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SOCIAL MOBILITY REFLECTED IN ANTON CHEKHOV'S THE CHERRY ORCHARD (1903): MARXIST APPROACH

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini tentang social mobilitas yang terdapat didalam drama Anton Chekhov yang berjudul The Cherry Orchard yang menggunakan perspektif Marxist. Tujuan dari penelitian ini terbagi dalam beberapa rumusan masalah diantaranya mengetahui indicator dari mobilitas social; bagaimana Anton Chekhov menggambarkan mobilitas social dalam dramanya; dan mengetahui alasan Anton Chekhov memasukkan mobilitas social dalam dramanya. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian deskriptif kualitatif. Data primer dari penelitian ini adalah skrip drama The Cherry Orchard karya Anton Chekhov. Data sekunder penelitian ini berasal dari buku-buku, jurnal-jurnal, internet dan sumber lain berkaitan dengan penelitian ini. Hasil dari penelitian antara lain: terdapat tiga indikator mobilitas social dan lima kelas social; mobilitas social dalam drama ini digambarkan melalui karakter, tempat, kejadian dan diksi; alasan Anton Chekhov memasukkan mobilitas social yaitu untuk merespon kondisi ekonomi social pada saat itu.

Kata Kunci: mobilitas social, Anton Chekhov, perspektif Marxist

ABSTRACT

This study is about social mobility in Anton Chekhov's drama entitled The Cherry Orchard which is analyzed by using Marxist perspective. There are several problem statements; to find out the indicators of social mobility; to know how Anton Chekhov describes social mobility in his drama, and to find out the reasons why Anton Chekhov addressed social mobility in his drama. This research belongs to the qualitative descriptive research. The primary data was from The Cherry Orchard drama script by Anton Chekhov. Secondary data of this research were taken from books, journals, internet and other sources related to this research. The results of this study such as: there were three social mobility indicators and five social classes; social mobility of this drama is illustrated by character, place, event and diction; the reason Anton Chekhov insert social mobility was in order to give responds to the social economic conditions at the time.

Keywords: social mobility, Anton Chekhov, Marxist perspective

1. INTRODUCTION

Social mobility means alteration of social status in society (Pattinasarany, 2016). According to Davis and Moore in Saunders (2001), people’s position in society influence how their rank and reward formed. It meant that people’s position in modern class is not determined by birth (parents’ opportunity). This movement may occur within one individual. Based on the definition above,
Literature can be one of evidence of how society is formed and how social status changed because of economic and other factors that influence social mobility. In this case, one of novel by Anthon Chekov can be illustration of social condition that had happened in the past. The story told about Lubov the owner of *The Cherry Orchard* had many debts. The estate should go to auction to pay her debts. Lopakhin is a merchant had suggestion to change the estate became villas by cutting down *The Cherry Orchard*, but Lubov refused it because she love her cherry orchard. The day of the auction came the new owner was Lopakhin because he offered higher than Leonid (Lubov brother).

There were several researches that had conducted this drama using different issues and theories namely *Dramatization of Social Change: Herman Heijermans’ Plays as Compare with Selected Drama by Ibsen, Hauptmann and Chekhov* by Hilda Van Neck Yoder (1974) proposed a research comparing Herman Hijeman drama *Ghetto* (Hijeman) with *Ghost* (Ibsen), *Op Hoop van Zegen* (Hijeman) with *Die Weber* (Hauptman), and *Ora et Labora* (Hijeman) with *The Cherry Orchard* (Chekov). Second research written by Ronald Quintland entitled *Chekhov and Conservation*. He concludes Chekov’s plays reflected to countryside and in his play also explored the environments such as *The Cherry Orchard, The Wood Demon, Uncle Vanya* and so on. The third research written by Mollie Wilson O’Reilly entitled *That Which Is Lost* she concluded that there were several similarity and differences between *The Cherry Orchard* by Anton Chekhov and *The Winter’s Tale* by Shakespeare, especially on stage by Mendes.

