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AN ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL JUSTICE IN WAR AND PEACE BY LEO TOLSTOY

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Abstract

This research discusses a novel which written by Leo Tolstoy entitled War and Peace. The writer aims to describe the social justice issue that is often appears in society. This research aims to identify the idea of social justice that reflected in War and Peace through the characters in the story. This study applies descriptive qualitative method and typically library research. This research applies Marxist theory about social justice in order to look at the relation between literary work and society's historical elements that happen in the past. Marx's theory emphasizes the inherent conflicts between different social classes, particularly the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. In War and Peace novel, it can be seen from the lives of characters from diverse social backgrounds, such as the aristocracy represented by characters like Prince Andrei and the wealthy Pierre Bezukhov, as well as the common people like the soldiers and peasants.

Keywords: class Struggle, historical materialism, Karl Marx, marxism, social justice, War and Peace

INTRODUCTION

According to Jones (1986), literature includes all written materials in its broadest sense. Prose, poetry, drama, and novels are examples of literary works. Both novels and short stories belong to the type of prose, many people enjoy reading novels and short stories. A novel expresses a particular aspect of human love and existence. Because novels discusses human activities and societal occurrences, it is written in a long composition. Since in the beginning of history, there are a few huge issues connected with science, religion, information, and upon universe (Samanik & Lianasari, 2016). These issues also extend to societal structures, where all communities organize their members based on concepts of superiority, inferiority, and equality. Within society, human relationships are grounded in interdependence, encompassing sociological aspects related to interpersonal, social, and cultural levels (Setiawan & Setri, 2020).

The significance of social phenomena and globalization within a specific society has inspired certain writers to create innovative fiction that integrates social elements. Their objective is to portray specific phenomena, providing a reflective depiction of the community through literature derived from their ideas. Ideas can be described as a content, messages and the purpose that is informed by text, (Afrianto, 2018). Literary works often gather someone's life story to highlight their life, particularly focusing on their personality. Additionally, these stories can be considered self-referential texts that reveal the processes of forming one's identity. It can be seen from Leo Tolstoy's work, where he reflects on his life and its significance to Russian society in the eighteenth century. Count Lev Nikolayevich Tolstoy, usually referred to in English as Leo Tolstoy, was a Russian writer who is considered one of the greatest writers of all time. He was born in Russia in 1828 and passing away in 1910, Tolstoy is recognized as a prominent figure of world literary realism during his time. Globally, Tolstoy is best known for his two longest works *War and Peace* and Anna Karenina, which are usually considered to be one of the finest novels ever written. *War and Peace* in particular seems to define this form for many readers and critics alike (Morson, 2018).

War and Peace is a novel that Tolstoy spent five years writing, from 1863 to 1868, is widely regarded as one of the greatest novels of all time. The novel focuses on significant events during the Napoleonic Wars, particularly

between 1805 and 1807, as well as the French invasion of Russia in 1812. The story mainly talks about what happened when Napoleon invaded Russia in 1812. But it actually starts seven years before that, when Russia allied with Austria to fight against the French. Tolstoy looks at war from different perspectives, including high-level strategic planning and the experiences of young soldiers experiencing combat for the first time. While discusses the broader impact and lasting effects of these wars, Tolstoy also explores how individual soldiers behave, revealing his perspectives on war as a human phenomenon. The writer chooses to analyze the novel *War and Peace* because justice is an important issue in this story; most of characters of *War and Peace* novel are struggling to get a freedom. Alongside with these events, Tolstoy described the different classes of Russian society in terms of their participation in war and what impact war had on their lives is an example of social justice.

Social justice is common to the whole of society. This concept is based on the idea of a just society, which allows individuals or groups are treated equitably and receive a just share of society's resources. Nowadays, there is a lot of competition in society aimed at achieving freedom, a certain standard of living, prestige, happiness, and other goals. This condition can be seen that some people do not have the same opportunities to obtain their rights such as; the right to a decent living, the right to education, the right to work and the same wages for the same work, and more. Usually, people with limited opportunities are lower class people and for that they have to fight for social justice because social justice is based on the concept of human rights and equality. Social justice reflects how people respect human rights in their daily lives at all levels of society and how people find solutions when they have problems in society, especially those related to human rights and equality. According to Suryawasita (1989: 13-14), social justice demands that all production produced by society is shared equally for all of society. This does not mean that all societies gets the same share of production, but rather the company's share, which can sometimes cause problems.

