

NOBILITY RETROGRESSION IN WILLIAM DALRYMPLE'S WHITE MUGHALS (2002)

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Abstrak

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah (1) menganalisa sejauh mana novel ini merefleksikan retrogresi (2) menunjukkan kontribusi elemen fiksi (karakter dan seting) dalam mengungkap retrogresi dalam novel ini. Data penelitian ini adalah teks tertulis yang dikutip dari novel dan yang konteks yang terjadi pada novel ini. Kutipan teks tersebut kemudian diinterpretasi dan dianalisa berdasarkan teori retrogresi yang dikemukakan oleh Fredrich Nietzsche dan teori *Nobility succession* oleh Jan-olov Van Wower dan representasi dari Ella Shohat. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa penyebab retrogresi adalah karena protagonist membuat peraturan yang tidak di patuhi oleh pengikutnya dan penjajahan yang di lakukan oleh Inggris dan kerajaan tetangga terhadap kerajaannya.

Kata kunci: retrogression, nobility, nobility succession, colonization

A. Introduction

Every area in this world, country or region has its own leadership or a king who has a noble pride to play a major role in organizing and defends their region in order they do not experience the retrogression of their country. Nobility certainly has several definitions; it can refer to a character trait, and be unrelated to one's birth or rank or it can refer to a birth or rank also. In definition noble means a possessing hereditary rank in a political system or social class. It derived from a feudalistic stage of a country or belonging to the class which possesses the dignity. Traditionally, nobility means as an informal designation for social class. Caputo Family Association (2012) defined Nobility as a belonging to a class of persons that are distinguished by high birth or rank, possessing special hereditary privileges, rights and titles that has been granted a qualifying title for their family or clan name from a leading figure in a certain area. A leading figure is usually a *king, chief, maharaja or sultan* of a region, country or empire. It implies that

¹ Mahasiswa penulis Makalah Prodi Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris untuk diwisuda periode Juni 2013

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nobility is belonging only to certain group such as highest social class in a country or aristocracy.

In a modern usage, nobility is applied to the richest or highest social class in the societies. It refers informally to a persons belonging to the upper class. It means that nobility in this case as a given, it is no longer as a hereditary. Historically, nobility in modern era is distinct from socio-economic status which is mainly based on income and possessions. Being wealthy or influential does not automatically make one a noble, nor are all nobles wealthy and influential. Most of noble man wealth derived from one or more estates, large or small, that might include fields, pasture, orchards, timberland, hunting grounds, streams, etc. It also included infrastructure such as castle, well and mill to which local peasants were allowed some access, although often at a price.

In 18th century, there were few countries in the world where a monarch actually exercises their nobility in a right purpose. The word monarch literally means somebody who rules alone, and has come to a king or queen. In reality nobility is an important legal concept, in particular because of the privileges attached to it. India in 18th century had to endure one of the most chaotic periods in its entire history. The Mughals empire, which had dominated Indian subcontinent began to experience the retrogression with internal and external pressure. These retrograde also give an impact to the condition socio-economic and military problem in India. According to Bijdragen (2009) Taxes were originally levied to help the sovereign in times of war; and since nobles were expected to provide help in kind. So, indirectly it can makes up the socio-economic and military problem in the country. Therefore, their nobility still can be maintained and can bring prosperity. As a matter of fact, there is also a country that cannot maintain their nobility and bring it into retrograde.

The analysis of this novel focuses on the nobility deterioration that happened in Mughals Empire in William Dalrymple's novel *White Mughals* (2002). This analysis is done through text-based and context-based interpretation. Furthermore, it is also done by analyzing fictional devices. Fictional devices are character and setting. Character is used to disclose the action of the character trying to survive and maintain their nobility. Then, setting deals with atmosphere that make up the story in this novel and support the meaning. Moreover, these elements are analyzed based on the concept of nobility by Nietzsche, nobility succession by Jan-Olov von Wowern and Representation by Ella Shohat.

