

Cultural Production of Adonis as Modern Writer in Arabic Literature Arena

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Abstract: This study reveal the cultural production of Adonis as a modern writer in Arabic literature arena. Pierre Bourdieu's theory of cultural production becomes an analytical tool on study. Bourdieu's theoretical concepts are habitus, capital, practice, trajectories, relations, between objects that support Adonis position as a modern witter. Cultural production of Adonis includes cultural capital in the form of education so that he produces education through literary works, academics, and also Arab cultural scholars. In addition, Adonis is also active in political activities in the Syrian National Socialist Party wich gives him the legitimacy of modern writer in Arena of Arabic Literature.

Keywords: Cultural Production, Sociology of Literature, Adonis, Pierre Bourdieu.

1. Introduction

Ali Ahmad Isbir has the pen name Adonis. He is a poet of poetry, literacy academic, as well as an intellectual critic of Arab culture. He used his pen name, because he liked a Greek god named Adonis. The name of Adonis is a name that has no Arabic elements. This is related to the ideology he believes in. According to Adonis, Arabic identity does not have to be named with Arabic elements. The name of Adonis is a representation of modernism (*hadasah*) in Arabic culture. The form of representation of Adonis of modernism can be seen from his personality, name, and also his works. The intellectual movement that Adonis did had a great influence on Arab poets in his generation to the next generation (Anwari, 2012:200).

Adonis' poetry is free poetry that belongs to modern poetry. This poem is also used by the Lebanese poet Khalil Hawi (born, 1925), Fadwa Tuqan (born 1917) the Palestinian poet, and Nazar Qabbani (born 1923) the Syrian poet as their poetry works. According to Khalil Gibran, the most important thing about free poetry is arouse feelings. Because the meaning of syi'ir in Arabic is taste (Kamil, 2009:17).

Free poetry is one of the interesting things in the development of Arabic poetry. Because, free poetry that seems exclusive. According to Adonis, Arabic poetry is an oral tradition or it can also be called audio vocals (*al-kalimah maqrurah bi al-saut*). The oral tradition here is one of the states of poetry in the Middle East in general. The practice of the oral tradition of Arabic poetry in Pre-Islamic times was spoken by the poet himself and he said it aloud. For someone who interprets must have skill in listening. Thus, the appeal of Arabic poetry is only for Arabs, for people who can speak Arabic fluently and

for people who are religiously and socially established. Thus, Arabic poetry is deconstructed as a written tradition. So that poetry no longer belongs only to Arabs or those who master Arabic. In other words, poetry is a universal work that anyone can own. The meaning of this deconstruction is that written culture can be realized by instinct as well as intellectual acuity, namely culture (Anwari, 2012:204-205).

Adonis' works contribute to the richness of Arabic literature in the form of free poetry. His works have also been recognized for their quality all over the world, from the Asian continent to Europe and have been translated into various languages. Adonis' poetry anthology works including: *Qasa'id al-Ula* (1957), *Awrak fi al-Rih* (1958), *Agani Mihyar ad-Damasqi* (1961), *Kitab al-Tahawwulat wal-Higra fi Aqalim an-Nahar wal-Ward* (1970), *Mufrad bi-Sigat al-Gam* (1977), *Hada Huwwa Ismi* (1980), *Kitab Al-Hisar* (1985), *Sahwah Tataqaddam fii Hara'it al-Maddah* (1987), *Ikhtifa'an bi al-Asya al-Gamidat al-Wahidah* (1988), *Abigadaya Tania* (1994), *Al-Kitab vol.1* (1995), *Mufradat Si'r* (1996), *Al-Kitab vol.2* (1998), *al-Kitab vol.3* (2002), *Allal al-Gassad Ahir al-Bahr* (2003), *Tanabba' Ayyuha al-A'na* (2003), *Tarih Yatazzaq fi Gassad Imra'ah* (2006), *Warraq Yabi Kutub al-Nugum* (2007), *Ihda' Hamlet Tanasaaq Gunun Aphelia* (2007), etc (Alim, 2018:223).

