

CHARACTER CHANGE OF THE MAIN CHARACTER IN OLIVER BOWDEN'S *ASSASSIN'S CREED: FORSAKEN*

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ABSTRACT

The topic of this research is related to the character change experienced by the main character in the novel *Assassins Creed: Forsaken* by Oliver Bowden. This research uses the descriptive analysis research method with the literature study technique which produces findings in the form of intrinsic elements such as characterization, plot, conflict, and setting. Extrinsic elements, namely psychological theories, through the perspective of psychoanalysis, are used to find out the factors that cause the character changes to occur in the main character. Other findings in this research also include character change caused by an event and interaction with other individuals.

Keywords: Changes of Character; Main Character; Change Factor.

I. BACKGROUND

Literature works, especially novels, generally contain intrinsic and extrinsic elements. Extrinsic elements, such as psychology, make literature works, namely novels, more interesting. The characters and characterizations display various characters and behaviors related to psychology and psychological experiences or conflicts as experienced by humans in real life (Minderop, 1:2018). Literature is an interesting study material because it is not just a text study, but also a study material that involves the character or personality of fictional characters, literary authors, and readers (Minderop, 1:2018). Atkinson (1996:7) in Minderop (2018:3) reveals that psychology comes from the Greek word *psyche* which means soul, and *logos* which means knowledge. So psychology is the science of the soul or the science that investigates or studies human behavior.

When talking about psychoanalysis, cannot be separated from Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory, Freud's psychoanalytic theory is the most comprehensive theory among other personality theories (Alwisol, 13: 2019). Freud argued that books reveal not only the great problems of science but also the riddles about the true nature of life or the nature of life; the book also presents a variety of conflicting feelings, urges, and expressions that refer to psychoanalysis (Minderop, 12:2018).

Ratna (2003:343) in Minderop (2018:54) states that the purpose of psychology in literature is to understand the psychological aspects contained in a work through the understanding of the characters, for example, the public can understand changes, contradictions, and other deviations that occur in society. Especially those related to the *psyche*.

Literature works often use psychology to describe the characters in it. Personality psychology is often used to describe characters in novels. The study of personality must understand the understanding of what constitutes it, why there are always differences in perception between individuals and other individuals, and how personality develops and constantly changes throughout human life (Minderop, 5: 2018).

Santro (1988:435) in Minderop (2018:4) reveals that many people believe that each individual has characteristics or personality traits that designate it. Innateness which includes thoughts, feelings, and behavior is a characteristic of a person that shows how individuals adapt and compromise in life, while other experts state that personality is formed by the birth potential that is modified by cultural experiences and unique experiences that affect an individual. Personality according to psychology can refer to the characteristic patterns of behavior and thought patterns that determine a person's assessment of the environment (Minderop, 4:2018).

Oliver Bowden's *Assassins Creed: Forsaken* tells the story of the main character named Haytham Kenway a 10-year-old boy who lives in an affluent neighborhood in London. His perfect life changes when his house is attacked and burned by an unknown group of people. His father was killed by the group in front of Haytham and so was her sister Jenny kidnapped by the group.

The incident caused a sense of wanting revenge until he grew up. Haytham's characteristics change due to his interactions with people and the environment in the *Templar Order*, and the events he experienced as a child, which made him a murderer and vindictive.

Oliver Bowden is a writer from Ilford, Essex who grew up in London. Bowden has written novelizations of several *Assassins Creed Games*. Other than *Assassin's Creed* series, Bowden also writes a couple of novels like *The hanging gale*, *City of Gold*, *Into darkness*, and *City of lies*.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

The research design of this research is qualitative research, whilst the research method that is used is the descriptive analysis method. According to Prof. Dr. Nyoman Kutha Ratna, descriptive analysis is carried out by describing words which are then compiled with analysis (Ratna, 2015: 53). This research will be conducted using the descriptive analysis method by describing the characters in the novel through the data that has been found.

III. RESULT & DISCUSSION

Haytham Kenway is the son of Edward and Tessa Kenway and also the half-sister of Jenny Kenway who lives in London in 1735. On his 10th birthday, Haytham's house is attacked by armed strangers. The intruder kills Haytham's father and kidnaps her sister Jenny and burns their house, this incident creates feelings of revenge on Haytham and intends to find the father's killer.

