

NATURALISM IN THE SHORT STORY OF WILLIAM FAULKNER'S "A ROSE FOR EMILY" 2020-2021

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Abstract- *A Rose For Emily* is a short story by Mississippi born William Faulkner, first published in 1930. This story does not tell only about a lonely woman but also tells about a person who is forced to lead an isolated life; it is about her mental state due to her abused childhood that made her isolate herself. She lived in isolated. The vicitudes of Miss Emily's life remain a mystery until the very end of the story. Although the actions are not visible to the reader, but the narrator evidently describes her physical appearance and the environment she lives in. The status of the persons that come from the different locations, such as Emily from the South and Homer from the North. Between the aristocratic person and the laborer that become an obstacle in their relationship.

Keywords: *naturalism, elements of naturalism, environment, sociology of literature, short story*

A. Introduction

Naturalism is a late 19th-century literary movement in which writers focused on exploring the fundamental causes for their characters' actions, choices, and beliefs. These causes centered on the influence of family and society upon the individual and all the complications that exist therein—resulting in a view that environmental factors are the primary determinant of human character (Gilbert K, et al, 2018).

A Rose for Emily is William Faulkner's first short story, published in a national greatest piece of literature (Wikipedia, 2021). The name of the main character in the short story is Miss Emily Grierson. William Faulkner talks about her that she comes from a rich

wealthy family and as member of an aristocratic family living in the antebellum South, but on the other hand, Miss Emily faces the miserable things in her life, so this makes the researcher feel that Miss Emily has a weird life. Based on such a condition, the researcher feels so interested in analyzing it, in which the story of Miss Emily is connected to Naturalism because through this literary movement, the researcher wants to analyze about her life and what elements of naturalism can be seen there, and why those aspects are found in the story. So for the analysis, the researcher decides the title of her research is about "Naturalism in the Short Story of William Faulkner's *A Rose for Emily*"

1. What elements of naturalism are found in the short story of William Faulkner's "A Rose for Emily?"
2. Why are those elements found in the short story of William Faulkner's "A Rose for Emily?"
 - a. To find out the elements of naturalism in the short story of William Faulkner's "A Rose for Emily"
 - b. To find out why there are elements of naturalism in the
 - c. short story of William Faulkner's, A Rose for Emily"

This research is conducted in order to achieve a better understanding in analyzing the Elements of Naturalism found in the literary work, that is the short story of William Faulkner's, *A Rose for Emily*. Theoretically, the result of the research hopefully can strengthen the theory of naturalism. Moreover the explanation of the theoretical framework is useful for the other researchers.

Practically, this research can be useful for the students, lecturers and researchers. For students this research can improve their understanding about the naturalism and how to analyze it from the naturalistic view point. For the lecturers, this research can be used as a teaching material that can improve their teaching process about naturalism. For further researchers, this research can be used as a reference for further study about naturalism.

This research only focuses in the observation of the naturalism elements of William Faulkner's *A Rose for Emily* and why such elements are found in the short story.

Naturalism is a late 19th-century literary movement in which writers focused on exploring the fundamental causes for their characters' actions, choices, and beliefs. These causes centered on the influence of family and society upon the individual—and all the complications that exist therein—resulting in a view that environmental factors are the primary determinant of

human character. Naturalism is in many ways interconnected with realism, but realism is primarily a style of writing, while naturalism is a philosophy in writing (Gilbert K, et al, 2018).

French author Émile Zola first adapted the term *naturalism* to describe a specific type of literature and designed many of the theories behind the movement. Though its prominence ended around the turn of the 20th century, naturalism left an ongoing impact, as many modern writers incorporate naturalist features into their work (Gilbert K, et al, 2018)

Jules-Antoine Castagnary, a French art critic, first used the term *naturalism* to describe a style of lifelike painting that became popular in the early 1860s. Émile Zola then applied the term to literature. Zola's seminal essay "The Experimental Novel," published in 1880, presents a detailed examination of the novel as a preeminent naturalistic literary art form (Gilbert K, et al, 2018).

Zola laid out three main arguments in the essay. First, writers could incorporate French physiologist Claude Bernard's method of scientific inquiry to their works. Bernard stated that controlled experiments could either prove or disprove a hypothesis regarding the tested phenomena. Zola posited that a writer could use this same approach, with the characters functioning as the phenomena. Second, Zola said this experimental method separates naturalism from realism and romanticism. Finally, Zola presented an argument challenging his critics' assertions that his work was immoral and offensive (Gilbert K, et al, 2018).