William Dalrymple was born in Scotland in 1965. He was educated at Ampleforth and Trinity College, Cambridge where he was first History Exhibitioner then Senior History Scholar. In 1986, while still at college, he set off to follow on foot the outward route of Marco Polo from Jerusalem to Mongolia and wrote a highly acclaimed bestseller about the journey, *In Xanadu* when he was twenty-two. The book won the 1990 Yorkshire Post Best First Work Award and a Scottish Arts Council Spring Book Award; it was also shortlisted for the John Llewellyn Rhys Memorial Prize. In 1989 Dalrymple moved to Delhi where he lived for five years researching his second book, *City of Djinnns*, which won the 1994 Thomas Cook Travel Book Award and the Sunday Times Young British Writer of the Year Award. *From the Holy Mountain*, his acclaimed study of the

demise of Christianity in its Middle Eastern homeland, was awarded the Scottish Arts Council Autumn Book Award for 1997; it was also shortlisted for the 1998 Thomas Cook Award, the John Llewellyn Rhys Prize and the Duff Cooper Prize. A collection of his writings about India, *The Age of Kali*, won the French Prix D'Astrolabe in 2005.

In 1999, he changed genres and after four books of travel, concentrated on the writing of history. *White Mughals* was published in 2003, and the book won Britain's most prestigious history prize, the Wolfson Prize, in 2003. It was also awarded the Scottish Book of the Year Prize, and was short listed for the PEN History Award, the Kiriyama Prize and the James Tait Black Memorial Prize. The book is made into a major motion picture, directed by Academy Award Winner, Ralph Fiennes. *The Last Mughal: The Fall of a Dynasty, Delhi, 1857*, described as 'a masterpiece' in the New York Review of Books, won the Duff Cooper Memorial Prize for History and India's leading literary award, the Vodafone/Crossword award for Non Fiction. It was also long listed for the Samuel Johnson Prize. And the last book is *Nine Lives: In Search of the Sacred in Modern India*, published in 2009, won the Asia House Literary Award and was again long listed for the Samuel Johnson Prize

The novel "White Mughals" (2002) is a novel written by William Dalrymple. *White Mughals* is one of the most popular books in India and it gets 5 awards. It exposes the issues the nobility retrogression. Generally, retrogression of nobility means the degeneration in the quality of aristocracy over a period of time and it depicts the condition backward movements. This backward movement of nobility is caused by several issues; they are disorganized government and colonization.

First, the cause of nobility retrogression in the novel *White Mughals* is disorganized government. It can be seen from several attitudes in the empire itself. Such as, the successors are breaking the law of succession in their empire. Next is anarchy situation which is triggered by the death of a king and upheavals that follow them. Because, every emperor each one is used nobles and members of the royal family to get the position as a king. The last is Moral Degradation of the Soldiers. The soldiers used to life in luxury. This situation makes the Mughal army lazy, corrupt and inefficient in running their job. The soldiers became pleasure loving and often they proved to be disloyal.

Second is colonization. The coming of the Europeans also gave a big impact for nobility retrogression. The Europeans, especially the British, played an important role in nobility deterioration in Mughals Empire. They first came to India to set up the colonization. And also neighbor invasions, the invasions of Maratha and Tipu proved fatal for the Mughal Empire. Not only were the Indians defeated but their weakness was exposed and India became as easy prey to other foreign powers too.

There are two studies that give contribution and inspiration in analyzing this novel. The first analysis was written by *Rebecca Dorgelo (2010)* entitled "*Travel, History, and Transnationalism: William Dalrymple's Writing about Delhi*". In this analysis Dorgelo reveals the three works of William Dalrymple entitled: *In Xanadu, City of Djins, and White Mughals*. Dalrymple's texts achieve

this representational amelioration through the employment of a number of different, though connected, tropes. Throughout this journal, it examines the ways in which such tropes function across Dalrymple's narrative history and travel texts. The second study that gives contribution to this analysis written by *Ingela Lundin* (2008) entitled *Double Oppression in the Color Purple and Wide Sargasso Sea: A Comparison between the main characters Celie and Antoinette*. The basic focus of this analysis is the main character Celie and her life conditions in Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* (1982) and makes a comparison to the main character Antoinette in Jean Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966). Both of the novels try to reveals about the issue gender relations, gender oppression, colonial subordination and identity seem to be salient in these two stories and shed light upon what these two novels very much have in common. And also it can be seen as feminist as well as postcolonial, and postcolonial feminist criticism is what this study will take as its point of departure. The two female protagonists are doubly oppressed, that is, both subordinated as women and as colonial objects.

