CONFLICT OF INTEREST IN WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE’S KING LEAR: A SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH

Research Paper
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by:

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

A conflict of interest is a situation in which someone in a position of trust, such as a lawyer, insurance adjuster, a politician, an engineer, executive or director of a corporation or a medical research scientist or physician, has competing professional or personal interests (Stowe, http://carlatpsychiatry.blogspot.com/2009/06/latest-conflict-of-interest.htm). More generally, conflict of interests can be defined as any situation in which an individual or corporation (either private or governmental) is in a position to exploit a professional or official capacity in some way for their personal or corporate benefit. It is virtually impossible to avoid having conflicts of interest from time to time. A conflict of interests can, however, become a legal matter for example when an individual tries (and/or succeeds in) influencing the outcome of a decision, for personal benefit. A headstrong of a corporation will be subject to legal liability if a conflict of interests breaches his duty of loyalty.

In the world of literature, there are many writers who apply several aspects of conflict of interest. One of them is William Shakespeare. Although Shakespeare does not belong to the writers of the conflict of interest, he often bases his works on portrays life at the time. William Shakespeare was born and raised in Stratford-upon-Avon. Few records of Shakespeare's
private life survive, and there has been considerable speculation about such matters as his sexuality, religious beliefs, and whether the works attributed to him were written by others. Shakespeare produced most of his known work between 1590 and 1613. His early plays were mainly comedies and histories, genres he raised to the peak of sophistication and artistry by the end of the sixteenth century. Next he wrote mainly tragedies until about 1608, including *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, and *Macbeth*, considered some of the finest examples in the English language. In his last phase, he wrote tragicomedies, also known as romances, and collaborated with other playwrights. Many of his plays were published in editions of varying quality and accuracy during his lifetime, and in 1623 two of his former theatrical colleagues published the First Folio, a collected edition of his dramatic works that included all but two of the plays now recognized as Shakespeare's.

One of the greatest Shakespeare work is *King Lear* that first recorded performance of *King Lear* was on 1606 December 26. In the Elizabethan era there was a huge demand for new entertainment and *King Lear* would have been produced immediately following the completion of the play. It is believed that *King Lear* was first printed in 1608. As William Shakespeare clearly did not want his work published details of the play would have therefore been noted, and often pirated without his consent, following a performance.
The story of *King Lear*, an aging monarch who is headstrong old man who is blind to his weaknesses, decides to divide his kingdom amongst his three daughters, according to which one recites the best declaration of love. Goneril and Regan who are the selfish daughters of Lear who pretend to love him but later treat him cruelly. Cordelia who is the loyal and unselfish daughter of Lear. He disowns her after confusing her honesty with insolence. Edgar is Gloucester's loyal son and heir and Edmund is Gloucester's evil bastard son. At first the families appear to be loving and caring but this could not be further from the truth. As the characters unfold we find greed, betrayal, lust for power, and cruelty. In other words, they are anything but normal and caring. The end of the play ends in death everywhere. Regan dies after being poisoned by Goneril. Goneril stabs herself to death. Edgar reveals his true identity to his father, but the old man dies. Mortally wounded, Edmund becomes remorseful and countermands his order to hang Cordelia. But it is too late, and Cordelia dies. Lear, now a broken man, falls upon Cordelia and also dies.

In the relation to the sociological aspect of a work of literature, literature itself is something which is not autonomous, independent; rather it is something which is bound to the condition and situation of the society where the literary work is created (Jabrohim, 2003:157). Furthermore, as stated by Damono (in Jabrohim, 2003:157) Literature shows the portrait of life, its goal is to get a complete, intact and comprehensive description about cause and effect relationship between the author, the work and the society.
According to Karl Vossler (in Wellek and Warren translated by Melani Budianta, 1993:218) “Literary history of certain periods would gain by an analysis of the linguistic milieu at least as much as by the usual analysis of political, social, and religious tendencies of the country and climate.” A literature work is often bond to specific moment of values related to the condition of society at the time the literary work is created. In addition, literature is closely related to the sociology since it reflects the phenomena happening in society. In other words, a work of literature also has social function it raises the social question such as question of tradition and convention, norms and genres, symbol and myths.

Related to literature which is influenced by the condition of society, it can be inferred that there is a relationship between the society and the production of King Lear. Hence the researcher is interested in studying the drama, which was the first published believed to have been written between 1603 and 1606. It is portrays the society that influence of interest conflict in King Lear. Therefore, the researcher decides to conduct a research focused on the conflict of interest by using sociological perspective with the title: CONFLICT OF INTEREST IN WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE’S KING LEAR: A SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH.
B.  Literary Review

To prove the originality of this research, the writer, in this part wants to present some research that also has close literary work of William Shakespeare’s *King Lear*. The previous researcher of William Shakespeare’s *King Lear* is Hartono. He was the student of Unika Atma Jaya University (2006) with the title *An Analysis of Several Personality Disorders of the Main Character in King Lear by William Shakespeare*. This paper analyzes the personality perspective of main character.

