THE POSSESSIVENESS IN STEINBECK'S THE PEARL



A Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty of Cultural Sciences Hasanuddin University in Partial Fulfilment for The Requirement to Obtain Sarjana Degree in English

WRITTEN BY

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ENGLISH LITERATURE STUDY PROGRAM FACULTY OF CULTURAL SCIENCES HASANUDDIN UNIVERSITY 2024

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Indah Lestari



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Bismillahirrahmanirrahim, Alhamdulillah, the writer is deeply grateful of Allah subhanahu wata'ala for all the love and grace given so that the writer could finish the research entitled *The Possessiveness in Steinbeck's The Pearl* which was submitted as the last requirement to obtain an undergraduate degree in the English Department, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, University of Hasanuddin Makassar. The writer received a lot of support, inspiration, guidance, and encouragement in finishing this thesis.

The writer would like to thank them all on this page. Furthermore, without the supervision, guidance, and support of the writer first advisor **Dr. Abbas, S.S., M.Hum,** who has given the writer amazing opportunities over the past few years, the writer would not have been able to complete this thesis. Then to her second advisor **Andi Inayah Soraya S.S., M.Hum**, who patiently guided the writer in completing this undergraduate thesis by offering suggestions, direction, and correction up. Also thanks for all of the lecturer and staff at English Department for the guidance and valuable lessons.

Also, the writer is incredibly grateful to her parents, particularly her mother **Sitti Ratang** for her unending love, prayers, and support, and her father **Basri**, also her beloved husband **Rahma**t to loving and support her to keep going and never give up. The writer would like to thank for her brothers, and my best friends who never stop asking about the completion of her study. Finally, the buld like to express her gratitude to everyone who helped make this

luate thesis a success. Although this undergraduate thesis is far from



perfect and will benefit from multiple improvements; thus, thus all recommendation and critiques for enchancement would be gratefully accepted. The writer also hopes that this thesis will be of interest to the readers.

Makassar, July 2024 The writer,

Indah Lestari



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ABSTRAK

Indah Lestari. 2024. Sifat Posesif Dalam Novel The Pearl Karya John Steinbeck's. (Dibimbing oleh Abbas dan Andi Inayah Soraya)

Skripsi ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi adanya sifat kepemilikan yang tinggi terhadap suatu mutiara pada karakter dalam novel *The Pearl* karya John Steinbeck. Adapun tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah menggambarkan konflik yang terkait dengan isu kepemilikan yang ada dalam *The Pearl*, dan menganalisis sifat kepemilikan yang dimiliki oleh karakter-karakter dalam novel tersebut.

Analisis skripsi ini berpusat pada unsur intrinsic dalam novel *The Pearl*. Pendekatan dan metode yang mendukung analisis ini adalah Pendekatan Strukturalisme yang menganalisis unsur intrensik novel *The Pearl* karya John Steinbeck. Novel ini *merupakan* objek dan sumber data utama dalam penelitian ini. Data tambahan lainnya diperoleh dari perpustakaan, internet, jurnal, dan artikel.

Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa terdapat konflik-konflik sosial yang ditimbulkan oleh sifat kepemilikan yang tinggi terhadap tokoh utama dalam novel sehingga terjadi perbedaan perlakuan antara kelas atas dan kelas bawah. Masyarakat Indian yang tidak memiliki pendidikan memperoleh perilaku ketidakadilan oleh masyarakat kelas atas dan juga, mengungkap sifat kepemilikan pada karakter-karakter dalam novel *The Pearl* karya John Steinbeck. Di mana sifat kepemilikan memainkan peran krusial dalam menggambarkan konflik dan karakterisasi tokoh-tokohnya. Karakter utama tergoda oleh janji kekayaan dari mutiara besar yang ditemukannya, namun kepemilikannya atas mutiara tersebut menciptakan ketegangan yang mengancam kebahagiaan dan keselamatan keluarganya.

Kata kunci: Sifat Posesif, John Steinbeck, Novel The Pearl.



ABSTRACT

Indah Lestari. 2024. *The Possessiveness in Steinbeck's The Pearl*. (Supervised by Abbas dan Andi Inayah Soraya)

This thesis aims to identify the high degree of possessiveness towards a pearl exhibited by characters in John Steinbeck's novel *The Pearl*. The objectives of this research are to describe the conflict which related to possessiveness issue that exists in novel *The Pearl*, and to analyze the possessiveness that the characters have in the novel.

