HOMICIDE PHENOMENA REFLECTED IN PATRICK SUSKIND’S *PERFUME: THE STORY OF A MURDERER* NOVEL (1985): A SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Submitted as a Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Getting Bachelor Degree of Education in English Department

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**ABSTRACT**

The research discusses about homicide phenomena in Patrick Suskind’s novel entitled *Perfume: the Story of a Murderer* (1985) by using sociological perspective. The objective of the study is to identify homicide phenomena base in the motives and manners of homicide. The researcher uses qualitative research to identify homicide phenomena which were occurred in Germany at around 1980-1985. Primary data of this study is novel entitled *Perfume: the story of a Murderer* written by Patrick Suskind. Whereas, secondary data of the study is took from some of sources, such as internet, dictionary, and some of books which support the research. The technique collecting data as following: reading the novel *Perfume: the Story of a Murderer* in English version, reading some of book that relate to the issue and its approach, looking for information from the internet taking note the important things from the primary data and secondary data, the last is classifying of the determine data that relevant to the data. The result of the study shows the meaning of the homicide motive of homicide, and manner of homicide. The other result of the study that related to the sociological of the author as a manifest to write the novel base on the social life in a place where the author was born; that is Germany. It can conclude that homicide phenomena can be done in some of motives and manners.

Key word: phenomena, homicide, motive, manner, sociological perspective

1. **INTRODUCTION**

*Perfume: the Story of a Murderer* written by Patrick Suskind is one of the best seller novels. It was translated in 48 languages and 20 million copies were sold out. Moreover,
it was filmed in 2006 by Tom Tykwer. So, this novel is interesting to be read. That is way there are some of researchers took on their research base on the Perfume: the Story of a Murderer. Almost of the previous researchers analyze by using psychological approach. The researcher found three of previous study. There is Hilde Sitohang (2008) in his research entitled Id, Ego, and Superego Analysis of Jean Baptiste Grenouille character in Perfume by Patrick Suskind. Nessie Agustina (2011) also analyzed this novel by titling her research The Unconscious Mind of Psychopath in Patrick Suskin’s Perfume: the Story of a Murderer. And then Sri Lestari (2012) analyzed the novel entitled Jean-Baptiste Grenouille’s Ambition in Patrick Suskind’s Perfume: the Story of a Murderer Novel (1985): A Psychoanalytic Approach.

Hilde Sitohang analyzed the main character (Grenouille) in id, ego, and superego by using psychological approach. He identified and classified of id, ego, and superego in the main character. Beside it, Nessie Agustina also analyzed the main character but she took to the point of psychopath. Based on her analyzing, the main character has bad experience in his life from he was child until adult. That is a reason that he had bad attitude and influence to the psychopath of the character. The last is Sri Lestari who analyzed about the ambition of the main character to get the perfect aroma of 25 girls. She related the ambition to the theory of id, ego, and superego by using psychological approach.

Considering of the previous study above, the researcher analyze in a same novel, that is Perfume: the Story of a Murderer novel, but here the researcher takes the issue Homicide Phenomena by using a sociological perspective. In this study, the researcher takes homicide phenomena as an issue because there are many criminal in many places, include murder or homicide. The sociological approach is used for this study because the literary work as a reflection of social situation of the authors that related to their background.

Sociology is “the scientific study of societies and the behavior of people in groups” (Longman Dictionary, 2008, p. 1508). While, “literature is books, plays, poems, etc. that people think have value, or the study of these works” (Longman Dictionary, 2008, p. 934). The literary work is the mirror of a society, which is the reason that sociology can be an approach in literature. From this phenomena, it can be known how interaction of individual to the society so that accepted in certain attitude. Laurenson & Swingewood said in his book The Sociology of Literature “Sociology is essentially the scientific, objective study of man in society, the study of social institutions and of social processes; it seeks to answer the question how society is possible, how it works, why it persists”.

