MAYA ANGELOU'S HABITUS IN AFRO-AMERICAN SOCIETY ON THE NOVEL I KNOW WHY THE CAGED BIRD SINGS

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Abstract

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings is an autobiography novel about life of Maya Angelou, a well-known African American writer, poet, to the activist of civil rights who has experienced various problems such as bullying and sexual harassment. This work created by Maya herself that talks about her struggle, thoughts and habits brought her to the successful in American Society. This study is type of descriptive qualitative with aims to analyze and identify Maya's Habitus using the perspective of Pierre Bourdieu. The findings and discussion showed that there were several habitus that Maya did to make her become one of the great writers of the United States. The habitus is meticulous, diligent, courageous, intelligent, and love reading and writing. Those Habitus motivated by several things including racist treatment that encourages Maya become a brave figure against it. Habitus diligently worked due to the Maya's condition who came from family with low economic capital and her parent who get divorced. Habitus like reading and writing caused by psychological trauma faced after Maya getting sexually abused and experiencing rape. All the bad things that Maya faced then turned out to be good things after she successfully used her thoughts, tastes and habitus.

Keywords: Auto-biography, Bourdieu, Habitus, Maya Angelou

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INTRODUCTION

Racism, bullying, and sexual violence are the three examples of big problems that are difficult to avoid in human lives that have occurred for a long time. There are so many policies have been carried out by the government as a decision maker, but these problems still exist and deeply rooted. If explored further than before, it begins because of the wrong values held by the community which then give rise to different social classes. These differences then created distance and tension between them until finally presenting the view that something good must be in accordance with the social values of the community. White skin, long hair, tall body, are examples of values that are considered good in society. A person who does not meet these criteria will be ostracized, shunned, and even considered as "liyan" or "the other".

Reporting from the qbukatabu.org page, the term liyan itself refers to a person or group who experiences isolation from social interaction in small units such as family, neighbours, or even large units such as the state which causes their rights to be reduced.

In fact, everyone can see those problems not only happening in Indonesia, but a big and developed country like the United States also experience the same thing. In this country, the issue that is still hot and debated to this day is the social classes created by acts of discrimination and racism against the black race. This problem arose because of the slavery system that had existed since the 16th century after the European colonies managed to explore and establish power there. Rasiah (2020) explains that slavery justifies the existence of human control and all aspects possessed by them to be absolutely controlled by

others. The Europeans who had seen the great potential for natural resources in America tried to develop the area above their control by recruiting Native American workers. They started by clearing land for tobacco and sugar production, which at that time were experiencing an increase in demand. The longer it turns out that this production process requires more labour, so the Europeans decided to buy slaves at low prices from the African continent. The slaves traded came from prisoners of war, criminals, and so on that sent to various locations in America using narrow ships and through a trade route known as the Atlantic Slave Trade. The use of African labour at that time was developed by the idea that they had a strong immune system to be exposed to the sun longer because they had black skin and were considered the most suitable for slavery.

Marguerite Annie Johnson, better known to the public as Maya Angelou, is an African-American writer, orator, dancer, singer, and civil rights activist. Maya was born to Bailey Johnson, who worked as a security guard and Vivian Baxter, who worked as a nurse. As stated by Talcott Parsons (195, pp. 59-64) there are several criteria that determine a person's level of social class, including birth criteria which include race, nobility, and gender. Based on her own birth criteria, Maya did not fit into what American values considered good. Maya is of African-American descent and has black physical characteristics, curly hair and short body. This makes Maya get racist treatment when she is at her grandmother's house, at school, or other public facilities such as libraries to places of worship. Moreover, in the 19th century when America was still in the vortex of capitalism activity, people from the black race were forced to use their energy for lower-class jobs such as day laborers, shopkeepers, to commercial sex workers. Few examples of this work have experienced by Maya in her life.

