



Representation of Poverty in the Novel *Krikil Krikil Pasisir* by Tamsir AS

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Abstract

Poverty is a complex social phenomenon that affects various aspects of people's lives, including its representation in literary works. This study aims to describe the portrayal of poverty in the novel *Krikil-Krikil Pasisir* by Tamsir AS, employing a literary sociological approach. This approach views literary works as a reflection of the social structure and dynamics of the society in which they live. This research employs Ian Watt's literary sociology theory in conjunction with the semiotic reading technique. Primary data is obtained from the narrative text in the novel, while secondary data comes from supporting scientific references. This reading method is included in the data analysis stage, and interpreting the data requires understanding social and cultural literary codes. The results show that poverty is a structural reality affecting the mindset, behavior, and relationships between characters. Unequal social relations between coastal communities and certain dominant ethnic groups give rise to resistance and latent conflicts. The characters in the novel experience moral dilemmas that show the complexity of human values in limited situations. Thus, this novel tells a personal story and voices the social crisis faced by Indonesia's marginalized communities.

Keywords: Poverty; Ian Watt's Sociology of Literature; *Novel Krikil-Krikil Pasisir*

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INTRODUCTION

Poverty as a social phenomenon is one of the central themes in literature, including in the novel *Krikil Krikil Pasisir* by Tamsir AS. In this context, this study uses a literary sociology approach to analyze how poverty is portrayed in the novel and its relevance to the reality of modern Indonesian society. Ian Watt's thinking connects literary works with the social context in which they were born and developed. In this case, the novel *Krikil Krikil*

Pasisir not only functions as an art product, but also as a social document that reflects the living conditions of society, especially in terms of poverty.

Poverty can be understood as a situation in which individuals or groups lack sufficient resources to meet their basic needs, such as food, clothing, and shelter. In the novel *Krikil Krikil Pasisir* written by Tamsir AS, there

is a strong representation of the social conditions of people mired in poverty, reflecting the challenges they face in meeting their daily needs (Triono & Sangaji, 2023).

This issue is very complex in Indonesia and involves various factors, including economics, politics, and culture. Recent studies have demonstrated that poverty is prevalent in numerous regions, affecting both urban and rural areas. Efforts to address this issue include a range of community strategies, such as social assistance programs and the utilization of local resources. (Salsabila et al., 2024)

In the context of the novel *Krikil Krikil Pasisir*, the portrait of poverty presented by Tamsir AS is not only a representation of physical suffering but also a reflection of the social awareness internalized by the characters in the story. Literary works are a form of an individual's emotional response to social reality that stimulates personal awareness. With the depth of his imagination, vision, assumptions, and intellectual level, an author tries to portray the existing reality in a creative work.

Literary works cover various genres and forms, from poetry to novels to short stories, all written through the author's imagination. They depict deep and complex narratives, which usually reflect the author's task of interpreting human experience in multiple dimensions (Murtini et al., 2024). For example, novels with rich details enable readers to feel and understand the situations and emotions experienced by the characters,

an important aspect that fosters empathy and reflection in readers (Annisa & Research, n.d.). Literary works depict society's life and social reality (Monica, 2024).

A literary work reveals human and humanitarian issues, exploring the meaning of life, and describing human suffering, struggle, love, hatred, lust, and the full range of human experiences. In this case, literature can be defined as a form of creative expression that utilizes language as a medium to convey ideas, feelings, and human experiences. Literature serves not only as entertainment, but also as a tool to understand and reflect on the human condition and society. Theme, character, and plot shape a literary work's meaning and value (Daud, 2024). Literature fosters critical thinking and deep imagination, deeply rooted in the social and cultural context as a reflection of life's reality (Sofyan, n.d.).

Literature and the social reality of society are two things that cannot be separated, because literature is produced and structured in response to various changes in reality. Reality in literature is the creator's perspective in denying or straightening the social reality that surrounds his life so that literature is a social portrait that re-presents the reality of society that has occurred uniquely in accordance with the author's interpretation and ideology, such as poverty that most people experience, as the author pours ideas about poverty in the process of revealing the reality carried out in his literary works, inseparable from various factors consciously or unconsciously influencing the author's ideas,

vision, or attitude. All of these factors come from the society in which the author lives.