2
(Laurenson & Swingewood, 1972, p. 11). Considering of the explanation above, the researcher in this study conducted a study entitled “Homicide Phenomena Reflected in Patrick Suskind’s Perfume: the Story of a Murderer Novel (1985): Sociological Perspective”.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

Type of the research is qualitative research. As Creswell explain about qualitative research that it was begun from giving assumptions and theoretical framework, collecting of data from people and places, making data analysis that is both inductive and deductive, and final written is reporting or representing includes voice of participants, the reflexivity of the researcher, a complex description and interpretation of the problem, and its contribution to the literature (Creswell, 2013, p. 44). Type of the research; material object and formal object. Material object is the Germany novel Patrick Suskind’s Das Parfum: Die Geschichte eines Morders published in 1985 by Diogenes Verlag Ag Zurich. But the researcher used to analyse in English version entitled Perfume: the Story of a Murderer. The number of pages in English version is 98 pages. Formal object of the study is issue of homicide phenomena which is depicted in the novel. Type of data consist of primary data source and secondary data source. Primary data source is the Perfume: the Story of a Murderer novel. The secondary data sources are taken from the other sources that related to the study, such as internet, dictionary, and some books which support the research. The researcher also did collecting data. There are 5 steps as following; Reading Perfume: the Story of a Murderer novel in English version, reading the literary books that related to the issue and approach, searching to the internet to get more information, taking note of the important things, and classifying of the determining data that relevant. The technique of data analysis is descriptive and use a sociological perspective as an approach.

3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Motives of Homicide

3.1.1 Profit Oriented

This is one of types homicide motive. Homicide/ murder here is just a way to get something that the murderer wants. In the other word, kill someone is not main purpose but he/ she actually has desire to get profit. It can be money, wealth, bussiness, or event the irrational things like the main character in Perfume novel.
Grenouille as a main character killed 25 girls to get aroma, then from the girls’ aroma, he made it to become perfume. The profit that the main character is the aroma of the girls and killing someone is just to make easy in his/ her action.

3.1.2 Shame Oriented

The reason of killing someone is shame. It happen because of someone before kill the victim, he/she felt disappointed about something or someone. According to the Longman dictionary, shame is defined as to force someone to do something by making them feel ashamed (Longman, 2008, p. 1450). In the novel, there was Grenouille’s mother that kill four of her children. She felt shame because of her status in society. She has not husband but she has many children. In her mind, killing the infant after giving birth is the solution in order to be not known by people. So, every she giving birth, she always kill it except the last child, that is Grenouille. She did not kill Grenouille because of her action was known by people in the market. Finally, she was punishment.

3.1.3 Psychopatic Oriented

Psychopath is individual disturbance. The bad experience is the one of cause psychopath. He/ she often hurt the other. Such as from the novel, Grenouille has psychopath character. He kill 25 victims by sadistic. The victims were blow until died.

3.1.4 Satisfaction Oriented

The murder kills the victims because of satisfaction motive. He/ she will get pleasure if he/ she success to kill someone. Satisfaction is a feeling of happiness or pleasure because you have achieved something or gotten what you wanted (Longman, 2008, p. 1401). Suskind presented the satisfaction murder is in the last story of his Perfume novel. It told that people that enjoy the perfume from Grenouille, they were cannibal. They satisfy because they pleasure of the Grenouille’s body.

3.1.5 Unintended

Unintended murder is the murder by unconsciousness. It means that the murderer unintentionally kill the other. It can be just an accident that makes someone died. It happened in the novel when the porters put four babies in a basket then there was some of babies were killed. The porters here did it unintentionally.
3.1.6 Anxiety Oriented

Murder is a terror of people. It makes people feel worry. The anxiety of person is the motive of the murderer to make people panic in their life. In the novel told that the anxiety happened when there were some of girls were killed. They were afraid about that event. It means that the murderer succeeded in is motive.

3.1.7 Unidentified

The crime is an illegal action. Murder is one of the crimes. The murderer will be punished when he/ she revealed. Because of this reason, there are some of criminal run off from the law, so he/ she is unidentified. Grenouille as a main character of the Perfume novel was unidentified as a murderer. Because of the perfume that he made and people unconscious that he was a murderer. Finally, Grenouille free from the law punishment.

3.1.8 Law Oriented

Law oriented is the punishment to the criminal. The punishment can be dead punishment. As a statement of McCaghy; murder is the willful (no negligent) killing of one human being by another (McCaghy, 2000, p. 124). It means that murder is an action to take someone life. Although, the lawful oriented is the legal action because of the command of government to make peaceful of the country.

