POLITICAL CONFLICT AMONG FACTIONS:
A MARXIST CRITICISM ON VERONICA ROTH'S NOVEL
DIVERGENT (2011)

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TESTIMONY

Here, the researcher testify that there is no plagiarism in this research paper. There is no proposed work before this study to get Bachelor degree in certain university and as long as the researcher knows there is also no work and idea that has been written or published by other people, except referred written in this study and mentioned in bibliography.

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Abstract
The major problem in this research is describing political conflict among factions which is reflected in Veronica Roth's novel Divergent. The research consists of an objective: analyzing the novel based on Marxist Criticism. The researcher employs qualitative method. The object of the study is Divergent novel by Veronica Roth which is published in 2011. The data sources consist of primary data source and secondary data source. The primary data source is the text of Divergent novel by Veronica Roth, published by Harper Collins and the secondary data sources are references or materials related to study which are taken from books, websites, and other matters that support this analysis. The method of collecting data in this research is library research by summarizing, paraphrasing, and documenting the data. The technique of data analysis is descriptive analysis. The result of this research shows that Roth generally wants to describe the social classes in the post-apocalyptic Chicago. Divergent also shows the conflict between factions that fight to get the authority of the government.

Keywords: classes, factions, Divergent, Marxist

Abstrak

Kata Kunci: kelas, faksi, Divergent, Marxist.
1. INTRODUCTION

Divergent is the new published novel written by Veronica Roth. This novel was published in 2011 by Harper Collins Publishers in New York. The book became best seller, and the author Veronica Roth got some honor like Favorite book of 2011, Best Young Adult Fantasy & Science Fiction 2012 and Best Goodreads Author by Goodreads. It was her phenomenal debut as a new literary work writer.

Divergent shows the human living in the future and the condition of post-apocalyptic Chicago. The humans live in five factions; Abnegation (The Selfless), Erudite (The Intelligent), Dauntless (The Brave), Amity (The Peaceful) and Candor (The Honest). Factions became new social class in society structure. If people had a compatibility aptitude with any faction, they could be joined as faction member and live there. If people did not have a compatibility aptitude with any faction, they would be a factionless. It means that they would be exiled from the society. Divergent also shows Erudite political will that wanted to take over the authority of the council from Abnegation. It caused a conflict between them. The conflict caused Dauntless controlled by Erudite and attacked Abnegation. From that attacked, there are many victims from Abnegation.

There are several studies that deal with Divergent. The first study is conducted by Nesreen Abdallah Eldoliefy from North Dakota University entitled Societies of Control in Young Adult Literature: The Panoptic World of Veronica Roth’s Trilogy Divergent (2015). In his research, Nesreen explains Foucault’s concept of panopticism. He uses it to demonstrate the containing nature of the novel. The novel represents a repressive ideological agenda that reinforces certain social order and identity on its characters. He found that the novel offer a prison-within-prison society enmeshed with layer of surveillance, incarceration and control mechanism. Nesreen also found that Both Foucault’s panopticon and Roth’s novel create a worlds where escape from strict surveillance, conformity, and lack of choice are almost impossible. Both are the nightmarish versions of an attempt to create a utopian society at the expense of the individual.

Second study is conducted by Sylvia Indah Arlita from Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta entitled A Translation Analysis on Verb Phrase in Divergent Novel by Anggun Prameswari (2015). It was a linguistic study. In her research, she identifies translation variations of verb phrase and describe the accuracy translation of verb phrase that found in Divergent novel.

In this research, the researcher only focuses on describing social classes and political factions by using Marxist criticism. There are five issues that concluded in Marxist criticism: Dialectical materialism, Historical materialism, Alienation, Class struggle, Revolution.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

In this research, the researcher uses qualitative research. There are some steps to conduct the research. Firstly, the researcher determines the type of the study. Secondly, the researcher determines the object of the study. Thirdly, the researcher determines the data and data sources. Fourthly, the researcher determines the technique of data collection. At last, the researcher determines the technique of data analysis.

The type of data in this study is texts that consist of words, phrases, and sentences. There are two types of data sources in this research. First, the primary data source which consists of text of Divergent novel by Veronica Roth, published by Harper Collins in 2011. Second, the secondary data sources or the references that relates to the study which picking up by the researcher from the books or website. In analyzing the novel, the researcher uses descriptive analysis as the technique of data analysis.

3. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The novel is analyzed by using Marxist criticism. Marxist analysis consists of five major issues. There are: Dialectical materialism, Historical materialism, Alienation, Class struggle, and Revolution. As the author, Veronica Roth described it systematically. She shows the dialectical materialism by reflecting
the thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. She described the historical materialism by showing the basic and superstructure. She also shows the process of alienation that happened to the major character. Besides, she describes the opposing and oppressed class that indicates class struggle. She closed her story with the revolution process.

3.1 Dialectical Materialism

Dialectical materialism is the world outlook of the Marxist-Leninist party. It is called dialectical materialism because its approach to the phenomena of nature, its method of studying and apprehending them, is dialectical, while its interpretation of the phenomena of nature, its conception of these phenomena, its theory, is materialistic. Dialectics comes from the Greek *dialego*, to discourse, to debate. In ancient times dialectics was the art of arriving at the truth by disclosing the contradictions in the argument of an opponent and overcoming these contradictions. There were philosophers in ancient times who believed that the disclosure of contradictions in thought and the clash of opposite opinions was the best method of arriving at the truth (Stalin, 1975: 3-4).

Hegel describes dialectical materialism method by using different language. Sometimes he characterized the three stages as, respectively, thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. In a different but essentially equivalent terminology he referred to them as position, negation of the position, and negation of the negation (Elster, 1986: 34-35).

Veronica Roth’s novel *Divergent* reflects the process of dialectical materialism. In *Divergent*, the thesis was represented by Natalie Prior when she came to Dauntless and met Tris in Visiting Day. She said that there was something wrong between Erudite and Abnegation. She wanted Tris to meet Caleb in Erudite and find out the problem. She could not explain more about this information.

The antithesis was represented by Caleb’s explanation. Caleb did not believe with Tris argument. As a member of Erudite, he believed with his faction leader. He believed that some big thing had happened between Erudite and Abnegation but he did not believe that Erudite was wrong and the synthesis was represented by Tris and Four after four found the secret file that looked like war plan and they stopped the simulation, and the war was over.

3.2 Historical Materialism

Historical materialism is not simply a theory that accords a privileged place to economic factors. It is, more specifically, a form of technological determinism. The rise and fall of successive property regimes are explained by their tendency to promote or fetter technical change. In Marx's language, this is expressed as follows. Within each mode of production, there initially obtains a correspondence between the relations of production and the productive forces (Elster, 1986: 105-106). Taken together, these ‘forces’ and ‘relations’ of production form what Marx calls ‘the economic structure of society’, or what is more commonly known by Marxism as the economic ‘base’ or ‘infrastructure’. From this economic base, in every period, emerges a ‘superstructure’ certain forms of law and politics, a certain kind of state, whose essential function is to legitimate the power of the social class which owns the means of economic production (Eagleton, 1976: 5).

1) Base

*Divergent* reflects the productive forces. Based on those productive forces, the characterizations of the book are divided into two groups; there are people with faction and people without faction which is called factionless. In *Divergent*, people who live in faction are divided into five factions; there are Abnegation, Amity, Candor, Erudite and Dauntless. People who live without faction or people who leave their faction or cannot be accepted in the factions because of their aptitudes are called factionless.
The characterizations of every faction were represented by character in the story. In *Divergent*, the characterizations of Abnegation were represented by Andrew Prior, Natalie Prior and Marcus Eaton. Dauntless were represented by Tobias “Four” Eaton, Beatrice “Tris” Prior, Christina, Will, Al, Peter, Lynn, Marlene, Uriah, Zeke and Tori. The relation of production between characters consists of conflict. It caused by the productive forces that makes conflicts more complicated.

The conflict was happened between Abnegation and Erudite that caused Abnegation genocide. Erudite wanted to take over the authority of the council by releasing some articles about Abnegation leader, Marcus Eaton who abused his children that caused him transferred to Dauntless. Second article was released by Erudite after choosing ceremony. The article said that Abnegation lost their moral value and it caused many people decided to transfer to another faction. The conflict between Erudite and Abnegation caused many victims from Abnegation.

