

**MATERIAL ORIENTATION IN SHAKESPEARE'S *KINGLEAR* (1606):
A MARXIST PERSPECTIVE**



RESEARCH PAPER

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

by:
NILA EMANIARTI
A 320 060 335

**SCHOOL OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION
MUHAMMADIYAH UNIVERSITY OF SURAKARTA
2010**

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

King Lear is one of the greatest Shakespeare work that first recorded performance on December 26, 1606. It is gathered with the other of Shakespeare complete work in an anthology. This anthology consists of 1172 pages, 37 plays, and 7 poems. It is edited with a glossary by W.J. Craig, M.A. and first published in 1905 by Oxford University Press. *King Lear* is placed in the thirty-three in queue. It consists of 5 scenes and 25 acts.

King Lear was written by William Shakespeare. He (baptized 26 April 1564 – died 23 April 1616) was an English poet and playwright. He is often called England's national poet and the "Bard of Avon". His surviving works, including some collaboration, consists of 38 plays, 154 sonnets, 2 long narrative poems, and several other poems. His plays also have been translated into every major living language and are performed more often than those of any other playwright are.

The story of *King Lear* begins with the decision of King Lear to divide his kingdom into three parts for his three daughters who recited the best declaration of love. Goneril and Regan who had evil characters tried to express their love to his father perfectly. However, Cordelia who really loved to his father could not proclaim how deep her love to him because of her honesty. Lear became angry and decided that he would not give his kingdom

to Cordelia. He disowned her after feeling annoyed of her beloved daughter's proclaiming. Even, Earl of Kent, the trusted Earl, was also disowned by him. Finally, Cordelia got married with the prince of France and stayed there although she did not have anything.

Because of conquering a half part of King Lear's kingdom, it made both of Regan and Goneril acted arbitrarily to his father. Lear felt sorrow, under pressure, and disappointed, so he decided to go far away to the forest followed by the Fool and Earl of Kent who had disguised as Lear's servant.

Meanwhile, the other Earl of Lear, Gloucester lived with his two sons, Edgar and Edmund. Edgar was Gloucester's loyal son while Edmund was Gloucester's evil bastard. Edmund tried to play Gloucester against Edgar. Consequently, when Gloucester had disowned his truly son, Edmund hoped he would conquer all of Gloucester's wealth.

Cordelia intended to take a revenge for her sisters' betraying. The war between England and France happened. King Lear and Cordelia had been caught by Edmund successfully. He asked someone to murder Cordelia. Lear cried because his lovely daughter had no a soul more, she was dead hanging on gallows. At last, King Lear came close to his death by himself.

The public response is important to know how popular and excellent the play is. Many people say that all of Shakespeare's work including poets, screenplays, novels, and dramas especially *King Lear* are great and excellent. There is no contrast argument to this play, but some of the readers such as Gerder and Frank Kermode points out this play. Gerder points out that this

play was completely plausible and logical. The second critical response of *King Lear* comes from Frank Kermode. He said that this play offered neither its good character nor its audience any relief from cruelty. Moreover, another public response also comes from the marketing side, for example, the Cologne production of *King Lear* gets many profits from the audience.

King Lear is an interesting drama. It is a masterpiece of Shakespeare's work. There are some points of interesting that cause *King Lear* is interesting to be studied. The first reason can be seen from the educational value of this drama. It teaches the readers how the way to repay a service to their parents does as Cordelia's attitude towards his father. She is still loyal and love Lear though he has disowned and does not bequeath anything to her.

The second point of interest in *King Lear* is from its plot. Shakespeare used traditional plot in this play. By the using of it, so the readers can catch every message contained in this play easily. The morality message touches the readers' heart also be apart of the interesting aspects in this drama.

The third point of interest is in its characters. In *King Lear*, there are four major characters as follows King Lear, Cordelia, Goneril, and Regan. While the minor characters are Earl of Kent, Earl of Gloucester, the Fool, Edmund, Edgar, King of France, Old Man, Doctor, Oswald, Curan, Duke of Burgundy, Duke of Cornwall, and Duke of Albany. Either major characters or minor characters support the story of *King Lear* one another, so it can make *King Lear* seems alive.

The last point is about material orientation as the major case happened in this play. Material orientation is an orientation that appears from the inside of someone to dominate and conquer such kind of material e.g. property, wealth, and position owned by the others by doing anything to achieve what he or she wanted.

