for expressing suffering, resistance, and hope within a structurally marginalized society. Literary language is employed as a symbolic tool to counter domination and the erasure of identity. Consequently, Palestinian literature is inseparable from the socio-political realities that surround it. The relationship between text and context is therefore essential in understanding the meaning of these works. This condition positions Palestinian literature as a significant field within sociological literary studies (Jayyusi, 1992; Said, 1979).

Among Palestinian poets, Samih Al-Qasim occupies a significant position as a collective voice of his people. He not only records the reality of oppression experienced by his nation but also articulates forms of cultural resistance through poetic language rich in symbols and metaphors. His poems demonstrate a strong engagement with social reality while maintaining aesthetic depth. Al-Qasim utilizes poetry as a space for articulating political and social consciousness, as well as for fostering collective solidarity. Thus, his works cannot be read merely as personal expressions. Rather, Al-Qasim's poetry represents the shared experiences of Palestinian society. This reinforces the poet's position as part of a collective subject (Harlow, 1987; Jayyusi, 1992).

The poem "Kama Nasya" is one of Samih Al-Qasim's works that carries a strong socio-political dimension. The poem does not merely present the poet's individual emotions but also depicts the dynamics of the Palestinian people's collective struggle. Themes of injustice, loss, and resilience of identity emerge implicitly through linguistic structures and intersubjective relations within the poem. Through symbolic diction, Al-Qasim articulates criticism of the oppressive colonial reality. The poem also reflects the

psychological and social conditions of Palestinians living under prolonged conflict. Thus, "Kama Nasya" can be understood as a representation of a complex social reality. The poem simultaneously serves as a medium of reflection and resistance (Harlow, 1987; Kanafani, 2013).

The significance of examining "Kama Nasya" lies in its capacity to represent the relationship between the individual and the community within a colonial context. Many previous studies have primarily focused on the aesthetic or spiritual aspects of Arabic poetry. Such approaches often overlook the social and historical dimensions underlying the production of literary works. As a result, the social meanings embedded in the poem remain insufficiently explored. Palestinian poetry, however, emerges from historical experiences marked by conflict and injustice. Therefore, an approach capable of linking literary texts with social reality is required. In this respect, the sociology of literature proves highly relevant (Swingewood & Laurenson, 1972; Welles & Warren, 1956).

The sociological literary approach proposed by Lucien Goldmann offers a comprehensive theoretical framework for reading literary works as expressions of a collective worldview. Goldmann views literary texts not as mere products of individual creativity but as outcomes of a group's social consciousness. Within this framework, the poet is positioned as a representative of a collective subject experiencing specific social conditions. This approach enables scholars to relate textual structures to the social structures that produce them. Consequently, literary analysis does not remain confined to formal elements alone. Instead, it moves toward a deeper understanding of the relationship between literature and society. This perspective is particularly relevant for the study of Palestinian poetry (Goldmann, 1964; Faruk, 2012).

In "Kama Nasya", the collective worldview of Palestinian society is reflected through the symbolic relationship between the lyrical subjects "I" and "you." This relationship does not merely depict a personal connection but also symbolizes the bond between the individual, the community, and the homeland. Such relational structures reveal the presence of collective consciousness formed through shared experiences. Metaphorical language is employed to convey meanings that transcend individual experience. In this way, the poem becomes a space for articulating collective identity. The social awareness expressed in the poem demonstrates an effort to preserve the meaning of life amid oppression. This corresponds closely with Goldmann's concept of worldview (Goldmann, 1964; Eagleton, 2002).

Beyond representing a collective worldview, "Kama Nasya" also functions as a form of social criticism against colonial power structures. This criticism is not conveyed explicitly but through symbols, metaphors, and subtle linguistic relations. Such a strategy allows the poem to communicate resistance without sacrificing its aesthetic strength. In colonial contexts, poetic language becomes an effective instrument of resistance. Poetry serves as an alternative medium for voicing injustice that cannot always be expressed openly. Thus, literature functions as a space for social and cultural critique. This affirms poetry's role within practices of symbolic resistance (Said, 1979; Ashcroft et al., 2002).