The analysis of this novel related to the concept of nobility by Fredrich Nietzsche and nobility succession by Jan-Olov von Wowern. Generally, Nobility can be refers to many things including a social and historical concept. This is not only about social status or class, but also related to income. Nobility is a government-privileged title which may be either hereditary or for a lifetime. Hereditary titles, in a general sense, are titles, positions or styles that are hereditary and thus tend or are bound to remain in particular families. Jan-Olov von Wowern (2012) stated that nobility refers to a class in society which once had hereditary political, financial and social privileges guaranteed by law. It means that nobility is a position in a society that differentiated them from a common people and they are protected by the law. There are five characteristics of nobleman by Nietzsche (2010)

First is the noble man is solitary, independent, and dealing with others as means to his ends. Second is he is driven by his work, having unified his personality to focus on his project, and seeks responsibilities. Third is the nobleman is essentially 'healthy', knowing what is good for him and choosing that. Forth is He wills his life unconditionally, and perhaps can will eternal return as well. The last is he has reverence for himself, honouring himself as powerful, and exercising power over himself in setting and striving for his own values. This sense of reverence extends also to the past – there is no assumption that what is new is better.

The quotation above shows that there are five characteristics that a nobleman should be had, in order they can maintain the country that they lead. Nobility are also involves a grand attitude and a longing for expansive inner states, not a sense of being caught up in oneself, but a continual 'self overcoming'. This shouldn't be understood in the usual moral or spiritual terms, e.g. overcoming one's selfishness or transcending human desires.

In maintaining nobility there are two rules to bring the succession in maintaining nobility. According to Jan-Olov von Wowern (2012)

The first rule is laid down in the letter patent which was given to the family member who was first ennobled (for patent nobility) and the second rule of succession is in use at the time and the place where the family was first recognized as noble (for original nobility). It follows that in the case of patent nobility the rules of succession could only be changed by the conferring authority, the reigning Monarch or his or hers successors

In the case of the original nobility in the rules of succession cannot ever be changed, not even by a successor of the reigning Monarch who once recognized the family as noble, because the rules of succession were in most cases not at the Monarch's disposition to change.

When, it discusses succession, it should define the meaning of succession to the nobility. It is which family members in the next generation will inherit the name, the arms and the quality of continuing the family line, and the succession to the headship of a noble family. In genealogy book by Jan-Olov von Wowern (2012) there is two noble succession:

Agnatic succession: succession to the nobility that continues only on the spear (male) side, from father to son.”And Cognatic succession: in many countries this was the original form of succession among the ancient nobility, meaning the nobility that continued on both the spear (male) and distaff (female) side in parallel lines”.

It means that the nobility succession is brought from the family itself without differ the male or female lines. Both of them can bring the succession of nobility. The noble person feels full of greatness and power, the new philosophers express the will to power in its purest form and are full of joy in the affirmation of life. The noble person despises what is weak; the new philosopher ranks people by what how much truth and suffering they can bear. Both are independent and are not moved by the suffering of common people.

Representation is a critical concept not only in postcolonial studies and academia, but in the larger cultural milieu. The term itself can be defined in many different ways. Often, it thinks of representation primarily as “presence” or “appearance” where there is an implied visual component. Representations can be clear images, material reproductions, performances and simulations. We understand them to be re-presenting a particular “real” thing; however, the relationship between the thing and the representation of the thing is one that has engaged philosophers, linguists, historians and artists for centuries. In a different context, we use representation to denote the relationship between a politician and her/his constituency

B. Discussion

Disorganized government is the first cause of the nobility retrogression in Mughals Empire. This situation is triggered by the Mughals breaking the law of succession, they break the rules that had already made by the leader and also do not carry out of their job in a right purpose. Next is anarchy situation. It is made by every emperor to get a position as a king and the last is moral degradation of

the soldiers. The soldiers as the protector of the empire cannot be trusted anymore. They try to corrupt and be careless in their duty. These three kinds of disorganized government are the internal causes of nobility retrogression in Mughals Empire.

