

**SOCIAL DISCRIMINATION IN JANE AUSTEN'S
SENSE AND SENSIBILITY (1811):
A MARXIST APPROACH**

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**SOCIAL DISCRIMINATION IN JANE AUSTEN'S
SENSE AND SENSIBILITY (1811):
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ABSTRACT

The major problem of this study is how the effort of Dashwood family in *Sense and Sensibility* to get an *equality* in their life and the objective of this study is to analyze the novel based on the structural elements and to analyze the novel based on *Marxist approach*. The type of this research is qualitative research. Type of data of the study is taken from two data resources: primary and secondary. The primary data source is *Sense and Sensibility* novel by *Jane Austen* release in 1811. While secondary data sources are taken from books, author's biography, essay, critics and internet related to the study. Both data are collected by conducting library research and analyzed by descriptive analysis. Based on the analysis the researcher portrays some conclusion. Second, the result, *Marxist approach* shows that in order to get a prosperity the major characters Elinor Dashwood and Marianne Dashwood have to trough several conflicts those are: cultural conflict and social conflict. Then, after overcoming those conflicts Elinor Dashwood and Marianne Dashwood finally found what they are looking for and live happily.

Key Words: Jane Austen, Sense and Sensibility, equality, Karl Marx, A Marxist Approach, better life.

A. Introduction

1. Background of the Study

In this research, the researcher takes issue about social discrimination that occur in *Sense and Sensibility* novel. One of the purpose of people in their life is to get prosperity, prosperity here means a good education, good job and good social status. Because everybody have different status in their life social class appear in life that make people different one to another. Marx Stated that “all society that had ever existed had been class societies of one kind or another” (Saunders, 1990: 5). And because of this difference discrimination accour Ansel said that “Discrimination refers to unfair treatment of some sort”. (Ansel, ET all, 1988: 290), Ansel also mentions that “discrimination is costly both to individual and to society” (Ansel, ET all, 1988: 304).

The researcher analyzes the novel entitled *Sense and Sensibility* written by Jane Austen. Jane Austen was an English novelist who works on romantic fiction and she is one of the most widely read writers in English literature. Jane Austen’s realism, biting irony and social commentary have gained her historical importance among scholars and critics in her life. Jane Austen had written some novels, They are *Sense and Sensibility* (1811), *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), *Mansfield Park* (1814), and *Emma* (1815), and because of that she achieved succeed as a published writer. *Sense and sensibility* is a

novel written by Jane Austen and published in 1811, and it is one of the greatest Jane Austen literary works, *sense and sensibility* takes a theme as romantic fiction better known as a comedy of manner, *sense and sensibility* takes a place in southwest England, London, and Kent between 1792-1797. Jane Austen's *sense and sensibility* tells about the life and love of the Dashwood sister, Elinor and Marianne. One of the main character Elinor Dashwood is an elder daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Dashwood, she is 19 years old at the beginning of the book, she has high responsibility to her family and she places their welfare and interests above her own and suppresses her own strong emotion in a way that lead others to think she is cold hearted. Opposite with Elinor, Marianne Dashwood is romantic and expressive, she is 16 years old in the beginning of the book Marianne undergoes the most development within the book, learning her sensibilities have been selfish.

There are several reasons why the researcher chose this novel to be studied. The first is because *sense and sensibility* is one of the greatest literary works written by Jane Austen and it is one of the greatest literary works in England. The second one is because the story of the novel is portray a social life and with analyzing it the writer hopes understand more about social problem and how to solve it. The third is this novel can be analyzed through Marxist approach.

From the reasons and illustration above the researcher decided to give the title of this study social discrimination in Jane Austen's *sense and sensibility* (1811): a Marxist approach.

2. Literature Reviews

To prove the originality of this research, the researcher wants to present the previous researches that deal with Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility*.