It is clear that society plays a significant role in the process of creating literary works. Literary works may use society and social problems as literary material, because literary work is a imitation conceptions implying views on the reflection of society's literature (Swingewood and Laurenson, 1972:23). The issues that reached all the way from the activities of everyday life to broader arenas of ideology and societal institutions are important to being discussed (Setiawan & Lina, 2017).

This research analyzes social justice which describes how individuals from various backgrounds navigate and face the challenges of their respective social statuses. The researcher used theory of social justice by Karl Marx. The results of this study describe how social social justice reflected in War and Peace novel through the characters. Based on the background above, the researcher formulates the research title as follows: "An Analysis of Social Justice in War and Peace by Leo Tolstoy."

METHOD

This research is conducted by using descriptive qualitative research design. It is due to the fact that this research is intended to find out social justice that reflected in War and Peace. The research data were collected and presented in the form of words by describing them, and without presenting numbers. In this chapter the writer will explain one by one the research methods. Qualitative research serves as an initial phase of a study, outlining its objectives and research questions (Suprayogi & Pranoto, 2020). More precisely, this research collects data in the form of written texts —the excerpts of characters' focalization in the novel which were consequently interpreted, elaborated and explained for basic data which are proven based on findings that drawn depending on the single writer's interpretation regarding social justice that reflected in War and Peacenovel's. Descriptive qualitative research involves analyzing the content in detail, typically focusing on messages or specific texts (Mahendra & Amelia, 2020).

Data is raw material that requiring processing to produce information, both qualitative and quantitative data that illustrate factual details. The method used for data collection involves a thorough reading the entirety of the data source (Amelia & Dintasi, 2019). Research instrument is important thing to get the data for the research. Content analysis techniques are used to provide answers to the topics being discussed (Lianasari & Samanik, 2016). In this research, the script of the novel "War and Peace (1869)" and the writer are the instruments to collect the data and analyze the data. The researcher may obtain assistance in organizing the data for analysis through the

utilization of data analyzing technique (Gulö & Rahmawelly, 2019). We can conclude that the method that we will employ involves identifying, defining, and describing the findings analyzed by the researcher.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter the researcher describes the portrayal of social justice in War and Peace novel which can be found on the lives of characters. There are some quotations taken from the War and Peace novel in order to show the historical materialism and class struggle from Karl Marx theory of social justice. In order to reveal the social justice in War and Peace characters, the writer tries to see the historical and class struggle in the novel. Furthermore, in the next discussion, the writer attempts to the idea of social justice that reflected in *War and Peace*.

1. The Concept of Marxist in War and Peace Novel

The researcher found some concepts to know about social justice and principles of Marxist by Karl Marx through dialogue and narration, these are:

1.1 Historical Materialism

Leo Tolstoy's "War and Peace" doesn't explicitly engage with Karl Marx's theory of historical materialism, as Tolstoy had his own philosophical and social perspectives. However, we can explore some themes in the novel that align with or reflect certain aspects of historical materialism and Marxian thought. In this novel, the historical materialism is describing in characters and setting.

The story begins with the backdrop of Russia in the early 19th century, starting in 1805 amidst the expanding influence of Napoleon in Western Europe, which sparked concern in Russian society. In 1812, Napoleon's invasion made Tsar Alexander reluctant to go to war. The crucial Battle of Borodino saw the unexpected victory of a smaller Russian force over a formidable French force, much to the dismay of Napoleon. Despite the occupation in Moscow, life among the elite in St. Petersburg remained largely unchanged.