Based on those several reasons why *King Lear* is interesting to be studied i.e. containing education value, the using of traditional plot, the characters that support the story seems alive, and the material orientation reflected in *King Lear* thus the researcher decides to conduct this research focused on the material orientation by using Marxist perspective entitled: **Material Orientation in Shakespeare's *King Lear* (1606): A Marxist Perspective.**

B. Literature Review

To prove the originality of this research, the researcher presents the previous research that deals with this research paper. The previous research was done by Hartono (Unika Atma Jaya University, 2006) entitled *An Analysis of Several Personality Disorders of the Main Character in King Lear by William Shakespeare*. In his research paper, he analyzed the personality perspective of the main character.

The second previous research was done by Novrika Mualvira Sandry (UMS, 2009) entitled *Conflict of Interest in William Shakespeare's King Lear: A Sociological Approach*. In her research finding showed that King Lear was made based on the phenomena in Britain society in the sixteenth centuries. The social realities of Britain give contributions to the creation of the story. The social class in Britain contributes for characters and building of their characterization and also plots of the story. The economic aspect contributes in the character, characterizations, and plot. The political reality gives contribution in the plot of the play. Cultural reality gives contribution in the character, characterization, and plot. Science and technology gives contribution in the character and characterization.

On the other hand, this research is different from the previous research. In this research, the researcher focuses on her action in analyzing of material orientation in Shakespeare's *King Lear*. She uses a Marxist perspective that there is no the other research with the same research problem.

C. Problem Statement

The problem statement is the essential element in research, because it can make the research is clearer and more focus. Based on the background of the study, the main problem of this research is "How is material orientation reflected in Shakespeare's *King Lear*?"

D. Objectives of the Study

Dealing with the problem statement above, the objectives of the study are:

1. To analyze the play based on its structural elements
2. To analyze the play based on Marxist perspective

E. Limitation of the Study

To make this research practicable, the researcher limits the discussion of the study and analyzes the major and the minor characters of the *King Lear* drama script from material orientation based on the Marxist approach.

F. Benefits of the Study

The researcher really expects that this research has some benefits to the readers theoretically and practically.

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 and to give deeper understanding in the concept of *King Lear*'s drama script based on the Marxist perspective especially both for the researcher and the readers.

G. Research Method

The research method of this study is divided into 5 parts namely; 1) type of the study, 2) object of the study, 3) data and data sources, 4) technique of the data collection, and 5) technique of the data analysis.

1. Type of the Study

The research design of this study is descriptive qualitative research because all the data collection is in the form of words. Moreover, qualitative research does not include calculation, numeration, and statistics to explore the fact.

2. Object of the Study

The object of the study is the drama script of *King Lear* play by William Shakespeare. It is edited with a glossary by W.J. Craig, M.A. and first published in 1905 by Oxford University Press.

3. Type of Data and Data Sources

Type of the data used in the research is text consisting of words, phrases, and sentences. The data sources 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 drama script of *King Lear* written by William Shakespeare, particularly the dialogues, statements, and actions that reflects such the material orientation of the story and the characters that support the research.

b. Secondary Data Source

The secondary data source is other source related to the primary data source. It includes the Marxist perspective of *King Lear* drama, the social background of English society at the turn of the seventeenth century and other sources supporting analysis, information about the author biography, and virtual references which also are related to the primary data.

4. Technique of the Data Collection

The techniques of collecting the data note taking. The steps of taking the data are as follows:

- a. Looking for the script of *King Lear* drama
- b. Reading rapidly of the *King Lear* drama script
- c. Focusing the attention to the material orientation reflected in the *King Lear* drama script
- d. Listing the material orientation in the *King Lear* drama script

5. Technique of the Data Analysis

The technique that is used to analyze the data is descriptive analysis through Marxist perspective.

H. Research Paper Organization

To report this research, the writer divides the research as follows: Chapter I is the introduction. It consists of the background of the study, literature review, problem statement, objective of the study, limitation of the

study, benefit of the study, research method and research paper organization. Chapter II is underlying theory. It deals with concept of Marxist perspective in analyzing William Shakespeare in *King Lear*. It includes the notion of Marxism, the major principles of Marxist perspective, the structural elements of *King Lear* and the theoretical application of Marxism. Chapter III is the social historical background of English society at the turn of the seventeenth century. Chapter IV concerns with the structural analysis of the drama and discussion. Chapter V covers the Marxist perspective that reflected in *King Lear*. Chapter VI is the last chapter. It consists of conclusion and suggestion.