The difference between this research paper and the previous study are in the research question that formulates; firstly was indicators of social mobility, secondly was the depiction of social mobility within the drama and thirdly was the reason why the author addresses social mobility. As the novelty, this research paper analyzes social mobility in *The Cherry Orchard* drama by Anton Chekhov as the issue by using Marxist Approach.
Marxist has been the center debates for almost century in literary theory. It offers engagement which sustained and differentiated in literature. Preferences in Marxist theory develop specifically concept such as determining status of forces with relation of production and the historical centrality of class struggle. Marxist is revolutionary theory practice of social and political transformation (Eagleton and Milne, 1996). For the reason, so Marxist approach is appropriate to analyze this study.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research belongs to descriptive qualitative research. Marvasti (2004) stated that qualitative research served detail description and analysis quality of human experience. There are two objects of the study for this research: material object and formal object. The material object of this research is script of *The Cherry Orchard* (1903) by Anton Chekhov, and the formal object focused on the social mobility based on Marxist perspective. There are two data sources for this research: primary data source and secondary data source. The primary data source is script of *The Cherry Orchard* (1903) by Anton Chekhov. The secondary data source was the supporting data could be found from some literary books, criticism, and some articles related to the drama. In collecting data, the research used note-taking technique. However, in analyzing the data, the researcher used three processes according to Miles and Huberman (1994), such as: data reduction, data display and drawing, and verifying conclusion.

3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Indicators of Social Mobility

In this part of article, the researcher wants to divide the indicator of social mobility based on Kerbo’s theory. The indicators of the social mobility are occupational, authority, and property. Each of the indicator
divided into five classes, such as upper, corporate, middle, working and lower class.

3.1.1 Occupational

Occupational is one of the indicators of social mobility. Several occupations need higher skill and knowledge. It means higher occupation needs high skill which is usually study in college. In this drama there are several occupations that act by the characters in the drama. It difference between each other, here are their occupation:

3.1.1.1. The Owner of the Estate

Lubov was the first main character in this drama. She inherited the estate from her ancestral. There was the dialogue told that she missed in her childhood for look out the Cherry Orchard from her nursery. Then she said “oh, my orchard!”, based on the dialogue, it showed Lubov’s occupational class which is belonging to the upper class. Thus, she was the owner of the cherry orchard estate. According to Kerbo (2003) upper class family inherited their ancestral property, authority and also their occupation. Upper class was indicated by the high occupation, such as became the owner of corporation.

3.1.2 Authority

Authority was the second indicator of social mobility. According to Kerbo (2003), authority was the power of dominance which is depending on the occupation. While individual has a high occupation, it will be automatically for him or her to have a high authority to control, command and etc. The researcher found some types of authority in The Cherry Orchard as mentioned as follows:
3.1.2.1 Order

Lubov was the owner of the cherry orchard estate. She had an authority to control her estate and also the people who worked in her estate and her house. It can be seen through the dialogue between Lubov and Yasha. She commanded Yasha to pick up the coin that she dropped. It showed that she had an authority. According to Kerbo’s (2003), the upper class had the high authority through the ownership where she could give command to other people.

3.1.3 Property

According to Kerbo (2003), property was people’s ownership that they got through occupation or inherited from their ancestor. Property also became individual authority which they can control, sell, rent and etc. Those indicators are related between each other. There were some properties that the writer found in The Cherry Orchard, as mentioned as follows:

3.1.3.1 Estate

Lubov was the owner of the cherry orchard estate inherited from her ancestral. There is dialogue showed that Lubov was the owner of the cherry orchard estate. She missed her childhood look out The Cherry Orchard from her nursery. According to Kerbo (2003), property was people’s ownership which they get it through occupation or may be inherited from their ancestor. It was meant that the estate was her ancestral’s own and now it inherited to her.