'If Buonaparte remains on the throne of France a year longer,' the vicomte continued, with the air of a man who, in a matter with which he is better acquainted than anyone else, does not listen to others but follows the current of his own thoughts, 'things will have gone too far. By intrigues, violence, exile, and executions, French society I mean good French society will have been forever destroyed, and then..' [War and Peace, 1805:30]

From the narrative above, "If Buonaparte remains on the throne of France a year longer" becomes a profound comment on the negative impacts of prolonged authoritarian rule. This reflects the character's belief that Napoleon's continued rule will result in the irreversible destruction of French society, signaling a warning of societal decline. This idea highlights the problems of power, corruption, and loss of values under despotic leadership, as depicted by Tolstoy through the perspective of the vicomte. It shows how individual freedom and political power are connected, and shows how societies can suffer when leaders have too much control.

'No, I have not; but this is what I have been thinking and wanted to tell you. There is a war now against Napoleon. If it were a war for freedom I could understand it and should be the first to enter the army; but to help England and Austria against the greatest man in the world is not right.' [] 'If no one fought

except on his own conviction, there would be no wars,' he said. 'And that would be splendid,' said Pierre. Prince Andrew smiled ironically. 'Very likely it would be splendid, but it will never come about..' 'Well, why are you going to the war?' asked Pierre. 'What for? I don't know. I must. Besides that I am going'

He paused. 'I am going because the life I am leading here does not suit me!' [War and Peace, 1805:41]

Tolstoy often emphasizes the influence of historical forces on individuals and the broader society. The characters' lives are intricately woven into the historical tapestry of the Napoleonic Wars, reflecting Tolstoy's view that history is shaped by both large-scale events and individual actions. It can be seen from the dialogue between Prince Andrew and Pierre above, that Prince Andrew doesn't like the war that was forced on them and

feels that war to seek freedom is better than war which doesn't even have any benefits in their lives.

1.2 Scientific Socialism

According to Karl Marx, scientific socialism explains the history of social classes by highlighting the differences between the lower and higher classes. It describes how the lower classes seek a better life and justice due to oppression from the higher class, leading to a struggle for their interests. Researchers have found several pieces of evidence in this novel, using the roles of class struggle, namely the Basis of Class Struggle, Economic Exploitation, and Labor and Values.

Pierre Bezukhov, a wealthy aristocrat, whose progressive intentions for the treatment of serfs on his estates reveals the complexities of power and manipulation within the feudal system; it can be seen from the narrative below:

When he reached Kiev he sent for all his stewards to the head office and explained to them his intentions and wishes. He told them that steps would be taken immediately to free his serfsand that till then they were not to be overburdened with labor, women while nursing their babies were not to be sent to work, assistance was to be given to the serfs, punishments were to be admonitory and not corporal, and hospitals, asylums, and schools were to be established on all the estates. Some of the stewards (there were semiliterate foremen among them) listened with alarm, supposing these words to mean that the young count was displeased with their management and embezzlement of money, some after their first fright were amused by Pierre's lisp and the new words they had not heard before, others simply enjoyed hearing how the master talked, while the cleverest among them, including the chief steward, understood from this speech how they could best handle the master for their own ends. [War and Peace, 180:.693]

Pierre's instructions to his stewards upon his return to Kiev signify a departure from the traditional harsh treatment of serfs. He emphasizes the importance of humane treatment, proposing initiatives such as the immediate liberation of serfs, easing their labor burdens, providing support for nursing mothers, and establishing institutions like hospitals, asylums, and schools on his estates. These measures signify recognition of the humanity and welfare of the serfs, indicating Pierre's desire for reform and social progress. However, the stewards' varied reactions to Pierre's instructions exemplify the entrenched interests and strategies of the ruling class, ranging from alarm and amusement to opportunistic exploitation. This shows how the challenges of enacting meaningful change within a rigid social hierarchy, where benevolent gestures often mask underlying power strxuggles and self-interest prevails despite noble intentions. In the next scene, this depiction highlights the interactions between Pierre Bezukhov and the serfs on his land show how social classes struggle. The narration talks about how Pierre's kindness changes the lives of the serfs, making them very thankful. They show their thanks by holding events for him, giving him gifts, and asking to do community projects, where acts of benevolence from the former are met with gratitude and reverence from the latter.