The first researcher is Nurhayati, Erna (2010) from Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta, in her study *A Pragmatic Expression in Sense and Sensibility Novel*. This research is linguistic study. The purpose of her research is to describe the linguistics form, the intention of the speaker and the politeness strategies of phatic expression. Her research focuses on describing the data (phatic expression) in its linguistics form by employing in novel by using speech act theory and cooperative principle, describing the politeness strategies of phatic expression used in the sense and sensibility novel by using context of speech and politeness pattern. The writer finds that from 25 data there are 16 sentence of declarative, 2 sentence of imperative and 7 sentence of interrogative. The similarity of this research is in the object of the study. The writer tries to analyze the same object with the previous study but in different source.

The second researcher is Triyani, Triyani (2009) from Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta, in her study *Anxiety in Jane*

Austen's Sense and Sensibility: A Psychoanalytic Approach. In this research the researcher tries to analyze the novel in literature point of view. The purpose of her research is to reveal how the major characters reflect her anxiety. In her research her finding is *Sense and Sensibility* is a novel that reflects the author's idea and intention that Jane Austen wants to show that there is no benefit from keeping secret in deep feeling. Jane Austen tells that the problem of the major character causes the conflict of her mental condition. It brings her into anxiety because the influence of her personality. Her personality is driven by her id, but her superego always warns her not allow her id controlling her behavior.

The third research is Lathifahnum, Muannisa (2007) from Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta, in her study *A Conflict of Love in Jane Austen's Sense and Sensibility: A Marxist Approach.* This research is literary study. Her finding are, Austen tries to explore the balance between social and materialistic life. Wealthy is not the most important thing in having happiness. Happiness is an important thing in human's life supported by faithfulness and trust worthy. Second, in Marxist perspective, Jane Austen criticizes the social condition, why there must be any different classes in the society. Marriage is the solution that happens between the two different classes. The marriage will erase the social classes, because the rank between man and woman, bourgeoisie and proletariat become equal

after the marriage happens. The similarity of this research is in the object of the study and the theory that is used. The writer tries to analyze the same object with the previous study but in different issue.

The previous study above is really important for the writer to help the writer to find the right book to the research. For this study the writer analyzes the social discrimination with the data source is *Sense and Sensibility* novel. The writer uses the different data source in order to prove the originality of this research.

3. Problem Statement

Based on the background of the research, the researcher proposed a single problem statement. The main problem in this research is “how the social discrimination is portrayed in Jane Austen’s *Sense and Sensibility*”.

4. Objective of the Study

In carrying this research the researcher formulates the objective of the study as follow: To analyse the major character effort for equality based on the Marxist perspective.

5. Beneficial of the Study

a. Theoretical Benefits

This research can be used to give contribution and an academic reference by other resercher to conduct further research, particularly the literary studies on an Marxist Approach in effort for equality in mainly character.

b. Practical Benefits

To give knowledge and experience of the researcher and the other students who have interest with literary study on the novel from Marxist Approach.

B. Research Method

The research method of this research paper is broken down into five elements: (1) Type of the Study, (2) Object of the Study, (3) Type of Data and Data Source, (4) Technique of the Data Collecting and (5) technique of the Data Analysis.

1. Type of the Study

In this research, the researcher uses qualitative research study which takes the source data from words and other written text. Qualitative study is concerned with providing description of the phenomena that occur naturally. This study attempted to present the data from perspective of the observed subject.

2. Object of the Study

The object of the research is *Sense and Sensibility* novel by (Jane Austen, the researcher is going to analyse it by using Marxist Approach).

3. Type of the Data and the Data Sources

a. Primary Data resources

The primary data source of the study is *Sense and Sensibility* novel by Jane Austen.

b. Secondary Data Resources

The secondary data are taken from other sources, which are related to the primary data that support the analysis. They are book, internet data and virtual references as documentation.

4. Technique of the Data Collection

The technique of collecting data is library research. The data from both primary and secondary sources are collected as evidence.

