

Cintapuccino, Beauty Case (Chick-Lit): As a Part of Representation of Indonesian Metropolis Women Life Styles

Ely Nurmaily

alfintokyu@yahoo.com

STBA Teknokrat, Lampung

Abstract

Chick Literature is a new spirit for new sub genres of literature. Chick Literature refers to the word chick which means young woman then most stories narrate on single women with her life style. This discussion is elaborated into some styles of life; Technology, Beauty, Eligibility, Love, and Cosmopolitan life. Then later readers will decide whether these two chick literatures represent a part of Indonesian metropolis women life style or not.

Key Words: *Chick Literature, Indonesian metropolis women life styles*

Introduction

Metropolitan is the concept of big cities in every country. Jakarta in Indonesia, Manhattan in United States, London in United Kingdom are as examples of being metropolitan. People who live in a large city, especially a country's capital city are called metropolis inhabitant. Metropolis inhabitant here refers to people who have their own modern and up to date life style; (the way they live and the conditions they live in); they have their own characteristics and habitual actions to run their life. Sometimes capitalism and materialism are exist and popular in the modern metropolis life style.

Method

Anyway the limitation of my discussion in this paper is about the active women who live in metropolitan and have their own life style of modern metropolis, then later it is namely as metropolis women. Nonetheless the active urban women who live there always up to date in running their life, starting from fashion, cosmetics, salon, beauty treatment, the ideal man as their idol/dream, man as their lover, money, clubbing, their thinking, party, competitive life, technology and so forth. Thus the conditions above are a bit of portrait of women in metropolis life style.

Women are usually becoming the object of characters in literary works, especially in *chick lit* (chick literature). Chick Literature refers to the word chick which means young woman; an attractive girl or young woman (slang) sometimes considered offensive. Then most stories narrate on single women with her life style. The popularity of chick literature in Britain and U.S. has influenced some Indonesian female writers to write in this genre.

Margaret Marbury, a senior editor for Red Dress Ink, Harlequin's in *An Emerging Genre* said that :

"Chick lit is a sub-genre of women's fiction that usually focuses on the heroine's journey, and the tone is usually younger and more modern than mainstream women's fiction, many chick lit stories would be classified as coming-of-age stories; others might be termed social satires, yet others are relationship stories."

Lani Rich of Anchorage, Ala., in *An Emerging Genre* stated that "The only thing that defines chick lit as a genre is that the books are a woman's story of growth." It can be assumed that chick literature as one of sub- genres in literature that narrates young women life in a modern life style also it satires the real social relation in condition of society's life style. Since chick literature narrates about modern women issues and their life style, so I will elaborate a lot about their life in the discussion whether it can be called as a portrait of metropolis women or not especially on *Beauty case* and *Cintapuccino*.

Discussion

There will be some parts and terms of metropolis women life style that will be elaborated on this discussion.

Technology

Metropolis women like to use technology as the way of their communication, as it can be seen from beauty case page 123 -124 (some testimonials which are shown as a part of their communication). I take one example of their testimonies in beauty case:

MriFky 02/05/04

Smart and attractive = NADja Sinka Suwita. *Penuh ide brilian dan kreatif, otaknya selalu dipenuhi ide-ide yang gak dipikir oleh orang lain. Antusiasnya gede kalo nemuin hal yang dia suka.* nadja is so full of life. She lives her life with passions, desires, and dreams. Smtms could be very naïve, but smtms could be very tricky like unsolved puzzle. So, Nadja is complicated. Understanding her almost impossible. But one thing for sure, she's could be one whole perfect package you guys are looking for: great lover, kisser and could be a great companion and friend too at a same time. Best I've ever had.

So..., who's the lucky guy that replace me, Nadj?

Ps.Masih inget Team Rocket? Pika pikaaaa piii..... always. (Rahmanti: 123)

From those communication Nadja as the character on beauty case is described as an active and an enthusiastic woman who also loves to have communication by using technology; internet. Those means of communication also as one of ways to relieve their activities burdened in their surrounding or as a part of fulfilling their leisure, it can be seen from the story of Beauty case:

Simply just reading your testimonials di friendster, *semua perasaan-perasaan yang membuat kamu merasa kerdil, hina, dan inferior, langsung hilang dalam hitungan beberapa detik saja. sesimpel itu.* (Rahmanti.P:125)

Being crazy of technology; internet, is one of the metropolis portraits. Chatting, browsing information, mailing, purchasing and so on are common activities done in front of this gadget. Nadja always do that when she has got a burdened work. It seems that by reading those testimonials in friendster, her confidence will be back in her mind. It is so simple. These activities which are narrated on chick lit are common habit done by metropolis people, but here let us scope it into women as the object.