3.2 Depiction of Social Mobility

Depiction shows the social mobility in this drama. There are several parts to show the depiction of social mobility. There are character, setting, event and diction.
3.2.1 Character

Chekhov shows social mobility through the character. In addition, each character has differences in attitude and behavior. It makes social mobility seen clearly.

3.2.1.1 Hard Worker Character

The author of *The Cherry Orchard* showed the mobility through the character clearly. There was Lopakhin as one of the character. He inherited his father shop when his father was died. There are several dialogues that showed he was a hard working character. He became a merchant and be a busy man. In other hand, it was also proved when he had a business appointment in Kharkov. He had a business until three weeks in Kharkov. He always woke up at five every morning. He also started to work from the morning until in the evening. He worked for getting much money. He got what he wanted because of his attitude and also hard-working. He also pride because he could buy the estate which his father and grandfather were work as a serf there. He wanted to build a villa because it would be bring more money. He was the richest person at the end of the drama because of his attitude and hard-working.

3.2.2 Setting

Setting was a place that related to the story of the drama. Setting in the drama usually showed the identities. The identities can be seen by the setting or location. The researcher identified some places in the drama, as follows:

3.2.2.1 Rural areas

People can move from village to town and vice versa. Moving can be indicated as progress or decrease. The
dialogue below showed that Lopakhin live in the village which his father build the shop. He inherited his father’s shop in the village after his father dead. He became a merchant because he inherited his father’s shop.

3.2.3 Event

There were very much event in a drama. The researcher found some events related to the issue. The events were used to describe the condition related with the issue that is social mobility.

3.2.3.1 Being in Debt

Because of the extravagant attitude, Lubov hadsome debts. She loved to use the money to buy unnecessary thing until she could not pay the interest. Thus, her estate should go to auction pay her debts. There is the dialogue between Anya and Varya. Anya asked to Varya whether the interest has been paid, then Varya answered that they had no other chance, and the estate should go to the auction in August. In addition, there was a dialogue of Lopakhin who said that the cherry orchard should be sold to pay Lubov’s debts. It would be fixed on August 22nd.

3.2.4 Diction

Diction is the choice and used word in literature. A word could have several meanings. However, the different meaning could be occurred according to the context of a text or conversation. In the drama, there were several dictions that related to the issue. It was explained as follows:

3.2.4.1 Debt

Debt was one of the diction that related to the issue. Hornby (2010) described several definitions of debt. First, it was meant as a sum of money that somebody owes. Second, it defined as the situation of owing money, especially when you
could not pay it. Third, it was also defines as the fact that you should feel grateful to somebody because they have helped you or been kind to you. The example of the used of debt was showed as follows: There is the dialogue of Lopakhin, he said to Lubov to sell the cherry orchard to pay her debts. Based on the diction of debt in the dialogue of Lopakhin, it has a meaning as a sum of money that Lubov should pay to the bank.

3.3 Addressing the Social Mobility

All people have different way to show their feeling. It can be through poem, diary, short story, etc. In this part the writer wants to reveal social mobility address in this drama by the author, Anton Chekhov. This drama is written in the older feudal. In 1890 the economic goes worsening. The cherry orchard shows many perspectives. There are perspectives of social mobility, economic and also politic. It statements declared by Whyman in her book.

The cherry orchard showed the changing on social, politic and economic in Russia. The cherry orchard premiered at Moscow Art Theater in 1904. In 1890s the economic in rural areas are worsening with heavy taxation, depression of peasants in the farm, cholera and typhus epidemics. Criticism from regime that failed found long-term solution for peasant become increasingly. It made peasants migration to towns. In 1903 all private land in Russia was mortgage, forcing the owner land to sell their land to join the professional or commercial classes. The Cherry Orchard tells about selling estate. It also showed shifts class identities and social relationship. The Cherry Orchard demonstrates redundancy of social order where upper classes do not work and impoverished peasantry.

