



EXERTION TO BE A MOSLEM IN DEBORAH BAKER'S *THE CONVERT*

Ayu Efta Febriani¹, An Fauzia Rozani Syafei²

English Department

FBS Universitas Negeri Padang

Email: ftaayu.ea@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Skripsi ini merupakan analisa novel *The Convert* (2011) karya Deborah Baker. Permasalahan yang dibahas dalam analisa ini adalah sejauh mana novel ini merefleksikan usaha dalam mencapai tujuan menjadi seorang muslim. Tujuan analisa ini adalah (1) mengungkapkan sejauh mana tokoh utama dalam novel merefleksikan *Exertion*, (2) menunjukkan kontribusi elemen fiksi dalam mengungkap permasalahan *Exertion*. Analisa ini menerapkan *text-based interpretation* yang mempertimbangkan elemen-elemen fiksi dan unsur-unsur di dalam teks secara spesifik sehingga memberikan kontribusi dalam pengungkapan makna dan *context-based interpretation* dengan mengaitkan konsep *Personality* yang dikemukakan oleh Victor Frankl. Hasil analisa menunjukkan bahwa tokoh utama berhasil melakukan usaha untuk bisa menjadi seorang muslim dan melakukan perubahan dari kehidupan lama dan memasuki kehidupan baru dan menyesuaikan diri dengan kehidupan barunya yang di pengaruhi oleh lingkungan sekitar dengan cara pindah keyakinan, mengubah pola pikir, menyesuaikan diri di kehidupan baru. Keinginan, niat, dan tekak yang kuat dari tokoh untuk berubah ke arah yang lebih baik sangat berperan penting dalam proses usaha menjadi seorang Muslim.

Kata kunci: Usaha, Perubahan, *Exertion*, *personality*

A. INTRODUCTION

Generally, every human has their purpose in their life. They attempt several ways to achieve it in order to change their life into a better life. In other words, as a human life, every people not only has desire to fulfill their achievement in physical needs but they also have to fulfill their achievement in spiritual such as religion. Sometimes, to get their purpose they need to do something hardly. For example a person who wants to be a Moslem. The process to be a new person as a Moslem is not easy for them. They struggle to face many problems from society. They also must learn from the begining about how to be a good Moslem.

¹ English ELLSP of English Department of FBS Universitas Negeri Padang graduated on September 2017

² Lecturer of English Department of FBS Universitas Negeri Padang



Religious conversion can be considered as a process of finding the meaning of life, encouraging the people to find what is considered important and valuable in their life. Paloutzian (1996) found that people experienced high spirituality and at the same time showed greater understanding of the meaning of life. For example, Moslem converts are expected to adhere to and display the Five Pillars of Islam, confession of faith, ritual prayer, giving of alms, the fast during Ramadan, and a pilgrimage to Mecca. for a Moslem, when they obey in Islam rule, they will find their new life and will satisfied as a new personality.

Sri Rahayu, Kurnia Ningsih and An Fauzia Rozani Syafei (2017) conducted a research about healing soul. This study analyzes the issue of healing soul which refers to how people recover themselves from their bad memories. It is defined by observing the efforts they do. Healing soul can help people control their actions, thought, and personality. They commit to make themselves much more beneficial and useful for themselves and their social life. This article has related to the discussion of exertion to be a Moslem. The research focused on how people does effort for a better life.

The phenomenon of exertion to be a moslem found in *The Convert* (2011) which is written by Deborah Baker. This novel reveals how the protagonist does exertion to be a moslem, she does effort to keep her conviction about Islam from her society which has majority of Christian in America. In order to achieve it, as a convert, she need to change her identity, her behaviour, her life style and does adaptation to a new society in Pakistan which has majority of Islam in a new country.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

The analysis of this novel is done through text-based. The fictional devices such as character, plot, and setting are needed during the process of analysing. These devices are corelated each other. Character is used to reveal exertion to be a moslem by analysing character's belief, behaviour or action. Plot is used to acknowledge the conflicts that character faced. Furthermore, setting is also crucial device as is situation and condition exist in the novel in order to reveal the character attempt to get her conviction. In addition, this analysis uses the concept of personality by Victor Frankl..

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This chapter analyzes the fictional devices such as character, plot (conflict), and setting to reveal the issue of exertion to be a Moslem. exertion in this analysis refers to the efforts of finding the identity and changing to a better life which is represented by the main characters. This analysis shows the three ways that have been done by the character to be a Moslem. The first can be seen from the way she explores about Islam. The second is by changing her identity and third is by creating work.