After the incident, Haytham was ordered to go with Reginald Birch who was the manager who worked with Edward and also Jenny Kenway's lover, they intend to find Jenny and go to Europe.

Twelve years later in 1747, Haytham and Birch had been living together in a palace in France for 5 years which became their second home. In 1744, Haytham was introduced into an

order namely the Templars, the order intends to use Haytham's ability to use the sword to kill to keep the cause of the Templars.

After a few years away from London Haytham got the news that his mother had died of an illness. While at his mother's funeral, Haytham looks for information on the whereabouts of Digweed, who is suspected of having killed his father and attacked his home. Haytham manages to find Digweed and the other two perpetrators, the pointy-eared man and the western-accented man, but it is known that they are not the real killers but someone's accomplices.

Two years later Haytham managed to find Jenny who was sold by a Turkish slave trader to the Ottoman palace, Haytham manages Jenny from the palace. Jenny says Birch is a traitor, he has made Haytham a Templar, and the people who attacked their house were Templars. Birch was the one who planned all of this, including killing Edward and taking Haytham's childhood. Birch kills Edward so he can retrieve the journal he kept. Birch was the leader of all the events that Haytham had been through. Haytham and Jenny attack Birch who is pushed by Jenny towards the door where there is a sword stuck. Birch is killed in the same way as Edward Kenway, namely with a sword stuck in his chest.

Based on the novel *Assassins' Creed: Forsaken* by Oliver Boden, the character Haytham, is the main character in the novel because it is the character who has the dominant intensity of involvement that makes him an important character. This is evidenced from the very beginning of the story, the Haytham character introduces himself and explains an event he has experienced since childhood. The way the main character dresses is his trademark

until he is 30 years old, which is wearing a vest but still neat, also wearing a scarf and a cocked hat. "*Behind Jenny came Holden who like me, wore a buttoned-up frock coat, scarf and cocked hat.*" (2012:236).

In his childhood, the main character has a shy nature that causes him to have no friends, he is also a very loving person towards his father because he has given him knowledge. In addition, Haytham is also happy to find a place or room that is rarely passed by people in his house so as not to be disturbed when playing alone, this shows that the main character is a loner.

The main character shows great courage when he finds his house was attacked, and one of the attackers tries to attack his mother from behind. Haytham manages to save his mother but on the other hand, the attacker manages to kill his father.

As a result of this incident, the main character feels vindictive against the murderer for killing his beloved father, kidnapping his sister, and burning his house. He intends to kill the murderer because he is deeply saddened by the loss of his father, sister, and home, especially when the incident occurred on his tenth birthday. The incident caused no birthday celebrations, only a funeral, and his house was burned to the ground.

"Two days ago I should have been celebrating my tenth birthday at my home in Queen Anne's Square. Instead, my birthday has gone unremarked; there are no celebrations, only funerals, and our burnt-out house is like a blackened, rotted tooth among the

tall, white brick mansions of Queen Anne's Square." (2012:1).

It can be concluded from some of the discussions above that the attack and murder incident was an initial factor in changing the characteristics of the main character in the novel *Assassin's Creed Forsaken*. This has a tremendous impact on the main character's childhood because it causes deep feelings of sadness and also creates feelings of revenge.

After the incident, Haytham met with Mr. Birch to collect a gift from his father which was supposed to be given on his birthday. Mr. Birch invites Haytham to go with him to Europe to find his kidnapped sister, Jenny. Birch tries to urge Haytham to come with him to join the Templar order and tries to convince Haytham that he is the only hope to save his kidnapped sister.

Haytham's character develops from childhood to adulthood. He is proficient with the sword and uses his skills to kill. Haytham's character also has an aggressive nature in carrying out assassination tasks as mentioned in the quote.

"They may be vigilant; undoubtedly they would be expert swordsmen; they would be skilled in the business of death. But then, I am vigilant. I am an expert swordsman. And I am skilled in the business of death. I have a natural aptitude for it. Although, unlike theology, philosophy, classics, and my languages, particularly Spanish, which is so good that I'm able to pass a Spaniard here in Altea, albeit a somewhat reticent one, I take no pleasure in my skill at death.