Novels often describe society's social conditions and record the author's daily experiences. In the context of the novel *Krikil Krikil Pasisir* by Tamsir AS, poverty is depicted as a profound reflection of the reality faced by the community, offering an insightful and critical portrayal of the situation around them (Umifa & Subandiya, 2024).

In this study, the author will examine the novel *Krikil Krikil Pasisir* by Tamsir A.S. This novel was published by Balai Pustaka in 1988. Tamsir A.S. presents crime in the form of murder and robbery as an impact of the socio-economic crisis on people's lives in these novels. The novel *Krikil Krikil Pasisir* tells the story of the socio-economic life of people in the coastal area of Tulungagung. The novel portrays the harsh social realities of coastal communities, subtly influencing the characters' thoughts, speech, and actions. In addition to the depiction of the social life of the coastal community, the social and economic gap between natives and migrants (Chinese descendants) in the story is one of the factors in the emergence of social jealousy.

The high economic gap in the novel *Krikil Krikil Pasisir* raises the assumption among the indigenous people that the presence of Chinese migrants exacerbates their suffering. The migrants are portrayed as controlling the local natural resources and earning huge profits, while the local people only become manual laborers with minimal income. This situation encouraged some

characters, such as Tajupedhet and his group, to take shortcuts to earn money, including through illicit acts like theft and extortion. Tajupedhet uses his daughter, Manikati, to steal the key to a cupboard containing valuables from Babah Cwan, a Chinese shipowner.

Manikati is conflicted between her loyalty to her father and her desire to protect Babah Cwan, even though he once tried to rape her. This conflict drives her home, but then she is invited by Sumiati to work in Surabaya. It is later revealed that Sumiati was involved in a human trafficking network and sold Manikati to Singapore.

Various forms of social crime are also represented in the novel, such as gambling by Kaharsidi and Tajupedhet, and extortion by Babah Cwan at the hands of Truna and Prayitna regarding the fishing boat. The climax of the conflict occurs when Tajupedhet threatens to burn down the house and kill Babah Cwan's family if a ransom of five million rupiah is not given. This action is foiled thanks to Kaharsidi's cooperation with the authorities on Mamah Lidhah's report.

Firstly, the novel successfully depicts the cunning and crimes committed by the father of the main perpetrator by utilizing his son. Secondly, this novel serves as a warning that many crimes are often shrouded in such cunning deception, without considering the impact on the people closest to the perpetrators. Crimes that are left unchecked can destroy the peace and social order that already exists in people's lives, and eventually,

all forms of evil will be defeated by good. Based on the description above, this research formulates the following problems: First, what are the conditions of poverty depicted in the novel *Krikil Krikil Pasisir* by Tamsir AS, and second, what factors contribute to the poverty portrayed in the novel *Krikil Krikil Pasisir* by Tamsir AS.

Based on the above statement, the novel *Krikil Krikil Pasisir*, which portrays poverty in social reality and the community environment, focuses on poverty in the novel *Krikil Krikil Pasisir* by Tamsir AS. The picture of reality in social life problems, especially the problem of poverty, prompted researchers to take the initiative in analyzing the novel more deeply. In addition to researching literary works, especially the novel *Krikil Krikil Pasisir*, the author studies social images using Ian Watt's literary sociology theory. Researchers prefer to use Ian Watt's literary sociology form of thought because Watt's literary sociology theory is simpler, yet it still provides a detailed description of poverty in the novel.

This study uses Ian Watt's literary sociology approach, which emphasizes the relationship between literary works and their social context in creation and reception. Watt divides this approach into three main aspects: the author's social situation, the reflection of society in literary works, and the social functions of literature such as shaping awareness, providing criticism, or being meaningful entertainment (Nensilanti et al., 2023).

These three aspects are used simultaneously in the context of Tamsir AS's novel *Krikil Krikil Pasisir*. First, the author's social context is important because the setting of coastal life and marginalized realities seem very close to the depiction of the characters. Secondly, the novel clearly reflects the unequal structure of society, conflicts between classes, and complex ethnic dynamics. Third, regarding social function, this work can be read as a form of symbolic resistance to social injustice, while presenting a touching and entertaining narrative.