These are technique of collecting data are as follows:

- a. Reading and Learning comprehension the novel repeatedly.
- b. Reading and translating the novel to get more understanding.
- c. Reading some related reference to observe the theory, data and information.
- d. Accessing to the internet to get several information and article related to the object of the study.
- e. Making a summary and determining (title, issue, topic, theory) about that novel.
- f. Classifying the data into several part categories.
- g. Drawing conclusion based on the data analysis.

5. Technique of the Data Analysis

The technique of data analysis in this research paper is descriptive qualitative analysis who the researcher identifies the effort for equality from main characters in *Sense and Sensibility* novel uses Marxist Approach.

C. Finding and Discussion

1. Notion of the Marxist Approach

Suseno said that, “Marxist is terminology relationship between social, political and economic concept” (Suseno, 2001: 5). Meanwhile Forgacs said that, “Marxist is a thought based on Karl Marx idea and a political practice that develop by change in the world” (Forgacs, 1987: 166). From several definitions above, Marxist can be refer as an ideology that based on the Karl Marx thought that study about the relation between economic, social and politic in society. Marxist Approach is devided into several parts there are : dialectical materialism, historical materialism, alienation, class struggle.

a. Dialectical Materialism

In dialectical materialism, the history of society consist of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. Thesis is the first idea, concept or argument deals with the problem. Sometimes people accept thesis and sometimes people deny thesis. The contrary of thesis will create antithesis. Thesis and antithesis will formulate synthesis.

The novel *Sense and Sensibility* express the process of dialectical materialism. The struggle of Dashwood sister especially Elinor and Marianne to get prosperity and equality can be seen in this process. Thesis comes when Mr. Henry

Dashwood died and give all his wealth to his son and left nothing to the Dashwood sister,

Mrs. John Dashwood now installed herself mistress of Norland; and her mother and sisters-in-law were degraded to the condition of visitors (S&S; P: 8).

John Dashwood and Fanny Dashwood become a new owner of the norland Park and for the Dashwood girls, they have become more like guest in their own resident. After several times Dashwood girls have to move out from their own resident Norland Park to the Barton Cottage which is smaller than Norland Park.

Many were the tears shed by them in their last adieus to a place so much beloved. 'Dear, dear Norland!' said Marianne, as she wandered alone before the house (S&S; P: 32).

Finally after went throught a hardship Elinor and Marianne found what are they looking for is that a housband that love them, accept them not because of money but pure love.

...It was only to ask Elinor to marry him...(S&S; P: 433).
... the marriage of Colonel Brandon and Marianne...(S&S; P: 451).

b. Historical Materialism

Historical in historical materialism here means an event that occurs in the past while materialism is a philosophy that studies about possession from both definition historical materialism in Marxist point of view is a system of thought that emphasizes the

relationship between social, politic and economy. The fact is the primary purpose and motivation of people existence is economic in other word economic is based and most crucial factor in people life. "Marx states that peoples' story, action and believe is determined by economic condition" (Bressler, 1999: 213).

The definition of historical materialism can be reflected in character and characterization, setting and style. The character in *Sense and Sensibility* is divided into two groups; they are the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. In *Sense and Sensibility* Jane Austen has a different point of view. She look everyone is the same. Everyone can live in harmonie thought they are from bourgeoisie or the proletariat.

In getting an equality, the major character (who come from the proletariat) especially Elinor and Marianne have to deal with some conflicts. The conflicts among the characters in the novel *Sense and Sensibility* express the historical materialism. The first character related to the social discrimination of the girls major character is John Dashwood. John Dashwood is Mr. Henry Dashwood's son from his first wife and he broke his promis to take care Mrs.Dashwood and her three daughter because he want increase his own wealth.

'I believe you are right, my love; it will be better that there should by no annuity in the case; whatever I may give them occasionally will be of far greater assistance than a yearly

allowance, because they would only enlarge their style of living if they felt sure of a larger income, and would not be sixpence the richer for it at the end of the year. It will certainly be much the best way. A present of fifty pounds, now and then, will prevent their ever being distressed for money, and will, I think, be amply discharging my promise to my father? (S&S: P: 12).

