

**CONFLICTS OF VALUES
BETWEEN TRADITIONAL AND MODERN CULTURES IN
WILLIAM DEAN HOWELLS *A MODERN INSTANCE*:
A SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH**



RESEARCH PAPER

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by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

A Modern Instance is the third novel of William Dean Howells's. The compilation novel book entitled *William Dean Howells: Novels 1875-1886: A Foregone Conclusion, A Modern Instance, Indian Summer, The Rise of Silas Lapham (Library of America)* publishing on November, 1982 by Library of America, consists of four novels, namely, *A Foregone Conclusion, A Modern Instance, Indian Summer, The Rise of Silas Lapham*. It consists of 1217 pages. In this book *A Modern Instance* is in the second order. *A Modern Instance* consists of 41 chapters and 415 pages. It is one of William Dean Howells novels which describes the real condition in that time.

William Dean Howells is a famous novelist from realism era. He was born on first, March 1837 in Martin Ferry, Belmont Country, Ohio (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Dean_howells). Howells was the most productive and versatile writer of his time. His works include short stories, poems, drama, travelogues, volumes of critics and autobiography. For the last thirty years of his life he was the dominant figure in American letters. He received many honors and was chosen as the first president of the American Academy of Arts letters. His literary works are *Their Wedding Journey (1872); The Lady of the Aroostook (1879); A Modern Instance (1882); The Rise of Silas Lapham (1885); The Minister's Charge (1886); A Hazard of New Fortunes (1889); The Quality of*

Mercy (1892); *The Landlord at Lion's Head* (1897). He also published *Poems* (1873 and 1886); *Stops of Various Quills* (1895). (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Dean_Howells).

The story of *A Modern Instance* novel focuses on a character namely Bartley Hubbard. He represents a modern person who has conflict with a traditional person in his life. The story begins with the meeting between Bartley Hubbard and Marcia Gaylord. Marcia Gaylord is Squire Gaylord's daughter. She is smart, educated girl, and rich but her father does not want to send her to school. Mr. Gaylord thinks that women must stay at home like his wife Mrs. Gaylord. Bartley Hubbard and Marcia Gaylord meet in small town Equity on provincial Maine, Marcia home town. They fall in love. But Mr. Gaylord does not give a blessing. Mr. Gaylord does not agree with their relationship because Bartley just an editor in small town. Mr. Gaylord thinks Bartley job is not popular and does not earn big salary. But Bartley enjoys his job, because he can pour his idea and his idealism when he works as a journalist.

Finally, they decide to get married spontaneously. Their marriage is very simple. They do not invite anyone because Bartley thinks it does not necessary, although Marcia wants to marry like their parents tradition. He also asks Marcia to send a letter to her father to give information about their marriage and they decide live in Boston. Bartley and Marcia stay in the hotel in Boston but Bartley does not get a job yet. He just spends his money for renting a horse cart, eating in luxurious restaurant and buying opera ticket. He wants to be an upper class. It makes Marcia angry. Marcia wants Bartley to change his habit, look for a job and

rent a house. Then, they find a house which is appropriate with their economic condition in that time. Bartley decides to look for a job. He works in 'Daily Chronical – Abstract'. He enjoys his job. But, Marcia does not like Bartley job. She wants Bartley to quit from his job, because he gets less salary and asks him to look for another one. Marcia knows that Bartley had ever studied in Law School in Harvard. Finally, he works in a lawyer office. He does not feel comfort with his new job. He does not stand with it and decides to quit, because in his office he can not improve his idea and idealism. Bartley decides to work as a freelance journalist again. Bartley just cares about his work. He does not care about his wife. It makes Marcia jealous and makes their economic condition worst.

