

THE EFFECT OF CHANGES IN THE MAIN CHARACTER'S PERSONALITY TOWARDS SOCIAL SETTING
IN LOIS LOWRY'S *THE GIVER*

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ABSTRACT

The title of this research is "The Effect of Changes in the Main Character's Personality towards Social Setting in the Novel *The Giver* by Lois Lowry". The aim of this research is to point out that personality changes can have an impact on environment. Analysis descriptive method and library research are the method and technique used in conducting this research. The result of this study show that Jonas has experienced change after he receives training as *The Receiver* and feels that something has gone wrong with the place called *The Community*. Memories of the beauty of the past makes him realize that the ritual called "release" was actually an assassination. In the end, these influences made Jonas leave *The Community* to save his environment and to return it back to normal.

Keywords : social background; psychology.

I.BACKGROUND

Personality is a psychological characteristic of a person that determines and reflects how a person responds to the environment. According to Kartini Kartono (2010: 78). Personality is a behavior that differentiates itself from others. This can be seen from the structure, behavior patterns, stance, abilities and potentials of a person, everything about a person as people know. In addition, personality is a dynamic organization within the individual as a psychophysical system that determines the behavior and thoughts of individuals in a specific way in adapting to their environment (Gordon W. W Allport, 1998: 11). A person's personality and behavior can also be formed because of the experiences he experiences in life. We can see this from the adaptation process that we experience and can change at any time according to his condition in adjusting to his social environment.

The social environment has a very big influence in shaping a person's personality and behavior. For example, if a child is used to living in a bad social environment, when he grows up he will have a bad personality according to the environment in which he lives. The social environment is a

function that does not stand alone, but is interconnected and produces human behavior. The social environment consists of people, either individually or in groups around humans (Soekanto, 1986: 432). Abdulsyani (1987: 40-42) argues that a person takes action because of factors from within and from outside the environment.

Environmental impact as a factor in personality development relies on the social environment so that the social environment is one of the factors that can affect a person or group. The social environment that we know includes the family environment, peer environment, and the neighborhood environment. Family is a social environment that is first recognized by individuals since birth. The social environment according to Stroz (1987: 76) includes all world conditions which in certain ways affect one's behavior, including growth and development or life processes, which can also be viewed as a preparation of the environment (to provide environment) for other generations. . Meanwhile, Amsyari argues that (1986: 12) The social environment is other human beings around them such as neighbors, friends, and even other people around them who are not yet known.

The description of the relationship between the social environment and the changes in individual personality can be seen in the literary works of Lois Lowry's *The Giver*. This novel is studied through a literary psychology approach by focusing on the main character. During his life, Lowry succeeded in creating several works, namely *A Summer to Die* which became his first novel. In addition, his other books are *Krupnik*, *Number the Stars* and *The Giver*. Lois Lowry's *The Giver* tells the story of the life of a boy named Jonas. Jonas underwent a personality change due to something he acquired when he was twelve years old. In this novel, social setting plays an important role in changing Jonas' personality. Jonas, who at first was a quiet child, turned into a child who had a high curiosity which resulted in a curious attitude and began to rebel against the social rules in his environment which he thought were wrong.

This novel is interesting to study because it raises the issue of the personality changes of the main character that have an influence on their social background. This novel is also the only novel by Lowry which tells about a social life full of absurd rules.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

The method used in this research is descriptive analysis which refers to theories about identity, gender, psychoanalysis, and transgender. The discussion is carried out through library research (library research) with an intrinsic approach, namely direct research into David Ebershoff's *The Danish Girl* novel and manuscripts, and supporting books or other sources that are related to the object of research and also references via the internet media. The steps used in this research are research based on three-dimensional aspects, namely physiological, sociological and psychological aspects of the main character, as well as the psychoanalytic theory according to Sigmund Freud.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Giver tells the story of life in a place called "The Community". "The Community" is an environment formed by a chairman of "The Community" who is also known as the chairman of the committee. The environment is made with an aim that every citizen who lives in this area does not have the basic emotions possessed by humans, so that the environment is created without having the freedom to choose because everything in *The Community* is determined by the committee chairman. These things, on one hand, make the environment look peaceful without any crime. But on the other hand, it makes *The Community's* environment look monotonous. *The Community* forms its members not to recognize the concept of love and hate. They live according to the rules set by the committee chairman.

Jonas is one of the male citizens who live in *The Community*. At the age of twelve, Jonas followed a ritual called *The Ceremony Of Twelve* which was held at "The Community", which is a ceremony for children who have turned twelve. *The Ceremony Of Twelve* is a ceremony held by *The Community* to give assignments or jobs to children who have grown up and have been prepared since adolescence, so that they will get used to work in the future when they are adults. The job is given in accordance with the character of each individual in "The Community".

