



THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF PATRIARCHY SYSTEM ENDURED BY MAIN FEMALE CHARACTER IN THE NOVEL OF THE TENANT OF WILDFELL HALL

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ABSTRACT

Patriarchy system occurs in the era of Victoria and many woman experience the effects of this system. The aims of the study is to find out the effect of patriarchy system endured by main female character in the novel "The Tenant of Wildfell Hall." This research was conducted by using descriptive qualitative method. The data used by the researcher in this research were taken from Anne Bronte's novel entitled The Tenant of Wildfell Hall which was published by Anne Bronte in 1848. Data were collected by reading intensively the novel and conducting library research to find some useful resources which relate to analyzed topic namely relate to the patriarchy system. The result of study showed that Helen Graham, main female character in the novel experienced psychological effect because she has a sorrowful life since her marriage with Arthur Huntingdon. Moreover, the effect of patriarchy system makes Helen take some actions and struggle against it as the reaction of the effect of the system to end her sad life, by running away from his husband's house which its taboo to be done by a woman in Victorian era.

Key words: *Effect, Patriarchy System, the Tenant of Wildfell Hall, Anne Bronte.*

INTRODUCTION

Patriarchy as a concept has a history of usage among social scientists, who used it to refer to a system of government in which men directed societies since they have a role as the heads of households (Walby, 1991). In this usage, man has authority over women, children and property in the household.

Many debates about women's position and their role in society since gender issue

became much discussed in the society. It was the era when women were regarded as the second gender. Women and men seemed to be accepting the fact that men had the right and women did not. Male attitude had been considered as the norm and that of women's was restricted. Men ultimately determined women's status in society. This condition was criticized by women who were called feminists. Women tried to fight for their right to have the

same position in some aspects, namely in social culture, economic, education, marriage and etc.

The Tenant of Wildfell Hall was published in June in 1848 by Anne Bronte under the name of Acton Bell. Anne comes from the Brontë's family. This novel is interesting to be analyzed because it tells about the social problems that happened in the Victorian era particularly, in the mid 19th century, due to the law.

The researcher found several studies which analyzed this novel. First is a research conducted by Vycpálková (2012) from Masaryk University, entitled "*Mary Wollstonecraft's Concept of Marriage and its Reflection in the Tenant of Wildfell Hall*". Mary Wollstonecraft is well known as a political writer. One of her famous work is *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*. She proposed the equality of men and women. She divides *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* into thirteen chapters in which she provides a detailed advocacy over the rights of women. She often repeats her arguments and puts them in new connections. She dedicates *A Vindication* to whole society as she pleads for her sex and strives for independence and freedom, as women are rather slaves than the equal part of social system. She proposes an idea of marriage as a partnership of two rational human beings as one of her concept in the book.

This study reveals that Anne Bronte and Mary Wollstonecraft share many ideas on marriage and other topics. However Bronte often proves to be more radical in her ideas

than Wollstonecraft. Anne Bronte reverses the traditional qualities of her characters in order to demonstrate that both sexes are equal. On the contrary, Helen, the main female character in the novel by Anne Bronte (1848), plays a sensible member in their partnership. Helen is also the key character in terms of the relationship with Gilbert Markham, the protagonist character and one of the narrators in the novel when adopting an active role and proposing to him. Brontë's reversal of traditional roles stresses the importance of an active approach of women leading to the new and reformed ideal proposed by Mary Wollstonecraft. Anne Brontë's ideas in *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* are certainly comparable to the ideas of Mary Wollstonecraft as she proposes them in *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*.

Second, Lupold (2008) from University of Montana Missoula, USA analyzed the novel of *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* in his thesis entitled "*Dwelling and the Woman Artist in Anne Brontë's The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*". In his thesis, Lupold used Heidegger's theory of dwelling concept to analyze how the environment and home become comfortable for Helen to develop a career as a painter in Wildfell Hall and Grassdale, and able to support her life and her son from her career. Furthermore, Lupold analyzed Helen's relationship with Gilbert Markham, the protagonist character in the novel who is able

to provide the desired dwelling, unlike her husband "Arthur Huntingdon".

Before marrying Arthur Huntingdon, Helen was a talented painter, but after the marriage she did not make it as a top priority, but the main priority was her family. After she left her husband's house because of mistreatment from Arthur so then she used her paint ability to fulfill her needs and her son. From this, it can be said that Helen tried to survive by relying on her ability and talent in painting and it was able to meet their needs at that time and the researcher interpreted that Helen was a strong female figure in living her life.