The second last related to the social discrimination of the girls major characters Fanny Dashwood. Fanny Dashwood is John Dashwood's wife because of her greedy she manipulate her husband to drop his gift to her sister.

‘Well, then, LET something be done for them; but THAT something need not be three thousand pounds. Consider,’ she added, ‘that when the money is once parted with, it never can return. Your sisters will marry, and it will be gone for ever. If, indeed, it could be restored to our poor little boy—’ (S&S: P: 9-10).

‘Oh! beyond anything great! What brother on earth would do half so much for his sisters, even if REALLY his sisters! And as it is—only half blood!—But you have such a generous spirit!’ (S&S; P: 10).

Those two characters have a close relation with Elinor and Marianne. Elinor is eldest daughter of Mr. Dashwood and Mrs Dashwood and a half blood sister of John Dashwood. She has an excellent heart, strong feeling, and her disposition was affection. Actually she is firstly come from the high class like John Dashwood. Because of her father's death, all of his wealth goes to his son John. Berfore her father's death John promise to take care of Mrs. Dashwood and her three daughters but after being manipulate by his wife Fanny John broke his promise and left nothing to his sister.

The family of Dashwood had long been settled in Sussex. Their estate was large, and their residence was at Norland Park, in the centre of their property, where, for many generations, they had lived in so respectable a manner as to engage the general good opinion of their surrounding acquaintance.(S&S; P : 1).

”Elinor, this eldest daughter, whose advice was so effectual, possessed a strength of understanding, and coolness of judgment, which qualified her, though only nineteen, to be the counselor of her mother, and enabled her frequently to counteract, to the advantage of them all, that eagerness of mind in Mrs. Dashwood which must generally have led to imprudence. She had an excellent heart;—her disposition was affectionate, and her feelings were strong; but she knew how to govern them: it was a knowledge which her mother had yet to learn; and which one of her sisters had resolved never to be taught” (S&S; P: 6).

Marianne is Elinor’s Sister. She is the middle daughter of the Dashwood family. Actually she is also come from the high class same as Elinor. But because of John and his wife greedy she become poor. Marianne is different than Elinor, she acts the sensibility. She show her emotion and what she felt.

The family of Dashwood had long been settled in Sussex. Their estate was large, and their residence was at Norland Park, in the centre of their property, where, for many generations, they had lived in so respectable a manner as to engage the general good opinion of their surrounding acquaintance.(S&S; P : 1).

“Marianne’s abilities were, in many respects, quite equal to Elinor’s. She was sensible and clever; but eager in everything: her sorrows, her joys, could have no moderation. She was generous, amiable, interesting: she was everything but prudent. The resemblance between her and her mother was strikingly great” (S&S; P: 6).

The setting of place describes the grouping class between bourgeois and proletariat. The bourgeois live in London and Norland Par, while the proletariat live in cottage.

Their estate was large, and their residence was at Norland Park, in the centre of their property, where, for many generations, they had lived in so respectable a manner as to engage the general good opinion of their surrounding acquaintance.(S&S; P : 1).

As a house, Barton Cottage, though small, was comfortable and compact; but as a cottage it was defective, for the building was regular, the roof was tiled, the window shutters were not painted green, nor were the walls covered with honeysuckles. (S&S; P: 33).

From the style, something can be describe the Marxist is the symbol of materialism. In Jane Austen *Sense and Sensibility*, the symbol of materialism can be shown from the property of horse. Horse is a symbol of wealth.

..... Marianne told her, with the greatest delight, that Willoughby had given her a horse, (S&S; P: 69).

So, all of those evidence show that materialistic become a part of human's live and create a strata in society.

c. Alienation

Alienation is a system of result of stratified society.

Alienation is also part of a social class. The basic theory of alienation is that the worker is invariably loses ability to determine his or her life destiny. Karl Marx in Fromm (2001: 60) argues that "Alienation means the existence of world is strange for human being". Alienation can also ,mentioned that the condition where someone is seperated from their self, their family, their friend, and also society. Alienation makes the people alinated their life.

