LAW DEVIATION IN CLAY CARTER’S MORALITY IN JOHN GRISHAM’S *THE KING OF TORTS*: A SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH

RESEARCH PAPER

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by:

NINING SETIANTI
A 320 000 320

SCHOOL OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Human beings are very perfect creature created by God. The perfection is because human beings are granted mind and feeling. Both of the bestowals could be assisted by the human beings in order to be able to actualize themselves to their vicinity. The mind given by God can be used by human beings to think of goodness and badness of something in their lives.

However, many people can use both the God bestowals optimally. For example when an individual is confronted with some problems, he could easily feel desperate, although life itself is to face the problems and to finish it. As human being he or she has to be wise in using his mind and feeling in order to find and get the correctness and precise solutions to finish the problems. Actually, there is solution for every problem.

In the way to get the solution, an individual will face many complex problems of life that will obscure his efforts. However every problem has its way out, although to reach the solution he or she will get remarkable resistance and pressure from his excitement.

More than anything else if the individual has a strong desire and ambition in his life, pressure and resistance to be faced will be very greater. If the individual does not have strong base foundation in life like religion, moral
and ethics as his life hold, he will be easy to fall because the pressure and resistance obscure his actualization.

To actualize himself in his environment, an individual should have his life held to face the problem and get solution, because the problems never consider to whom they should come. Definitely, every person has problems. Especially if he or she has a good position in the society views, he or she also has responsible to his or her position. For example, an individual who upholds the law, he has to be respect to his position and his prestige and ready to assist the people without having expected more reward. He also has to be responsible to uphold the law and not exploit his legal force to harm others for the benefit of himself.

Sometimes, there is individual who upholds the law cannot uphold the law and makes law deviation to get many benefit from his job. In this problem, an author sees the action, the way of thinking and certainly the law deviation done by major character in order to have a good life, having much money and not lowered by anyone. Because of the reasons, the author is withdrawn to try to interpret the phenomenon in his works and usually the problems that come to the individual are influenced by the society.

Society gives much contribution to an author in his writing. In common, the author’s ideas come from the life conditions where he lives and gives his critics to society in the form of literary works. Through his works, he tries to
express his thoughts, feelings, and then tries to find the solutions of the social problems that arise.

Swingewood (1972:23) states that the influences of society give the contribution in overcoming the conflicts, which appears. This is because literary work is a conception of imitation which implies a view of literature as social reflection. So literary works represents of a phenomenon which happens to the author or his social community, it because literary work which is lifted by an author usually inspired by personal environment or his social community.

As one of the American authors, John Grisham in his novel *The King of Torts* tries to describe the phenomenon of law deviation, which is full of deception and tricks that are done by major character who acts as a lawyer in order to get a better living. As a lawyer who should uphold the law, the major character, Clay Carter finds opportunity to make a deception in each of his cases. In settling every case, Clay uses parochial way to win all his cases and does not escape from his expectation of money. Initially Clay is only an ordinary lawyer who does not have much money, he becomes different. Clay becomes very rich lawyer and the journalists call him “The King of Torts”.

John Grisham was born Jonesboro, Arkansas. He was educated in the University of Mississippi and graduated with a law degree in 1981. In the same year, he established a law practice in Southaven, where he practiced both criminal and civil law. John Grisham published his first novel, *A Time to Kill*. The book received some good reviews but sold only moderately. Then, John
Grisham is recognized as one of the world’s best selling novelist (http://www.johngrisham.theofficialwebsite.html).


*The King of Torts* is one of the greatest novels written by John Grisham, telling about law deviation done by the legal upholds law. The major character namely Clay Carter is an underpaid lawyer at the Public Defender in Washington D.C, when reluctantly agrees to represent Tequila Watson, a young black man charged with the random street of Ramon Pumphrey, known as Pumpkin. Clay assumes this is just another senseless murder until he interviews Tequila’s medical files from the drug rehabilitation center where he was being treated.

Here the story begins when Clay finds a multinational drug company that two years earlier had developed a drug that could cure addiction to opium and cocaine based narcotics. Ninety percent of addicts who stayed on the drug remained clean. The catch was that after taking the drug for 100 days, 8 percent of the patients feel irresistible impulses to kill. The other problem was that Drug Company was testing it on unsuspecting addicts, like Tequila, and that six people had been murdered in the Washington D.C. area because of the drug. And Clay has a mind to trial the company. But the company does not want to deal with the law, and finally Clay offers to the company to pay a number of money in for
indemnifying the victim of the drugs. Clay become very rich in a brief time and at the same time he feels that he is on an equal level with the people around him especially with his lover who is from a rich family.

Based on the phenomenon, the writer is interested in analyzing this novel by using sociological approach because this novel relates to the human efforts in realizing personal wishes.

B. Literary Review

As far as the writer concerns, there is no researcher who analyzes The King of Torts by John Grisham at least in Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta.

That is why the writer encourages herself to analyze this novel in the sociological perspective.

C. Problem Statement

The problem in this research is “What kind of law deviation is done by Clay Carter’s in John Grisham’s The King of Torts at the time.”

D. Limitation of the Study

In this research, the research will focus on the relation between the social backgrounds of American society in the late twentieth century and the novel as reflected in The King of Torts.
E. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the research are:

1. To analyze the structural element of the novel, by finding character and characterizations, setting, point of view, plot, and theme.
2. To analyze the novel based on sociological perspective, in order to know the deviation of law in Clay Carter’s morality in John Grisham’s *The King of Torts*.

F. Benefit of Study

There are two benefits of studying novel *The King of Torts*, which are expected by researcher:

1. **Theoretical Benefit**
   
   This study is expected to contribute to the larger body of knowledge, particularly studies on John Grisham’s *The King of Torts*.

2. **Practical Benefit**
   
   This study is expected to give deeper understanding about the novel especially in sociological perspective.

G. Research Method

1. **Type of Study**
   
   Type of the study is qualitative study in the form of library research.

2. **Object of the Study**
   
   Object of the study is the novel *The King of Torts* by John Grisham.
3. **Type of the Data and the Data Sources**

Type of data in this study is text that consists; words, phrases, and sentences.

a. The data resources in this study are categorized into primary data and secondary data sources.

b. Primary data source of the study is the novel *The King of Torts* written by John Grisham, published by Doubleday in New York, USA, 2003.

c. Secondary data sources are taken from some references and material related to the study whether by picking up from the books or Internet.

4. **Technique of the Data Collection**

The data collecting method used in this study is the library research. Some steps of collecting the data are:

a. Reading the novel repeatedly.

b. Taking notes or information in both primary secondary data.

c. Classifying the data into some categories.

d. Analyzing the data.

e. Drawing conclusion based on the analyzing data.

5. **Technique of the Data Analysis**

In this research, the writer uses descriptive analysis, in which the writer identifies the relationship between the novel and the social background of American society in the sociological perspective.
H. Research Organization

This paper is divided into six chapters. Chapter I is introduction, which explains the background of the study, literature review, problem statement, research limitation, objectives of the study, benefits of the study, research method and thesis organization. Chapter II deals with the underlying theory, which consists of sociology of literature, structural element of the novel and theoretical application. Chapter III contains the social background of American society when the author writes the novel. Chapter IV is structural analysis; the researcher wants to explain the structural element of the novel and discussion. Chapter V is sociological analysis of the novel. Chapter VI is the last chapter that consists of conclusion and suggestion.