Simply I just good at it." (2012:59).

The main character lives and is in the Templar neighborhood for five years after his residence in the city of London. This situation drives the main character to adapt himself to the new environment which is a factor in his character change. Haytham begins to trust Reginald and learns about the Templars. Reginald has guided Haytham from childhood to adulthood. It can be said that Reginald is a character who supports changes in the characteristics of the main character. The main character develops by living his father's ideals and adopting or learning new things as well.

"This feeling-this feeling of "knowing" that Reginald imbued in me was my guide from boyhood to adulthood. I never forgot my Father's teachings, on the contrary, he would have been proud of me because I questioned his ideals. In doing so I adopted new ones." (2012:55).

It can be said that Reginald Birch's character is a factor that causes character changes in the main character. As mentioned before, Haytham's characters were shy, aloof, loving, and kind, then drastically turns into someone who without hesitation killed his target, aggressive and very acutely observant.

The main character's ability to kill, to assassinate people who are targets for the benefit of the Templar order. Haytham has been shaped by Mr. Birch to become the most reliable assassin in the Templar order.

The interaction between Haytham and Reginald is a close relationship that affects Haytham's characteristics to completely change. Haytham has carried out many assassinations on orders from Reginald.

“And then I took out my sword. It was fitting-ironic, perhaps-that it should have been the sword given to me by my father. These days, I rarely go anywhere without it. Years ago Reginald asked me when I expected it to taste blood, and it has, of course. Many times.” (2012:71).

The quote above proves the change in the characteristics of the main character is caused by Reginald. This causes the main character to join the Templar order and help Reginald carry out his goals and forget his true purpose which is to find Jenny and her father's killer.

Haytham gets word from Birch that his mother has died of an illness. Birch takes advantage of the moment by knowing Haytham that the only family he has now is him and the Order of the Templars. “*your family is the Order now, Haytham. You can come to us for anything*” (2012:62).

The main character's ambition to find the murderer is increasing, Haytham also says that Reginald has educated him to kill but Reginald cannot always give orders to Haytham who to kill, one of Haytham's current targets is the murderer. This shows that their characteristics have changed completely, he no longer kills on orders but of his own volition which is to find and kill his father's killer.

“I snorted. “Just because you taught me to kill, Reginald, it doesn't give you the final say on whom I kill and to what end”, “I taught you honor. I taught you a code”, “I remember you, Reginald, about to dispense your form of justice outside white's all those years ago. Was that

honorable?”, “the man was a thief” he said, “the men I seek are murderers, Reginald”. (2012:83).

Haytham managed to get information related to the incident and who was the real culprit behind the murder. Haytham was also informed that his father was an Assassin and not a Templar like himself and his father was killed by something he had. Haytham begins to feel something is odd because he feels the murder was planned and Reginald never told about his father who is an Assassin. “*I looked out of the window, wrestling with feelings of doubt, guilt, and disloyalty, wondering if there was anyone I truly trusted—anyone to whom I remained truly loyal now*”. (2012:117).

One day Haytham gets a letter from Holden containing information on where his sister Jenny is, the letter is the answer to what Haytham is looking for, which is to find the real killer of his father, and the main character is tired of the sadness and suffering he goes through and wants freedom. He still has an unfinished goal of finding his father's killer and finding Jenny. This shows that the main character has realized that his search with Reginald is not producing anything and is only being used for Reginald's benefit, Haytham decides to look for Jenny with Holden. Haytham and Holden found Jenny after several months of searching for her, Jenny was found in the city of Damascus in a palace called As'ad Pasha Al-Azm.

Haytham and Holden managed to free Haytham's sister, Jenny, who became a slave in the palace. An argument ensues when Jenny finds out that Haytham is a Templar. Haytham insists he is a Templar like Birch, which is something that deviates greatly from his father's beliefs. Haytham questions his identity as an Assassin and his position as a Templar.

Haytham also explains to his sister that it was Reginald who had taken care of him and guided him after the attack.

“Reginald is my mentor, my Grand Master. It was he who looked after me in the years after the attack.”(2012:233).

