

ABSTRACT

Literature is an art which can be analyzed by using scientific methods. The methods include the application of the objective theory. The objective theory is used for analyzing the intrinsic elements of a literary work. For that reason, the writer uses literary approach which is supported by psychological approach since the focus analysis is on the development of the protagonist's personality.

Joe Christmas in the novel Light in August is considered as a "mulatto" searching for the assertion of his individuality. He isolates himself from social involvement in order to prevent others from knowing about his black self. For this reason, he has performed self-destructiveness which is represented in the theme, characterization, plot, and setting of the novel. Therefore, he may suffer from mental deviation which will be appropriately seen as his psychological problem. Since his childhood, Joe Christmas has lived as an orphan. One of the reasons for his being abandoned in the orphanage is that his grandfather considers him to be a black. This fact leads him into many troubles and results in the crucial problem in his life.

Then, he struggles either for reducing his pain or for the acceptance of his individuality since the society is only divided according to the dichotomy; that is, the whites and the blacks. However, it has influenced his mental development.

Having failed to get the acceptance of his manhood, Joe is severe to himself since he thinks the failure he endures has something to do with his being a black. By denying his origin, Joe has performed self-destructiveness. More than that, he has also destroyed himself by rejecting any humane motive, such as the need to have good social relationship and to survive by overcoming the difficulties of his environment. Faulkner has successfully conveyed self-destructiveness of Joe Christmas through his presenting the condition after the Civil War in the South as a setting which supports the thoughts, the feelings, and the moods which the protagonist experiences during his life time.

ABSTRAK

Sastra adalah seni yang dapat dianalisa dengan menggunakan metode-metode ilmiah. Metode-metode tersebut meliputi pengetrapan teori obyektif. Teori obyektif digunakan untuk menganalisa unsur-unsur intrinsik suatu karya sastra. Karena alasan tersebut, penulis menggunakan pendekatan sastra yang didukung oleh pendekatan psikologi karena fokus analisisnya pada perkembangan kepribadian pelaku utama.

Joe Christmas dalam novel "Light in August" dianggap sebagai seorang "mulatto" (keturunan campuran kulit putih dan kulit hitam) yang mencari penegasan individualitasnya. Ia menarik diri dari keterlibatan sosial untuk mencegah orang lain mengetahui dirinya keturunan kulit hitam. Karena alasan ini, ia telah melakukan penghancuran diri sendiri yang dihadirkan melalui tema, perwatakan, alur, dan latar novel tersebut. Oleh sebab itu, bisa dikatakan Joe menderita penyimpangan mental, yang akan tepat bila dianggap sebagai permasalahan psikologisnya. Sejak masa kanak-kanak, Joe Christmas telah hidup sebagai seorang anak yatim-piatu. Salah satu sebabnya mengapa ia ditinggalkan di rumah panti

asuhan adalah karena kakeknya mengira dia anak kulit hitam. Kenyataan ini membawanya ke berbagai persoalan dan mengakibatkan permasalahan yang serius dalam hidupnya. Selanjutnya, ia berjuang baik untuk mengurangi penderitaannya maupun untuk memperoleh pengakuan individualitasnya, karena masyarakat hanya mengenal dikhotomi, yaitu komunitas kulit putih dan kulit hitam. Bagaimanapun juga, mau tak mau keadaan ini mempengaruhi perkembangan mentalnya.

Merasa telah gagal mendapatkan pengakuan kedewasaannya, Joe menyiksa dirinya sendiri karena ia pikir kegagalan yang ia alami ada kaitannya dengan keturunan kulit hitamnya. Dengan menyangkal keberadaan dirinya, Joe telah melakukan penghancuran diri sendiri. Dan lebih dari itu, ia juga telah menghancurkan dirinya sendiri dengan menolak segala alasan kemanusiaan, seperti kebutuhan untuk membina hubungan sosial yang baik dan untuk kelangsungan hidupnya dengan mengatasi segala kesulitan di lingkungannya. Faulkner telah berhasil mengungkapkan penghancuran diri sendiri Joe Christmas dengan menghadirkan keadaan setelah perang saudara di Selatan sebagai latar yang mendukung pikiran, perasaan, dan suasana jiwa yang dialami oleh pelaku utama selama masa hidupnya.

SYNOPSIS

The story is divided into three different parts which convey the main themes of the novel. They are the story of Lena Grove's adventure in finding her husband, Joe Christmas' struggle for self assertion, and Lena Grove's giving birth to her baby. The first and the third parts are purposely presented in such a way that the second part seems isolated. It is about Christmas' self isolation from human relationship which is conveyed in the second part. The second part takes almost the entire sections of novel. While the first and the third are only in a few sections and consist of some contradictory traits of Lena's personality with that of Joe's in the second part. More than that, those two characters are strangers to each other, even though Christmas has been living in a single cabin with Joe Brown, alias Lucas Burch who is Lena's husband, for three years.

Joe's life goal is only to obtain the acceptance of his manhood. Joe Christmas is an orphan considered to be partly black since he has been abandoned by his grandfather at the doorstep of the orphanage at Christmas Eve. Thus is where the name

Christmas comes from. Being a "mulatto", Christmas suffers from mental anguish.

He feels that he is unable to define his racial division since he is doubtful about his identity. The fact that the dietitian has broken his sense of order followed by the taunt of "nigger bastard" and later that she has committed conspiracy with the janitor, who is also Christmas' disguising grandfather, to get rid of him have reinforced his feeling of impending doom. His sufferings have increased when he is adopted by the McEacherns and starts living through the rigid discipline of Puritanism.