The analysis in this thesis focuses on the intrinsic elements within the novel *The Pearl*. The approach and method supporting this analysis is Structuralism Approach that examines the intrinsic components of the novel *The Pearl* by John Steinbeck. The novel serves as the primary object and source of data for this research. Additional data are obtained from libraries, the internet, journals, and articles.

The findings of this research reveal that social conflicts arise from the high level of possessiveness of the main character in the novel, leading to disparities in treatment between the upper and lower classes. The uneducated indigenous people face injustice from the upper-class society and also, revealing the possessiveness of the characters in John Steinbeck's novel *The Pearl*. Which is the possessiveness plays a crucial role in depicting conflicts and characterizations of its figures. The main character is tempted by the promise of wealth from a large pearl he discovers, yet his possession of it creates tensions that threaten the happiness and safety of his family.

Keywords: Possessiveness, Steinbeck, The Pearl.



CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the writer discusses about introduction, which consists of background, identification of problem, scope of problem, research question, objective of study and sequence of writing.

1.1. Background of The Study

Humans often prioritize their ego to fulfill their desires by competing to get something of value that they believe can increase their social status. The drive that makes them often want more is a natural human behavior. Therefore, some companies advertise their products almost every day because humans are increasingly obsessed with material things. They are subconsciously drawn to spend their money on things that are valuable but temporary. The things they have often make them value material things more than empathize with something or even lose their humanity. As a result, it is this materialism that causes people to often not be aware of human values and cover up true happiness.

Materialism is a lifestyle culture that cannot be separated from social life and other factors such as possessiveness, materialism and competition. The emergence of the phenomenon of society that easily believes in the ability of someone who can bring wealth instantly even though it is considered irrational is a symptom of the increasingly strong value of materialism. People infected with materialism tend to have an attitude of life that values material things excessively.



becomes one of the main benchmarks in assessing a person's success so results in the decline of social values in society.



Often the purpose of life for a person affects his achievement of happiness. Not all goals will lead to goodness, even some of these goals have a negative impact on the welfare of life. This will be proven if it's pay attention to the condition of our society and also the stories that are circulating in the public space about people whose lives are full of problems because they pursue worldly goals, such as wealth, fame, and appearance. Such a phenomenon is called materialism, namely a view of life that seeks the basis of everything that includes human life in the material world solely by setting aside everything that transcends the realm of the senses.

Belk (1985: 265) said that materialism is an individual who places worldly possessions to achieve happiness in life so that worldly possessions are a goal in life. Belk also defines materialism as part of the personality traits that everyone has. One part of materialism is possessiveness, namely the tendency to maintain control or ownership of one's property. The same thing also happens in the novel The Pearl by John Steinbeck which tells of a small family consisting of Kino the head of the family, Juana as his wife, and Coyotito their eldest child who is still a baby. This family lives in the middle of a shabby settlement of people who make a living as pearl fishermen. This community group is people with dark skin or from Indian tribes. This tribe includes Indian people in their country but they belong to the lower economic society which is still very primitive and marginalized. Despite being in a cycle of poverty, Kino and the local people are determined to find

ery day as a way to sustain their lives.



Until one day, when disaster comes in the midst of this family. Coyotito, who is still a baby, was stung by a venomous scorpion and had to get medical help immediately while they could not afford to pay for his son's medical expenses. This is the reason a doctor in a big city refuses to provide help to Coyotito because they come from a poor family. Then after so many days Kino searched in the middle of the sea, luck finally sided with him when Kino got a large pearl with an estimated selling price that was very high and became the center of attention of many local people. It was this pearl that gave rise to competition and people's greed when Kino wanted to sell it to make ends meet for his family. People from various tribes compete to get these pearls by any means.

Therefore, the writer chose the novel as the object of this thesis entitled The Pearl by John Steinbeck. In this study, the writer is interested in analyzing the novel The Pearl as research material because the analysis of possessiveness in this novel is rarely used as a topic of discussion in previous studies and the writer wants to know more about the conflict issue that related of possessiveness in the novel *The Pearl*. From the explanation above, the writer chose *The Possessiveness* in Steinbeck's The Pearl as the title of this thesis.

1.2. Identification of The Study

Based on the background of the problems that have been stated above, the identification of the problems in this study are as follows:



Injustice that occur among poor and marginalized communities.



