

**JANE AUSTEN'S FEMINIST IDEAS AS SEEN IN  
THE MAIN CHARACTER OF PERSUASION**

A Thesis

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**ABSTRAK**

Skripsi ini menganalisis sebuah karya sastra klasik dari novelis ternama Inggris, Jane Austen, yang berjudul *Persuasion*. Penulis menganalisis ide-ide feminis yang Austen tanamkan dalam karakter utama wanitanya, Anne Elliot. Penulis juga membahas pengaruh dari kehidupan serta pengalaman-pengalaman hidup yang dilalui Austen yang direfleksikan ke dalam karyanya. Penulis berpendapat bahwa pengalaman hidup Jane Austen mempengaruhinya untuk meletakkan ide-ide feminisnya ke karakter wanitanya.

Dalam menganalisis *Persuasion*, penulis menggunakan pendekatan ekspresif dan teori kritik sastra feminis. Untuk lebih memfokuskan teorinya, penulis menggunakan teori feminis yang digagaskan oleh Elaine Showalter, yakni *Gynocriticism*. Teori ini menganalisis karya sastra yang ditulis perempuan dan melihat karya sastra memiliki pengaruh dari pengalaman hidup pengarang. Penulis menggunakan metode kualitatif karena data yang diperoleh tidak berupa angka-angka tapi tulisan-tulisan serta menggunakan metode deskriptif untuk menjelaskan hal-hal dalam skripsi.

Setelah menganalisis novel ini, penulis melihat bahwa Jane Austen memasukan ide-ide feminisnya ke dalam karakter Anne Elliot. Penulis menjelaskan empat ide feminis yang menurut penulis menonjol dari Anne Elliot yaitu wanita yang pintar, rasional, kuat, dan mandiri. Penulis dapat melihat bahwa melalui gambaran hidup Anne Elliot, terdapat ide-ide feminis tersebut. Anne Elliot yang kehidupannya cukup menderita karena kehilangan cinta dan mendapat perlakuan yang tidak adil dari keluarganya membuatnya harus kuat dan berjuang agar kehidupannya lebih baik. Penulis menemukan bahwa ide-ide feminis Jane Austen banyak dipengaruhi oleh pengalaman pribadi maupun pengaruh dari orang-orang di sekitarnya. Oleh karena itu dia mencoba untuk menggambarkan wanita yang lebih baik daripada wanita-wanita Inggris pada umumnya pada masa awal abad ke-sembilan belas.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. The Background of the Research

Literature is a written media to express idea, feeling, or experience of the author. For that reason, literary work as the product of literature is always related with the authors especially about their experience. The author is free to write everything they feel into literature. Author can describe the political situation, the social class, the physical and the psychological of the characters. In this research the writer is interested about female author and women in literature.

Patriarchal ideas have put women aside, both in real life and literature especially until the early of nineteenth century. In literary works, woman characters are usually described weak and uneducated especially by male authors. In real life, the writer sees at that time women too were marginalized by men. That situation had significant cause to female authors. Caroline Zilboorg explains in her book, Women's Writing: Past and Presents that there were few female authors especially in the early of nineteenth century (8). Those female authors did not have much contribution in literature. They did not have their own style in literature. They usually imitated male authors' writings, for example in presenting characters. There were not many of female authors' works that had been published. Some female authors even took pseudonyms to hide their names so their books could be published, for example George Eliot. But, since George Elliot made her writings, many other female authors also excited began to write and one of them is Jane Austen. Gilbert Keith Chesterton (1874–1936), a critic,



novelist and poet says,

"The strength and subtlety of woman had certainly sunk deep into English letters when George Eliot began to write. Her originals and even her contemporaries had shown the feminine power in fiction as well or better than she. Charlotte Brontë, understood along her own instincts, was as great; Jane Austen was greater." (qtd. Southam, 239)

Since then female authors could freely express their ideas, thoughts, and experiences into literature. Many female authors wrote lives of women, or their experience as a woman. Some of them even wrote novels based on their own female experiences.

One of female authors in nineteenth century is Jane Austen. She is one of the greatest English female writers. As quoted in Critical Heritage of Jane Austen Vol. 2, Dalloway states in his book, The Voyage Out that Jane Austen is the greatest female writer that English have because she does not imitate man's writing but, other female authors does. Because of this reason he does not like other works written by women expect Austen's. Austen in her novel even dares to mock about patriarchal system and society especially in Britain. Zilboorg says that Austen is satirizing early nineteenth century society in which especially a marriage depends on money not love (38).

That kind of thing can be seen from her last novel, Persuasion. She wrote it before she died and published by her brother, Henry Austen. Jane in this novel portrays her main character, Anne Elliot as a smart, strong, and independent woman. The main character, Anne is married based on love.

The writer is interested to analyze this novel because it is one of Austen's

famous novels; especially the main character has feminist sides which is unusual for women in 19<sup>th</sup> century. Since, it is a woman's writing, the writer wants to analyze it by using feminist literary criticism, particularly Gynocriticism. The writer in the research is concerned with the feminist ideas that Jane Austen put in Persuasion. In addition, the writer wants to observe the relation of her life and experience to the novel.

Gynocriticism is a criticism that emphasizes the evolving female consciousness reflected in literature. According to Showalter, gynocriticism is the study that more concern to the women writers that discuss women's problem in her novel and, gynocriticism sees woman's writing as a text based on female experience. (qtd. Selden, 219). Women as writers have their own representation to the women in the literary work. They usually deconstruct the character of women without the oppression of patriarchal system. Women writers try to run away from male writers' style of writing and make their own way in literature.

## 1.2. The Identification of the Problem

The main character in Persuasion, Anne Elliot is described as an uncommon woman in 19<sup>th</sup> century. She is not a kind of woman who is married based on money, but love. She is also an educated woman who can think rationally and can be independent in her life. The writer thinks Austen puts the feminist ideas through Anne. The writer finds that there are influences of Jane Austen's life experience to make this kind of character in the novel. For example, Anne's struggle in reaching her happiness in life especially in marriage that based on love not money is really shown by Austen in this novel. Like Anne, Austen

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

This chapter is the conclusion of the main analysis. After analyzing Persuasion, the writer makes some conclusions. Firstly, the writer concludes that Jane Austen puts her feminist ideas through the main character, Anne, so she looks different from other women in the novel. The writer explains that the main character is a strong, smart, independent, and rational woman. Austen shows the reader the feminist ideas in Anne's life so she could be a role model for the readers. Anne's life is not happy since she rejected the proposal from Wentworth. Besides, her family is never being supported her in her life. Because of that, she tries to do everything she can to make her life happy. She determines herself to be independent and strong. She is not going to be persuaded again by anybody else. Her feminist sides have helped her to get happy life in the end of the novel.

Secondly, the writer finds that Anne's feminist ideas are influenced by the life experience of the author's itself. Here, the writer relates Austen's life to the feminist ideas in Anne's life. Austen is smart and independent woman and it is reflected in Anne's feminist sides. Like Austen, Anne is only going to marry a man she loves. She does not want to marry just because social status and wealth. In the society, the writer sees that both Anne and Austen are polite, well manner and educated women. They made a lot of acquaintances and loves by people in society. For people in 19<sup>th</sup> century, the way people meet people and socialized can reflect the education. From the research, the writer also can find that Jane is a strong woman who wants to be kind and makes people happy even though she is



in a difficult situation, for example when she is sick. We also can find that she reflected that attitude in Anne Elliot.

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