Bartley and Marcia have a daughter; Marcia wants to baptize his daughter in the Mr. Halleck church. Marcia wants her family to be harmonious and religious like Mr. Halleck family, her neighbor. Marcia feels embarrassed with Mr. Halleck family if not baptize her daughter. But Bartley thinks, it is not important in that time and does not care about it. Bartley just cares about his work. It makes Marcia angry and she is threatened to leave Bartley. Bartley does not feel comfort with Marcia's anger. Bartley decides to leave his wife and his daughter. But Marcia stills wait for Bartley to come back. In several years Marcia gets a letter from Bartley. Bartley's letter is about his decision to divorce Marcia. Bartley wants to divorce Marcia because they are not compatible any more. They have different thought. Christian, Bartley's religion prohibits divorce but Bartley does not care about that. He does not change his purpose to divorce Marcia and leave his family. But Marcia does not want to divorce because divorce is

contradicted with her religious. Finally they never divorce and Marcia decides to go back to her home town Equity with her daughter.

A Modern Instance is one of the important works of William Dean Howells. In this novel Howells defended his reputation as a champion of realism in America. *A Modern Instance* is not famous like *The Rise of Silas Lapham* (1885). When Howells wrote *The Rise of Silas Lapham*, "The New York Times" reported that "The great American novel" had at least been written (www.oplin.org/ohioana/howells/wdhubio.htm1). *A Modern Instance* have demonstrate the realism became the preferred genre of a growing reading public that favored texts whose themes and storylines shift with time. Howells' themes of divorce and journalistic corruption were social issues that plagued the United States during the Gilded Age. The novel condemns rather than praises its modern reading audience through its protagonist Richer who "is willing to defer moral judgment in order to give readers material they are willing to buy" (144) (<http://www.cercles.com/review/r20/okker.htm>). *A Modern Instance* (1882) William Dean Howells's divorce novel and draws upon the latter nineteenth-century legal discourse of "injury to emotions" that allows parties to seek divorce on grounds of cruelty (p. 74). The analysis of Marcia and Bartley Hubbard's marriage, demonstrates that the development of legal narratives about divorce gave male emotional pain public visibility and empowered men by recognizing that they too can legally be victims of mental and verbal abuse (<http://www.hnet.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=11835>). *A Modern Instance* only seventeen times copying, start from 1882 until 2008. Howells can predict the

capitalist of mass media and the power of mass media in *A Modern Instance*. It looks these phenomena in Bartley job in a News paper's office, his work to write criminal news and investigation news. The History of mass media, called Bartley's work as "Yellow Journalism". "Yellow journalism" is famous in 1890s. It is great business in that time (<http://www.ibiblio.org/gutenberg/etext03>).

In *A Modern Instance*, the writer can find some points of interest. First, is plot, Howells makes an interesting plot in this novel. Howells serves interesting conflict which has relation with the condition in that time. Second, Howells has ability in created the moment which not general about the great transformation in American history. Third, Howells uses great structural language. In the narration Howells uses great structural and use metaphor as a figure of speech which is unique and simple. Howells uses general conversation which is used by native speaker. It is difficult but interesting for the writer. Fourth, Howells is capable to create character in this novel. He does not put the character like a photographer take a picture but he has capable to create character with perfectly. For example, He creates major character such as Marcia as a beautiful, education, rich, good person, and friendly woman.

A Modern Instance is a reflection of the people in that time which affects people's in set of ethnics. The different perceptions of the novel compare the character between Bartley Hubbard and Marcia. The different perception between Bartley Hubbard and Marcia is the example of the conflict between traditional and modern culture in that time. Bartley Hubbard is representative of modern person and Marcia as a traditional person.

Traditional and Modern culture has different characteristic. Modern people are usually adherent with modern culture. Mostly modern culture has some characteristics. They are educated, independent, aggressive, instance and individual. Modern culture has purpose to develop that society to thinking modern and high education and technology. Modern culture did not worry about the traditional values. It happens because modern culture has assumption that traditional values are dated and conservative. In other side, there are still people how keep traditional value in their life. Traditional culture has characteristic, they are socialism, cultural, familiar, cooperation, and natural. Traditional culture obeys the rule in the society, appreciate and care about one another. Because they have assumption that all people in there society are members of family.

