

THREE CHARACTERS REPRESENTED MATERIALISM IN JANE AUSTEN'S MANSFIELD PARK

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Abstract

Mansfield Park is a novel written by Jane Austen, an English author in 1814. In her novel, Jane Austen wants to show the life of materialistic person. Maria, Miss Crawford, and Mrs. Norris are materialistic characters in Jane Austen's novel. Maria and Miss Crawford are girls who really want to get rich men to be their husbands. Meanwhile, Mrs. Norris is a stingy woman who always wants to keep her wealth because she thinks that money makes her happy. Those characters have materialism idea because of their society influence. During the time, they are being greedy because they sacrifice everything they love to get money. In the end, the three characters face many obstacles and their life becomes complicated. The discussion aims to analyze the society around the materialistic characters and the materilistic characters. Those goals are accomplished by using cultural materialism. It is used to analyze materialism issue in the novel. Furthermore, cultural materialism theory by Raymond William is used to analyze the causes of characters being materialistic related to the culture. The inductive method is applied to analyze the specific matter in the discussion to obtain general conclusion. Thelibrary research is used to collect data and information which are relevant to the topic discussion. It concerns with material and information which are taken from many books, dictionaries, and references to support the analysis. The data from internet also support to complete the data to make the analysis accurate.

Keywords: materialism, cultural materialism, materialistic character.

Abstrak

Mansfield Park adalah sebuah novel yang ditulis oleh Jane Austen, seorang penulis Inggris pada tahun 1814. Dalam novelnya, Jane Austen ingin menunjukkan kehidupan orang materialistis. Maria, Miss Crawford, dan Mrs Norris adalah tokoh-tokoh materialistis di dalam novel Jane Austen. Maria dan Miss Crawford adalah gadis-gadis yang benar-benar ingin mendapatkan pria kaya untuk menjadi suami mereka. Sementara itu, Mrs Norris adalah seorang wanita pelit yang selalu ingin menjaga kekayaannya karena ia berpikir bahwa uang membuatnya bahagia. Mereka adalah karakter yang memiliki paham materialism karena pengaruh masyarakat mereka. Selama ini, mereka menjadi serakah karena mereka mengorbankan segala sesuatu yang mereka cintai untuk mendapatkan uang. Pada akhirnya, tiga karakter menghadapi berbagai kendala dan hidup mereka menjadi rumit. Diskusi ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis masyarakat di sekitar tokoh materialistis dan tokoh materilistis itu sendiri. Tujuan tersebut dicapai dengan menggunakan cultural materialism. Hal ini digunakan untuk menganalisis masalah materialism dalam novel. Selain itu, teori cultural materialism oleh Raymond William digunakan untuk menganalisis penyebab tokoh-tokoh di dalam novel menjadi materialistis yang terkait dengan budaya. Metode induktif diterapkan untuk menganalisis masalah tertentu dalam diskusi untuk mendapatkan kesimpulan umum. Penelitian perpustakaan digunakan untuk mengumpulkan data dan informasi yang relevan dengan topic diskusi. Hal ini termasuk menyangkut bahan dan informasi yang diambil dari berbagai buku, kamus, dan referensi untuk mendukung analisis. Data dari internet juga mendukung untuk melengkapi data untuk membuat analisis yang akurat.

Kata kunci: materilisme, budaya materialisme, tokoh-tokoh materialistik.

Introduction

Materialism is an idea which focuses on material possession. This idea will make people consider money as their central of happiness. Materialism comes from the culture which develops in the society and influences human idea. It will make people more interested in physical value

which is related to world life than spiritual value. "Materialism is the importance thing placed on material possessions. Someone with a high level of materialism, described as "materialistic," considers material possessions to be central to their life and their identity, and focuses a good deal of their energy on acquiring possessions. Someone with a low level of materialism, described as "non-

materialistic," or "not materialistic," does not consider acquiring possessions to be particularly important, although they vary in the extent to which they acquire material possessions in order to meet other objectives, such as social acceptance" (Hartney:2009).

Furthermore, this research focuses on materialism which is had by three characters in the Austen's novel *Mansfield Park*. Those three characters are created by the author related to her experience in her era. Such Jane Austen who disagrees with materialism which develops in her era, the three characters are created in purpose. The three characters who have materialistic idea value that money is everything. They do anything to get their dream without thinking that their action is suitable with spiritual value or not. Their ambitions blame them to the religious thing. In the end of the novel the three characters have unhappy life. I try to find all kinds of aspects by finding the deeply information about materialism emerges in the three characters in the novel. Then, I want to show the representation of materialism which the author against is had by the three characters in the novel.

