

**ESCAPE FROM FREEDOM IN WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S
DRAMA *ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA*:
AN EXISTENTIALIST CRITICISM**



RESEARCH PAPER

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CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the study

Freedom is essential to human life. In fact, freedom is a complex idea. Such as the principles of economic liberalism, political democracy, religious autonomy, and individualism in personal life, gave expression to the longing for freedom. Freedom has a twofold meaning for modern man that he has been freed from traditional authorities and has become an individual. But that at the same time he has become isolated, powerless and an instrument of purposes outside of himself, alienated from himself and others. Furthermore, that this state undermines his self, weakens and frightens him, and makes him ready for submission to new kinds of bondage. (Boeree, 1997). Escape from freedom is an effort of escape from freedom from a reality which is inability he faces. Where is in his freedom he tends to depressing and worrying. Because of to man the freedom is a life burden. Hence from that, the man tries to escape from freedom in order to his get freedom truly. So, it is why the man wants to escape from freedom.

Antony and Cleopatra is a tragedy by William Shakespeare. This story tells about tragic love and it is based on real events in ancient times. It was first printed in the first folio of 1623. The plot based on Thomas North's translation of Plutarch Life of Markus Antonius. It was written 1606 and 1607. Shakespeare used the English translation of *Parallel Lives* written by Sir Thomas North (1535-1601). *Antony and Cleopatra* consist of 39 scenes and 5 actions. The total lines in

play 3573 lines. It's come from the Shakespeare complete work in an anthology. The anthology consists of 1172 pages, 37 plays, and 7 poems. It edited with a glossary by W.J. Craig, M.A. and first published in 1905 by Oxford University Press.

One of the greatest Shakespeare is work *Antony and Cleopatra*. It also was written by him. He was an English poet and playwright. He was born in Stratford upon Avon and baptized on 26 April 1564. Shakespeare produced most of his known work between 1590 and 1613. The other tragedies of Shakespeare is *Romeo and Juliet*, *Julius Caesar*, *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, *Othello*, and etc. The comedies work of Shakespeare is *The Winter's Tale*, *As You Like it*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *Measure for Measure*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Love's Labour's Lost*, *All's Well that Ends Well* and etc. And He has the other work such as histories, poems, lost plays, and Apocrypha. Shakespeare wrote his plays for performance, not publication, and apparently took no part in their printing. Shakespeare and continued to alternative the writing of comedy and tragedy, although comedy is prominent in the last decade of the 16th century and tragedy after 1599.

It's beginning when Antony one of the Triumvirs of Rome along with Octavius Caesar and Aemilius Lepidus has duty to be ruling the eastern Roman Empire. He must conquer queen of Egypt, Cleopatra. He is the leader who has charisma, experience, popularity, and has problem solving of its problems. But in this case, he hasn't solved of his problems because his problem is very big. It is

why because he is failing to conquer Cleopatra. And, actually the big problems is He falling in love with his enemy, which is Cleopatra. Next, they are married.

Unconsciously, this big problem heard by Octavius Caesar. He is the king of Rome and Fulvia's brother. So, enragement of Octavius is growing larger. Antony comes back to Rome to finish his problem in Rome. In there, He not gets greeting friendly from his family in Rome. Because, Octavius and Fulvia angry with him. He is not conscious that he faced big problem in there. He is very confused. He must choose Cleopatra, his true love or Fulvia who sister from King of Rome, Octavius. He also very confused because he find awkwardness in Rome. He not gets justify. He not gets his fair share of Pompey's lands. Antony and Octavius are quarrels. He is becoming more confused again. After that, Antony prepares to battle Octavius. Next, he is fails in the battle. He gives up and then come back to the Egypt.

Finally, Antony killed himself because he is shy and he can't to be the winner in the battle. So, He hasn't anything. He hasn't land, power, family and self regard. And then Cleopatra also killed herself with poison of snake. She loss politic of power. That is her husband, Antony. She dies calmly and ecstatically, imagining how she will meet Antony again in the afterlife.