- Racism or the belief that there is an inherent difference between the Indian race and the white race that makes the white race superior to the Indian race.
- 3. Discrimination against black and white communities depicted in the novel *The Pearl*.
- 4. The possessiveness exhibited by the characters resulting in social conflict and community destruction.
- 5. Corruption and extortion in *The Pearl*-selling process, exploiting the situation of the poor community for personal gain by the elite.
- Caste conflict and colonialism highlighting the caste conflict between indigenous people and European colonizers, and the impact of colonialism on Indian society.
- 7. Life uncertainty experienced by Kino and his family filled with uncertainties and threats, leading them to struggle hard to survive but thwarted by unfavorable circumstances.

1.3. Scope of Problem

Based on identification of problems, there are various problems that can be analyzed in this novel. However, this study focuses on analyzing the Possessiveness in the novel *The Pearl*.

1.4. Research Question



ased on the background and identification of the problems that have been above, the formulation of the problem can be formulated as follows:



- 1. What kind of conflicts are related to possessiveness issue that exist in *The Pearl*?
- 2. How is the possessiveness does the character have in the novel?

1.5. Objective of The Study

Based on the research questions, the writer formulates the research objectives as follows:

- 1. To describe the conflict which related to possessiveness issue that exists in *The Pearl*.
- 2. To analyze the possessiveness that the characters have in the novel.

1.6. Sequence of The Writing

This writing consists of five chapters. Chapter one is an introduction consisting of background, identification of problem, scope of problem, research question, objective of writing and sequence of writing. Chapter two is a literature review consisting of previous study, structural approach, and possessiveness. Chapter three consists of methods that explain how the writer uses in analyzing the novel, including method of collecting data and method of analyzing data. Chapter four consists of discussion and finding in the novel *The Pearl*. Chapter five is the conclusion and suggestion for the readers is involved in this chapter of the study.



CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, the writer explains Previous Studies, Structuralism Approach, and Possessiveness.

2.1. Previous Studies

Through literary review that has been done, the writer found some previous studies, which related to this research. Those researches are Dian Haerunnisai Putri S (2018), Moh Imawan Helmi (2018), and Mirna Yusnita (2018).

The first is Dian Haerunnisai Putri S (2018) writes "Analysis Social Setting in Tortilla Flat by John Steinbeck" explaining the social setting of the character in the novel Tortilla Flat and describing the internal aspects of the novel. She uses a structural approach that focuses on the intrinsic elements that exist in literary works such as characters, themes, plot, and setting. In analyzing data, this research uses a descriptive method, a method that describes the phenomenon as it is with the data obtained through literature study. The result of the research, the writer has found two points, the first is the intrinsic aspect consisting of the characters Danny, Pilon, Pablo, Jesus Maria, Big Joe and pirates. The second points are social settings contained in the novel Tortilla Flat such us desire for freedom, Alcoholism, connected with natural and spirituality, and rejecting materialism.

econd is Moh Imawan Helmi (2018). He is wrote a thesis with a title ek's Worldview Toward the Effects of Materialism in The Mexican



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Colonial Era in The Pearl". This study aims to find out the view or perspectives of John Steinbeck toward the effects of materialism in Mexican colonial era depicted in The Pearl and to reveal the way John Steinbeck depicted the phenomenal through the literary elements of the novella. This research applies genetic structuralism theory proposed by Lucien Goldman and this research used qualitative analysis. The writer's main data were expressions taken from Steinbeck's The Pearl. To Analyze the data, the writer used a deductive approach and then, to ensure the trustworthiness of data the writer applied triangulation. The result of this research is that there are Steinbeck's worldviews on the effects of materialism that can be explained into three categories. The first one is the trait of possessiveness. It can be defined as the desire to possess someone's things. The second trait is envy and the third trait is non-generosity. It can be defined as a reluctant feeling to share possession. The second result is that there are three significant literary elements representing Steinbeck worldviews such as the character, the plot and the setting.

The last is Mirna Yusnita (2018). She wrote a thesis with the title "Social condition of Indian in Steinbeck's The Pearl". This research describes the social condition of The Indian in terms of status and role, economy, and education in the social life of the character, which are related to each other. Analysis of this research was focusing on intrinsic and extrinsic elements that built the novel. Study approach and method that supported this research were genetic ism, which was used to analyze the intrinsic and extrinsic elements of I. The primary data were obtained from the novel discussed and the



secondary data were obtained from library, internet, journal, and article. The result of this research shows that the social condition of Indians in terms of status and role belongs to the lower class while the doctor belongs to the upper class. The Indians have not got education and make their lives in poverty. It is different from a doctor who has education so he could live in healthiness.