William Steuart, however, left a much fuller description of Nizam's durbar at around this time. The Nizam and his minister he mention only briefly: 'The Nizam is polite and extremely attentive, 'degree. His minister is a clever but lazy hound whose avowed maxim is to distress all the subjects in order to please the avaricious disposition of his master whose beard he holds with both hands and with it can manage as he likes. (p. 84)

The quotation above informs that as a leader, Nizam failed in managing his governmental. The system that Nizam's has does not have a good organization. As a leader, Nizam does not make a strict law for his empire succession. In the sentence " *The Nizam is polite and extremely attentive, 'degree. His minister is a clever but lazy hound whose avowed maxim is to distress all the subjects*" depicts the characteristic of Nizam and also the minister who has a noble pride and given a mandate by their citizen to bring prosperity to their Empire. A minister is a person who has a major role in the developing of the empire rather to think of himself than the empire and the position that he has. As successors, both Nizam and the Minister failed in maintaining their nobility because they do not responsible on their position as successors in the Empire. Nietzsche mentioned in his *characteristic of a nobleman*, the second characteristic of a nobleman is they were driven by his works, unified his personality to focus in his project. By this, both of them cannot be said as a nobleman anymore. They cannot responsible in their works and projects to manage the Empire. The quotation "*His minister is a clever but lazy hound whose avowed maxim is to distress all the subjects in order to please the avaricious disposition of his master*" illustrated that the minister is a greedy and lazy person. He has a responsible on his project to manage the empire, but he does not obey it. It indicates that the minister who has a noble pride cannot say as a noble man anymore. He cannot run his life nobly and also cannot responsible in his nobility. The word *lazy hound* shows that he is a dangerous, lazy and greedy man. He deludes many people to enrich himself and just thinks about himself. The word "*avaricious disposition of his master*" "exposes that the minister uses his position as power to do it. He ignored the responsibilities of a minister to hamper the deterioration of the Empire. "*whose beard he holds with both hands and with it can manage as he likes*" depicts that he is a cruel man and also arrogant. He likes other people to follow every demand he asked. The only that he cares about himself and also he wants everyone obeys his rules. It clearly shows that as a king Nizam is incompetent. He can not makes his empire in peaceful condition. The retrogression of Mughals Empire not only caused of by their breaking law of succession but also the anarchy situation that made by every emperor to get a position as a king

The anarchy condition is depicted in the Mughals Empire that leaded by Nizam ul-Mulk. As a noble person, a king Nizam left the Empire in a difficult condition. He did not leave any last will or testament to his son who will lead the Empire after his death. This condition triggered his entire son to replace his father

position and makes an anarchy action. Moreover, as brothers, they kill each other to get a king crown and lead the Empire. This can be seen in the following quotation.

At his death in 1748, the carefully-created structure tottered toward collapse as Nizamul-Mulk's son fought among themselves and tried to establish themselves as rulers by entering into rival alliances with neighboring powers, notably the Marathas to the north and west the French at Pondicherry to the east. It was fourteen years before Nizam Ali Khan -an illegitimate younger son- finally established himself on the throne, throwing his elder brother Salabat Jang into dungeons of Bidar, where he was strangled. (p. 87)