2) Superstructure

*Divergent* also reflects the institutional arrangements and the collective consciousness arrangements. *Divergent* reflects a certain kind of state which is reflected by Erudite. Erudite has essential function to means the productive forces from the simulation that they develop. It made Erudite has legitimation of power in the social class. Erudite was a faction which wanted to take over the authority of the government. Erudite representation, Jeanine Matthews, wanted to control people by using the simulation serum.

She declared that if she was became the leader of the government, she would guarantee people in new system. She would make the government improved and all people would live in wealth and prosperity but she made cruellest decision. The cruellest Jeanine's decision is she used the simulation in Dauntless member to attacked Abnegation. From that attacked, there are many victims from Abnegation.

3.3 Alienation

For Marx, the history of mankind is a history of the increasing development of man, and at the same time of increasing alienation. His concept of socialism is the emancipation from alienation, the return of man to himself and his self-realization. Marx describes alienation as the process of man who does not experience himself as the acting agent in his grasp of the world, but that the world (nature, others, and he himself) remain alien to him. They stand above and against him as objects, even though they may be objects of his own creation. Alienation is essentially experiencing the world and oneself passively, receptively, as the subject separated from the object (Fromm, 1961: 43-44).

The process of alienation was reflected on *Divergent*. The alienation process was reflected by the major character, Beatrice “Tris” Prior. In *Divergent* she was alienated from her family, her environment, and her friends. When she was in Abnegation, she was alienated from her family, she was different, she could not accept Abnegation value in her life, she was too selfish and she was different from her family. Later, she decided to choose Dauntless as her new faction.

After she transferred to Dauntless, her father was angry with her. She was alienated from her family and her environment. She was not an Abnegation member again. She became a member of Dauntless. She became a stranger in a new environment. After second initiation, she was alienated from her friends. It caused by she got the best rank in that initiation.

3.4 Class Struggle

Marx describes classes as the basic units in social conflict require a definition that yields a small, determinate, and non-arbitrary number of classes. Classes cannot be defined by arbitrary cut-off
points on a continuous scale: They have real existence as organized interest groups, not just as constructs in the eye of the observer. There are some fifteen groups that Marx refers to as classes: bureaucrats and theocrats in the Asiatic mode of production; freemen, slaves, plebeians, and patricians under slavery; lord, serf, guild master, and journeyman under feudalism; industrial capitalists, financial capitalists, landlords, peasantry, petty bourgeoisie, and wage laborers under capitalism (Elster, 1986: 123-124).

In Divergent, the society was divided into two social classes. The social classes were divided based on the personal aptitudes. People who had aptitudes compatibility, they would chose a faction as a place to live, but people who did not have aptitudes compatibility they could not live in a faction and became a factionless. From the explanation above, Divergent reflects some classes of the society and also power structure that indicate the class struggle. The power structure and classes of the society are reflected by some events happened in the story.

1) The Power Structure
Divergent reflects a power structure. There is complicated power structure that happened in the story. The power structures are reflected by some occurrence that showed the oppressed class and oppressing class. It was reflected by Erudite which was oppressing Abnegation.

The reason why Erudite oppressing Abnegation was their represent; Jeanine Matthews wanted to get the authority of the government to control the ‘Divergent’ and to make the society improved. She indicated that Abnegation saved much ‘Divergent’ in their sector. She also wanted to control everyone under simulation. She would develop better simulation serum to control everyone. She declared that by controlling them, the government will be improved and the citizens will lived in wealth and prosperity. That was why Erudite attacked Abnegation that caused a lot of victims.

From the explanation above, Divergent reflects a process of oppress and oppressed. It was reflected by Erudite which was oppressing Abnegation to take over the authority of the council. It also showed the political will from Erudite that caused many victims from Abnegation.

2) Classes
Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that, there are two classes in Divergent based on Marxist theory.

a) The Oppressing Class
The oppressing class is reflected by Erudite who controlled Dauntless under simulation. Erudite develop simulation serum, and controlled Dauntless member to attacked Abnegation. Erudite wanted a life in wealth; comfort and prosperity by taking the authority of the government.

b) The Oppressed Class
The oppressed class is reflected by Abnegation. They were attacked by Dauntless under simulation. It caused by Erudite who wanted to take over the authority. Erudite did not agree with the Abnegation simplicity way of live. They wanted develop new improved government, and guarantee the citizens with lived in wealth and prosperity.