Likely written and first performed between 1606 and 1607, *Antony and Cleopatra* is generally considered one of Shakespeare's finest tragic dramas. But most of public response interest to this play because it's one of excellent Shakespeare's drama. There is no contrast argument to this play, but some of the people such as John Wilders (1995) gives comment about the structure, characters,

themes, and language of *Antony and Cleopatra* and highlights Shakespeare's dramatic juxtaposition of Egypt and Rome, He said that all of element of this play is very amazing and can play as all out. Another critical of *Antony and Cleopatra* drama comes from William D. Wolf (1982). He comments that an *Antony and Cleopatra* drama contrast radically with Shakespeare's other tragic dramas. Wolf claims its central symbolic conflict involves the tension between change and permanence, a tension that prompts *Antony and Cleopatra* to escape from this mutable world.

Antony and Cleopatra is one of masterpiece of Shakespeare's drama. There are some points that important why it is to be interesting. So, the researcher has many reasons why the researcher takes it to research. The first reason can be seen from the conflict of this drama. The conflict of this drama is very complicated. There are conflict personal, love, and politics. They are to be one. So, the complicated conflict of this drama makes this drama becomes extraordinary and different from other drama.

The second of reason is from its plot. The plot of this drama is traditional plot. So, it makes the readers easy to understand the content of this drama. And, they are can enjoy every scene of this drama. They can enjoy the romantic scene, politic scene until tragic scene. They are tidy nicely to be one makes this drama excellent drama. By the using of it, the readers can find separate satisfaction.

The third reason of important of this drama is in its characters. The *Antony and Cleopatra* drama, there are two major protagonist characters as follow Antony is Roman general and one of the three men (triumvirs) who rule Rome

after the assassination of Julius Caesar in 44 B.C. He is as leader has charisma, power, experience and popularity. Cleopatra is queen of Egypt in the Macedonian dynasty. She is beautiful queen, has power to captives the leaders and to able to control government. The antagonist character is Octavius Caesar. He is one of the three men (triumvirs) who has big ambitious and cunning. He is Antony's enemy. And many other minor characters that support this drama that can make the story are perfect.

The fourth point of interest is in its setting. The action takes place in Europe and the Middle East between 40 and 30 B.C. The Shakespeare also can to describe the palace of Rome and the Egypt's palace that hedonistic. The settings include the following: Cleopatra's palace in Alexandria, Egypt; the house of Octavius Caesar in Rome, Italy; the house of Sextus Pompeius in Messina, Italy; the house of Lepidus in Rome; a street in Rome; a meeting place near Misenum, Italy; the galley of Sextus Pompeius of Misenum; a plain in Syria; Mark Antony's residence in Athens, Greece; Mark Antony's camp near Actium, Greece; a plain near Actium; Octavius Caesar's camp in Egypt; Mark Antony's camp at Alexandria; Egyptian field of battle; the walls at Alexandria; a monument at Alexandria. So, it is make the drama is amazing. Because we know Shakespeare from England but he can describe the setting seems alive.

The fifth point is a romantic story between two leaders. This drama tells about love story that different with other, because this drama tells about love story between two people that have power. They are Antony, triumvirs from Rome and Cleopatra, she is queen from Egypt. Shakespeare can tell their love story with

dramatically. The readers impressing can feel their romantic and also they are can enjoy the love story in every scene. The love story in this play can jar soul every its readers.

The last point of reason is issue major in this drama. The issue major in this drama is escape from freedom that reflected in this play. The escape from freedom can see in Antony characteristic as major protagonist characters. They faced many problem that make they are must choose a better choice. They also feels hesitate, jumpy, and worries in their self in to take a decision.

Based on those several reasons why this drama to be research. Such as its complicated conflict, plot, setting, characteristic, its love story, and the last is existentialist issue in reflected in this drama. Hence, the researcher decides to conduct this research focused on the escape from freedom by using existentialist perspective entitled: **ESCAPE FROM FREEDOM IN WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S DRAMA *ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA*: AN EXISTENTIALIST CRITICISM.**

B. Literature Review

To prove the originality of this research, the researcher presents the previous research that deals with this research proposal. The previous researcher of William Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* is Santoso, Catharina Tjindrawati, a student of Petra Christian University of Surabaya, her thesis entitled "A comparative study of the characterization of Cleopatra in Shakespeare's *Anthony and Cleopatra*, and Plutarch's *lives of the noble Grecians*". It was written in 1986. From the title it can be seen that the research

focuses his research on the comparative between the characterization of the Cleopatra in *Antony and Cleopatra* drama by William Shakespeare and Characterization of Cleopatra in Plutarch's lives of the noble Grecians. And the result of this research is the differences and the same of Cleopatra's character in the *Antony and Cleopatra* by William Shakespeare and Cleopatra's character in Plutarch's lives of the noble Grecians.