The quotation above depicts the anarchy actions that happened when a king was dead. The sentence "*the carefully-created structure tottered toward collapse as Nizam ul-Mulk's son fought among themselves and tried to establish themselves as rulers*" shows that Nizam failed in leading his Empire and makes the succession structure become deteriorated. It was caused the system in Nizam Empire was disorganized. So that, this low system is manipulated by several people inside the Empire to makes him self as a king. The anarchy situation that happened in Nizam Empire caused by Nizam as a king did not think for the long term succession in his Empire. The possibility of this anarchy will be happen almost every the death of the king but Nizam does not find the solution for the problem. "*Nizam ul-Mulk's son fought among themselves and tried to establish themselves as rulers*". It implied that a position as a king is something important in their life even they will get killed. Implicitly, it depicts a purpose as a king itself has already distorted by greedy people. The word "*fought among themselves*" exposes the worse mental of Nizam empire organization. They rather thought to increase social status than bringing prosperity to the empire. It was because the function of a king was not for leading and developing an Empire anymore, it depicts in this quotation "*It was fourteen years before Nizam Ali Khan- an illegitimate younger son-finally established himself on the throne, throwing his elder brother Salabat Jang into dungeons of Bidar, where he was strangled*". Throne refers to a power of a king, where they can have a control over the empire. It is also a kind of a pride, through the position as a king; they can increase their social status and they can be respected by many people. It depicts that to get a nobility of a king they will get everything they want. So that, to get a position as a king they will do everything, include killing each other. As Wowerm mentioned in *Nobility succession* "*The first rules is laid down in the letter patent which was given to the family member who was first ennobled (for patent nobility)*". It showed that Nizam as a king failed in developing the empire succession; he did not give a patent letter which will replace his position as a king. The mistakes that Nizam made the situation in the empire became chaos and uncontrollable. Besides that, Moral degradation of the soldier was also a cause of nobility deterioration in Mughals Empire.

Moral degradation is a destroying of moral qualities or known as demoralization. This moral degradation is shown by the soldiers who bring a glory to the empire. They have a function to defense and bring the glory to the

empire become bias. They are corrupt and inefficient in working their duty. The empire will be very weak and cannot do anything without a soldier. It happens because the soldier has a major role in maintaining the stability of the Empire.

For three months the Nizam's army advanced slowly towards Pure along the banks of Manjirah River. The Marathas advanced equally slowly towards the Mughals (as the Hyderabadis called themselves). Of the two armies, the marathas' was slightly larger around 130,000 men against the Mughals total of around ninety thousand; the Maratha force was also much the more experienced and better led. Both armies were equally divided between cavalry and infantry, though only the Hyderabadis had a regiment of female infantry dressed in British-style redcoats, brought along primarily to protect the Nizam's harem women, was also came along on the trip in along caravan of covered elephant howdahs. (p. 92)

A soldier who had a duty in protecting their area from the enemy was distorted by several people for their own importance. The sentence "*Both armies were equally divided between cavalry and infantry, though only the Hyderabadis had a regiment of female infantry dressed in British-style redcoats, brought along primarily to protect the Nizam's harem women, was also came along on the trip in along caravan of covered elephant howdahs*" shows that the function of a soldier was not only to protect the Empire from the enemy had changed into watching Nizam's wife activity. It shows there is a moral degradation from the soldiers in Nizam's Empire. It also depicted the deterioration of the Empire, because there was a deduction of soldiers. These disorganizing of government in Nizam's Empire was the beginning of retrogression in Mughals Empire. The incapability of Nizam organized the empire, it made an assumption that Nizam failed in maintaining his nobility. Wowerm stated that Nobility is a class in a society which differentiated them from a common people. Nizam as a noble man could not solve the problem which appeared in the Empire shows that he was the same as a common people. He could not think to drum up the Empire. Even, gave a duty for the soldiers he failed to do it. This condition made the military fortress in Nizam's Empire became very low. It was caused by the incompatible duty of a soldier. Automatically, they had difficulties in fighting back the enemy because they had fewer soldiers than the enemies. The disorganizing government form a king is indirectly shows their weakness in protecting their Empire.