Since childhood, Maya faced so many bad experiences. When she was only three years old, her parents decided to divorce. This condition caused Maya and her brother Bailey Junior to live with their paternal grandmother, Anne Henderson, in Arkansas. When Maya was seven years old, her mother brought them back to live together. But

unfortunately, Maya gets sexual harassment from her mother's boyfriend. Her uncle, who knew the incident directly from her confession, then killed the perpetrator with his own hands. The traumatic experience made Maya choose to isolate herself from the surrounding and did not want to speak a word. She got Selective Mutism. Her grandmother who could not stand Maya's condition finally brought her back and sent her to study at the Rosenwald school. In that place, Maya met Bertha Flowers, a teacher who helped her, overcome her fear and also guided her to express her voice through works such as poetry, short stories, etc. I know Why the Caged Bird Sings novel is her first work which contains unpleasant experiences such as sexual harassment and how she lives as a descendant of the black race in an American society that always claims to uphold human rights but becomes very inhumane. Starting her career as a writer, Maya has received numerous accolades and awards from various universities, literary organizations, government agencies and special interest groups including a Pulitzer Price nomination for her book titled Just Give Me a Cool Drink of Water 'fore I Diiie.

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings novel which tells the story of Maya Angelou's experiences from childhood to adolescence, has produced quite a lot of research on issues of discrimination and discussions of gender equality. For example, research conducted by Alfrido Lambi in 2016. This research is entitled Social Segregation in the Autobiographical Novel I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings by Maya Angelou. By using the sociology of literature theory initiated by Alan Swingwood, the results show that Maya Angelou uses the story of her childhood life through dialogue between characters and her narrative to describe the social segregation in her life. Although it is different from the research objectives that the author wants to do at this time, this research helps the author to open a discussion space, that it is true and real that Maya Angelou has faced so many unpleasant treatments in the social life of American society, then she expresses criticism through her works.

Furthermore, I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings novel is also quite often used as a material

object for feminist movement research. Indiani Eka Permatasari in 2016 has conducted research using the poems in this novel series to find out and explain how acts of discrimination occur against women of the black race using feminism theory and historical and biographical approaches. The results show that the most dominant type of feminism is radical feminism which is influenced by the bad history of the life of the black race in America. Maya uses her poetry to give a bad picture of her life being discriminated because she is African-American descent. This research provides further evidence that Maya's life was not easy. From this research, the writer can see the things that Maya has done to achieve success. Segregation or separation of rights for the black race, discrimination for women was not able to stop the struggle.

Research on habitus as a formal object has been carried out by Harpindo Syah Putra Hilarion Ginting in 2019 with the titleAnalysis of Habitus and Capital in the Educational Arena according to Pierre Bourdieu's Perspective in the novel Sang Pemimpi by Andrea Hirata. This study aims to determine the habitus and capital possessed by the main characters Ikal and Jimbran to achieve success in the education arena. Education was chosen because the leaders believed it was the way to make their dreams come true. The results of the study show that there are several habitus and modals in the novel Sang Pemimpi: Ikal has six habitus, namely: hard worker, never give up, likes to exercise, rises from pessimism, is frugal, and religious. Arai has six habits, namely: hard worker, unyielding, optimistic, always curious, thrifty, and Jimbron has habits, hardworking, obsession with horses, saving, and innocent. In addition to these habits, the success of the character is also supported by capital in the economic, cultural, and social fields. This research is the author's biggest reference to find out Maya Angelou's habitus during her life which is described in the novel I Know Why the Caged Bird

To find out more in matters relating to Maya Angelou's habitus in the autobiographical novel, the author uses a sociocultural approach. This approach brought by Pierre Bourdieu is centred on the theory of "human practice" which involves structures and agents (humans) that influence each other. Bourdieu is one of the leading theorists whose ideas are used in the study of culture. In a book entitled Critical Reader: Bourdieu or a critical reading of Bourdieu's ideas, habitus is explained as follows:

'Habitus is the thing that explains how "types of behaviour can be directed towards certain ends without being consciously directed to these ends, -determined by them". "The habitus, "entertains with the social world that has produced it a real ontological complicity, the source of cognition without consciousness, intentionality without intention, and a practical mastery of the world's regularities which allows one to anticipate the future, without even needing to posit it as such". (Shusterman, 1999, p. 53)

Habitus according to Bourdieu is something that explains how types of human behaviour can be directed at certain goals by looking at social phenomena and realities to anticipate the future. Habitus is formed in various ways and is reshaped by the aggregate behaviour of members of society therefore class division occurs to regulate the perception of the social world which is a product of internalization within these classes. In the sense that habitus is formed through activities and social interactions that result in learning and experience which is then directed to the form of real action. Bourdieu understands Habitus as a unifying principle, which allows for a unified and nonobjectivist conception of social science or seeks to avoid tedious uniformity, and tries to go beyond the fragmentation of experience into various domains of practice in the private, public, family, cultural, and so on. The aim is to distinguish the relationships and parallels that exist between the practices of the same agent in different domains and to understand the relative weight or contribution that certain practices make to the production and reproduction of social agent identities (Shusterman, 1999).