Furthermore, literature as a social mirror in Watt's view emphasizes three important questions: (a) to what extent the work reflects the social situation of its time, (b) to what extent the author's personal character or style influences the content of the narrative, and (c) whether the chosen genre can represent the picture of society as a whole. All these elements are present in Tamsir AS's novel. The harsh realities of coastal communities in the 1980s are clearly depicted, without obscuring the author's position as part of the community.

Meanwhile, regarding social function, Watt proposes that literature can act as a tool of social transformation, mere entertainment, or both at once. *Krikil-Krikil Pasisir* exists not only as a fictional story but also as a social archive- a medium that portrays the problems of small communities honestly, sharply, and touchingly (Ainiyah, 2023). Thus, Ian Watt's approach provides a vast space to explore how poverty is represented in this novel: not as a single theme, but as a network of structural, cultural, and personal issues.

From Ian Watt's perspective, literary works reflect the social conditions of their time. Watt believes that understanding the social and historical context of the work is key to interpreting its broader meaning (Diwa, F.K., & Septiana, 2025). The conflicts and characters in the novel *Krikil-Krikil Pasisir* indirectly illustrate the socio-economic pressures and class structures that place small communities in vulnerable and marginalized positions (Hidayat, 2024).

Literature often voices the reality of poverty through the stories of characters who live in limitations. As seen in the study of the novel *Ketika Lampu Berwarna Merah* by Hamsad Rangkuti, poverty is portrayed as a condition that the characters in the story must face directly (Rusmayani, 2024). A similar approach is employed in analyzing *Krikil-Krikil Pasisir*, which presents the lives of coastal communities with all their social complexities and inequalities, making this work relevant in today's academic studies (Sibali et al., 2025).

Furthermore, an in-depth understanding of poverty in literary works can have a profoundly positive impact on poverty alleviation efforts in society. By understanding how literature reflects social issues, people can become more sensitive to humanitarian concerns and more empathetic towards those who are experiencing difficulties. For example, social assistance programs such as the Family Hope Program, which demonstrate the government's effort to reduce poverty, become relevant when related to the themes raised by the novel *Krikil Krikil Pasisir* (Taufiqi et al., 2025).

In their research, Nonika, Mulyono, and Uum stated that poverty is not just an individual problem, but also the result of a social system that places certain groups in a marginalized position. Thus, literary works serve as a reflective medium that raises social class issues and invites readers to reflect on the societal conditions (Farahdila et al., 2025).

Meanwhile, it is important to realize the cultural context in which the novel was written. Tamsir AS describes a world not far from the reality experienced by the surrounding community. Therefore, the sociological analysis of literature in this novel not only highlights poverty itself but also the unique way the author uses to convey narratives relevant to everyday life (Monica, 2024). The social values and norms that exist in society serve as a backdrop to understand the characters' behavior and the choices they make in facing life's challenges.

Overall, this study aims to answer how poverty is portrayed in the novel *Krikil Krikil Pasisir* and the sociological implications behind these representations. By examining the relationship between social conditions, economic stratification, and the portrayal of poverty in the novel, it is hoped that this research will contribute to the study of literary sociology and foster a deeper understanding of poverty in Indonesia within the context of local literary works.

METHOD

The semiotic method obtains data by reading the first level of semiotics, namely, heuristics

based on language codes. Furthermore, the collected data is read and understood using the second-level semiotic reading technique, hermeneutic. This reading method is included in the data analysis stage. To interpret (analyze) the data, it is necessary to understand the social and cultural literary codes; therefore, the second level of semiotic reading (hermeneutic) is used (Supriyanto, 2021).

Literary sociology theory examines the reciprocal relationship between literary works and the social reality behind them. The sociology of literature includes three main focuses: (1) the sociology of authors, (2) the sociology of the content of literary works, and (3) the sociology of readers (Humaira & Satriani, 2024). This research focuses on the sociology of the content of the work, namely, how the social reality in the novel *Krikil-Krikil Pasisir* reflects the conditions of coastal communities living in structural poverty.