1. Exploring about Islam

As a Child living in America and born from a Jew family, she grow up in

America which has majority of Christian. Her parents adapt culture in America meanwhile for Margaret, the main character in this analysis always has some question about her confuse, she is a Jew but adapt Christian, this is the begining she find about the religion until find about Islam. Margaret was agree that Islam certain to Allah as their God. They keep their conviction as a Moslem and prayed to Allah as their God and not like her parents, believe as a Jew, but claims that they are like Christian. In her mind, what is the differentiation between Jew, Christian or Islam. It can be seen through the quotation below:

When she grew older she compared the sacred texts of Christianity, Judaism, and Islam for their teachings on the hereafter. Of all these faiths, only Islam provided her the clear assurance that her efforts to live a pious life would be justly rewarded.(p.78)

Margaret also try to compare between Jew, Christian, and Islam to make sure what actually she believed. Until she finally found that *“only Islam provided her the clear assurance that her efforts to live a pious life would be justly rewarded”*. It means she is believe in Islam. She got her conviction of Islam because only Islam has the answer of her hesitant. In Islam her believe every human life are equal, no racism, eventhough they are has different nationality.

2. Change Identity

As a new convert, Margaert Marcus has decided move to Pakistan as the invitation of Maulana Maududi. She takes this chance in order to be a real Moslem by living around Moslem people in Pakistan. And choose to left her identity as an American to be Pakistani.

Wandering the streets of Alexandria, my first experience of a real Moslem country outside of books and *National Geographic*, I never once felt I was in a foreign place. Though I have yet another month at sea before I reach Pakistan, I will post this letter here. I wanted to reassure you that for the first time in my life I feel I have finally arrived at a place I can call [home](#) (p.14)

The quotation above explain how Margaret Marcus go away from America just for finding her identity as a Moslem. Going abroad to foreign country, which mean she go away from herlife before into the new life. She makes hard decision in her life, it can be seen in this quotation *“I have finally arrived at a place I can call home.”* Means she feel comfort with her new life as a Moslem and it means that she has been found her identity as a

Moslem in foreign country as a Moslem than her life in America as a Jew.

In Pakistan Maryam Jameelah expected to find this true Islamic society she had read of in her books. This was why she left her home and family, her childhood memories, her entire American identity. She left behind everything for Allah. All these wonderful thoughts were in her heart and mind when she reached our shores.(p.43)

From the quotation above, it can be seen how Margaret Marcus change her identity to be a Moslem and living in a new society in Pakistan, which is mean that she change her whole life, left her life style, her behaviour and her named Maragaret Marcus to Maryam Jameela. Ofcourse change her identity will give some effect in her life. It will be change the way she think, act, and behave. And it will be expected to be different from what she was before.

3. Creating Work

Living in Pakistan, is not same like in America. In Pakistan woman can not give her voice to speak to other people. One way Maryam can speak is by writing. In her writing she introduce her idea, she writes about human in the world such as about western civilization toward east, and about Marxism she gives her idea through her work and share to another people. It can be seen through the quotation below:

*In the meantime, I decided to introduce myself to my new country by writing an autobiographical essay for the *Pakistan Times*, revisiting my journey from America to Pakistan. No sooner was this published than I began receiving an avalanche of letters proposing marriage. The Mawlana had predicted this in one of his letters to me. He wrote that all those qualities that would make me a good Moslem wife would be considered faults in America, and that if I stayed in New York I couldn't possibly hope to find a husband to be my true life- companion. He said he knew a great number of virtuous young Moslems and maged a match that would prove to be of great help in his movement. Once I arrived in Pakistan, he promised, I would have no cause to worry about my future.(p.25)*

From the quotation above, Maryam Jameela shows how she can not speak to others, so she decided to wrote and try to introduce herself and her life to people by her work. It is make Maulana helped her to get her conviction as a

Moslem in society in Pakistan. She also try to adaptation with a new society and show to people how hard she want to be a Moslem through her work.

By then she was living in the home of Mawlana Mawdudi and her first book, *Islam versus the West*, was a best-seller, soon be translated into a dozen languages. This image of her would appear in nearly every book that followed.(p.16)

In her book she writes about the problem in the world that west always opposite with Islam. In islam for example, woman must cover her body by wearing like burqa and woman should not talk to the man who is not her muhram. But in West, woman should not can talk directly to the man. In her book also shows how west civilization enter to east and want to be the central and east must followed it.

D. CONCLUSION

This analysis showed the efforts to find the identity as a Moslem. The issue of exertion to be a Moslem was observed and analysed through the main characters' change of mindset and behaviour. She released any behave, identity, religion related to her identity before.

The caharacter faced some conflict in her life. Confusing of her parent's religion and get discriminate from her society which make her to find her new identity. She learned and found her new identity as a Moslem. Then she tried to learn anything about Islam by moving to another country, change her identity and her religion before and become a better personality after being a Moslem.

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