Jenny reveals to Haytham that Birch was the Templar that also planned the attack on his home, as he wanted to retrieve the journal that was his father's. *“it was your friends The Templars who attacked our home”*(2012:234).

Jenny hopes Haytham still idolizes their father as he did when he was a kid. From Jenny's statement, we can see the characteristics of the main character that not only does he loves his father but also idolizes him more than anything. This indicates that his childhood was depending on his father. *“I expect you idolized Father, did you, Haytham? Probably still do. Your sun and moon? My father my king?”* (2012:233).

After years of suspicion, Haytham finally realized Reginald Birch was responsible for his father's death, Birch had planned the attack on his home and stolen his father's precious book containing Assassin's secrets.

“I've spent years suspecting, ignoring the obvious. The book you saw in the carriage that night—Reginald has it with him. He'll have it in that house if I'm not very much mistaken. It was he who organized the raid on our house. He who is responsible for Father's death.” (2012:245).

Haytham began to realize that everything Reginald said since he was a child was knowledge and everything he knew and his childhood was made up of their plans.

“Reginald told me he was warning Father...” *“More lies,*

Haytham...” I looked up at her, trembling slightly. Yes. More lies. Everything I knew—my entire childhood, all of it built on a foundation of them.” (2012:238).

The quote above shows that the changing factors in the characteristics of the main character originated from Reginald and the Templars that were planned and the main character finally realized it.

Haytham starts planning his revenge, he plans it according to what Birch did when he attacked his house, then attacks at night and kills everyone there. *“We do what they did the night they attacked us at Queen Anne's Square. We wait until nightfall. And then we go in there, and we kill people.”*(2012:237). This is where revenge begins, after knowing all the truth about Birch, the main character wants to kill Birch to take revenge.

When they start attacking at night, the main character has high ambitions for revenge, even letting his killing instinct work for itself to finish off the guard who was holding him back. *“There was terror in his eyes; my blood was up. I felt more animal than man, working on pure instinct, as though I had levitated from my own body and was watching myself fight.”* (2012:242).

Reginald died with a sword stuck in the back, just as his troops killed Haytham's father by stabbing a sword in the chest. *“Reginald pinned to the door and looking from me to his chest where the point of the sword protruded from it”* (2012:253).

Haytham's father taught him about mercy and forgiveness but Haytham's character was the opposite of what his father had taught him. He remains an evil person who kills mercilessly. It can be stated that Haytham's characteristics have changed completely after what he had been

through ever since he was mentored by Reginald, and even after Reginald's death, his characteristics remained unchanged. The violence taught by Reginald is inevitable which eventually becomes a part of Haytham's characteristics.

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion above, regarding the character changes in the main character in Oliver Bowden's *Assassin's Creed: Forsaken*, it is found that the main character is a child who experiences a terrible event that changes his characteristics and his life until he grows up. This main character is used as the object of discussion in researching character changes using a psychological approach.

The main character at first is someone loving, shy, friendly, and polite then turns into someone who is vindictive, hard to trust someone, has no sympathy and compassion, arrogant and self-confident. The main character also turns into a ruthless assassin at the behest of the antagonist and continues after the antagonist is killed.

The factors that influence the character change in the main character come from environmental factors, namely a terrible experience or event that causes the main character to lose several people he loves and change his life. The second factor is the setting or place where the main character grew up, namely in London and his characteristics changed when he was in France with the antagonist that guided him to adulthood and trained him to be an assassin.

The main character overcomes his feelings of revenge by committing premeditated murder against the antagonist like he did when the main character was a child by attacking the

murderer at night and stabbing a sword in his chest just like his father's death.

After the antagonist dies, the main character does not return to the way he was when he was a child but remains as someone cruel in killing, arrogant, and does not trust anyone. This proves that one's character can be something difficult to change.

Based on the whole process of this research, it can be concluded that the main character is someone who experiences character changes over time that are caused by external factors since his childhood. Character changes in the main character are negative, one of which is being vindictive, the feelings of revenge. Such changes also affect his attitude to be aggressive, which is shown by the main character's action to defend his ego by betraying and killing the antagonist to take revenge.

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