Beauty

In spite of that condition, there will be core discussion that is usually portrayed in chick lit, especially when people talked about women. Beauty and body treatment, cosmetics, the eligible men are the hottest issue surround them. Being beauty physically and mentally sometimes becomes an obligation for women and they have to be perfect in front of public. Women think that beautiful is everything and to be perfect is their goal. As Rahmanti stated on beauty case :

we try to loose our weight, whitening our skin, straightening our hair, buying stuff we don't really need, spend lots of money on make up, anti-acne cosmetics, anti-aging crème, perfumes, clothes, shoes and bags, do some painful things such as facial, waxing, and so on.....

What's that all about?

Just to spoil our urge, our nature?

To fit the profile?

To fit the **picture perfect**?

To be more beautiful?

And finally, to **get us the finest man**-in order to prove that we are beautiful?

(Rahmanti.P:109)

Women sometimes like to sacrifice many things even do painful things for her body; it is only for the sake of beauty and to be perfect creature. Those beauty treatment stuff become one of metropolis women's priorities in running their life with their community. This comment exists to remain readers whether beauty can guarantee all women to get the finest man or not.

it's in our nature to worship beauty, get addicted by it, becoming a beauty junkie. but also, it's in our nature to find the great equalizer. Something like : "If someone looks good, there's got to be

something wrong with her/him” (quoting Raquel Welch, from ‘What is beauty?’ in Beauty Case. P:161)

It was the quotation that was taken by Rahmanti from Welch, about the thing behind someone beauty. When women really adore of beauty and look perfect physically, anyway no body is perfect in this world, there will be something wrong with her/him inside (psychologically). It is the reality of active women’s life style.

Those phenomena show people that beauty becomes necessity and it also becomes the life style.

Eligibility

wow, ckckck.....dan ternyata semakin aku perhatikan, banyak sekali cewek-cewek cantik khas nona Jakarta dengan setelan perfect, dan rambut perfect ada di situ, tentunya dengan perfect boyfriend mereka: cowok ganteng yang di jidatnya as if terstempelkan tulisan : **TAJIR**. Aku tiba-tiba merasa minder, karena compare to those girls, aku tuh biasa banget! Apalagi sama Dania Soedjono? (Beauty case. P:115)

Beauty is filthy rich. Our society is still the same old capitalist society which is making woman’s beauty has value on the open market, where the most beautiful girl gets the richest man.” (Franz Lebowitz, Beauty is Filthy Rich, What is Beauty? in Beauty case. P:1)

“KEPONAKANNYA HASLAN NASUTION?! Serious, Bi ?! Budi itu keponakannya Haslan nasution ? yang **ketua PPIR?**” (Beauty Case. P:17)
Obi adalah kunci untuk mengenal Budi nasution, my **eligible Prince Charming**. (Beauty case. P:21)

It seems that having and getting an eligible man is one of obsessions for beautiful ladies. Eligible man becomes the object of chick literature narration that beautiful ladies or women must get the richest man. Chick literature commonly describes what women dream especially for her couple. Budi as the character in *beauty case* is described as the eligible man who deserves to get a beautiful princess and becomes the admired object for women. Moreover in Cintapuccino page 18, it is clearly narrated that the ideal male for women is the one which exist on this story, as stated here :

Dimas Geronimo dengan ciri-ciri yang aku bayangkan tinggi,berbadan tegap dengan dada bidang. Mirip seperti Jake dari serial Melrose Place. (Rahmanti: P.18)

Sosok Boy digambarkan sangat sempurna : ganteng, kaya raya-kuliah diluar negeri, di Amerika tepatnya, mobil keren lengkap dengan aksesorisnya. (P.59)

Physically male on the chick literature is portrayed as the perfect creature who is really reach and have many things physically and materially also the one who deserves to get the perfect ladies.

Love

Di kota, tubuh menyempal jauh dari mitos dan logis suci....Arkian, ia ditelanjangi dan direparasi sampai ke titik nol. Atau dijadikan kuil-kuil pemujaan hasrat serta sesembahan baru dalam kapel-kapel pesolek **voyeuristis** metropolis. (Rois: P.49).