When *The Ceremony Of Twelve* took place, Jonas was the only child who was not given a job by the Committee chairman. Jonas was purposely not given a task because he had a special task, which was to become a *The Receiver* whose job was to receive past memories from a *The Giver*. *The Giver* keeps all past memories and has emotional feelings. As *The Receiver*, Jonas is required to undergo special training with a *The Giver* by holding hands so that *The Giver* can transfer past memories and feelings to Jonas.

Jonas has a new assignment as *The Receiver*, He is assisted by *The Giver*. *The Giver* provides memories of things Jonas had never seen and felt before. These memories contain life in the past about joy, parties, love, hatred, war, murder and various other emotions. The task looks easy, however, for Jonas or residents of “The Community” who have no memories of the past, they will feel a variety of things from feelings of happiness to deep sadness.

Jonas carries out his duties as a recipient of memories that had been done by previous recipients. These memories were given by *The Giver* to a *The Receiver*. On the assignment of receiving his first memories, *The Giver* gives only pleasant memories that make Jonas feel only pleasure. Through the memories given by *The Giver*, Jonas began to feel the coldness of the snow and knew of an object called a slide, besides that he also felt the heat of the sun and saw the beauty of the vast expanse of sea.

After spending several days as a *The Receiver*, Jonas began to feel confused and anxious about the changes he was experiencing, what Jonas saw through the memories given was different from what was in his environment. Until one day *The Giver* gave him a memory that made him feel very sick. Jonas had never felt such excruciating pain as he did when he received the memories. Jonas felt sad, angry, confused, anxious and depressed after receiving these memories.

Jonas senses there is something wrong with The Community. The mistake of every rule made by the leader of The Community, one of the rules that makes Jonas feel very stressed is when he finds out the true meaning of a ritual that “The Community” often performs, namely the discharge ceremony. Initially, Jonas only thought that the ceremony was a ceremony to celebrate the residents of The Community who were moved to a place called “elsewhere”. However, the memories he received from *The Giver*

indicated that what was actually called the release was the murder of the residents of “The Community” by means of death injections.

The physiological characteristics of Jonas shown by the author are described as having brighter eyes than the rest of the population, who mostly have dark eyes.

“Almost every citizen in the community had dark eyes. His parents did, and Lily did, and so did all of his group members and friends. But there were a few exceptions Jonas himself, and a female Five who he had noticed had the different, lighter eyes. (Lowry, 2014: 19). According to the quotation above, Jonas' physical characteristics are described by the author as having different physical characteristics from his friends and other residents.

Another physiological picture of Jonas was revealed by the author when Jonas was with his father, while at the Nurturing Center. It was also told that Jonas had a neatly trimmed haircut just like other children in *The Community*. Jonas was Nineteen. He had been the nineteenth new-child born his year. It had meant that at his Naming, he had been already standing and bright-eyed, soon to walk and talk. (Lowry 2014:49)

The quote shows that, from a physiological point of view, Jonas is a 19 year old teenager. At the age of Jonas, who has turned 19, he will be given a job by the Chairman of *The Community*. Another physiological image of Jonas is depicted in the way he dresses.

“But suddenly Jonas had noticed, following the path of the apple through the air with his eyes, that the piece of fruit had well, this was the part that he couldn't adequately understand the apple had *changed*. Just for an instant. It had changed in mid-air, he remembered. The nit was in his hand, and he looked at it carefully, but it was the same

apple. Unchanged. The same size and shape a perfect sphere. The same nondescript shade, about the same shade as his own tunic. (Lowry, 2014: 23). The quotation that shows about physiology is described by the author in an indirect presentation. From the information above, it illustrates physiologically that Jonas's eyes cannot see colors clearly as well as other residents. This also explains that Jonas wears clothes called tunics, these clothes also have something in common with men the same age as Jonas as the following quote: "I apologize to my classmates," Asher concluded. He smoothed his rumpled tunic and sat down. (Lowry 2014: 3).

After undergoing training, Jonas felt an oddity when he was looking at a book. *The Giver* tells us that what Jonas has seen is called color. "It happened," Jonas said. "It happened to the books, but it went away again." "I'm right, then," The Giver said. "You're beginning to see the color red."

"The what?"