Third is the research from Maarif from The State Islamic University of Maliki Malang (2010) with the title of his thesis "*Woman's struggle against gender inequality in The Tenant of Wildfell Hall by Anne Bronte*". In his thesis, Maarif used feminist literary criticism to analyze the main characters, especially female characters in the novel of Anne Bronte. The analysis took point of view about feminism that presents problems of women's struggle against inequality and domination of men over women. The main focus is on the position and the role of female characters that are placed as inferior or marginalized by men.

The next study was conducted by a researcher from the University of Findlay namely Diederich (2013) with the title "*The Art of Comparison: Remarriage in Anne Brontë's The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*". Diederich stated

that this novel is a novel that brings ideas about feminism and a critique toward the relationship which harm women in the Victorian era. In Law marriage in the 19th century, the British limited opportunities for women to divorce, to keep custody of the child, and to keep all of their property after marriage and that was the case in the main female character in the novel by Anne Bronte.

Furthermore, a research was conducted by Zedníková (2013) from Masaryk University, entitled "*The Tenant of Wildfell Hall as a Critique of Jane Eyre*." In this study, the researcher stated that both Charlotte and Anne are unsatisfied with the state of the contemporary society but they choose two different strategies of dealing with such a situation: Charlotte's conclusion is to be lenient to those who are superior and provided the situation becomes unbearable, shun the society altogether; Anne's solution is to address the pressing issues and attempt to repair it. Anne Bronte and her work represent the courage and strength of women in the past, present and future that could be seen as an inspiration.

From the above-mentioned five studies that discussed novel of Anne Bronte, for the present research, the researcher tries to take different things from previous studies above namely about the psychological effect of patriarchy system endured by main female character as revealed in the novel of *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* by Anne Bronte which happened in the Victorian Era.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Source of data

The data used by the researcher in this research was taken from Anne Bronte's novel entitled *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* which was published by Anne Bronte in 1848. It has about 383 pages as the primary data and the secondary data was taken from various books, journal, articles, and website on internet. Through this secondary data, the researcher collects and uses the relevant data to the topic.

Method of Collecting Data

The procedures of collecting data were presented in chronological order as follows. First, the researcher reads the novel of Anne Bronte intensively entitled *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*, tries to catch the ideas related to the topic investigated. In this case, the researcher investigates the occurrence of patriarchy system in the novel through the action or statements of characters and the effect of this system to the main character in this novel. The second, the researcher took some sentences in the novel that probably became the clues to get better understanding about the topic investigated. The third, the researcher conducted library research to find some useful resources which relate to the analyzed topic namely relate to the patriarchy system and the effect of patriarchy system to the main character in the novel.

Method of Analyzing Data

In analyzing the data, the researcher conducted descriptive qualitative method. He conducted a literature review techniques to obtain data that support the researcher in assessing the topic to be studied. Sources of data were obtained from books, journal, articles, and website on internet and other scientific reports that have relevance to this research. Then the researcher made the selection of samples or data to be examined with a paper record along with pages of data, namely texts containing elements identified to be assessed. In the next step, the researcher conducted an analysis of the data done through reading strategies using the sociology of the literary work approach, which was related to its social content of the literary works by Wellek and Warren (1956) in analyzing the phenomenon of patriarchy system in the Novel '*The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*' (1848).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Effect of Patriarchy System

Psychological Effect

In this novel, Helen as the female character feels a very deep psychological impact of the patriarchal culture which is adopted by her community. During her marriage, she feels how miserable she is being married to Arthur. At first she assumed that she would be happy to marry the person she loves but he is far from what she expected, while she herself is a good woman, religious and obedient

to her husband. She never hates him, but she always advises him to repent and be a good husband to her, and responsible father for their only child. But a few years after their marriage, Helen's life is like in a prison. During that time she buries her heartaches due to the many mistakes that have always committed by husband intentionally and repeatedly. It makes her psychological condition being worse and starts regretting the attitudes of her husband. Actually, she was not trying to hate her husband but in the end she seemed to succumb to the circumstances.

"I wish I could convince you of it now!" cried I, starting up from beside him: and for the first time in my life, and I hope the last, I wished I had not married him." (Page: 164)

From the data above, we can see that Helen began to regret her marriage life. It is the thing he had never done during the time that may be it is a form of her disappointment to her husband.

This condition tells us about Helen's regret to be married to Arthur. By saying that she wishes not to have married Arthur, Helen shows us that there is something wrong in their relation as husband and wife. But if the authors look deeper in Helen's statement, there is something wrong with Arthur. If Helen regrets to love Arthur it means that Arthur disappoints her, or even offends her. As a husband, Arthur

does a lot of mistakes to his wife; he is supposed to love his wife not to offend her.

The novel mentions several times Helen's remorse for having loved the wrong man. In some fragment description shows how Helen reveals her feelings. She is docile and obedient woman to her husband. She does many things against her husband and family, but only sadness and despair that she can get.