Finally, I choose materialism to discuss in this research because I want to make the people and the readers of my thesis know that materialism is bad for human thought. I also want to give them deep information how to deal with this idea when they come in to this situation and how to treat the people who have materialism. This thesis is expected to give explanation about materialism in the novels and to give new information for the readers to be more critical in reading novel from the view of literary criticism. This thesis analyzes the materialism of three characters which become the representation of the author experiences in her real life by using sociological approach. Therefore, understanding materialism of the three characters through the novel is interesting to analyze. Then, this thesis is hoped to be the reference for the students who study novel as one of literary works and for the readers to get better information about the content of the story especially about materialism.

Research Method

This subchapter deals with the procedure of the research. It includes type of the research, data collection, data processing and data analysis. All of these procedures make this thesis clear to understand. Lorraine Blaxter, Christina Hughes, Malcolm Tight argue in their book *How to Research* that qualitative data is used to describe steadily extracting from the data collected a series of themes. The data collection uses documentary data. It is applied in this study as the technique of data collection. Documentary analysis proceeded by abstracting from each document which we consider to be important or relevant, and by grouping together these findings, or setting them alongside

others which we believe to be related. What you see or read in documents will be a product of your viewpoint, discipline or focus." (2006:208). The primary data are taken from the dialogues and the sentences in the novel *Mansfield Park* which have relationship with the discussion. The secondary data are taken from some information in the references, such as taken from the books about Materialism, papers, journals, articles, and the biography of the author.

The data processing is done by categorizing the information acquired. All of the data from the novel and sociological condition of the three characters are categorized in order to understand the novel better, as the representation of the materialism and the way of thinking of the author which is represented in three characters of the novel.

Result

The result of this article is to show some problems which are related to materialism in the real life of Jane Austen as the author of the novels and it is represented on the three characters of her novel, *Mansfield Park*. Hence, this research wants to elaborate the specific information and fact about the three characters' behavior related to materialism. For more the detail information about how materialism which Jane Austen against it gives influence to the three characters, the types and the causes of the three characters' materialism and how this feeling of materialism influences the whole life of the three characters will be explained briefly in the next chapter.

Discussion

The article intends to show that the three characters in *Mansfield Park* represented as the materialistic characters. The second, the factors which cause the three characters to be materialistic and its impacts toward the three characters's life. The third, the ideology which is brought by the author.

I choose the three characters named Maria, Mrs. Norris and Miss Crawford who have all aspects of materialism. The characters in the novel are not only the imaginative character created by Jane Austen but also the three characters in the story are the expression of the author to show his critique to the materialistic life which happens in Romantic era. The first character named Maria is described that woman must be a wife from rich man in order she can be a rich woman. Being a rich woman will make her life easy. This first character sacrifices her love to get the wealth. The second character named Mrs. Norris is described that a woman must be stingy to protect her wealth. Being a stingy woman is not enough, she still has to stay close to the rich family in order she can take advantage from any situation. The third character is Miss Crawford who has opinion that woman has to limit her friendship. She can be a friend from rich family but she cannot make a friendship

with poor family. A woman must see the salary from her boyfriend before getting married. If a boyfriend has less salary she must forget him and look for another man who has high salary. This view makes the third character leaves her lover because her lover has less salary although she really loves him.

The representation of materialism is shown in Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park*. She creates those characters because of the influence of her society. There is materialism which has been culture in her society in that era and Jane Austen disagrees about this view. She creates those characters to show her disagreement of her society's view. She also creates the society in the novel which is similar as the society in her real life. She creates the society in the novel which influences the three major characters become materialistic. Austen gets influence from her society so she creates the society which also influences the characters. This condition has similarity between the real society of Jane Austen writes the society in the novel influences the three characters so they become materialistic characters with unhappy life in the end of the novel. The first character gets refused from the society and the family because of her materialistic idea. She sacrifices her love to get a wealthy man as her husband but, in fact, material possession which is considered as the central of happiness by her is totally wrong. She realizes it after getting married with a rich man so she cheats with her ex-boyfriend and leaves her husband. She has to move to the remote area because her family and society refused her. The second character gets refused from the family and feels guilty of her education to her niece. She has to accompany Maria to leave the family to live in remote area and becomes Maria's servant. The third character becomes single woman because she always sees man's salary. She leaves her lover and she cannot find another man who is suitable for her criteria. She lives alone without a man who loves her and loved by her. This condition shows that Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park* is not only a representation of the materialism which happens in the real life when Jane Austen lived but also shows her opinion against materialism.