Although Adonis is famous in the western world for the achievements of his works. However, his literary works are less accepted in the Middle Eastern world. At the time, Adonis' books were banned from circulation in Saudi Arabia, by the late Saudi grand mufti, namely 'Abdullah bin 'Abdul 'Aziz bin Baz. Adonis called *Hubal* is a statue of a god who was highly revered in ancient times. Because, Adonis praised the false prophet according to which these false prophets were the remnants of the power of the ancient times of ignorance that persisted in the character of Islam. However, besides that Adonis also wrote works on the Qur'an and the interpretation on the Qur'an entitled *al-Nas al-Qur'ani wa Afaq al-Kitabah*, with the basic concept that the text of the Qur'an is a language text, not a religious text, like a text other text (Adonis, in Anwari, 2012: 203-204).

Adonis' free poetry is based on his contemporary thoughts on Arab-Islamic culture. According to him, Arab culture cannot live in modern times with ease, freedom, without anxiety. Arab culture tends to be hostile to modern times. Thus, living in this period tends to be restless and hostile. This is because there is a reason about Islamic civilization in the past. During the first three centuries Arab civilization chose the 'old (*at-Turath al-Qadim*) which in Adonis' terms is called *at-Tabit* (the established) over the 'new' (*al-Muthawwil*) (Ro'uf, 2018: 45).

Adonis' contemporary thinking is in line with the movement for reform of thought in the religious and social fields which synergizes with reforms in the fields of literature and culture. Both start from dissatisfaction with the existing conditions. Infrastructure conditions that lead to stagnation, cultural decline, and become a scourge for those who realize and understand it. The infrastructure conditions referred to are patterns of understanding and implementing religion which are characterized by taqlid, mystical, and irrational attitudes. Whereas in the field of literature, at that time, poetry had lost its nuances, no longer radiated the weight of total beauty and coherence, which included the

integration of forms, ideas, patterns, musicality, expressivity, and on the contrary showed a stagnation of creativity (Dardiri, 2010: 237).

In literature, the space for taking literary positions is determined by a series of structured manifestations of social agents involved in the literary arena. These manifestations include literary works, political actions, constructed polemics, and other things that cannot be separated from the literary position space which is determined by the ownership of capital (recognition) in a certain amount as well as the occupation of an already solid position in the structure. This specific distribution of capital. This is due to a field of forces, but also a field of struggle which tends to perpetuate this arena of power (Bourdieu, 2012:5).

Adonis' struggles in the social arena cannot be separated from the arena of Islamic discourse in the Arabian Peninsula. This discourse discusses the religion of Islam as the basis of life by using the Qur'an and Hadith as a guidelines. According to Adonis, this is the root of the epistemological problem that tends to hold the stability of the text at the religious level. This tendency makes an analogy of literature, poetry, and, thought in general to religion (Adonis, 2007:2).

In literature, a study of the Cultural Production of the Literary Arena was conducted on Indonesian Literature. Karnanta (2015) discusses the literary practice of Andrea Hirata whose name is 'orbiting' in Indonesian literature. In his article, Andrea Hirata's literary practice has an obsession, to achieve specific legitimacy as a 'writer'. For this reason, Andrea Hirata insists on the view of possibility in Indonesian literature.

Another study was conducted by Satria. In his article, Satria (2018) describes Kiki Sulistyono creates young poets and the same time carries out a work publishing project. In gaining legitimacy, it is awarded by fellow poets, literary academics, and institutions.

The study discusses the struggle of Budhi Santosa's faith to achieve the consecrated position in the literary arena of Yogyakarta. According to Safitri (2015) the struggle for the literary practice of Imam Budhi Santosa is manifested in the activities of writing and publishing works, participation in activities, and the formation of institutions.

Another study on the Literary Arena is Nugraha (2015) which discusses the strategy, arena, and position of Emha Ainun Nadjib in the Literary Arena and Social Arena. In his article, Nugraha explained that Emha Ainun Nadjib could not achieve an established position solely by relying on his literary works. Nadjib managed to manage capital with a strategy of reproduction in order to apply his ideas. The role of agents around him also has a great influence in strengthening his name and position in the constellation in the literary and social arena, both in Indonesia and internationally.