3.2 Manners of Homicide

3.2.1 Torturing the Victims

Torturing the victims is an action to make the victims faint. The purpose is to make easy for the murderer to kill the victims. It can be the threatening or torture of psychic. Grenouille torture the girl by closing her and making the girl afraid. Then he choked her until the girl died.

3.2.2 Using Equipment

Manner of the murder using equipment is one of the techniques to make the victims easy to kill. The equipment that possible to use is usually sharp equipment. But, it is not all the sharp equipment can be used. Grenouille killed the victims by the club wooden. He blew on the back of the victims head.

3.2.3 Using Poison

Poison is one of the manners to kill someone. The poison can be put on the food or beverage. It is consist of the dangerous element. In the novel was told that people were not allowed the food to the Grenouille that on the jail. Because of the
police worried about the Grenouille’s safety. The police know that people were angry with him.

3.2.4 Doing Abortion

Doing abortion has two perspectives. It can be legal or illegal. Doing abortion is legal if the action has purpose to rescue of the mother. But when abortion was done without the precise reason, it was illegal action. The arborist can be called the murderer. The example is taken from the novel is the illegal action; Grenouille’s mother kill her infant when it was in the womb by reasoning that she has not husband. She was as a murderer for her baby. In the end of her life, she was dead punishment.

3.2.5 Reason of Addressing Homicide Phenomena

*Perfume: the Story of a Murderer* is a novel written by Patrick Suskind. He was a German who was born on March 26, 1946. His parents were as a journalist (father) and sport trainer (mother). He has an old brother was as a journalist. It was possible that Suskind inherit of father’s talent. From the talent, he has many works in literature. The first carrier wrote drama. Then he was successful as a screen writer on TV Production of Monaco Franze (1983) and Kir Royal (1987). The other works are *The Double Bass* (radio play), *Pigeon* (Novella, 1988), *The Story of Mr. Sommer* (Novella, 1991), *Three Stories and a Reflection* (Stories, 1996), *Rossini* (film, 1997), and *On Love and Death* (essays, 2006).

Among his literary works, *Perfume: the Story of a Murderer* is the most famous then the other. It told about the social life in 18th century and the setting place of the story was in Paris. Although, the author took a setting in the past time, it was actually as reflecting the society in 1980s. At the time, Germany was under authority of two countries; Soviet and America. Germany was divided into two parts; West Germany and East Germany. East German felt that Soviet did not fair. They did not be allowed to go anywhere. Then, there was disorder and raise crimes in that country, include the murder in some places.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis in the previous chapter, the researcher concludes that Homicide is a crime action to take someone’s life. Homicide has two points; motive of homicide and manner of homicide. There are 8 motives of homicide; profit oriented, shame oriented, psychopathic oriented, satisfaction oriented, unintended, anxiety oriented,
unidentified, and lawful oriented. Manner of homicide consist of 4 points; torturing the victims, using equipment, using poison, and doing abortion.

The explanations of motives of homicide are follows: Profit oriented is the murder to take the profit. Killing someone is not the main purpose. Shame oriented is someone kills the other because of the reason that she/ he feel ashamed if her/ his action was known. Psychopathic oriented is mental disturbance of someone which has effect to kill someone else sadistically. Satisfaction oriented is the murder that based on the satisfying after kill the other. Unintended is the murder which is unintentionally. It can be an accident. Anxiety oriented is the worry feeling that happens because of terror of the murderer. Unidentified is the murder case is not identify of the law. The last is lawful oriented. It is the death punishment to the prisoners.

There are four manners of homicide. First is torturing the victims. It is a murder action to injury the victims in order to they did not against to the murderer. Second is using equipment. That is an equipment to make the victims is weak so that they can easy to be killed. Third is using poison. Poison usually is put into some of food or water to drink. It is include the planning murderer in order to the action does not known directly. Fourth is doing abortion. Abortion is allowed by government if the action to protect mother safety. But if abortion is done to cover the bad attitude, it is the illegal abortion. This action is not allowed and the abortionist will be punished.

Patrick Suskind wrote the novel Perfume: the Story of a Murderer as reflection of the society at the time. The novel was written in 1985. Around 1980s to 1985 is a disorder era in Germany. Germany was not freedom yet from the colonialist (Soviet and America). Moreover, there were many crime and murder in anywhere because of the unstable situation in that country.

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