Based on the three previous studies above, the writer concludes that the similarities and differences between previous study and the writer's research are found in the research object, the focus of the approach and theory used in the analysis. The similarities that exist in previous studies are discussing the same two objects as the writer and one of previous studies have the same approach.

In this study, the writer focuses on the possessiveness in the novel The Pearl by using a structural approach. The difference that distinguishes previous study is the research method and approach used. Therefore, the results of this study are absolutely different from the analysis in the previous study because the writer chooses to analyze *The Possessiveness in Steinbeck's The Pearl*.

2.2. Structuralism Approach

The structural Approach is a technique where in the learner masters the pattern of sentence. Structures are the different arrangements of words in one accepted style or the other. It includes various modes in which clauses, phrases or word might be used. It is based on the assumptions that language can be best

and vocabulary. The structural approach or often called intrinsic is an approach used to analyze literary works that build on the work



itself. This approach focuses on analyzing the aspects that exist in the literature without regard to the external aspects.

Jean Peaget stated in Dwi Susanto (2013: 90) that structuralism contains three main points. The first is an overall idea (wholeness), in the sense that the parts or elements conform to a set of rules that determine the intrinsic good overall structure and its parts. The second idea of transformation (transformation), structure undertakes transformation procedure that constantly allows the creation of new materials. The third idea of the regularity of the self (self-regulation) does not require things outside of themselves to maintain the procedures of transforming the structure were autonomous from the reference to other systems. It can be explained through an example that in one building, a building must have a buffer and roof pillars. Roffs cannot stand without the absence of a pillar that stands firm. Stanchion cannot stand firmly without constituted by the foundation, and the foundation will not be useful to the well if there is no roof, walls, and poles. All elements can be said that a building if everything is complete, as well as literary works.

The structural approach is an intrinsic approach, namely discussing the work on the elements that build literary works from within. This approach examines literary works as autonomous works and is independent of social background, history, author biography and everything that exists outside of literary works (Satoto, 1993: 32). The structural approach tries to describe the ionship and function of each element of literary work as a structural unity gether produces a total meaning (Teeuw, 1984: 135). So it can be



concluded that the structural approach is an approach in the science of literature that works by analyzing the structural elements that build literary works from within, as well as looking for the relevance or relevance of these elements in order to achieve unanimity of meaning.

To analyze, it is important to see the structure in literary work, because it can be interpreted as the formation of materials and component parts into interesting forms. These elements can be used to identify, to assess, and to describe the functions and relation between elements in the novel, and it is also the central focus on literary text itself. In the intrinsic approach there are several intrinsic elements such as character, plot, setting, theme, and others.

2.2.1. Characters

The character in the novel comes from the experience of the authors, the secret lives are visible or might be visible. The authors can write the character as babies, make them without sleep or food, and make them be in love, as Forster says:

Definition as to when a character in a book is real: it is real when the novelist knows everything about it. He may not choose to tell us all he knows—many of the facts, even of the kind we call obvious, may be hidden. But he will give us the feeling that though the character has not been explained, it is explicable, and we get from this a reality of a kind we can never get in daily life (1985: 67).

The Character is divided into two kinds, they are the main character and the peripheral character. The main character is a character who most widely told

t can be seen on every page of the story. Because of that, the main



character determines the development of the plot. While the peripheral character is the characters who just have a little part in the story (Nurgiyantoro, 2010: 176).

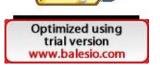
Characteristic are the protagonist and the antagonist. The protagonist is the character who has a good role in the story and always be loved by the readers. The antagonist characteristic is the character who caused conflict in the story.

2.2.2. Plot

The plot is the chronology of events in a story have not simple quality because the author configures the events based on connection cause-effect as Dibell says, the plot is built of significant events in a given story –significant because they have the important consequence (1988: 5). So the common definition plot is whatever happens in a story with the events have important cause-effect for the literary works.

The differentiation of plot based on chronology is divided into three kinds, there are progressive plot, flashback plot, and compound plot (progressive-flashback). Commonly the structures of plot develop the event with exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution (Sumardjo and Saini, 1997: 49).

- 1) Exposition or introduction is the part in which the author introduces the characters, scene, time, and situation.
- 2) Rising action is the section of the dramatization of events that complicates the situation (complication) and gradually intensifies conflict.