"Oh! when I think how fondly, how foolishly I have loved him, how madly I have trusted him, how constantly I have laboured, and studied, and prayed, and struggled for his advantage; and how cruelly he has trampled on my love, betrayed my trust, scorned my prayers and tears, and efforts for his preservation, crushed my hopes, destroyed my youth's best feelings, and doomed me to a life of hopeless misery." (Page: 243)

Helen considers herself a fool for trusting and having loved her husband sincerely. From the above data, we can see that how many times she sacrificed for his family especially, her love for her husband but, because she sees herself betrayed by her husband's infidelity with another woman who she regarded as a friend of her husband.

In addition, in one of fragments in the novel, Helen tells how her heart suffered because of marrying Arthur. She says that she is

wrong to choose a husband, and if she knows early that Arthur is not the right person for her then she will not be loved Arthur like what she does. It can be seen from the description below;

"I am married now, and settled down as Mrs. Huntingdon of Grasdale Manor. I have had eight weeks' experience of matrimony. And do I regret the step I have taken? No, though I must confess, in my secret heart, that Arthur is not what I thought him at first, and if I had known him in the beginning as thoroughly as I do now, I probably never should have loved him, and if I loved him first, and then made the discovery, I fear I should have thought it my duty not to have married him."
(Page: 158).

The novel also describes how the attitude of Helen who is very tired with the problems in her family.

"I am tired out with his injustice, his selfishness and hopeless depravity. I wish a milder word would do; I am no angel, and my corruption rises against it". My poor father died last week." (Page: 210)

Helen is tired of living in injustice and despair. She is saturated with the treatment she received during her marriage, while she is

treated improperly as a wife. She feels disrespected and betrayed. Helen feels that she is not an angel that could forever silent and does not do anything against the condition that afflicts her and she wants to repair and change the condition.

This research focuses in how the patriarchy system presented in the novel 'The Tenant of Wildfell Hall' related to psychological effect. To analyze the patriarchy system in the novel, the researcher uses the sociology of the literary work approach by Wellek and Warren (1956), and the theory of Neubeck and Glasberg (2005:60).

In this novel Helen's life has been full of bitterness and sadness because getting psychological harassment from her husband. After several weeks of her marriage that she finds Arthur is not as well as she thinks first. Arthur makes his wife life in a sorrowful condition. He demands his wife to stay at home and just do domestic duties.

There are some data in the novel that can show us that Arthur does violence to his wife especially psychological harassment. It can be seen from the quotation below that become as a representative data for structure of patriarchy specifically related to male violence.

"You promised to honour and obey me, and now you attempt to hector over me, and threaten and accuse me, and call me worse than a highwayman. If it were not for your situation, Helen, I would not submit

to it so tamely. I won't be dictated to by a woman, though she be my wife."
(Page 185)

"He likes to talk about things that cannot interest me - or even that annoy me - and these please him - the most of all: for his favorite amusement is to sit or loll beside me on the sofa, and tell me stories of his former amours, always turning upon the ruin of some confiding girl or the cozening of some unsuspecting husband; and when I express my horror and indignation, he lays it all to the charge of jealousy, and laughs till the tears run down his cheeks."(
Page: 163)

From the data above, it is clearly seen that Helen gets psychological harassment from her husband. Although Arthur never hits or beats his wife but he does things that made her suffer. Arthur does something in accordance with his wishes without considering the feelings of his wife. Arthur wants to be respected, but he does not honor and keeps his wife's feelings. He wants to dominate his wife and it makes Helen is in an inferior position in the house.

The effects of patriarchy which occur in the woman character in the novel is about psychological effect. It is a form of effects of patriarchy condition in Helen's family that may

be as a representative of women in the Victorian era at the time.

The effect of patriarchy system produces the reaction of woman characters toward the system. In the novel, the researcher focuses on main female characters who suffer patriarchy system namely Helen Graham. The researcher finds that Helen as the main female character in the novel "*The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*" (1984) leaves the house as the reaction of the suffer that she gets from her marriage life. Her action shows her consciousness of human values namely "pride". This could be considered as an act against violation human rights.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

There are some effects of patriarchy system experienced by female character in the novel '*The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*' (1848) and for this research, the researcher shows the psychological effects of patriarchy system endured by main female character of the novel, namely Helen Graham. She experienced psychological effect because she has a sorrowful life since her marriage with Arthur Huntingdon. The limitation analysis that has been done by the researcher is because of the limitation of references about patriarchy system which happened in England. Therefore, the researcher hopes for the next researchers who use the same object to analyze this novel can compare it to the real system of patriarchy in England in order to give the best understanding to the reader about the system of patriarchy which happened in England. The

novel takes the setting in English on 19th century, so by the next research that compares it to real world that can enrich the knowledge about the English culture beside patriarchy system from the novel itself.

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