A qualitative-descriptive research method is employed to uncover the social meanings embedded in "Kama Nasya". The analysis is conducted through interpretative readings of the poem's structure, including diction, metaphor, and patterns of intersubjective relations. These textual structures are then connected to the socio-historical context of Palestinian society. This approach allows for a more holistic understanding of the literary work. Literature is not treated as an autonomous text but as part of a broader social reality. Consequently, literary analysis becomes a means of understanding social dynamics. This aligns with the fundamental principles of the sociology of literature (Ratna, 2011; Endraswara, 2013).

The findings indicate that "Kama Nasya" not only reflects suffering but also affirms the resilience of identity and collective solidarity. The poem demonstrates how individuals derive meaning in life through their connection with the community. Values of struggle, resistance, and hope are embedded within the structure of the text's meaning. Thus, the poem functions as a medium for affirming collective identity. Literature becomes a tool for preserving social memory and shared history. This reinforces the role of poetry as a form of cultural resistance. Poetry does not merely record reality but also shapes social consciousness (Assmann, 2011; Harlow, 1987).

Based on this discussion, it can be concluded that the analysis of "Kama Nasya" through Lucien Goldmann's sociology of literature provides a deeper understanding of the relationship between literature and Palestinian social reality. The poem represents the collective worldview of a society living under colonial oppression. Through poetic language, Al-Qasim articulates social criticism while constructing symbolic resistance. In this context, literature functions as a space for articulating identity and resistance. Therefore, Palestinian poetry cannot be separated from its socio-political dimensions. Studies of this kind are essential for enriching contemporary Arabic literary scholarship. At the same time, this research underscores the relevance of the sociology of literature in interpreting works produced within contexts of conflict (Goldmann, 1964; Said, 1979; Jayyusi, 1992).

2. METHOD

This study employs a descriptive qualitative method because it aims to understand meanings, structures, and social relations embedded in literary texts in a comprehensive manner. A qualitative approach allows the researcher to interpret literary texts as constructions of meaning shaped by specific social contexts rather than as mere formal linguistic objects. This approach is particularly relevant to literary studies that focus on symbolic and ideological interpretation. In the context of Palestinian literature, a qualitative method is essential because literary works often represent complex collective experiences. Therefore, the analysis is not directed toward quantitative measurement but toward interpretative understanding. This method also enables the integration of textual analysis with social reality. Accordingly, literature is positioned as a cultural product with social significance (Creswell, 2014; Ratna, 2011).

The sociological approach adopted in this study is based on Lucien Goldmann's sociology of literature, particularly his concepts of worldview and collective subject. Goldmann argues that literary works are expressions of the mental structures of social groups articulated through creative individuals such as poets. Within this framework, literary texts are understood as the result of a dialectical relationship between social structures and textual structures. Consequently, poetry is not treated as an autonomous work detached from social reality. Goldmann's approach allows for an analysis that connects the structure of the poem with the historical and social conditions of its production. This perspective is highly relevant for the study of Palestinian resistance poetry. Therefore, this approach is selected as the primary theoretical framework of the research (Goldmann, 1964; Faruk, 2012).

The data sources in this study consist of primary and secondary data. The primary data comprise the poem Kama Nasya' by Samih Al-Qasim, which serves as the main object of analysis. This poem is selected because it strongly represents the social and political realities of Palestinian society. The secondary data include books on the sociology of literature, scholarly journal articles, and previous studies relevant to Palestinian literature and colonial criticism. Secondary sources function to strengthen the theoretical framework and provide academic context for textual analysis. The use of credible and relevant literature is essential to ensure the scholarly validity of the study. Thus, the analysis is conducted based on adequate and systematic literature review. This approach aligns with established traditions in qualitative literary research (Jayyusi, 1992; Endraswara, 2013).