Bourdieu explains the background why social phenomena such as bullying can occur. It is related to the power of disposition that is instilled as the way in which a habitus imposes a person on the identity of members of a culture. The process

of socialization or the introduction of a culture into a habitus called Bourdieu as a form of coercion, especially by way of expression, and see the dominant world. As an example, he provides an illustration of how using a dominant language, dominant speakers can effectively achieve what they want in speech and impose their forms, styles, and modes of expression on others with their authority. Other languages that are not dominant, however competent the speakers are linguistically still do not have the same position in social relations (Shusterman, 1999).

So far as it has been, Bourdieu recognized that the habitus is formed over time, and its formation gives rise to a strong belief in the reality of the social field in which it operates. Habitus is not only a place for reproducing belief in the reality of a particular social field - the belief that underpins that field - but it also produces a disposition credited with the social subject's "tendency" to act in relative conformity to the ostensibly objective demands of the field. Strictly speaking, habitus produces or produces its disposition and transposability. The problem of translating between suitable and non-conforming fields is potentially solved through the path to habitus. Habitus seeks to explain how individuals (agents) come to share their culture and practices, even when there are asymmetrical or more dominating social positions. This is done by means of the internalization of norms, but through the "planting" of dispositions that come not only from being socialized into the culture in general, but into a certain subordinate or dominant position within it. It operates through the disposition of agents themselves rather than coercion, through "generative and implicit schemes" rather than agreed-upon rules. Even if there are sanctions or rules, it remains to be explained why agents tend to accept them. This is the real role of habitus (Shusterman, 1999, p. 116).

One thing that also attracts Bourdieu's attention is how the analysis of power and illocutionary power does not capture the social conditions of different speakers. Bourdieu explains that success, success, happiness of speakers occurs externally which can be explained entirely through reference to social conditions and contexts and

these conditions themselves must be explained in terms of asymmetric power relations. First of all, any particular use of language in a context is not simply the result of a universal linguistic competence that allows the production of an infinite number of well-formed sentences. On the other hand, the "form" of language use is always specific, and it is based on that form that speech acts are most likely to succeed in a given context. Thus, form determines the "legitimate" or "official" use of language in a way that transcends ritual contexts or explicit conventions, making all languages a "political unit." The competence to produce comprehensible sentences "may be insufficiently adequate to produce sentences that are possible to listen to, perhaps to be recognized as acceptable in all situations where there is an opportunity to speak (Shusterman, 1999, p. 136).

Wawan Kuswandoro through his website (2016) explains Bourdieu's assumption that someone in social activities has struggled for common goals and interests, even though behind it all there is a motivation to fight for personal interests. As long as that happens, individuals have been tied to the social arena (power), and are investing (capital) in order to get a certain position in society, either recognition or power itself. Bourdieu understands social reality as a dialectical individuals relationship between subjective structures) and the objective structure, namely the structure itself. This dialectical relation involves subjective elements such as individual mentality, individual experience structures, cognitive structures, etc. which have a dialectic with an objective structure. This dialectic produces "practice". Habitus refers to "what exists and is owned by an agent (individual). The meeting of habitus in the arena gives rise to capital (capital), which can be social, economic, cultural and symbolic capital. Habitus, arena, capital produce what Bourdieu calls symbolic power. Bourdieu also states that habitus is closely related to capital (capital), because some of these habits act as multipliers of various types of capital, namely economic capital, social capital, cultural capital and symbolic capital. And in fact, it creates a symbolic capital. Bourdieu views capital as the basis for domination and legitimacy. Symbolic

capital is capital that can be exchanged and carries a position that can give rise to power, namely the power to represent the legitimate social world or symbolic power. It can be concluded that individuals who control these various capitals will get great power.