In addition, another study on the Literary Arena is the study of Arsitowati (2017) which specifically discusses the struggles of Okky Madasari after the New Order. In his article, Okky Madasari has just not won popular legitimacy. This cannot be separated from the influence of the condition of the Indonesian literary arena which is still controlled by legitimacy literary agents who determine legitimacy in the literary arena.

Based on the results of observations from various literature reviews, the discussion examined by each study is about the Cultural Arena of Writers in Indonesia. The

difference between these various studies and this research is the Cultural Arena of Arab Writers named Ali Ahmad Isbir in gaining legitimacy as a modern writer.

2. Methods

The research theory used is Pierre Bourdieu's theory of Cultural Production. This theory is an attempt to form substantial thinking, so that is an attempt to form substantial thinking, so that it can radically separate thinking. The substantialist way of thinking tends to prioritize the individual, or the visible interactions between individuals, by ignoring the structural relations – which are invisible, or only seen through their effects – between social positions occupied and manipulated by agents. Which can be in the form of isolated individuals, groups or institutions (Bourdieu, 2012:3).

Bourdieu has 3 concepts in analyzing the Cultural Production Arena. First, habitus, which is a historical product that was formed after humans were born and interacted with society in a certain space and time. Habitus is not innate or natural but is the result of learning through parenting and socializing with the community. The learning process is very subtle, unconscious and appears as a natural thing (Siregar, 2016. In: Lubis, Akhyar Yusuf:80).

Second. Arena, namely the space of positions, is nothing but the capital distribution structure of specific properties that govern success in the arena and win external profits or specific profits (such as literary prestige) at stake in it. The space for taking up positions in literature or art, which is a series of structured manifestations of social agents involved in the literary or artistic arena, cannot be separated from the literary or artistic position space which is determined by the ownership of specific capital (recognition) in a certain amount at once by the occupation of positions already established. Firmly, within the specific capital distribution structure (Bourdieu, 2012:5).

Third, capital is closely related to habitus which acts as a capital multiplier, specifically symbolic capital. Capital in Bourdieu's sense is very broad, including: economic capital, cultural capital, and symbolic capital used to seize and maintain differences and domination. Capital must exist in every realm, so that the realm has meaning. The legitimacy of actors in social action is influenced by the capital they have. Capital can be exchanged between one capital and another. Capital accumulation is very important in the realm (siregar, 2016. In: Harker, Richard: 81).

This study uses a qualitative descriptive research method. The research data collection method was carried out by literature study by collecting data from reading sources such as books, research journals, internet articles, etc. in the social sciences of humanities, according to Bogdan and Biklen to a certain extent, qualitative methods have similarities with interpretation, content analysis, naturalism, naturalistic, case studies, ethnomethodology, and phenomenology. The method of delivering this research is done informally, namely in the form of a narrative (Ratna, 2010: 85).

3. Results

3.1. *Condition of Modern Arabic Literatures Arena*

Modern Era Arabic Literature is a movement for the reconstruction of Arabic literary works, especially poetry by improving the quality poetry of the integration of form, ideas, patterns of musicality. Thus, Arabic poetry can rise from the stagnation of creativity. This movement is related to literary movers from various schools.

First, the neo-classical whose movement is the same as that of Western culture. If western culture is oriented towards reviving Ancient Greek and Latin literature, than Arab neoclassicals want to revive the beauty of Abbasid poetry, such as the poetry of Abu Nuwas, Abu Tamam, Ibn Rumi, al-Mutannabi, al-Ma'arri, and al-Buhturi. This period was a period of anthology (diwani) and publication of classical Arabic texts through the publishers of Bulaq Press, Jamiyat al-Ma'arif, and al-Jawaib magazine. During this period, writer succeeded in bringing back the style, form, and musicality of Arabic poetry. The emergence of the Neoclassical was originally a reaction to the arrival of Napoleon Bonaparte to Egypt in 1798 (Dardiri, 2010: 290-291).