Zola's 20-novel series *Les Rougon-Macquart*, written between 1871 and 1893, is one of the most significant contributions to naturalist literature. It centers on the lives of two fictional French families—one privileged, the other destitute—throughout five generations. Environment, heredity, and the challenges of life in the Second

French Empire ultimately lead each family to ruin.

American author Frank Norris was another formative figure in the naturalism movement. Like Zola, he viewed his characters as experiments; he exposed them to certain stimuli or phenomena and recorded their reactions. The result blends literature and science, marrying a writer's gift for character and description with a scientist's detached observations on proven or disproven hypotheses. Stephen Crane, the author of *The Red Badge of Courage* and other works, employed a similar approach and contributed greatly to the canon of American naturalism (Gilbert K, et al, 2018).

Naturalism as its own distinct literary movement largely ended around 1900, when American magazine *The Outlook* published a tongue-in-cheek obituary for naturalism. The publication went so far as to deem Zola's efforts to craft a new form of scientific literature a total failure. This stance is debatable, especially because countless writers since 1900 have infused their works with heavily naturalistic elements. Ernest Hemingway, Edith Wharton, and Jack London are just a few who carried naturalism into the 20th century (Gilbert K, et al, 2018). Gilbert, K at al (2018) states that the major elements of naturalist works are determinism, objectivity, pessimism, setting, and plot twists.

This is the philosophical belief that external causes are responsible for all the events in an individual's life. Fate, nature, or heredity explain why a character's journey unfold the way it does. Forces beyond one's will and control predetermine everything.

For example, in William Faulkner's short story "A Rose for Emily," the central character's insanity is a foregone conclusion. It is a natural byproduct of the oppressive control her father exerted over her, her codependent relationship with him, and the self-imposed isolation she maintained her entire life. It's clear to the

reader that there was never any hope for Miss Emily—her fate was determined by her circumstances.

Naturalist writers maintain an objectivity in their storytelling. They detach themselves from the emotional components of the story and serve more as impartial observers of what transpires. When discussing emotions at all, the focus is on primitive emotions of survival, usually in a hostile world.

In *The Red Badge of Courage*, Crane describes a battle scene with a cool remove: The men dropped here and there like bundles. The captain of the youth's company had been killed in an early part of the action. His body lay stretched out in the position of a tired man resting, but upon his face there was an astonished and sorrowful look, as if he thought some friend had done him an ill turn. Rather than drawing readers focus to the viscerally disturbing realities of battle, he takes an almost lackadaisical approach to depict the scene. The imagery it evokes is commonplace—describing dead men as bundles or resting—rather than violent.

Authors of naturalist works typically possess a cynical or fatalistic worldview, wherein they don't see their characters as having much power over their lives or decisions. These writers view life as a glass-half-empty prospect.

An example of this appears in Jack London's classic adventure novel *The Call of the Wild*, in which the central character is a dog named Buck. "Thus, as token of what a puppet thing life is," London writes, "the ancient song surged through him and he came into his own again." Calling life a "puppet thing" is a pessimistic way of viewing the human-or animal-experience.

Naturalism puts great emphasis on the impact of environment, so location tends to play a significant role in these works. The setting often becomes a character in and of itself.

This is the case in Frank Norris's novel *McTeague: A Story of San Francisco*. The downfall of the title character and his wife plays out against a California backdrop, from San Francisco to Death Valley, where the shattered dreams of the gold-seeking miners reflect the shattered dreams of the McTeagues.

Many naturalist works include a plot twist or some type of intense gut-punch at the end of the story. This underscores the futility of the character's struggle and the fixed quality of their destiny. For instance, Kate Chopin's novel *The Awakening* ends with Edna Pontellier drowning herself in the Gulf of Mexico after rebelling against the societal role assigned to her.

Naturalism is an outgrowth of realism. The latter is a literary technique in which an author describes the way things are, but naturalism significantly expands upon this idea by delving into how the way things are influences a character's behavior and nature.

The characters in realist works have more agency. While they're products of their environments, they have the freedom to counter their environments and influence their own futures. This differs significantly from naturalist works, where characters enjoy no such autonomy from their circumstances. The hard reality of their lives, defined by genetics, nature, or just the cruel hand of fate, is the sole deciding factor in what happens to the characters.