METHODS

According to Faruk (2017, p. 55) the research method is a way to gain knowledge about certain objects whose existence is in accordance with what is stated by theory. This research method includes steps of real work starting from data collection, data classification, data analysis, and finally conclusions. The data in this study are divided into two forms, namely primary and secondary. The data in the primary form are textual (words, sentences, paragraphs, text) while the data in the secondary form are books, journals, articles, theses, and theses related to the formulation of the problem. By using this type of descriptive qualitative research, this research aims to make a systematic, factual and accurate description, picture, or painting of the facts, characteristics and relationships between the phenomena studied. The research data comes from Maya Angelou's autobiographical novel entitled I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings as a material object, then for the formal object is Bourdieu's perspective on habitus, culture, carried out by characters under the theory of sociology of literature.

In the data collection process, the first thing the writer did was read the text of the novel *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* while reading the author highlighting (notes/marks) important things that are considered temporary data, then categorizes the data according to what which is the focus of this research. After going through the collection process, the next is the data analysis process. Textual data that has been mapped or included in the same category is then analysed to show Maya Angelou's habitus to achieve success in the American social community with Bourdieu's habitus theory as the scalpel. Then the last stage is to draw conclusions from all the results of data analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Habitus of Meticulous

Based on observations of the biographical novel *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, the author finds several Habitus Maya Angelou which are projected into the form of her actions and behaviour in everyday life. This habit itself turns out to be derived from her observations of the people around her who are considered to provide good value and become a role model for her, as well as from observing the surrounding. The first habitus of Maya Angelou is meticulous, which can be proven through the following narrative:

Weighing the half-pounds of flour and putting them dust-free into the thin paper sacks was a simple kind of adventure for me. I developed an eye for measuring how full a container of flour, sugar, or corn had to be to push the scale indicator over to eight ounces or one pound. When I was absolutely accurate, our appreciative customers used to praise me: "Sister Henderson sure got some smart grandchildren (Angelou, 1969, p. 6).

Meticulous means careful or attentive and careful in doing something. Through the narration above, Maya's meticulous habitus in her daily life is carried out while helping her grandmother maintain the shop and serve buyers. To avoid protest Maya must be careful in several ways for example when measuring the weight of flour, sugar or corn to order. Because of this habit, buyers often give indirect compliments by telling the grandmother that she has a smart granddaughter. Maya's conscientious habitus turned out to be useful for securing her position in the social structure.

Habitus of Diligent

During their stay with their grandmother, Maya and her brother Bailey Jr. always showed a good attitude by diligently helping with chores at home or in the shop. They help their grandmother serve the customers and then feed their livestock. This habit of diligent work is shown by Maya because she does not come from a family with good economic capital. Maya's parents divorced, making them have to live with their grandmother who is still working in her old age. Feelings of worthlessness, not getting attention also

encourages Maya not to rely on her parents' income.

Throwing handfuls of corn to the chickens and mixing leftover food and oily dish water for the pigs were among our evening chores. Bailey and I walked down the trails to the pig yard, and standing on the fence we poured the unappealing mess down to our grateful pigs (Angelou, 1969, p. 8).

Helping to ease her grandmother's work is a form of Maya's gratitude to her. Even so, Maya is still like the other children who want a lot of things, especially when they start to growing up. To fulfil this desire, Maya often willing to do anything as long as it makes money, including being a bus conductor "...I would have the job. I would be a conductor and hang a money changer from my belt. I would... "(Angelou, 1969, p. 91). This job is the only option for children at her age who do not have any skills. Especially at that time in the United States, people of the black race only got menial jobs with low salaries such as conductors, factory workers, lifters, and so on.

Habitus of Courage

While in Arkansas, racist treatment was not only accepted by Maya but also her family, especially her grandmother. Groups of rude and irreverent white people frequented their shop. The young people made fun of, mocked, and even took some of the contents of the grandmother's shop. Maya did not like their treatment, one day when they came back, she asked her grandmother to come into the house and let her face them.

I wanted to beg her, "Momma, don't wait for them. Come on inside with me. If they come in the Store, you go to the bedroom and let me serve them. They only frighten me if you're around. Alone, I know how to handle them (Angelou, 1969, p. 14).