That statement indicates that physic appeal and intimate for the metropolis people become something which is far from the eastern norm that taboo and myth are usually believed by people. It is not far from the sake of love. Every person has his/her own way in expressing their love to their lover. Voyeuristic here means sexual acts in which they participate (Encarta Dictionary). It can be to their lover or to other persons. Furthermore love cannot be separated from the stories on the fiction. Since the fiction also describes about the reflection of human life, then love always becomes an interesting thing to be evoked on it. On Cintapuccino :

at last..... Raka mencium bibirku, pertama sekilas, lalu rasanya susah deh melepaskan bibir kami yang sudah jadi satu. (Rahmanti.: P.88)

It is also described on Beauty Case, as stated here:

well, kalau lidah si ganteng ini sudah ada didalam mulutku, mau bilang apa? Think? You don’t think you’re kissing, right? you just do it, atau momennya akan hilang. (Rahmanti: P.184)

Kissing like french kiss, dating are commonly happen on their life which is narrated on these chick literature.

Cosmopolitan Life

Kosmologi Kapitalisme ruang Hugo's ini merupakan salah satu penguat adanya culture area ruang kota yang tidak didasarkan pada etnis, asal – usul kelahiran, agama dan ras. namun bergeser ke batas-batas berdasarkan kekuatan profesi, alat produksi, capital (uang, tanah, dan rumah). (Sangaji. P:56)

Statement above indicates how big city in a term of cosmology of capitalism is not limited by ethnic, where they were born, what their religion and race are Instead of profession, production tools and capital (money, land and properties). This condition exists in the narration of *cintapuccino* and beauty case. Before coming to the analysis, let us take a look at the definition of cosmopolis as a thing inside cosmology of capitalism.

Cosmopolis according to encarta dictionary tools means city influenced by different cultures: a large city where people from many different countries and cultures live. See these statements:

Fashion Café, Jakarta

Catherine Wilson melenggang dengan cantiknya di atas panggung berbentuk letter T dalam balutan gaun cantik rancangan Sebastian Gunawan. Jason Tedja Sukmana memegang tangannya dalam setelan Armani. (Cintapuccino. P:159)

Who do not know Sebastian Gunawan, Tedja Sukmana and Armani ?, those people are characterized to be shown as cosmopolis 'product' and exist on this story as minor characters who support the plot and the major characters on the narration.

Setelah berkenalan dengan Alin, Nimo memperkenalkan nya Bram dan Boris-seorang bule Jerman yang katanya adalah teman kerjanya di D'estain Compaigne (Cintapucino. P: 71)

Vivi, teman Tia yang tengah kami gosipkan itu katanya sudah seperti the real living Samantha Jones-nya Sex and The city di Jakarta saking seringnya tidur dengan gebetan dan teman-teman kencannya. (Cintapuccino.P:53)

The influences of different cultures from different countries are able to be seen from those statements above. Then the influences are not only from the culture but also from how they have relationship with other people from other countries.

Conclusion

Concerning these two novels narration; Beauty case and cintapuccino; as the metropolis women issue inside, there will be some judgments either positive or negative about metropolis women. The positive judgment rises into active women who have their own life style with their spirit in running their life. While the negative judgment is shown from the women who live in metropolitan with their own free life style. Then later the readers will decide whether these two novels (chick literature) can be asserted as a part of metropolis women life style or not with their own judgment.

References

- _____. *Beauty Case*. 2005. Gagas Media. Jakarta.
- Brown Teri. *An Emerging Genre. Why women love chick lit*. <http://Graphics.iparenting.com>. (December 1st, 2006)
- Mochtar Jenny. 2006. *The Commodification of the body in Sophie Kinsella's Confessions of a Shopaholic and Alberthiene Endah's cewek Matre*. Seminar paper on Redefining World Literature at UI. 2006.
- Rahmanti Icha. *Cintapuccino*. 2004. Gagas Media. Jakarta.
- Rois A. Agus. 2006. *Kota Yang Menyingkirkan Allah, Tentang Tuhan dalam Metropolis Modern*. Badan Penerbitan Pers Mahasiswa Balairung UGM. Yogyakarta. PP:49.
- Sangaji Hatib Abdul KO. 2006. *Geliat Dugem sebagai Ritual Baru pada Tubuh Kaum Urban (Studi Kasus Para Clubbers di Hugo's Cafe)*. Badan Penerbitan Pers Mahasiswa Balairung UGM. Yogyakarta. PP: 56.