Data collection techniques involve library research and intensive reading of the poetic text. Library research is conducted to gather theoretical references and previous studies relevant to the research topic. Intensive reading is carried out repeatedly to understand the internal structure of the poem, including diction, metaphor, imagery, and intersubjective relations. This technique aims to uncover implicit meanings embedded in poetic language. Close reading also enables the identification of social and ideological symbols within the poem. Through this process, the text is examined holistically, both in terms of form and meaning. Such techniques are commonly employed in interpretative literary studies (Wellek & Warren, 1956; Ratna, 2011).

Data analysis is conducted by identifying the poetic structure and relating it to the concepts of human facts, collective subject, and worldview as proposed by Lucien Goldmann. The textual structure is analyzed to reveal its connection with the social realities of Palestinian society under colonial oppression. Subsequently, the results of the structural analysis are interpreted contextually by considering the historical and social background of the poem. The analytical process is carried out interpretatively to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the poem's social meaning. This approach allows the poem to be understood as a form of social criticism and an expression of collective consciousness. Thus, the analysis extends beyond formal elements to address ideological dimensions. This analytical model is consistent with the fundamental principles of the sociology of literature (Goldmann, 1964; Swingewood & Laurenson, 1972).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of Samih Al-Qasim's poem Kama Nasya' begins with a reading of its textual structure as an integrated unity of meaning that represents Palestinian social reality. The structure of the poem functions not merely as an aesthetic element but also as a medium for conveying social and ideological messages. In this poem, poetic language reflects conditions of oppression, alienation, and injustice experienced collectively by the Palestinian people. Therefore, the poem can be understood as a cultural response to an oppressive socio-political situation. Structural analysis becomes essential to reveal the relationship between text and social context. Accordingly, the poem is read not as an autonomous work but as a contextualized cultural product. This perspective is consistent with the principles of the sociology of literature (Mus, 2024; Ratna, 2003).

From a linguistic perspective, Kama Nasya' demonstrates the use of diction that is simple yet rich in symbolic meaning. The choice of words represents the collective experiences of Palestinians living under colonial oppression. The diction employed is not individualistic in nature but reflects a shared voice shaped by common social experiences. Poetic language thus functions as a means of representing reality rather than merely expressing the poet's personal emotions. This indicates that the linguistic structure of the poem is closely related to the social structure that produced it. Consequently, an analysis of diction provides insight into the relationship between poetry and social reality. Language structure becomes a reflection of the humanitarian conditions experienced by the collective subject (Goldmann, 1964; Jayyusi, 1992).

Metaphors and symbols in Kama Nasya' play a crucial role in conveying criticism of oppression. These symbols are not presented explicitly but emerge through implicit and suggestive semantic relations. Such a strategy enables the poem to express social criticism without sacrificing its aesthetic power. In the context of colonialism, metaphor functions as an effective means of articulating symbolic resistance. The symbols in the poem represent collective experiences such as the loss of land, identity, and freedom. In this way, metaphor bridges individual experience and collective suffering. Symbolic analysis thus reveals the ideological dimension of the poem (Said, 1979; Eagleton, 2002).

The intersubjective relationship in the poem, particularly between the lyrical subjects "I" and "you," indicates a strong bond between the individual and the community. The subject "I" does not function solely as a personal entity but represents the collective subject of Palestinian society. Meanwhile, "you" can be interpreted as a symbol of the homeland, the community, or a threatened collective identity. This relationship reflects a form of social consciousness shaped by shared experiences. Thus, the poem presents a relational structure that transcends interpersonal interaction. The relationship illustrates how individuals derive meaning through their attachment to the community. This interpretation aligns with Goldmann's concept of the collective subject (Goldmann, 1964; Ratna, 2003).

Within the framework of the sociology of literature, Kama Nasya' can be understood as an expression of the Palestinian collective worldview. This worldview is formed by historical and social conditions characterized by colonization, conflict, and resistance. The structure of the poem reflects a collective consciousness shaped by life under structural oppression. This worldview is not articulated explicitly but is internalized within the linguistic structure and semantic relations of the poem. Consequently, the poem functions as an ideological representation of a social group. The poet serves as a medium through which collective consciousness is articulated. This further underscores the relevance of Goldmann's approach to the analysis of Palestinian poetry (Goldmann, 1964; Faruk, 2012).