Meanwhile, the sociology of literature theory employed is Ian Watt's, which views novels as a realistic medium that reflects real conflicts, including class, economy, and social inequality (Bagaskara & Septiana, 2025). Watt emphasizes that literary works are representations of social reality closely related to the structure of society at the time the work was written.

There are three main focuses in this approach, namely: (1) the author's social context, (2) literature as a mirror of society, and (3) the social function of literature (Humaira & Satriani, 2024). These three

aspects analyze how *Krikil-Krikil Pasisir* represents poverty as a structural condition, not just a result of individual failure. With this approach, the narrative in the novel is read as a form of social criticism of class inequality and the marginalization of coastal communities.

The main object of this research is the novel *Krikil-Krikil Pasisir* by Tamsir AS, published by Balai Bahasa Central Java in 1998. This novel was chosen because it explicitly addresses the themes of poverty, power relations, and moral dynamics in coastal communities, making it relevant to be analyzed using a literary sociology approach.

This research method is expected to provide a deep understanding of the portrait of poverty in the novel *Krikil Krikil Pasisir* and how literary sociology can be an effective analytical tool in drawing connections between literary texts and the socio-cultural context in Indonesia. With this approach, the research is expected to make a significant contribution to the study of literary sociology and enrich the discourse on poverty in literature.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research uses a literary sociology approach to the portrait of poverty in the novel *Krikil Krikil Pasisir* by Tamsir AS. From the analysis conducted, several significant findings have been obtained that represent poverty, its social impact, and reflections on the state of society. The following are the main results of the research, along with the discussion.

The basic foundation for applying Ian Watt's theory in this study is based on his view that the modern novel is a medium that can describe social reality in depth through the subjective experiences of its characters. In this approach, literature is understood not only as an aesthetic work, but also as a social document that contains reflections on the dynamics of society, including class structure, economic inequality, and moral conflicts (Auliah et al., 2025).

From this description, it appears that the author is attempting to highlight some of the challenges faced by coastal communities. These problems include romance, kinship, violence, cunning, justice, and the pursuit of truth. The main problems in the novel *Krikil Krikil Pasisir* are then linked to the real social context of the community, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the issues presented in the novel. Several reasons underlie the selection of the novel *Krikil Krikil Pasisir* by Tamsir AS as the object of research.

Structural Poverty Representation

One of the main results of the analysis is the detailed portrayal of poverty in the novel. Tamsir AS managed to capture the essence of the lives of impoverished people. In this novel, poverty is portrayed as a material deprivation and a factor that influences social and cultural values. The characters in the novel demonstrate how they adapt to their limitations and how their social environment influences their identity and behavior.

Poverty in the novel is not portrayed simply as an individual misfortune, but rather

as a condition that is both inherited and perpetuated by social and economic structures. The main character, Manik, was born into a low-income family, deprived of access to education and economic stability. His father does not have a steady job, and his older brother, Kaharsidi, only worsens the family's situation through gambling and violent behavior.

"Kabeh kanca bapak wis padha lunga ngulon. Bapak isih urip ing omah reot iki, sesambatan karo ora dijaga."
(Tamsir, 1988)

This text describes the house's physical condition as a symbol of structural extreme poverty. The rickety house, with its broken kitchen and cracked walls, is a metaphor for the family's breakdown and the social order within it. The father's helplessness reinforces the stereotype that low-income families tend to resign themselves to their circumstances without trying to improve them.

Tamsir AS's *Krikil Krikil Pasisir* represents poverty as a structural condition that shapes the story's social dynamics, characters, and conflicts. The description of poverty in this novel is not only evident in physical conditions, such as rickety houses and unemployment, but also permeates the social structure that does not favor the marginalized.

The characters in the novel, such as *Manik*, *Manikati*, and *Tajupedhet*, are described as living in a circle of poverty that is difficult to break. This condition aligns with Yuli and Prima's findings that poverty in Indonesian realist novels is often presented as the result of

unequal access and systemic injustice. In other words, the novel subtly but powerfully illustrates that economic inequality is structural and inherited, not just the fault of individuals (Ginting & Nucifera, 2025).