The other research Wirtanen, Mildred (1980). She was the student of Simon Fraser University with the title "*The Woman and Sovereign in Antony and Cleopatra by William Shakespeare*". This paper analyzes the how we are to understand the influence of Cleopatra as a queen in *Antony and Cleopatra* by William Shakespeare. In her research finding showed that see Cleopatra and his repudiation of the world of power and prestige. It is her believe that Cleopatra is a dedicated and responsible queen, and that, far from being the destructive and dominant influence in Antony's life, she is his captive, her person and her state held subject to the will of an ambitious and headstrong Antony Cleopatra's life and death as they are portrayed in *Antony and Cleopatra*. Antony was the most powerful influence in Cleopatra's life, Octavius the most powerful influence in her final hours.

On the other hand, in this research, the research will focus on analysis of escape from freedom in William Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*. In this research the researcher uses an existentialist perspective that there are no researchers that research the same problem.

C. Problem Statement

Based on the research background above, the problem of the study is “How is the escape from freedom reflected in William Shakespeare’s drama *Antony and Cleopatra*?”

D. Limitation of the Study

To make easy for the writer to conduct the study, she gives limitation of the problem on the major character Antony attempt in the escape from freedom in William Shakespeare’s drama *Antony and Cleopatra* viewed from Existentialist perspective.

E. Objective of the Study

In this research paper, the research has objective as follows:

1. To analyze the drama script based on its structural elements.
2. To analyze the drama script based on existentialist perspective.
3. To analyze the major character of the drama script from escape from freedom based on existentialist perspective.

F. Benefit of the Study

By presenting this research, the writer hopes that there will be same benefits as follows:

1. Theoretical Benefit

This study is aimed to give additional information to literature research especially that dealing with in William Shakespeare’s drama *Antony and Cleopatra*.

2. Practical Benefit

This study can develop the writer's skill and ability in applying the existentialism criticism in William Shakespeare's drama *Antony and Cleopatra*.

G. Research Method

Dealing with research method, there will be at least four points that need to be involved in this research.

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 study is the drama in William Shakespeare's drama *Antony and Cleopatra*. It is edited with a glossary by W.J. Craig, M. A. and first published in 1905 by oxford University Press. It's analyzed using structural analysis and existentialism perspective.

3. Data and the Data Sources

Type of the data source 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 sources is the text of *Antony and Cleopatra* by William Shakespeare, particularly the dialogs, statement and actions reflecting the escape from freedom of the drama and characters that support the research.

b. Secondary Data Source

The secondary data source is other source related to the primary data sources. The data sources are material related to data requires, such as writer's biography, the data taken from official websites about the drama, and other sources supporting analysis.

4. Technique of Data Collection

The techniques of collection the data in this study is note taking. The steps of taking the data are as follows:

- a. Looking for the script of *Antony and Cleopatra* drama
- b. Reading rapidly of the *Antony and Cleopatra* drama script
- c. Focusing the attention to the escape from freedom reflected in the *Antony and Cleopatra* drama script.
- d. Listing the escape from freedom in the *Antony and Cleopatra* drama script.

5. . Technique of Data Analysis

The technique of data analysis in this study is descriptive. In analyzing the data, the writer uses constant descriptive analysis through existentialist perspective.

H. Research Paper Organization

In this research, the researcher organizes the research into five chapters. The first chapter is introduction, which consists of background of the study, literary review, problem statement, objective of the study, limitation of the study, benefit of the study, research method and research paper organization. The second chapter is underlying theory, which presents of the notion of existentialists

approach, three major points of Erich Fromm's theory, and the notion of structural element of play. The third chapter is the research method, which deals with type of the study, object of the study, data and source of data, method of collecting data, and method of analyzing data. The fourth chapter concern with research finding and discussion. The finding how escape from freedom reflected in Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*. And the last chapter is conclusion and suggestion.