The social reality reflected in Kama Nasya' includes experiences of alienation, loss, and the struggle to preserve identity. The poem depicts how Palestinian society continues to assert its existence amid ongoing colonial pressure. This reality is not presented narratively but through imagery and symbols that create a particular emotional atmosphere. Through this approach, poetry conveys social experience in a more profound and reflective manner. Literature thus functions as a medium for preserving collective memory. Such memory becomes the foundation for social consciousness and shared identity. Therefore, poetry plays a significant social role in Palestinian society (Assmann, 2011; Jayyusi, 1992).

Criticism of oppression in Kama Nasya' is not expressed in a direct or confrontational manner but through subtle aesthetic strategies. The poem employs symbolic language to articulate injustice without explicitly naming the agents of oppression. This strategy reflects cultural intelligence in confronting repressive power structures. In colonial contexts, literature often becomes an alternative space for expressing resistance. Poetry functions as an effective tool of social criticism because it engages the emotional and ideological awareness of readers. Thus, the poem's critique operates on cultural and ideological levels. This affirms the role of literature as a form of symbolic resistance (Said, 1979; Ashcroft et al., 2002).

The relationship between poetic structure and social structure is evident in the alignment between themes, symbols, and the historical context of Palestine. The structure of the poem does not emerge arbitrarily but is shaped by the social realities surrounding the poet and the community. Accordingly, the poem can be understood as a product of a dialectical relationship between the individual and society. This analysis demonstrates that literary works are closely connected to the material and ideological conditions of a community. Therefore, the sociology of literature enables a more comprehensive interpretation of the text. Poetry is understood as part of a broader social and cultural system. This view corresponds with the notion of literature as a social institution (Swingewood & Laursen, 1972; Wellek & Warren, 1956).

Through the structural analysis of Kama Nasya', it becomes evident that Samih Al-Qasim not only expresses suffering but also constructs a narrative of resilience and hope. The poem conveys values of solidarity and the continuity of meaning in life despite oppressive conditions. These values reflect a

Palestinian collective worldview that refuses to surrender to domination. As such, the poem functions as a source of symbolic strength for the community. Literature becomes a space for affirming identity and cultural resistance. This demonstrates that poetry plays an active role in shaping social consciousness. In this sense, poetry operates as a social agent (Harlow, 1987; Eagleton, 2002).

Based on this analysis, it can be concluded that the structure of Kama Nasya' reflects Palestinian social reality and offers a critique of oppression. The poem represents the collective worldview of a society living under colonial conditions. Through poetic language, Samih Al-Qasim articulates social consciousness and symbolic resistance. Lucien Goldmann's sociological approach enables a deep understanding of the relationship between text and social context. Thus, the poem is not understood merely as an individual artistic product but as an expression of collective awareness. This study confirms the relevance of literature as a medium of social criticism. At the same time, it contributes to the study of Palestinian literature and the sociology of literature (Goldmann, 1964; Mus, 2024; Ratna, 2003).

4. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that Samih Al-Qasim's poem Kama Nasya' functions not merely as an aesthetic literary text but as a sociocultural expression of Palestinian collective consciousness. Through a structural and contextual analysis grounded in Lucien Goldmann's sociology of literature, the poem is shown to articulate a collective worldview shaped by historical oppression, colonial domination, and the struggle to preserve identity. The poetic structure manifested through diction, metaphor, symbolism, and intersubjective relations reflects the lived social realities of Palestinian society and reveals the dialectical relationship between individual expression and collective experience.

Furthermore, the findings confirm that Kama Nasya' operates as a form of symbolic resistance and social critique, in which poetic language becomes a medium for articulating injustice, solidarity, and resilience without relying on direct confrontation. By positioning the lyrical subject as a representative of the collective subject, Al-Qasim transforms personal voice into communal testimony. Consequently, this study reinforces the relevance of sociological approaches in literary analysis, particularly in reading postcolonial and resistance poetry. It also affirms that Palestinian poetry plays a vital role in preserving collective memory and sustaining cultural resistance, thereby contributing meaningfully to both literary studies and broader discussions of literature as a social institution.

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