Poverty in this novel is not just a passive background, but a structural force that actively shapes the characters' life paths. Manik was born into a family without access to economic stability, education, or social mobility. His father is described as an older man who is physically and economically helpless.

"Bapak isih urip ing omah reot iki, sesambatan karo pawon bolong, tembok retak, lan anak bojone sing ora dijaga."
(Tamsir, 1988)

The condition of this house is not only a physical representation of poverty, but also a metaphor of a social system that has become obsolete and broken. In Ian Watt's perspective, this description reflects absolute *social particularity*, where characters do not live in an ideal world, but within concrete historical and economic limitations.

Manik's father has no bargaining power in the local economy. He not only lost his job, but also lost control of his household. This reinforces the thesis that poverty is structurally inherited, not simply due to individual negligence.

Poverty and Ethnic Social Relations

Through the lens of literary sociology, the characters in the novel *Krikil-Krikil Pasisir* can

be seen as representations of the existing social structure in society. Each character represents a distinct social stratum, and their interactions reflect the societal inequalities that exist within it. For example, the main characters often face moral and economic dilemmas that reveal the difficulty of navigating life when trapped in economic conditions that prevent them from achieving their better ideals and dreams.

Another aspect that stands out in the novel is the social inequality between the locals (natives) and the ethnic Chinese. The characters in the novel mention that the coastal residents are merely 'babu' or servants for the Chinese, who control the local economy.

"Kita iki mung dadi babune wong Cina. Pabrik-pabrik, toko-toko, lan warung gedhe kabeh duweke wong-wong kuwi. Wong kaya aku, yen ora nurut, ora iso urip." (Tamsir, 1988)

This statement reveals the power relations between the economically dominant group (ethnic Chinese) and the marginalized coastal communities. Ian Watt explains that this kind of relationship creates a condition of inequality that becomes the background of the characters' social and psychological motivations. In this context, feelings of economic inferiority give birth to ethnic sentiments, which in this novel are shown through acts of violence by a group of residents against Chinese shopkeepers.

From Ian Watt's sociological perspective on literature, poverty in this novel reflects the unequal structure of society. As

Watt (Kadir et al., 2025) explained, the umang-umang character accurately represents social realism, reflecting Indonesia's socio-economic conditions and power dynamics. The characters and narratives depict poverty, injustice, and marginalization, while criticizing the intellectual and artistic community's lack of sensitivity to societal suffering. In *Krikil Krikil Pasisir*, the character Manik never had the chance to get a proper education. He can only accept his fate with no room for maneuver. This situation is exacerbated by the power relations between the indigenous people and the Chinese businesspeople who control the local economy, as depicted in the character of Babah Cwan.

However, the novel does not fall into a black-and-white depiction. Tamsir AS wisely shows that not all coastal residents hate the ethnic Chinese. There is also a character who dares to risk his life to save the Chinese from the mob, showing that human solidarity can transcend ethnic and economic boundaries.

"Ora kabeh wong buta amarga nesu. Aku ngerti, wong-wong kuwi salah. Wong Cina kuwi ora kabeh ala. Yen ora diselametke, mati dheweke."
(Tamsir, 1988)

This quote aligns with Watt's argument that modern novels not only portray social structures but also the inner struggles of individuals in determining their moral positions amid social pressures.

One of the important layers in this novel is the relation of domination between the

ethnic Chinese and the coastal indigenous people. This inequality is evident in the fact that a small number of Chinese control economic resources, while the natives are relegated to laboring or serving roles.

"Kita iki mung dadi babune wong Cina. Pabrik-pabrik, toko-toko, lan warung gedhe kabeh duweke wong-wong kuwi."
(Tamsir, 1988)

This expression shows unequal power relations. Economic powerlessness gave rise to ethnic sentiments that became a kind of social catharsis, leading to collective acts of violence.

However, Tamsir AS is not trapped in an antagonistic dichotomy. He also voices the voice of reason and empathy within the community, as seen in the character who saves a Chinese shopkeeper from the mob:

"Wong Cina kuwi ora kabeh ala. Yen ora diselametke, mati dheweke."
(Tamsir, 1988)

In this case, the depiction of ethnic conflict is not merely a matter of blame, but a reflection of social friction rooted in structural inequality. Ian Watt emphasizes the importance of internal conflict and moral choices in the characters, which is reflected in the characters who still maintain humanitarian principles amid social chaos.