The Giver sighed. "How to explain this? Once, back in the time of the memories, everything had a shape and size, the way things still do, but they also had a quality called *color*. (Lowry, 2014:94). According to the quote above, it explains that Jonas's physiological changes occurred when he became *The Receiver*, when he was carrying out his duties with *The Giver*. The physical changes that Jonas experienced also had implications for Jonas's personality changes when he could see the color of blood he saw when receiving memories of war. As the days passed, Jonas learned everything related to the memories he received until finally he began to see all colors. Apart from the rules regarding morning rituals that each family unit must perform every morning. Members of each family unit are also governed by the rules contained in *The Community*. "Maybe we could even keep him," Lily suggested sweetly, trying to look innocent. The look was fake, Jonas knew they all

knew. "Lily," Mother reminded "you know the rules." Two children — one male, one female — to each family unit. It was written very clearly in the rules. (Lowry 2014:8)

The quotation above shows the sociological dimension of the existence of rules regarding family tree, where one family consists of the father and mother and one son and daughter. This is a rule for all families in *The Community* that cannot be broken. Even though the rules regarding the family tree have been established, Jonas' father can still take care and bring the newborn baby by submitting a request to care for the baby at the Jonas family home to the chairman of *The Community*, "Instead, as a result of Father's plea, Gabriel had been labeled Uncertain and given the additional year. He would continue to be nurtured at the Center and would spend his nights with Jonas's family unit. (Lowry, 2014:41)

"Such a selection is very, very rare," the Chief Elder told the audience. "Our community has only one Receiver. It is he who trains his successor." "We have had our current Receiver for a very long time, she went on. Jonas followed here yes and saw that. (Lowry, 2014:60)

The explanation above can be seen in the sociological dimension in the field of work. When Jonas grew older, he was faced with determining the field he would live in for the rest of his life. Jonas was chosen to spend the rest of his life being a recipient of memories. A task that members of *The Community* rarely get. As the main character, Jonas is depicted as a clever person, possessing integrity and courage. This was stated by the chairman of *The Community*. "He has shown all of the qualities that a Receiver must have." With her hand still firmly on his shoulder, the Chief Elder listed the qualities. "*Intelligence*," she said. "We are all aware that Jonas has been a top student throughout his school days. "*Integrity*," she said next. "Jonas has, like all of us, committed minor

transgressions."She smiled at him."We expect that. We hoped, also, that he would present himself promptly for chastisement, and he has always done so. "Courage," she went on. "Only one of us here today has ever undergone the rigorous training required of a Receiver. (Lowry 2014:62)

The quote above explains Jonas's psychology, which was mentioned by the chairman of *The Community*, some of the qualities that Jonas possessed made him qualify as the only one who has the right to become *The Receiver*. Jonas' intelligence makes him a person who has high curiosity.

"But I want them!" Jonas said angrily. "It isn't fair that nothing has color!" "Not fair?" *The Giver* looked at Jonas curiously. "Explain what you mean." "Well..." Jonas had to stop and think it through. (Lowry, 2014:97).

According to the information above, it shows that Jonas has high sense of curiosity which then causes Jonas to experience inner conflict such as man against himself conflict, he experiences dilemma when he finds out about the truth in *The Community*. Dilemma is a situation when the character is trapped in two choices that are unpleasant and difficult for him (Perrine, 1983: 43).

During *the Ceremony Of Twelve*, it is said that all the children who are about Jonas's age gathered in an auditorium to be given jobs by the committee chairman. "Jonas has not been assigned," Chief Elder informed crowd, and his heart sank. Then she went on "Jonas has been selected" He blinked. What did that mean? He felt a collective, questioning stir from the audience. They, too, were puzzled. (Lowry, 2014:60)

This explains that there is a mismatch between expectations and reality that happened to Jonas (irony of situation). When only Jonas was left unnamed at *the*

Ceremony Of Twelve he should have got the job. Jonas and other members of *The Community* felt ashamed of the incident and did not expect that a smart child like Jonas could not get a job.

So many bitter memories from the past make Jonas mentally yearn for his old life when he was not chosen to be *The Receiver*, even though Jonas realized that he would not be able to return to the previous time. He wanted his childhood again, his scraped knees and ball games. He sat in his dwelling alone, watching through the window, seeing children at play, citizens bicycling home from uneventful days at work, ordinary lives free of anguish because he had been selected, as others before him had, to bear their burden. (Lowry 2014:121)

Jonas experienced the conflict man against himself, he was experiencing mental pressure because he missed his childhood and his old life. Jonas realized that he could not return, because he had learned so much about joy, color and love. When Jonas was in a depressed mood, he thought he didn't want to continue his training and tried to live his life as usual.

Jonas did not want to go back. He didn't want the memories, didn't want the honor, didn't want the wisdom, didn't want the pain. But the choice was not this. He returned each day to the Annex Room. *The Giver* was gentle with him for many days following the terrible sharing memory of war. "There are so many good memories," *The Giver* reminded Jonas. And it was true. By now Jonas had experienced countless bits of happiness, things he had never known of before. (Lowry 2014:121)

Jonas has been able to feel emotions, feelings and know what really happened in *The Community*, now he feels that he is angry even in front of his friends. The depression in Jonas is that Jonas experiences a sad or grieving mood

and lasts too long. When Jonas was very surprised after finding out that his father had been carrying out a murder, he was called releasing, but Jonas knew that his father was not aware of what it meant to be released. In this situation, this is a man against himself conflict, when Jonas's must try to accept the reality of the real meaning of the ritual called "release."