- 3) The climax is the main point of the plot. The conflict of the character is set at the top of the story. Perpetrators and sufferers, the occurrence of the conflict is the main character.
- 4) Falling action events and conflict begin to resolve and the result of action of the main character is forward.
- 5) Resolution is the final or end section of the plot and resolution of the problem in the story.

As a conclusion, a plot is the chronology of events in a story based on connection cause-effect. The differentiation of plot based on chronology is divided into three kinds, they are a progressive plot, flashback plot, and compound plot. The part of plot divided into five kinds as exposition or introduction, rising action, falling action, climax, falling action, and resolution.

2.2.3. *Setting*

Setting in literary works is where the story is set, when the historical time of the events, and social circumstances happens in the moment (Abrams, 1999:284). The setting is important to the audience (especially a book reader) to imagine the whole story. To make the story connected one another, readers need a setting of place for analyzing the right thing to do in a certain place. Time is also important for informing readers or the audience what the character normally does in a specific time of the day. For the setting of social circumstances, much of the character's expressions show. The tense of the environment decides the reader's

rough the story. These three types of settings hold an important part of a 'ork (Handayani, 2017:42).



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A setting in the novel a function gives vision to the readers. As Abrams states that Setting required supporting characterization with the atmosphere of the story because the character which has so many experiences needful scopes, placing and timing, as well as human life in the real world (Nurgiyantoro, 2010: 216). The elements of the setting divided into three kinds, they are a place, time, and social setting.

Place setting aims to the location of events that told in the story. Time setting related to the problem of "when" the occurrence of the events in the story. Social setting aims to related of social behavior life in the community in particular place and time in the story.

2.2.4. Theme

The theme becomes basic for development of the all the story which inspirits all part of the story. A theme is one of element building a story together with other elements to be unity. In the novel theme is main idea of the story. Through the work that the author offers a particular experience of life, invited readers to see, feel, and appreciate the experience of life by way looking at it as he looked at the problem. Nurgiyantoro (2010: 66) defined that Theme is main idea becomes the basic for developing the whole of story

Theme raised the social problems experienced by humans like the problem of life in the real world. Although the experiences every human is different such as the things related to issues of religious, lust, love, fear, death,

rs. Novel always told and reveals various things about it. A theme in work always have related with the meaning of experience life as



Nurgiyantoro says the many problems and life experiences raised in the work of fiction, whether personal or social, are love (accomplished or not accomplished, to the beloved, parents, siblings, homeland, or others), worry, revenge, vanity, fear, death, religious, pride, and also the solidarity, betrayal, heroism, justice and honesty, others (Nurgiyantoro, 2010: 71).

The writer conceptualizes theme is the main ideas as the basic for the development of the story. Theme tells about social life which universal so that, a literary work is always related to the meaning of life.

2.3. Possessiveness

Generally, the possessiveness is a part that cannot be separated from materialism. Belk views materialism as a collection of personality traits. His current view of materialism includes three original traits of envy, non-generosity, and possessiveness (Belk, 1985: 268). Belk in his book entitled: "*Trait aspects of living in the material world*", sees envy as a desire for others' possessions; the envious person resents those who own what he wants. Non generosity is defined as "an unwillingness to give or share possessions with others", which also includes a reluctance to lend or donate possessions to others and negative attitudes toward charity. Finally, possessiveness is defined as a concern about loss of possessions and a desire for the greater control of ownership.

Possessiveness defined as the inclination to retain or control ownership—ething. Possessiveness is related to possession which can be defined as ence of someone's ownership over objects such as person, car, house, ven ideas. It appears as evidence that the object someone possesses is



important or essential for their life. According to Belk, possessiveness is the inclination and tendency to retain control or ownership of one's possessions null (Belk, 1985: 267)

Those three traits signify the negative outcomes from pursuing materialism wealth that is believed as a source of pleasure. People tend to measure happiness with the achievement of financial success. According to Kasser and Ryan (1993: 411) people who value attaining financial success more that affiliation, community feelings or self-acceptance are predicted to have negative profiles associated with psychological adjustment. In addition, when goals for financial success exceeded that value of affiliation, community feelings or selfacceptance, worse psychological adjustment was found. Thus, the researcher sees the importance of studying materialism, which is represented in the novella about possessiveness. In addition, when goals for financial success exceeded the value of affiliation, community feelings, or self-acceptance, worse psychological adjustment was found. Thus, the researcher sees the importance of studying materialism, as reflected in the novella about possessiveness, and how literary works depict and respond to social conflicts related to the possessiveness.