As the oppressed class, Abnegation reflected simplicity in their life. They kept struggling even though they were attacked by the under simulation Dauntless that caused many victims.

3.5 Revolution
A revolution is seen as transfer of governmental power. It simply becomes a matter of change in personnel. For Marx, revolution is defined by the nature of the change involved, by sociopolitical
relation. In the popular mind, it is called as the ruling ideas are the idea of the ruling class. Revolution and revolutionary developments are primarily in terms of particular means; force and violence as departures from the political methods prescribed by established power (Draper, 2011: 18-20).

In Divergent, the revolution is reflected in the end of story. It shows the process of the oppressed class against the oppressing class. The process was reflected by Tris. She, along with her father, Caleb and Marcus came to Dauntless headquarters tried to saving Tobias and stop the simulation. After Tris realized Tobias who was under simulation, she asked Tobias to stop the simulation. Tobias did it and he took the data in the computer. Later, they escaped to Amity by train.

3.6 Discussion
After analyzing the Divergent novel by using Marxist criticism, the researcher finds some interest things. First, the author of the novel, Veronica Roth shows her imagination about the social structure in the future. She also gives her point of view about people personality from their aptitudes by reflecting in the character of the story. She also manifests the social realities of people in the world at present time. Veronica Roth also reflects the whole Marxist issue, they are: dialectical materialism, historical materialism, alienation, class struggle and revolution.

The dialectical materialism in the story consists of thesis, antithesis and synthesis. The first thesis was delivered by Natalie Prior in Divergent. She got some information about Erudite plan. The antithesis came from Caleb that did not believe about the plan, but he knew that there is something wrong between Erudite and Abnegation. The synthesis came from Four who found the secret file in Dauntless that indicates the war plan

Divergent also reflects the historical materialism. The story shows productive forces. The historical materialism consists of base and superstructures. Base was reflected a conflict happened between Abnegation and Erudite which was caused Abnegation genocide. The superstructure reflects the institutional arrangements and the collective consciousness arrangements. Institutional arrangement reflects a certain kind of state which is reflected by Erudite. It made Erudite has legitimation of power in the social class. Erudite was a faction which wanted to take over the authority of the government. Their cruelest decision is used the simulation in Dauntless member to attacked Abnegation. From that attacked, there are many victims from Abnegation.

The alienation processes also happen on Divergent. The alienation process was reflected by the major character, Beatrice “Tris” Prior. In Divergent she was alienated from her family, her environment, and her friends. When she was in Abnegation, she was alienated from her family. After she transferred to Dauntless, She was alienated from her environment. After second initiation, she was alienated from her friends. It caused by she got the best rank in that initiation.

Roth also reflects class struggle in her story. Class struggle reflects the power structure. The power structure is reflected by an occurrence that showed the oppressed classes and oppressing classes. In Divergent, the power structure was reflected by Erudite which was oppressing Abnegation. At the end of the story, Roth reflects the process of revolution. It showed the process of the oppressed class against the oppressing class. It was reflected by Tris and Four who wanted to stop the simulation that controlled by Erudite. All explanation showing process of solve the conflict that happened in the novel. The conflict begins from Erudite (The Intelligent) and Abnegation (The Selfless). The conflict happened between them was political conflict.

4. CONCLUSION
After analyzing Divergent, a novel by Veronica Roth which is published by Harper Collins in 2011, the researcher comes to the following conclusion:

First, through Divergent, Roth explains the condition in the future where social classes are not divided based on wealth or materials. It was divided based on the citizen’s personality. Roth also delivers a message that was reflected by the main protagonist character, Beatrice “Tris” Prior. She
wants the reader realize that they must be who they are even though they are not a perfect person. For that, she writes the conflict that happen to the main character tragically. She also uses six major characters and twenty two minor characters to show the retrospective plot.

Second, *Divergent* reflects political conflict among factions that happened between Abnegation and Erudite. They fight to get the authority of the council. Roth also tries to manifests the social realities of people in the world at present time. She also tries to reflect the dialectical materialism that happened to each character, the historical materialism that shows the base and superstructure of the society, the alienation, class struggle, and revolution that happened to the story. That manifestation reflects Roth message and also critics of Marxist.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**