Violence, Gambling, and Social Morality

In the novel *Krikil Krikil Pasisir*, elements of local wisdom can be interpreted as a way for people to survive despite difficult

circumstances. The Javanese traditions and customs shown in the novel function as coping mechanisms for those in need. A series of rituals and norms practiced by the community, although simple, demonstrate the collective power to survive and strengthen solidarity among them.

Kaharsidi is the personification of the moral degradation caused by poverty. He is portrayed as a gambler, violent, and uncaring of his family. However, in character development, Kaharsidi becomes the key to understanding the moral complexity of people with low incomes.

"Kaharsidi ora nate nyekel kitab. Nanging atine njerit nalika ngerti Manik digawa wong adol wadon. Dheweke ninggal wong wadon sing ditresnani mung kanggo ngoyak adhine." (Tamsir, 1988)

This quote emphasizes that, despite his rude attitude and directionless life, Kaharsidi still has love and care for his family. Watt states that individuality in the modern novel shows that every moral action arises from a conscious choice, even in a corrupt or oppressive environment.

Kaharsidi's change of character demonstrates that there is room for moral transformation even in the harshest of environments. This aligns with recent sociological studies of literature that suggest the possibility of human values emerging from marginalized characters.

Poverty in the novel also serves as a setting for moral decadence, particularly as depicted through the figure of Kaharsidi, Manik's older brother. He reflects on how the pressures of life drive individuals to deviant behaviors such as gambling, violence, and escape from responsibility.

"Kaharsidi sering bali esuk-esuk, ambune arak. Ibune mung iso nangis, ora bisa ngapa-ngapa." (Tamsir, 1988)

However, Tamsir AS's narrative makes room for complexity. Kaharsidi is not entirely antagonistic; he still harbors love and concern for Manik.

"Dheweke ninggal wong wadon sing ditresnani mung kanggo ngoyak adhine." (Tamsir, 1988)

In Ian Watt's framework, individuals in literary works are not merely subject to the social pressures that shape them, but can also show reflective personal attitudes. In *Krikil Krikil Pasisir*, a character like Manikati demonstrates that, despite being trapped in an environment rife with violence, poverty, and exploitation, she still strives to uphold her moral principles. This attitude illustrates that characters in literature are not entirely determined by the system but have awareness and control over their choices.

This aligns with Raidinoor's findings, highlighting how Sethe and other women struggle against racial, social, and gender injustices, creating narratives of resistance against the power structures that threaten their

humanity. An analysis of language, character, and historical context helps detail the complex power dynamics and injustices experienced in women's lives (Raidinoor, 2024).

Spaces of Resistance and Social Agency

Manik is an example of a character who, despite being born with limitations, maintains the value of patience and fortitude. He does not fall into the same trap as his brother and tries to live a straight life. In Watt's theory, characters like *Manik* are modern individualist protagonists who can shape their way of life, even when the system is not in their favor.

"Aku ora bakal ngelakoni sing kaya Kaharsidi. Aku ora seneng judi, ora seneng kasar. Aku mung pengin kerja lan urip sing resik." (Tamsir, 1988)

This statement marks the existence of individual moral agency amid an oppressive structure. Through *Manik's* character, the novel conveys that humans still have ethical choices, and poverty is not a reason to lose dignity.

Manik emerges as a protagonist who still values honesty and patience, despite being in a harsh environment. He refuses to follow his brother's way of life.

"Aku ora bakal ngelakoni sing kaya Kaharsidi. Aku ora seneng judi, ora seneng kasar. Aku mung pengin kerja lan urip sing resik." (Tamsir, 1988)

Manik's character represents the typical protagonist of the modern novel as described by Watt: an ordinary individual, not

an aristocrat or heroic figure, who lives a life through choice and moral awareness. He embodies moral individuality, symbolizing that humans still have control over their lives, even when the system is not in their favor.