European invasion was the most crucial thing that happened in nobility retrogression of Mughals Empire. Especially is British, British invaded India for three hundred years. They colonize India and settle India as their colony country. This invasion became the ending of the Empire in India. It can be seen from the quotation below:

On 8 November 1797, Lord Wellesley, a minor Irish aristocrat, set out from England to take up his appointment as Governor General of Bengal and head of the Supreme Government of India. For nearly three hundred years European coming out to the subcontinent had been assimilating themselves to India in a kaleidoscope of

different ways. That process was now drawing to a close. Increasingly Europeans were feeling they had nothing to learn from India, and they had less and less inclination to discover anything to the contrary. India was perceived as a suitable venue for ruthless and profitable European expansion, where glory and fortunes could be acquired to the benefit of all concerned. It was a place to be changed and conquered by. (p. 54)

The quotation above shows that India had been colonized by British. India became their commodity to get a benefit. British also came to India in order to settle India as their colonized country; they wanted to make an expansion for their land. Indirectly, their invasion for three hundred years had been planned. They wanted to take many advantages through their monopoly. Europe wanted to have a control from all aspects, include governmental and social life. As it states "*India was perceived as a suitable venue for ruthless and profitable European expansion, where glory and fortunes could be acquired to the benefit of all concerned*". It means that the coming British to India wanted to occupy India and made them as their expansion country. It was no longer as a partner where they could assimilate and exchange their culture and education. They tried to exploit everything in India for their own importance. *For nearly three hundred years European coming out to the subcontinent had been assimilating themselves to India in a kaleidoscope of different ways. That process was now drawing to a close*" illustrated that Europe came to India by assimilating and offering prosperity to the citizen but it was only an intrigue to occupy them. They only wanted to take advantages from it.

Moreover, the failure of Mughals Empire in maintaining their nobility was not only caused by the European invasion but also the invasion from neighborhood Empire. Every Empire had a desire to have an expansion for their land, and made them in war to get it. It seems in the quotation below.

The brothers spent Christmas together, probably for the first time. But it quickly became clear that James's discharge would take longer than hoped to wind its way through the Company's military bureaucracy. It was agreed, therefore, that for the time being he should stay in Vizianigram, and William should head on to Hyderabad alone. After long period of truce and even friendship, war was again said to be brewing between the Nizam of Hyderabad and his old enemies the Marathas, and it was vital for William to get to Hyderabad as soon as possible to do what he could to forestall it. (p. 80)

The quotation above shows that the deterioration of Mughals nobility was not only caused by European invasion but also neighborhood Empire invasion that happened in the Empire. The sentence "*After long period of truce and even friendship, war was again said to be brewing between the Nizam of Hyderabad and his old enemies the Marathas,*" proves that the neighborhood empire invasion was also caused the nobility deterioration Mughals Empire. Both of the Empire involved in the fratricide condition to get a position as a powerful kingdom. Their willing to overbearingly each Empire showed their greediness. War that happened

between Nizam and Maratha showed the failure of an Empire to stand side by side. The decayed of these two Empire to maintain their noble pride made their nobility retrograde.

C. Conclusion

Novel *White Mughals* (2002) written by William Dalrymple reflected nobility retrogression. Nobility retrogression was caused by disorganized government and colonization. It was triggered by the Mughals breaking the law of succession that had already made by the successors, anarchy situation which was made by every emperor to get a position as a king and moral degradation of the soldiers. Besides that, the colonization from European and neighborhood Empire also gave a contribution to the nobility retrogression in Mughals Empire.

The disorganized government in Mughals Empire made this empire deteriorate. The incapability of the king organize the Empire made the situation in the empire became worst. Furthermore, the anarchy situation which was made by every emperor triggered the condition in the empire not running well and also moral degradation of the soldier made the empire find the ending of the glory.

The colonization also made the retrogression in the Mughals Empire. The destruction of the empire made the noble pride of every emperor deteriorated. Coincide with the British conquest; it became clear that India had found it's canceled. Moreover, this situation was not only caused by the European invasion but also the neighborhood empire invasion. Every empire wanted to make each empire under their power. This condition made the situation in the empire more anarchy.

There are two elements that contribute in revealing the nobility retrogression in the novel. They are character and setting. Character plays an important role to show the nobility retrogression itself. Then, the setting contributes mostly in the disorganized government and colonization. They are explored in the forms of situation and condition to show how the nobility retrogression is revealed.

Note: This article is written based on Oktulillah Putri's paper under the supervision of Muhammad Al-Hafizh, S.S, M.A.

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