There is also a scientific component to naturalism. The movement coincided with the first publication of many of Charles Darwin's theories, which may explain the movement's tendency to portray a survival-of-the-fittest mindset and a lack of personal, independent choice in one's fate. Hand in hand with this idea is the presence of the more primitive or animalistic emotions in many naturalist characters.

Naturalism is innately more socially conscious and political than realism. Characters usually live in hardscrabble conditions or face serious life-or-death decisions as a result of external factors rooted in society or circumstance. These conditions are essentially larger than the characters themselves, conditions with which many readers-sometimes, whole communities-can identify. So, on a fundamental level, naturalism deals with more socially relevant issues and bigger-picture perspectives than realism.

Gilbert, K at al (2018) described that naturalism is presented to illustrate the dominance of environmental conditions in human life and on individual characters. This perspective allows the author to comment on the darker sides of human nature.

Subjects like poverty, disease, racism, and prostitution often make their way into literary naturalism. The gritty vantage point on the human experience can sometimes be bleak, but authors write this way in service of a higher purpose. They aim to improve the condition of the world by highlighting the dire, uncontrollable circumstances with which everyday people typically live.

According to Francis E. Merrill, cited in Ithaka (2020-2021), sociology is the study of society in interaction. For this process human beings "take each other into account" and react in a more or less appropriate fashion on the behavior of others and themselves as well. The product of social interaction is culture, which emerges from past interaction and guides present and future interaction. Culture influences the personalities of those who are reared in society; personality is thus, in a manner of speaking, "the subjective aspect of culture."

Literature is a cultural product that reflects the interaction on the past of the reader. In this dual sense- as both product of, and influence upon, social interaction-literature is a legitimate subject of sociological interaction.

Social interaction is a symbolic process. The term refers to the “peculiar and distinctive character of interaction as it takes place between human beings. The peculiarity consists in the fact that human beings interpret or ‘define’ each other’s actions instead of merely reacting to each other’s actions. The symbolic nature of this behavior is illustrated by both writer and reader.

Due to the sociology of literature, Sofyan (2018) stated that It refers to and gets cushioned by two different academic disciplines-sociology and literary study. In short, sociology is an objective and scientific study of humans in society and the review of social institution and process. Literature, on the other hand, also deals with human beings in society with regard to their undertaking to adapt to and change society.

Sociology and literature, therefore, share the same issues. The novel, as one of the major genres in literature, can be regarded as an effort to recreate the social world; relations between human beings and their family, environment, politics, state and others. Their distinction: while sociology makes an objective analysis of society, literature penetrates into the surface of social structure and expresses human beings’ ways of comprehending their society with their feeling, and according to Laurenson and Swingewood, cited in Mursalim (2019: 271), although sociology and literature have certain differences, both of them can actually provide an explanation of the meaning of literary texts. It is understood because sociology is about humans and so is literature. Literature is an expression of human life that cannot be separated from the roots of society. Thus, although sociology and literature are two different things, but they complement each other. Short story is one of the primary genres in literature. Kosasih cited in Mursalim (2019: 271) said that short stories are short essays in the form of prose. In short stories, the characters’ lives are presented,

which are full of contentious events that are touching or pleasant, and contains impression that is not easily forgotten.

For this research, the researcher has two previous studies. First, taken from Simbolon’s thesis, entitled “An Analysis of Naturalism As Reflected In Theodore Dreiser’s *An American Tragedy*”. He analyzed about the Characteristics of Naturalism and he found out that there are three characteristics of naturalism in the novel, those are determinism, frankness, and pessimism.

He also found that Tragedy as the Effect of Naturalism Tragedy is the most important role in the naturalistic novel. Terrible thing must happen to the main character. It is because the incapability of man to control the forces and the nature.

Then the second one is taken from ErniYusriana’s thesis, entitled “Naturalism As Reflected In Stephen Crane ‘s Short Story *The Open Boat*”. She found out that some aspects of naturalism are reflected in Crane’s short story *The Open Boat*. The naturalism aspects which are found in the story: objectivity, frankness, philosophy of determinism and bias in selection of characters, especially an occasional use of a strong characters whose will is broken.