This proclamation serves as a testament to the government's acknowledgment of social class disparities and its commitment to facilitating positive change, highlighting the potential for collaborative efforts to transcend the barriers of social hierarchy and foster a more equitable society; this can be seen in the narrative below:

His Majesty the Emperor and King protects them, and considers no one among you his enemy except those who disobey his orders. He desires to end your misfortunes and restore you to your homes and families. [] Craftsmen and industrious artisans, return to your work, your houses, your shops, where the protection of guards awaits you! You shall receive proper pay for your work. And lastly you too, peasants, come from the forests where you are hiding in terror, return to your huts without fear, in full assurance that you will find protection! Markets are established in the city where peasants can bring their surplus supplies and the products of the soil. [War and Peace, 1805:1886]

From the narrative below describing how the government's response to social class struggle by implementing measures to ensure freedom of trade and economic empowerment for peasants and rural residents. These steps include designating specific market days and locations where peasants can sell their goods without fear, ensuring fair pricing and the freedom to return unsold goods, and providing protection for their transportation.

The government has taken the following steps to ensure freedom of sale for them: (1) From today, peasants, husbandmen, and those living in the neighborhood of Moscow may without any danger bring their supplies of all kinds to two appointed markets, of which one is on the Mokhovaya Street and the other at the Provision Market. (2) Such supplies will be bought from them at such prices as seller and buyer may agree on, and if a seller is unable to obtain a fair price he will be free to take his goods back to his village and no one may hinder him under any pretense. (3) Sunday and Wednesday of each week are appointed as the chief market days and to that end a sufficient number of troops will be stationed along the highroads on Tuesdays and Saturdays at such distances from the town as to protect the carts. (4) Similar measures will be taken that peasants with their carts and horses may meet with no hindrance on their return journey. (5) Steps will immediately be taken to re-establish ordinary trading. [War and Peace, 1805:1887]

Through these initiatives, the government aims to alleviate economic disparities and promote social stability by enabling peasants to engage in commerce without hindrance and facilitating the restoration of normal trading practices.

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion of some of the data above, this thesis will explain and answer questions from the previous chapter. From Marxist perspective, that shows the structure of society and class struggles that were prevalent during the Napoleonic era in Russia. Throughout the novel, characters from different sial classes navigate the complexities of justice and fairness in their interactions and circumstances. Marx's theory emphasizes the inherent conflicts between different social classes, particularly the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. This kind of justice relies on those in power making sure everyone is treated fairly across all aspects of life. In War and Peace novel, it can be seen from the lives of characters from diverse social backgrounds, such as the aristocracy represented by characters like Prince Andrei and the wealthy Pierre Bezukhov, as well as the common people like the soldiers and peasants.

The novel portrays a society divided by class, exposing the struggles between the privileged and the disadvantaged characters as they seek justice and happiness. These themes resonate with the principles of social justice found within Marxism, emphasizing the importance of equality and fairness. Marxist ideology, centered on socialism, offers hope for addressing the challenges faced by the proletariat, promising prosperity, peace, and security. As we can see in the characters like Prince Andrei, who comes from a noble family, and Pierre Bezukhov, who inherits a lot of money. Even though they have different backgrounds, they both start questioning if society is fair. They see how the rich and powerful take advantage of the poor, and they want things to change. The novel also shows us the harsh realities of war, where soldiers and ordinary people suffer, while those in power benefit. This reflects Marx's belief that wars often serve the interests of the ruling class.

War and Peace novel provides a portrayal of social justice, illustrating how individuals from different backgrounds navigate and confront the challenges of their respective social standings. War and Peace novel highlights the importance of fairness and equality in society. It shows us that everyone deserves to be treated with respect, regardless of their social status. Marx's idea of social justice helps us understand the struggles of the characters and the need for a more just and compassionate world.

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