The other research is *An Analysis of King Lear’s Sense of Justice in the Four Trials within William Shakespeare’s King Lear*. It was written in 2002. From the title it can be seen that the researcher focuses his research on the four trials in Shakespeare’s play *King Lear* and discover if *King Lear* possesses any justice in his participation over trials. It can be shown how he behaves in the scope of justice and what that means to him.

Another research is in 2008 with the title *An Analysis of King Lear’s Poor Character Judgment in William Shakespeare’s play, King Lear*. This paper analyzes a personal life evaluation of the blindness of poor character judgment in relation to William Shakespeare’s *King Lear*.

On the other hand, in this research, the researcher will focus on analysis of conflict of interest in William Shakespeare’s *King Lear*. In this research the researcher uses a sociological perspective that there is no researcher that research about the same research problem.
C. Problem Statement

The problem statement is essential for the research, because it makes the study clearer and more focus. The main problem emerges in this study is “How is interest conflict reflected in William Shakespeare’s *King Lear*?”

D. Limitation of the Study

In this study the writer limits the idea to focus and analyze major character such as *King Lear* as the major protagonist character and Goneril and Regan as the major antagonist character of the *King Lear* drama script from conflict of interest based on the sociological approach.

E. Objective of the Study

In this research paper, the researcher has objectives as follows:

1. To analyze the drama script based on its structural elements
2. To analyze the drama script based on sociological perspective by identifying the relationship between the drama script and the social background of English society in sixteenth century.
3. To analyze the major character of the drama script from conflict of interest based on the sociological approach.

F. Benefits of the Study

The benefits expected from the study are as follows:
1. Theoretical Benefit

This study is expected to contribute to the larger body in knowledge particularly studies on William Shakespeare’s *King Lear*.

2. Practical Benefit

It is expected to enrich the knowledge of the researcher and readers about William Shakespeare’s *King Lear* based on Sociological Approach.

G. Research Method

This research is broken down into four aspects: (1) type of the Study, (2) object of the study, (3) type of the data and data source, (4) Technique of Collecting Data, and (5) Technique of the Data Analysis.

1. Type of the Study

In this research, the writer uses a qualitative research. It is a library research while data sources are using literary data.

2. Object of the Study

The object of the research is the drama script of *King Lear* play by William Shakespeare. Copyright published on 1961, edited by Hardin Craig, by Scott, Foresman and Company.

3. Type of the Data and the Data Sources

Type of the data source used in the research can be categorized into two sources of data. They are primary data and secondary data sources:
a. Primary Data Source

The primary data source is the text of *King Lear* by William Shakespeare, particularly the dialogs, statement and actions reflecting the interest conflict of the story and characters that support the research.

b. Secondary Data Source

The secondary data source is other source related to the primary data source. Data sources are information about the author biography, websites about the drama, and the social historical background of English society in sixteen century and other sources supporting analysis.

4. Technique of the Data Collection

The data collection technique is library research. The steps are:

a. Looking for the script of drama in internet and library,

b. Reading rapidly of the drama script,

c. Taking notes of important in both primary and secondary data,

d. Classifying the data into some categories, and

e. Taking notes from the material and read some other resources related the drama script,

f. Crosses check with the other object resources to support the data validity.
5. **Data Validation**

The data validation in this study is using a data triangulation. It crosses check and compare the content of the three literary work from the primary data source, translation, and movie.

6. **Technique of the Data Analysis**

The technique of analyzing data in this study is descriptive. It concerns with the relationship between the drama script and the sociological theory to show how conflict of interest is reflected in the story and the characters in William Shakespeare’s *King Lear*.

H. **Paper Organization**

This research paper is classified into six chapters, the first chapter deals with background of the study, literary review, problem statement, objective of the study, benefit of the study, research method and research paper organization. The second chapters cover the underlying theory of sociological perspective in analyzing William Shakespeare in *King Lear*. It includes the notion and the major principles of sociology of literature which expose the theory of sociology of literature, the notion of the structural element of the drama script, and the theoretical application. The third chapter deals with the social historical background of English society in the twelfth century. The fourth chapter concerns with structural analysis of the novel and discussion, which includes the structural elements of *King Lear*. The fifth
chapter covers the sociological analysis of the drama script and the
discussion, the last chapter is the conclusion and suggestion.