The cherry orchard placed near a large town in addition the growth of industry, the expansion of town and the development of the rail ways by de Witte in 1893 it based on the real situation in Chekhov era. The
industrialization offers for Russian but it adopting western style, the oppositional the voice of socialist groups after 1900 despite it censorship. Peter is a student reflected the voice of social groups. Chekhov showed politic topic in *The Cherry Orchard* more than the other drama. It also indicating Chekhov saw the social progress (Whyman, 2011).

Statement above shows the condition economic, social and politic in Russian. It became inspiration for Chekhov to address social mobility in his drama. He responds the condition that era. The economic, social and politic condition is inspiring him to address social mobility in his drama.

### 3.4 Discussion

At the beginning the upper class was consisted of Lubov, Leonid, Pischin Anya and Varya. However, Lubov, Leonid and Pischin were in property because they were as the owner of the property. Lubov and Leonid were as the owner of *The Cherry Orchard* and Pischin was land owner. On other hand, Anya and Varya were in the authority because their mother has property as upper class. Lopakhin was in the lower middle class because of his occupation as a merchant. Working class was placed by Dunyasha, Yasha, Fiers, Charlotta and Epikhodov because they were servant in Lubov’s house. The last, Peter was in the lower class as a part time tutor.

At the end of social mobility the upper class was consisted of Lopakhin as the new owner of *The Cherry Orchard* and Pischin as Landowner. However, Lubov, Leonid and Anya were in the upper middle class because the Cherry Orchard was bought by Lopakhin. On other hand, working class was placed by Epikhidov as clerk, Charlotta as governess, Yasha as footman and Varya as housekeeper. The last was the lower class that placed by Dunyasha, Fiers and Peter because both of them not found job yet.

From the statement above, the researcher showed several characters that experienced social mobility. It can be upward and downward mobility. Upward
mobility experienced by Lopakhin. Downward mobility was experienced by Lubov family, Varya, Dunyasah and Fiers as explain below.

Lopakhin was the character does upward mobility. In the beginning his class, he was in the lower middle class as a merchant. At the end of the process, he became the owner of the cherry orchard estate. He wanted to build villas there.

Lubov and her family (Leonid and Anya) in upper class position in the beginning. But, at the end of the process, their class became upper middle class because they just have the money from Anya grandmother to life. They were experienced experience downward mobility.

Varya was Lubov’s adopted daughter. She did not have anything but her position follows Lubov as upper class in the beginning. When mobility happened, her class became downward, because she was choose became a housekeeper. She was experienced downward mobility.

Dunyasha and Fiers was servant in Lubov house but after mobility occurred their class became lower because they could not found any jobs. They were experienced downward the mobility.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis in the previous chapter, the study comes to the following conclusions. First, Anton Chekhov illustrated a social mobility in his drama. Social mobility can be identified through three indicators by Kerbo; there are occupational, authority, and property structure. Each structure divided into five classes. There are upper, corporate, working, lower, and middle class. Middle class is divided into two, they are: middle upper and middle lower. The several occupations needed the higher skill and knowledge. It is usually taken from people who got study in a certain college. For example teacher, lecturer, manager, etc. The different occupation in society made different class. Authority was the power of dominance which is depended on the occupation. While individual has a higher occupation, he or she been automatically has a high authority to control, command and etc. For example the owner of house which
have servant can command their own servant. Property was meant as the people
ownership which is gotten through the occupation or may be inherit from their
ancestor. There were many form of property, such as money, the ownership like
car, house, land, etc. Property also became individual authority that they could
control, sell, rent and etc. The three indicators were related between each other.

Second, Chekhov depicted the social mobility in his drama. It can be
identified through characters, setting, events and diction. Characters show the
attitude or habit the character. Setting related to the place. There is much event;
the researcher chooses the event that related with the issue. Diction is the choice
and used word in literature.

Third, the social mobility addressed in the drama because it is the social
issues that can happens our life. Also it related with Chekhov condition in 1890
the economic goes worsening.

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