His life adventure began from his childhood in the McEacherns. Christmas was a little boy who keeps delighting himself with pleasure and ecstasy. It was too early for him to understand the meaning of self-sacrifice which was always demanded by many puritans. His foster father, who was a puritan, had emasculated his manhood with the dogmas. He unconsciously had showed him the practice of the destructive self-denial. He would surely beat Christmas whenever Christmas showed his tendency of his independent spirit or his manhood. Christmas, however, often purposely made him angry in order to

get the punishment that he had failed to obtain during his childhood. He usually found the way of getting his punishment through fightings by making his peers call him "Negro". Consequently, he had psychologically associated the fightings or any destructive conducts to the achievement of his manhood.

Furthermore, since he had nobody that he believed could serve as his ideal figure of manhood, except his foster father, Joe impersonally turned to portray his own manhood based on the puritanical ways of life. He became as hard and cold as McEachern himself; proud of suffering from his rigid self-denial. He also made himself incompatible with feminine kindness and grace represented by his foster mother who kept trying to side with him while undertaking his punishment. To Joe, she seemed to remind him of the dietitian's love affair which had broken his sense of order.

When he was eighteen, Christmas met Bobbie Allen, a prostitute, who still wanted to befriend him though she had known he was partly black. He got a nausea, which had reminded him of his childhood experience with the dietitian, when he was first seduced by Bobbie as if he had witnessed again the

scene of the dietitian's seducing Charley in the orphanage. He was awoken from his sleep that night because of the fragrance coming from the dietitian's bedroom but later he found a tooth paste instead of candies. Not realizing that he had mistakenly eaten the tooth paste for the candies, he vomitted afterwards.

He was yet unable to understand such feelings and the experience still terrified him with his obscure identity, moreover, since the dietitian had called him a "nigger bastard". Anyway, Joe managed to have good relationship with her and became so honest to her about his doubting his own identity until one day McEachern interfered their business and scolded her with "Jezebel". She, then, turned to break the relationship accompanied by the taunt of "nigger bastard". That happening almost caused Joe's murdering McEachern but had eventually led to Joe's isolating himself in order not to be recognized as a mulatto.

After his running away from the McEacherns, Christmas appeared in Jefferson at the age of thirty three. He lived in an old isolated plantation which belonged to the Burdens the abolitionist and worked for the planing mill while he was also secretly

selling whiskey. From the very time he came to Jefferson, Christmas kept on isolating himself and showing unfriendly manners to others. He shared a single cabin with Joe Brown, who was Lena's husband, side by side with Joanna's cabin. Joanna herself was a white advocate woman for the blacks, her idea was to build a family with children who had Negro blood. Therefore, she insisted Joe on proclaiming his being a black after they had had relationship for three years.

She also lied to him concerning her pregnancy thinking that she had a good reason for having a legal marriage. Feeling forced to break his isolation, Christmas tried to find reasons for not marrying her. Before his murdering Joanna accidentally, Joe was walking along the street in the night as if he was doing a ritual ceremony of cleansing. He visited two sections of the town. First, he went to the white section which he rejected because he sensed his isolation from it; the whites made him conceal his black self. Then, he visited the Negro section where he was rejected and where he realized that his isolation was complete.

Thinking it was an external force controlling his mind to pull the trigger, Joe refused to be

responsible for the murder. Meanwhile, he realized that his restlessness was caused by his refusing to proclaim his being black. Therefore, Joe changed his shoes with others belonging to a black woman to show his readiness to proclaim his black self. He knew that he had tried running away from nobody but himself. He, then, ran to Mottstown to save his life, but was caught anyway. When he was exposed to the public, Joe's grandfather, who had moved to Mottstown since Joe was adopted, demanded his death. Fortunately, when Christmas was almost lynched, the sheriff of Jefferson came and convinced the people of Mottstown that he would draw Joe to trial in Jefferson in order to get justification and punishing him as well. In order to gain the permission, the sheriff cowardly stated that he was in fact a servant of the law but he had no sympathy of higher murderers than any other white men.

On their way to Jefferson, Joe's grandparents followed him. His grandmother, who was worried about her grandson's being lynched, came to Hightower, the minister of Jefferson, asking for Hightower's help. She would like the minister to use his authority to persuade the people of Jefferson for not lynching him. She came with Byron, who was a farmer and later

also helped Lena to find her husband, convinced Hightower that Joe had been accused of doing what he had never done. Moreover, Byron said that all was Brown's story against Joe. Therefore, they wanted the minister to oppose every evidence in the story though, for sure, he himself did not know anything about the case. But, Hightower refused to do that since he was still afraid of the world; requesting for the plea proved that he was lying. In other words, he kept on isolating himself from the normal life.

The following morning, Joe had escaped from prison. Some people said that they had seen Joe's grandmother visiting him in jail, but they did not know for sure of what they were talking about. No sooner had Joe been freed, the sheriff sent the order of capturing him alive or dead. The order came to Percy Grimm, a white fanatic soldier, who was delighted to be the only one in charge to execute the order. On his way to Hightower's residence, Percy Grimm had seen Joe and, then, ran after him. When the minister saw Grimm holding a pistol, the minister tries to prevent the murder. In defending Joe, Hightower told Grimm, that Joe was a homosexual and at the night of Joanna's murder, Joe had spent

his time with Hightower. Nevertheless, Grimm did not believe him and soon ran into the kitchen where he found Joe. When Joe saw Grimm pointing his pistol at him, he felt that he would die. So, he surrendered himself passively as if he had obtained his peace. After having shot him five times, Grimm castrated Joe's dead body because he also wanted him emasculated even in hell.

About the same time with Joe's death, Lena's baby was born in Joe's cabin where she also met her baby's father. It was also the time when Hightower started to break his isolation by helping deliver the baby, though eventually he left Jefferson.

