

**ESCAPISM AS IDEOLOGY IN FRANZ KAFKA'S SELECTED
SHORT STORIES (THE METAMORPHOSIS, A HUNGER
ARTIST, THE JUDGMENT)**

A Thesis

*Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement
for the Degree of Sarjana Sastra*

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PADANG
2011**

ABSTRAK

Dalam penelitian ini penulis menganalisis beberapa cerita pendek karya Franz Kafka: *The Metamorphosis*, *A Hunger Artist* dan *The Judgement*. Di dalam ketiga teks terdapat kesamaan pola dimana konflik selalu muncul ketika individual dihadapkan dengan posisi mereka dibawah tekanan sosial dari masyarakat kelas menengah di Prague pada awal abad ke -20. Fokus dari teks-teks tersebut terletak pada bentuk penggambaran solusi oleh karakter-karakter utama yang melibatkan persepsi mereka terhadap realitas.

Penulis menggunakan konsep alienasi, ideologi, dan *negative knowledge* yang dikemukakan oleh Marx, Louis Althusser, dan Theodor Adorno. Dibatasi oleh kerangka pendekatan Marxisme, konsep alienasi menggali bentuk keterasingan karakter utama terhadap diri dan realitasnya. Sebagai konsep utama, konsepsi ideologi Althusser menjadi sorotan penting terhadap solusi ideologis terhadap masalah yang dialami karakter-karakter utama. Secara umum dua konsep ini menjelaskan konten dari teks. Sedangkan *negative knowledge* mempunyai peran dalam analisa bentuk formal dari teks yang juga berfungsi sebagai kritik terhadap terhadap kontradiksi sosial yang terjadi di zaman Kafka. Analisa didukung kajian kepustakaan melalui buku dan referensi yang terkait. Selanjutnya analisa menggunakan metode kualitatif untuk mengambil kutipan sumber terkait. Hasil analisa disampaikan melalui metode deskriptif.

Sebagai hasil penelitian, penulis menemukan bahwa eskapisme adalah wujud dari ideologi yang bekerja sebagai solusi dari ketidakmampuan karakter-karakter utama mengisi peran ideologis baik sebagai pekerja, seniman dan usahawan. Analisa ideologi juga mengandung penjabaran kontradiksi sosial yang menyingkap dominasi masyarakat kelas menengah di Prague di mana kapitalisme industrial berkembang pesat. Sebagai analisa akhir, teks-teks Kafka mewakili karya sastra yang kritis terhadap kontradiksi sosial zamannya ditinjau dari fungsi unsur-unsur formal yang terdapat di dalam teks.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Research

The richness of art absolutely cannot be separated with the works of literature. Since centuries ago literature has been enriching the human life with aesthetic and artistic phenomena in reflecting their life. Literature as an imaginative work of language embraces the inevitable engagement of time in history. In a specific context, literature also entails certain aesthetic values and forms that are influenced by certain characteristic of history development.

Historically the era of modernism became the ground breaking and marked one of the epochal periods in literature. Through the representation of literature, modernism is regarded as the influential and mostly claimed as the shocking period of literature that formerly was preceded by the era of realism and naturalism. Mapping the periodical time of history, modernism existed before the postmodernism in where we are now as the elaboration of civilization entities nowadays. Hence, modernism entails the characteristic of human civilization underlying certain historical events and condition behind the analyzed text.

Modernism era was marked by advanced industrialized society. Inevitably, literature was also affected by the advanced industrialized economic condition. Mostly modernist writings in European countries represent the abundant and extremely strange illustration as the response to industrialized society. This

representation occurs in the works of one of brilliant writers that much influenced world literature and development of modernist writing. This writer is regarded as the writer who could bring the depiction of industrialized society into unthought-of, expressive and skillful use of language in his works, Franz Kafka, as Abrams confirmed that he is one of central representatives of modernism among other European and American writers (168).

In The Metamorphosis (1915), A Hunger Artist (1924) and The Judgment (1912) Kafka narrates the same patterns of individuality that are imposed by the social and economic condition either as a labor, as an artist and as a businessman. Through these three short stories, Kafka expresses the distinctive narration of subjectivity into fragmented and alienated existence of individual with his social aspect. It is represented by the dominant characters of these novels, Gregor Samsa, the unnamed artist, and Georg who question their reality through illustration of economic production that affects social and cultural reality. As a result, indication of escapism appears when their escaping attitude represents the answer for their lacked existence and lack of alternative surroundings.

Since literature contains the representation of social context that is governed by the system builds its structure, literature involves ideological sphere as the mediation of social phenomena within it. The conception of ideology expresses the occurrence of social, economic and artistic production related to it such as family, working institution and etc. In three Kafka's works above we see that characters' attitude brings the ideological ideas through his writings. As Terry Eagleton argues in

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

After analyzing three Franz Kafka's short stories by The Metamorphosis, A Hunger Artist and The Judgment I found the same pattern of conflicts experienced by the main characters in the text including Georg Samsa, the hunger artist, and Georg Bendemann. The conflict is located in the oppositional clash between the protagonists as individuals and their outer world represented by family, art impresario, and father in terms of fulfilling their position as bread winner for family, professional faster, and businessman. The concern of the research focuses on how they perform the solution based on perspective of Marxist criticism related to concept of alienation, ideology and negative knowledge. To be precise this research answers 3 points; how the main characters experience escapism of ideology, what contradiction appears in escapism and how formal elements of Kafka's modernist writing show the distance to reality.

In the case of alienation, analysis of central characters focuses on estrangement of himself and his outer world. In The Metamorphosis, as a vermin Georg Samsa is unconsciously estranged from himself by his nature as vermin and estranged by his family and people in his working institution. In A Hunger artist, the hunger artist was consciously estranged to himself by his nature as professional faster and estranged by his audience. Meanwhile, in The Judgment, Georg Bendemann was unconsciously estranged by his imagination and estranged by his father. The purpose of analysis of alienation is to explain his social reality which leads to resolution of their conflict represented by escapism.

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