2.4. Theory of Conflict

In the world of conflict literature is an important event in plot development. Conflict is something dramatic refers to the fight between two

forces is balanced and implies action and retaliation (Wellen and Warren, 1995: iflicts will occur if there is no agreement or regular arrangement between and another ego. This usually happens in real life which most people



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avoid. However, in the world of literature, conflict is needed even arguably impotant to support the content of the story. If there is no conflict in a story, then it is certain that the story will not come alive and attract the reader to read it because there are no events that can be felt. It is not event excessive if writing literary works is so build and develop conflicts because the more and more interesting conflicts that occur the story will be more interesting to read.

Sayuti (2000: 42-43) divides conflicts into three types. Firts, conflict in a person (figure). This conflict is often referred to as *psychological conflict* or psychological conflict. This types of conflict usually occurs in the form of a character's struggle against himself, so that he can overcome and determine what he will do. Second, conflict between people or a person and society. This types of conflict is often referred to as *social conflict*. Conflict like this usually occur between figures and the surrounding environment. This conflict arises from individual attitudes towards the social environment regarding various problems that occur in society. Third, the conflict between humans and nature. Conflict like this are often referred to as physical or element conflicts or natural conflicts. This type of conflict usually occurs when a character cannot control and or utilize and civilize the surrounding environment as he should. If human relations with nature do not match, disharmony will occur that can lead to conflict.

2.3.1 External Conflict



External conflict deals with the problems of the world. The story's s will struggle against the circumtances of external conflict, they may



even suffer internal conflict resulting from the issues of external conflict, but this is not as simpleas internal conflict. External conflict may place the protagonist in opposition to another individual, nature or society (Allen and Meyer, 1990: 45). External conflict manifest itself as man versus man, man versus nature, man versus society. Internal conflict is the issues a character faces; an issue that requires a personal opinion or decision. These difficult decisions must be concluded with a definite conclusive decision.

Man versus man is the most fundemental type of external conflict. This form of external conflict occurs when a character struggle against another character. These struggles may be born from moral, religious or social differences and may be emotional, verbal or physical conflicts. Man versus man is almost always the conlict present when a hero fights a villain. This form of conflict may present alone, or in conduction with other external conflicts. Man versus man is when there is a conflict of two forms of like beings. An example is the hero's conflict with the central villain of a work, which may play a large role in the plot and contribute to the development of both characters.

Man versus nature conflict occur when character, or character, find themselves at odds with foces of nature. A character stuck by lightning, characters whose boat sinks in a storm and a character who struggles against hypothermia in a snow storm are all characters man versus nature conflicts. Man versus nature is the theme in literature that palaces the character against forces nature. Sometimes naracters in the book are the good guys and the conflict in the book is



naracters in the book are the good guys and the conflict in the book is all the people and forces of nature that are out of the characters conflict.



Man versus society is the form of conflict which often represented by a person who is an outcast or by a character who tries to break the normal rules of the society that has established.man versus society is also a theme in fiction in which a main character's group, main source of conflict is social traditional or concepts. In this sense, the both sides are the protagonist, and society of which the protagonist included. Society conflict gives the playwright an opportunity to comment on positive or negative aspects of society as whole.

From several of the meanings above, it can be conluded that conflict is a contradiction in fulfilling the needs of man himself or with other people or groups. Conflict can be divided into three types that is, the approaching conflict, approaching and moving away. Indicators of conflict include the fulfillment of mutual needs contradictory, the presence of tension expressed, the small possibility fulfillment of perceived needs, the presence of other parties that can obstruct someone in achieving their goals. Continuous conflicts within individuals will result in frustration.

Meanwhile, in conclusion of conflict theory and materialism are interconnected in analyzing how literary works depict and respond to social conflicts related to material and economic factors. The relationship between conflict theory in literature and materialism in a literary work involves how literature portrays and analyzes social conflicts as well as possessiveness traits affecting character, plot, and theme. Conflict is emphasized as an important in the narrative, whether internal (within the character) or external characters or between characters and society), exploring class, social,



and ideological conflicts in the story. Conflicts in literature often reflect economic and social structures, such as injustices between classes or discrimination against different races, driven by material conditions, such as economic difficulties influencing character decisions.