Second, the Apollo whose name is taken from the name of the magazine. This frol was pioneered by Ahmad Zaki Abu Syadi (1892-1955). Abu Syadi published this magazine after returning to Egypt. A series of names of writers who are members of this are Ibrahim Naji, Kamil Kaylani, and Sayyid Ibrahim. Apollo has an obsession to unite and provide a platform for poets to develop their artistic talents. This flow produces a lot of concepts about literary works. The result of Apollo's literary works is an idea of renewal that frees itself from the convention of a single qafiah with the support of neat musicality and deep expressive abilities (Darfiri, 2010:296).

Third, the Mahjar sect (The Emigrant Poet). This group of poets lived in America, especially North and South America. The association of the Mahjar literary group in New York, the association is called the Pela League of Al-Rabitah al-Qlamiyah (1920). As for South America, namely in Sau Paulo the association was called al-Ushbah al-Andalusi or the Andalusian League (1923). Between the two in terms of the concept of renewal, Al-Rabitah al-Qlamiyah is the most prominent and quite mature compared to the more conservative al-Ushbah al-Andalusiyah. Members of this group are Khalil Jibran, Rashid Ayub, and other. The influence of this school is that it has succeeded in creating a new style of writing poetry, namely the form of prose-poetry (Dardiri, 2010:289).

In the midst of modernizing Arabi poetry, there are two groups that produce poetry, namely reformists and conservatives. The reformists emphasized the freedom of regulation in the form of writing, emphasized the beauty of language and emphasized the meaning of the text. The orientation of the content developed is more varied, ranging from Sufism, philosophy, social criticism, politics, renewal of Islamic thought, scientific development, etc. Meanwhile, the reformists emphasized the importance of literary discipline in developing their literature by paying attention to poetry and bad'I (Muizzudin, 2014:161). Poetry produced by conservatives is a poem that has a model sixteen meters, tends to rhyme singly. These rules are used as a basis for the rules of poetry. On the one hand, this type of poetry is supported in the literary, cultural, and social

arenas as a form of preserving Arab culture. However, on the one hand this rule has been criticized because it burdens the translation of poetry and limits poets, because the form of poetry is only concentrated in style and form (Manshur, 2007:8).

The development of Arabic prose literature was more influenced by the works of Muhammad Abduh through studying the translation of French literature in exile when he was detained by the French army. Muhammad Abduh created the al-Ahram newspaper which has the breadth of study and the richness of its language on political writings to carry out the Islamic renewal movement and to observe and examine the compatibility between Western civilization and Arab civilization, paying attention to Islamic Shari'a laws as a way of life for Muslims and awaken the spirit of new *ijtihad* for Muslims and reconstruct better and rational thinking (Muizzudin, 2014:159).

3.2. Adonis Cultural Production in the Arena of Arabic Literature

Adonis' cultural capital stems from the education given by his father, so that since childhood he has memorized a lot of classical Arabic poems. Adonis was born in the village of al-Qassabin near the city of Latakia, Syria in 1930 with the real name Ali Ahmad Sa'id Isbir. Although he did not attend formal school until the age of 12, the eldest of six children had learned to read and write from a village teacher and received traditional Islamic education from his father who was a farmer and imam of mosque (Anwari, 2010:202).

On his knowledge of classical Arabic poetry, he read heroic poems that he wrote himself in front of the President of Syria, Shukri al-Quwatli in 1944. Later, the president was attracted to him and sent Adonis to a French school in the city of Tartus. He completed his studies in law and philosophy at the University of Damascus, and briefly studied in France. In 1973 he obtained his Ph.D in Arabic Literature from the University of St. Joseph in Beirut (Anwari, 2010:203).

The cultural capital in the form of education, he produced again in the form of education, he produced again by establishing the journal *Sayr* with his wife who is a literary critic named Khalid Sa'id in 1956, in Lebanon. They founded the *Shi'r* journal which introduced the idea of modernity on Arabic poetry, but this cultural production movement did not run smoothly, because it was banned in several Arab countries. Adonis also founded the journal *Muwafiq* with theme of culture. The cultural capitals that he produced gave Adonis another position, by making himself an academic or Lecturer at the Sorbonne Paris III. He and his wife often move from one country to another country. However, every country leaves a literary cultural imprint. Adonis has been a visiting lecturer at several universities in the United States and Switzerland. In fact, his name has been on the short list of Nobel Prize nominees for Literature since 2003 (Anwari, 2010:203).