B. Research Methodology

In the process of writing this thesis the researcher uses descriptive qualitative method. Hancock, B, et.al (2009:7) explained that qualitative research is concerned with developing explanations of social phenomena. That is to say, it aims to help us to understand the social world in which we live and why things are the way they are. It is concerned with the social aspects of our world and seeks to answer questions about: · Why people behave the way they do· How opinions and attitudes are formed · How people are affected by the events that go on around them· How and why cultures and practices have developed in the way they have.

Data on its own has no meaning. It only takes on meaning and becomes information when it is interpreted. Data

consists of raw facts and figures. When that data is processed into sets according to context, it provides information. Data refers to raw input that when processed or arranged makes meaningful output. Information is usually the processed outcome of data. When data is processed into information, it becomes interpretable and gains significance. (Cambridge International Examinations, 2015: 5). In research, there are different methods used to gather information, all of which fall into two categories, i.e. primary and secondary data (Douglas, cited in Ajayi, V, D 2015 : 2). As the name suggests, primary data is one which is collected for the first time by the researcher while secondary data is the data already collected or produced by others. The primary data for this research is taken from the sentences or words in the short story of William Faulkner's *A Rose for Emily*, and as the secondary data, taken from the books, websites, journals, etc.

In collecting the data, the researcher applies the library research as it is said by Mestika, cited in Fikri (2017), Library research type or commonly referred to as literature research or literature study is interpreted as an activity to collect literature data through reading, recording, and processing of research materials. In other words, literature research is a study conducted to solve a problem that is basically based on critical and in-depth review of the relevant literature materials. To collect the data of this research, the researcher does as the following :

Search for the short story, written by William Faulkner Read the sentences or words of the short story William Faulkner. Describe the short story of William Faulkner's *A Rose for Emily*

Dr. Saul Mc, Leod (2019) described that qualitative research is the process of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting non-numerical data, such as language. Qualitative research can be used to understand how an individual subjectively

perceives and gives meaning to their social reality. Qualitative data is defined as non-numerical data, such as text, video, photographs or audio recordings. This type of data can be collected using diary accounts or in-depth interviews, and analyzed using grounded theory or thematic analysis.

According to Patton, cited in Bogdan (2007), data analysis was described as the process of bringing order to the data that was collected for research and organising these data into designs, classes and basic descriptive elements.

The researcher takes some steps in analyzing the data :

1. The researcher reads the collected data to find the aspects of naturalism and why they are used in the short story of William Faulkner's "A Rose for Emily"
2. Data of the elements of naturalism, listed in different table and analyze their elements and why they are used.
3. The analysis is then evaluated in order to draw the conclusion.

C. Research Findings And Discussions

In the short story, "*A Rose for Emily*," William Faulkner talks about Miss Emily Gierson that comes from a rich wealthy, and highly respected family and also as member of an aristocratic family living in the antebellum South, but on the other hand, Miss Emily faces the miserable things in her life.

According to Gilbert, et al (2018), there are the major elements of naturalist works, such as determinism, objectivity, pessimism, setting, and plot twists. Related to the story of Emily's life, it is interesting to analyze those elements in this research.

This is the philosophical belief that external causes are responsible for all the events in an individual's life. Fate, nature, or heredity explain why a character's journey unfold the way it does. Forces beyond one's will and control predetermine everything.

In the short story, “*A Rose for Emily*”, it is seen how Emily’s father treats her so sad that keeps her single by chasing away all her suitors.

Data 1

None of the young men were quite good enough for Miss Emily and such. We had long thought of them as tableau, Miss Emily a slender figure in white in the background, her father a spraddled silhouette in the foreground his back to her and clutching a horse whip, the two of them framed by the back of the back-flung front door. So when she got to be thirty and was still single, we were not pleased exactly, but vindicated; even with insanity in the family she wouldn’t have turned down all her chances if they had really materialized. Faulkner cited in Meyer (1993 : 49)

In the story it is also seen that Emily is a woman who is so desperate for marriage in her life because of the different class that she has. She comes from Southern Aristocracy, but Homer is a day laborer who is not ready to settle down.

Data 2

So the next day, we all said, “She will kill herself”, and we said it be the best thing.