Jonas was in great pain and wanted to find a way out in his tears. Jonas felt a ripping sensation inside himself, the feeling of terrible pain clawing its way forward to emerge in a cry. The emergence of heartache that causes the main character to experience depression. In the life of *The Community*, Jonas never knew that war and murder could traumatize him. This was also triggered by changes in Jonas who could see colors and now he has emotions in himself.

The Giver will give about the memory of courage determination to Jonas. Jonas needed that memory so that he could find "Elsewhere", and they realized that it would be a difficult journey. Jonas worked at keeping his voice absolutely calm. "When?" he asked. "When will he be released?"

"First thing tomorrow morning. We have to start our preparations for the Naming Ceremony, so we thought we'd get this taken care of right away. (Lowry, 2014: 163) The ego that appears in Jonas is supported by his *id*, namely the presence of a personality executive who tries to fulfill the *id*'s needs of the main character.

Jonas has taken Gabriel with him on a motorbike. "And he had taken Gabriel, too. He could feel the little head nudge his back, bounce gently against him as he rode. Gabriel was sleeping soundly, strapped into the seat "(Lowry, 2014: 165)

He knew that he had the remaining hours of night before they would be aware of his escape. So he rode hard, steadily, willing himself not to tire as the minutes and miles passed. he relied on what he had, and hoped it would be enough. (Lowry, 2014: 166)

Finally Jonas saw a small residence which indicated that he had made it across the edge of *The Community*'s borders. There is a super ego in Jonas, it can be seen that stimuli in the form of pain and sadness he received when he received memories triggered a personality change in Jonas which required him to break the rules. The pain of knowing the truth that actually happened in *The Community*, drove Jonas to keep on going with his journey before he arrived at his destination.

IV. CONCLUSION

In accordance with the analytical study of the novel *The Giver*, that changes in the personality of the main character have an impact on the environment due to a series of events and conflicts internally and externally in the environment, giving rise to *id*, *ego* and *superego* in the main character which have an effect on changes in the main character's personality.

Internal factors, in the form of depression and ambition, play a role as an influence on the personality changes of Jonas. Jonas's feelings of depression create an ambition to save the residents of *The Community*. The *id* in Jonas encourages him to live a normal life and not want to be in an environment where he has to violate the wrong rules that exist in that environment. The actions taken by Jonas are a form of support from *Id* who forms *Ego*. The pain and deep sadness made Jonas realize that his environment had a positive impact on his actions and made Jonas take Gabriel across the border of *The Community* and break the rules. The action that Jonas took was a form of support from the *id*

that made the ego. Then, there was deep pain and sadness after knowing that his environment had been wrong. This is represented as the superego which provides positive impulses in the character's personality.

In addition, external factors, namely conflict, also played a role that could influence Jonas' personality change. The conflict experienced in the main character when Jonas felt a dilemma resulted in a personality change. The main character since childhood lives in his environment that has been formed and governed by the founder of *The Community*, but when Jonas learns the truth. The character is caught in two choices that are unpleasant and difficult for him. The impact of the conflict experienced by the main character can also be seen when the main character starts to feel angry with the people around him and his friends (man against environment), because they are happy without knowing what is really happening in *The Community*.

After the conflict experienced by the main character and his environment, the main character again experiences a conflict between man and man. Jonas felt depressed and grieved when he learned the true meaning of the release, Jonas was angry trying to leave the training venue but *The Giver* tried to hold Jonas until he convinced him that he was willing to continue training. Jonas cannot accept the fact that his father has committed a murder that he is not aware of, this incident also further affects Jonas' personality change. Jonas realized that without *The Giver* he could not save *The Community* but his inner turmoil would continue his training.

The conflict within the main character has a positive impact on Jonas' changed personality, namely the conflict between the *man against the environment* when Jonas is declared a fugitive and sought by *The Community*. This made Jonas not give up and endured fatigue after going across the border of *The Community* with Gabriel.

Based on the discussion, it can be concluded that the social background influences the change in the personality of the main character so that it has a positive impact on the environment in the form of a return to a sense of feeling or feeling so that the members of *The Community* are able to stop rules such as release which are not rules for moving *The Community* residents to a place. but rather to eliminate residents deemed ineligible by killing and having a negative impact on *The Community's* environment. Memories of the beauty of the past and realizing that the ritual called release is a murder, in the end these influences make Jonas leave to return his environment back to normal again.

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