Traditional culture and modern culture can make problems when they come together. Traditional cultures tend to reject the process of modernization, because they think that modernization does not influence betterment for their life. They feel that it is not necessary. Traditional culture feel not enjoy with the modern culture and not ready yet to welcome it. In difference condition modern culture does not only produce the goodness development and progress but at the same time it also produces misery, poverty and sadness especially for the lower class of society. This imbalanced condition can produce social injustice in the society. So, modern culture not only provides the benefits for the superiority. The condition above can cause conflicts of value between traditional and modern culture.

Conflicts of values between traditional and modern cultures as an issue in society have relationship with sociology. Sociology is science which deals with society. It views that conflict of values between traditional and modern culture will develop social problem. Social problem appears when there are differences between social value and real condition in life (Soekanto, 1990: 402). In that condition social value will have no power to control people's behavior in society. That conflict can disturb the social condition and can emerge problems in the society such as regional conflicts and civil war.

This phenomenon makes the writer interested in analyzing the novel *A Modern Instance* to describe the conflicts of values between traditional and modern culture. The researcher chooses the title **THE CONFLICTS OF VALUES BETWEEN TRADITIONAL AND MODERN CULTURES IN WILLIAM DEAN HOWELLS' A MODERN INSTANCE: A SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH.**

B. Literature Review

A Modern Instance is a novel that is interesting to be analyzed. As long as the researcher knows, there is no research which has been conducted to study the novel *A Modern Instance* based on the researcher's observation in Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta, Sebelas Maret University, Gajah Mada University, Sanata Dharma University, and State University of Yogyakarta.

Here, the researcher concerns with the conflicts of values between traditional and modern cultures happened in William Dean Howells' *A Modern Instance*. She uses a sociological approach to analyze the novel.

C. Problem Statement

The problem statement of the study is: "How is the conflicts of traditional and modern values reflected in William Dean Howells' *A Modern Instance*?"

D. Limitation of the Study

In this research, the researcher focuses on the analysis of American society in the late nineteenth century as reflected in *A Modern Instance*.

E. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of study are:

1. To analyze the structural element of the novel by identifying character and characterization, setting, point of view, plot and theme.
2. To analyze the novel based on the sociological perspective in accordance with the social condition of the latest nineteenth century in American society.

F. Benefit of the Study

By researching William Dean Howells' *A Modern Instance* the researcher hopes their research paper can gain the benefits they are:

1. Theoretical Benefit

This study will give additional information and contribution to the development of knowledge particularly to the future studies of William Dean Howells' *A Modern Instance*.

2. Practical benefit

This study will give deeper understanding in literary study to the writer about this novel.

G. Research Method

1. Type of the Study

In this research the researcher uses quantitative method to analyze the novel.

2. Object of the Study

The researcher takes William Dean Howells *A Modern Instance* by copy books on 1982 as the object of the study.

3. Type of the Data and the Data Source

In this study data source can be categorized into two. They are primary source and secondary source.

a. Primary Data Source

The primary data source is the novel *A Modern Instance* by William Dean Howells'. The primary data are taken from the words, phrases, sentences, narration and dialogue in the novel.

b. Secondary Data Source

Secondary data source are some references and materials related to the study. The references are picked up from books and internet.

4. Technique of the Data Collection

The method of collecting data is library research by collecting and selecting both primary and secondary data. The steps in collecting the data are:

- a. Reading the novel more than once to get deep understanding.
- b. Browsing to the internet to get information related to the object of study.
- c. Taking important notes in both primary and secondary data.
- d. Classifying the data into some categories.
- e. Selecting the data which one is important and relevant for the analysis.
- f. Drawing conclusion based on the analysis of data.
- g. Developing the data provided.

5. Technique of the Data Analysis

The technique of data analysis used in this study is descriptive analysis to identify the relationship between structural analysis of the novel and sociological approach of the literary work.

H. Paper Organization

The research paper consists of six chapters. The first chapter is introduction, which consists of the background of study, benefits of study, research method, and paper organization. The second chapter is underlying theory. The third chapter deals with Social Background of American in the late nineteenth century. The fourth chapter deals with Structural Analysis of *A Modern Instance*. Analysis and discussion of *A Modern Instance* are presented in fifth chapter. Finally, conclusion and suggestion are presented in the last chapter.