When she has first begun to be seen with Homer Barron, we had said. “She will marry him, “Then we said, “She will persuade him, yet ”because Homer had remarked- he liked men, and it was known that he drank with the younger men in the Elks’ Club- that he was not marrying man. Faulkner cited in Meyer (1993 : 49)

Emily is a person who is not able to let go of her past because when her father was alive, he paid the property taxes on their home; he arranged for his friend, Colonel Sartoris, to continue

paying the taxes after his passing on behalf of his daughter. After the colonel’s death, the younger generation was no longer interested in maintaining their “hereditary obligation, she refused to forfeit taxes and accept the new town rules.

Data 3

When the next generation, with its modern ideas, became mayors and aldermen, this arrangement created some little dissatisfaction

On the first of the year they mailed her a tax of notice. February came, and there was no reply. They wrote her a formal letter, asking her to call at the sheriff’s office at her convenience. A week later the mayor wrote her himself, offering to call or to send his car for her, and received in reply a note on paper of an archaic shape, in a thin, flowing calligraphy in faded ink, to the effect she no longer went out all. The tax notice was also enclosed, without comment. Faulkner cited in Meyer (1993 : 48)

There are two areas of Emily’s private life encroaching on the public, and the public finds her choices unacceptable.

Data 4

At first we were glad that Miss Emily would have an interest, because the ladies all said, “Of course a Grierson would not think seriously of a Northerner, a day laborer,” But there were still others, older people, who said that even grief could not cause a real lady to forget noblesse oblige- without calling it noblesse oblige. They just said, “Poor Emily. Her kinsfolk should come to her” She had some kin in Alabama; but years ago her father had fallen out with them over the estate of old lady Wyatt, the crazy woman, and there was no communication

between the two families. They had not even been represented at the funeral. Faulkner cited in Meyer (1993 : 50)

At the turn of the twentieth century, as an unmarried woman past at the age of thirty, she has very few chances of ever finding a man to become her husband. Aging cannot help her prospects, and whatever beauty she may have had is fading fast. On the following is a description of her appearance when the elder men pay her a visit.

Data 5

They rose when she entered – a small, fat woman in black, with a thin gold chain descending to her waist and vanishing into her belt, leaning on an ebony cane. With a tarnished gold head. Her skeleton was small and spare; perhaps that was why what would have been merely plumpness in another was obesity in her, she looked bloated, like a body long submerged in motionless water, and of that pallid hue. Her eyes, lost in the fatty ridges of her face, looked like two small pieces of coal pressed into a lump of dough as they moved from one face to another while the visitors stated their errand. Faulkner cited in Meyer (1993 : 48)

Naturalism puts great emphasis on the impact of environment, so location tends to play a significant role in these works. The setting often becomes a character in and of itself.

The time *A Rose for Emily* was written during the time the South was fighting for their livelihood and against slavery. The South was fighting with the North and trying to hold onto what belonged to them. Faulkner used this period to write *A Rose for Emily*. In the story Emily is very attached to Homer, the same way the South is attached to slavery. She cannot let Homer go away and she does everything to preserve Homer, her “rose”

even it means breaking the laws. This shows that there is the struggle of the South and the North with Emily and her attachment to Homer. Faulkner cited in Meyer (1993 : 50-51).

Gilbert, K et al (2018) described that naturalism is presented to illustrate the dominance of environmental conditions in human life and on individual characters. This perspective allows the author to comment on the darker sides of human nature.

The researcher thinks that William Faulkner wants to tell that Emily's father is the cause that makes her not married until die. Her father is the one man who keeps her single by chasing away all her suitors as it can be seen through the analysis in part 4.1.1 and part 4.1.2.

Besides that, the present generations that cannot accept her, because of the past law that concerns with the tax pay which makes her free from the payment in past law.

The status of the persons that come from the different locations, such as Emily from the South and Homer from the North. Between the aristocratic person and the laborer that becomes an obstacle in their relationship.

In naturalism, Emily is the victim of the environment that comes from her own family and society.

Conclusion And Suggestion

Conclusion

After having the analysis of the Short Story of William Faulkner's *A Rose for Emily*, it is found that there are two elements of Naturalism, they are determinism and setting.

And why the two elements found in *A Rose for Emily* is William Faulkner wants to prove the impact of the environment towards the individual's life, in which Emily has become the victim of her father and the society.

It is hoped that this research will be useful for the readers and researchers for the future improvement of naturalistic study in literary work basically about naturalism theory in literary work.

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