Bourdieu (2010) classifies legitimacy into the three groups, namely specific legitimacy, bourgeois legitimacy, and popular legitimacy. Specific legitimacy is the recognition that the art world gives to artists who are autonomous and self-sufficient. Meanwhile, bourgeois legitimacy granted by dominant factions or protected by the state such as academies which can provide ethical and aesthetic rewards according to the tastes

of the dominant faction. The last legitimacy is popular legitimacy, namely the consecration given by the choice of the general consumer or society. According to Bourdieu, legitimate authors who have large symbolic capital are in a position to provide or impose an assessment or support for other works (Aristowati, 2017:313). Based on the assessment that Adonis received for his works, as well as the recognition he received through his practice outside of literary works, Adonis can be said to have received specific legitimacy and bourgeois legitimacy.

Through his creative and unique thinking, Adonis has produced works that can be classified as controversial works. Some of Adonis' work include: *Qasaid al-Ula*, *Aghani Mihyar al-Dimsyq*, *Auraq fi al-Rih*, *Kitab al-Dimsyq*, *Auraq fi al-Rih*, *Kitab al-Tahawulat wa al-Hijri fi aqolim al-Lail wa al-Nahar*, *Masrah wa al-Makan al-Am*, *al-Syi'riyah*, *Muqaddimah al-Syi'ru al-'Araby*, *Zaman al-Syi'ru al-Araby*, *Zaman al-Syi'r*, *al-Syi'ru al-Arabiyyah* and several other books. Almost all of Adonis' books are poetry anthologies (Abdillah, 2010:121).

Apart from making literary works such as poetry, Adonis also writes criticisms of Arab-Islamic culture. One of the books that shocked the world of Arab thought was the book entitled "*al-Tabit wa al-Mutahawwil; bahth fi al-Ibda' wa al-Ittiba' 'Idn al-'Arabic*". This book forms the concept of *ittiba* and *ibda'* or the old (*al-Qidam*) and the new (*al-Hadatsah*). Adonis' critique of Arab civilization is written in this book. He criticized the Arabs who tend to choose the old one (*Al-Tabit*). Adonis conceptualized *Al-Tabit* as an establishment that tends to be dominant and powerful;. He considered this tendency to have an impact on the development of culture tends to stagnate. Because, the beauty of culture can be measured (Abdillah, 2010:110).

Meanwhile, Adonis conceptualized *al-Muthawwil* as a novelty that is free for all parties to be as creative as possible on cultural wisdom. This concept tries to move creativity without leaving the old things, but it can also leave the old things altogether. The seeds of creative movement in Arabic poetry are reflected in *Qashidah Imri 'al-Qais* and *Tharafah Ibn Adb*. The creative values of these two classical writers are that they are a new alternative to poetry with fresh ideas. So that it can undermine the standard rules of classical Arabic poetry. This poem is also a medium of criticism of the attitude of *ashabiyah* (tribal fanaticism) which is often found in classical Arabic poetry (Abdillah, 2010:110).

Creativity for Adonis is modernity According to Adonis' view, modernity is a creative vision (*ru'ya ibda'; 'iyyah*) or it is nothing more than fashion. Fashion grows obsolete since it was born, while creativity knows no age. Therefore, not all modernity is creativity but creativity is always modern (Adonis, 2006:118).

4. Conclusion

From the studies that have been carried out on the cultural production of Adonis as a modern writer in the arena of Arabic literature. From this cultural arena, Adonis can take several ways to get a literary degree. First, Adonis regularly writes poetry in the form of a book. Second, writing works of Arabic cultural thought. third, Adonis becomes an agent

of academics. Finally, all four of its legitimacy is recognized by the United State Nobel Prize.

Adonis's poetry has a free style without following the wazan sya'ir. His poetry seems to put forward the implied meaning and message. Its cultural production also move to Arab cultural thought. Then, based on his educational capital, Adonis also increased his cultural production by becoming an academician teaching cultural poetry for literary students, even his academics were produced in Western countries such as the United States and Switzerland. His creativity, which he believes is the power of modernity, which he applies in his works, has received great attention from an award event, namely the Nobel Prize.

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