Mansfield Park is a novel which describes the ideology of the author. Before knowing the kind of ideology which is brought by the author, it is necessary to know the meaning of ideology. According to Raymond Williams Ideology is a term for the science idea. The use of it depends on a particular understanding of the nature of ideas broadly. The science of ideas should be a natural science because all of ideas are coming from someone's experience of the world (1977:56). Jane Austen is a religious woman and really stressing her religious belief. She is included as an obedient religious woman. She will do everything related to her religion. The lifestyle in Enlightenment has contradiction

with her view. One example of Enlightenment lifestyle is Materialism idea which becomes dominant in that era. Materialism focuses on earthly life and makes someone wants to be perfect by ignoring spiritual value. (Shaw, 2009:05). Jane Austen's ideology comes from the society where she lives. There is dominant culture as hegemony culture which appears in the society and influences Jane Austen's idea. The dominant culture in Romantic era is against Enlightenment, the literary work in this era consists of back to nature, express the emotion, express imagination, individuality. It becomes an ideology for Jane Austen. Materialism appears in Enlightenment era so Jane Austen experiences her ideology as found in *Mansfield Park*. She creates characters who have materialistic idea and they are influenced by the hegemony culture in the society such in the novel *Mansfield Park*. Austen makes a materialistic society as their culture that becomes dominant idea in some characters as their ideology. The materialistic characters who are created by Austen get unhappy life in the end of the story in *Mansfield Park*. It is because Austen has an ideology against materialism.

"It ended in Mrs. Norris's resolving to quit Mansfield and devote herself to her unfortunate Maria, and in an establishment being formed for them in another country, re-remote and private, where, shut up together with little society, on one side no affection, on the other no judgment, it may be reasonably supposed that their tempers became their mutual punishment" (Austen, 2001:393:394). Jane Austen not only makes materialistic characters who get unhappy life in the end of the story but she also makes non materialistic characters such as Fanny and Edmund who get happy life in the end of the story. Fanny and Edmund are not only non materialistic character but also religious characters. They finally get married happily.

"With so much true merit and true love, and no want of fortune and friends, the happiness of the married cousins must appear as secure as earthly happiness can be. Equally formed for domestic life, and attached to country pleasures, their home was the home of affection and comfort; and to complete the picture of good, the acquisition of Mansfield living, by the death of Dr. Grant, occurred just after they had been married long enough to begin to want an increase of income, and feel their distance from the paternal abode an inconvenience" (Austen, 2001:400).

All of the quotations above show the ideology of Jane Austen. She wants to show that people live with materialistic ideology will not be happy in the end of their life. On the

other hand, people who do not have materialistic idea and straight to the religious rules will get happy life in their life.

Conclusion

Mansfield Park is a novel which tells about the lifestyle of materialistic character and the impact of being materialistic character. This novel is Jane Austen's critique to Materialism which appears in the Enlightenment era which is opposed by Romantic era. Jane Austen creates three major characters who have materialistic idea because of the society's influences. All of the three characters have materialism as their ideology because they consider that money is everything and as an important thing to reach their happiness. However, they can reach their ambition to be rich women but in the end of the novel they get unhappy life. Austen shows her ideology to criticize the materialism through the three major characters. She creates three materialistic characters as the result of her experiences in the social environment. So, the three characters in the novel *Mansfield Park* have materialism as their ideology because of the society in which they live as shown in the novel.

It can be concluded that all of the people in this world need to know materialism and its impact to their future life. Money is an important thing in people's life but it is not necessary to consider money as the central of happiness for people to live. As Austen's view that money is not the only thing that will make people get satisfaction and happiness in their life but the true love and the religious views are needed to complete their life. The non materialistic characters who are created by Austen consider money or material possession as the thing which is not particularly important. They use it to fulfill their life and getting society's acceptance. On the other hand, materialism can make someone greedy, stingy, and arrogant. As Austen described in her novel that three characters limit their relation only with the rich people. They do everything to increase their material possession. They do not care of others who need helps. By this novel Jane Austen as the author tries to show that all of the people in this world including herself are deserved to be happy and to be appreciated by the other without considering material possession.

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