In *Sense and Sensibility*, alienation can be seen when Elinor shows her feeling because of her happiness. She lets her emotion flow up and she lets Edward know that she love Edward.

Elinor could sit it no longer. She almost ran out of the room, and as soon as the door was closed, burst into tears of joy, which at first she thought would never cease. Edward, who had till then looked any where, rather than at her, saw her hurry away, and perhaps saw— or even heard, her emotion; for immediately afterwards he fell into a reverie, which no remarks, no inquiries, no affectionate address of Mrs. Dashwood could penetrate, and at last, without saying a word, quitted the room, and walked out towards the village— leaving the others in the greatest astonishment and perplexity on a change in his situation, so wonderful and so sudden;—a perplexity which they had no means of lessening but by their own conjectures (S&S; P: 432).

Another alienation also can be seen when Marianne knows Willoughby is not her lover. She become more rationale than before.

My illness has made me think— It has given me leisure and calmness for serious recollection. (S&S; P: 415).

d. Class Struggle

In Marxist perspective society is divided into two classes, the bourgeois and the proletariat. Because of lack of power the proletariat have to struggle in order to get equality.

In *Sense and Sensibility*, the class struggle can be seen in the process when Elinor and Marianne looking for husband. Their mother teach them how to get a better life is having a rich husband, and because of that reason the try to find a rich man to get marriage although they have to deals with some conflicts

before getting their love. The marriage of the major character is the result of class struggle.

...It was only to ask Elinor to marry him(S&S; P: 433).

... the marriage of Colonel Brandon and Marianne...(S&S; P: 451).

D. Conclusion and Suggestion

1. Conclusion

Based on the analysis, the researcher would like to draw the following conclusion:

First, *Sense and Sensibility* is a novel written by Jane Austen in 1811. She is one of the most famous writers in England literature. The novel sets in nineteenth century of England. From the character, Jane Austen concern with Elinor Dashwood, Marianne Dashwood, Edward Ferrars, John Willoughby, Colonel Brandon. The plot of the novel tells about the journey of Dashwood Sisters in order to get prosperity.

Second, the story of *Sense and Sensibility* describe the struggle of of Dashwood sisters especially Elinor and Marianne Dashwood in order to get prosperity. At the beginning Elinor Dashwood and Marianne Dashwood is from high class after their father's death they become lower class because their father left nothing to them, as a lower class they have to make struggle to get prosperity in life, which is begun by several conflicts to reach their goal. On the contrary, people like John Dashwood, Fanny Dashwood, Mrs. Ferrars who come from high class who have power, authority to exploit the lower class. The high class called bourgeoisie is a symbol of oppressor and

the lower class, namely the proletariat is a symbol of oppressed. As the oppressed they want to change their condition into better life. In *Sense and Sensibility* Elinor Dashwood and Marianne Dashwood is placed as the oppressed and people like John Dashwood, Fanny Dashwood, Mrs. Ferrars is placed as the oppressor.

Third, Jane Austen tries to solve the conflict that arise between oppressor and oppressed. The end of conflict of *Sense and Sensibility* everything ends happily, Edward is reconciled to his mother and marries Elinor. He takes order and is given the living at delaford, Colonel Brandon's estate. Eventually Marianne agrees to marry the Colonel, and the two couples live happily, close in distance and in friendship.

2. Suggestion

Sense and Sensibility is interesting novel written by Jane Austen. It describe the struggle of Dashwood family to get equality and better life. That's why this novel can be analyzes through other several approaches.

Therefore, the reaeacher suggests and invites the other researcher to study this novel. The researcher found that this novel can be analyze using Sociological Approach with issue social relationship. Finnaly the researcher expectsthis researcher paper contributes to the readers references related to the knowledge of literary study and to knowledge about Jane Austen's works.

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