Literature as Social Criticism

Using the sociological approach to literature, this study found that literature can serve as a tool to understand and critique social conditions. This approach enables us to view literary works not only as artistic products but also as social documents that serve as critiques of society's economic, social, and cultural conditions. This finding aligns with Ian Watt's view that literature reflects the social reality in which it appears.

Overall, this research demonstrates that *Krikil Krikil Pasisir* is not just a novel, but a reflection of the complexity of the poverty problem in Indonesia. This work successfully combines various social, economic, and cultural aspects that limit people's lives. By applying the literary sociology approach, it is hoped that readers can consider values related to social care and poverty alleviation efforts within a broader context.

In this study, Ian Watt's literary sociology approach examines how the novel *Krikil Krikil Pasisir* portrays poverty as a complex social symptom by analyzing the narrative's relationship between social structure, economic determinism, and individual moral dynamics. Ian Watt emphasizes that modern novels represent individual experiences rooted in concrete

social realities, including class conflict, economic pressure, and power relations.

Overall, *Krikil Krikil Pasisir* not only records the suffering of the poor but also proposes a social critique of economic structures, ethnic power relations, and deviant social values. In this case, literature functions as a mirror of society and a means of critical reflection. The novel invites readers to understand that poverty is not just an economic condition, but part of a complex network that includes cultural, moral, and structural factors. In this case, Ian Watt's sociology of literature proves relevant in dissecting the layers of narrative that hold the objective social reality.

Krikil Krikil Pasisir is not just a documentation of the suffering of the poor. Furthermore, the novel serves as a medium to critique the unequal socio-economic system, the breakdown of family order, and the erosion of human values.

By incorporating the details of everyday life, Tamsir AS presents the social realism that characterizes the modern novel. In the tradition of Ian Watt, this kind of literature becomes a place where the concrete experiences of individuals are read as a reflection of social structures.

“Urip mung dadi rebutan golek sega. Lha yen mung rebutan, sapa sing kalah, yo ora mangan.”

(Tamsir, 1988)

This expression illustrates how microeconomic narratives, such as the daily

struggle for food, reflect an unjust macroeconomic structure.

CONCLUSIONS

This study reveals that *Krikil Krikil Pasisir* by Tamsir AS is not merely a Javanese regional literary work, but a profound representation of the social reality faced by coastal communities trapped in structural poverty, unequal power relations, and complex moral dilemmas. Through Ian Watt's literary sociology approach, the novel can be read as a social document that captures the shifting values, class struggles, and cultural resistance of the lower society to economic domination and systemic injustice.

Manik's character embodies fortitude and moral values that endure amid economic downturns and domestic violence. In contrast, Kaharsidi's character reflects the moral ambiguity of the lower class who are wrapped in poverty, but still retain the embers of humanity. The story in this novel illustrates that poverty is not only material, but also undermines human values, affects family relations, and creates a social and economic dichotomy between the ethnic majority and the minority.

Furthermore, the novel is an implicit critique of the economic hegemony of certain ethnicities and the state's inability to liberate people from unequal social structures. Amid life's limitations, the narrative asserts that there is still room for honesty, compassion, and sacrifice, even in characters who seem socially "broken".

Through Ian Watt's literary sociology approach, *Krikil Krikil Pasisir* depicts poverty not as a personal tragedy but as a collective social symptom rooted in the economic system, ethnic relations, and social values. The narratives and characters in the novel reflect how individuals live within oppressive structures, while still holding possibilities for agency, change, and moral choice.

The results of this study offer more profound insights into how literature serves as a social mirror, reflecting the conditions of Indonesian society. *Tamsir AS* not only presents poverty as a theme, but also invites readers to think critically about the condition. Therefore, readers are expected to be more aware of the issues of poverty around them, reflecting the author's desire to engage people in the struggle against poverty actively.

Thus, this study confirms the importance of literature in reflecting and criticizing social reality. Literature is not only a voice for aesthetic beauty but also a medium for resistance, class consciousness, and the formation of cultural identity. *Krikil Krikil Pasisir* is worth reading not only as a work of local literature but also as a social artifact that represents the complexity of poverty in Indonesia within the frame of universal humanity.

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