Another courage that Maya showed was after she was sexually abused and ended up being raped by Mr. Freeman, her mother's lover. Maya, who received threats that her mother and sister would be killed, finally dared to speak up and tell what had happened. Mr. Freeman gets a light sentence, makes Maya's uncle disapprove and kills him secretly.

In the hospital, Bailey told me that I had to tell who did that to me, or the man would hurt another little girl. When I explained that I couldn't tell because the man would kill him, Bailey said knowingly, "He can't kill me. I won't let him." And of course, I believed him. Bailey didn't lie to me. So, I told him (Angelou, 1969, p. 35).

Through this incident, Maya experienced a series of personality disorders, fear due to death threats against her family members, as well as trauma due to the sexual harassment she experienced. The death of Mr. Freeman also brought a feeling of guilt in her, therefore she chose not to speak and kept herself in silence. Even so, in real life Maya has exceeded the expectations of herself and her family. Every day she struggles to fight fear in order to recombine, playing with friends until she decides to accept the offer to enter the school.

Another bad treatment carried out by white citizens towards Maya which pushed her to become a brave figure stem from a deliberate mistake by Mrs. Cullinan in giving a nickname for Maya. She is a woman of the white race who lives not far from her grandmother's house. When Maya was ten years old, she worked at Mrs. Cullinan's house as a dishwasher. For African Americans, the issue of naming is a sensitive subject because it relates to their identity, a mistake is an insult to them. While at home Mrs. Cullinan, Maya must face the situation that Mrs. Cullinan changed her name to Maria, because for her Marguerite was too long and sweet for Maya. Maya became furious, and the incident inspired her to take her first act of resistance. Maya dropped Mrs. Cullinan's favorite plate as the woman shouted calling her Maria.

On the next day when Miss Glory was hanging out clothes and I had again been told to serve the old ladies on the porch, I dropped the empty serving plate. When I heard Mrs. Cullinan scream, "Mary!" I picked up her favourite dish and two of the green glass cups in readiness. As she entered the kitchen door, I let them fall on the floor (Angelou, 1969, p. 48).

Habitus of Intelligent

Maya's intelligence is useful for securing herself in the social structure and realm of everyday

life. While at school, Maya had to mingle and socialize with everyone, including white students who often looked down on Maya and other black race friends. To show that they also deserve to be treated well, Maya studies diligently, always being on time, never absent until she becomes the best in her class. After graduating from Elementary School, when Maya returned to Stamps, some teachers still remembered her as a good-minded and intelligent student.

My work had earned me a top place in my class and I was going to be one of the first called in the graduating ceremonies. No absences, no late arrivals, and my academic work was among the best of the year (Angelou, 1969, p. 58).

Years later when I returned to San Francisco, I visited her classroom. She always remembered that I was Miss Johnson, who had a good mind and should be doing something with it (Angelou, 1969, p. 72).

Habitus of Love to Read and Write

After several years living with her grandmother, when she was 7 years old, Maya and her brother Bailey Jr. returned to their mother, Vivian, and lived together. Mr. Freeman who is the mother's new lover also lives with them. He is an unemployed person who likes to gamble, all day he just sits enjoying his food and waiting for Vivian to come home from work. One day, Mr. Freeman did something bad to Maya, he raped her. Maya's uncle who did not accept the treatment came and killed him secretly.

All the bad things that happened to Maya, from racism to sexual harassment, traumatized her and closed herself off from the environment. She is that originally had a cheerful nature turned into a quiet person and liked to spend time alone in her room. As an escape and find her fantasy world, Maya reads many books, especially novels. The works written by Shakespeare were her first love.

When spring came to St. Louis, I took out my first library card, and since Bailey and I seemed to be growing apart, I spent most of my Saturdays at the library (Angelou, 1969, p. 31).

That evening I decided to write a poem about being white, fat, old, and without children. It

was going to be a tragic poem. I would have to watch her carefully to capture her loneliness and pain (Angelou, 1969, p. 47).

This habit has brought Maya to her position as it is known to the public today. Starting her career as a writer, several of Maya Angelou's works were used as social criticism of the racist treatment received by the black race in America. Maya's work can be said to have opened the door to changes in the social order, open the eyes of many people that the black race also deserves the same treatment in the social and political spheres. Together with her friend Martin Luther King, Maya became a representative of civil rights activists for black people in America. Maya's work is often used as research material related to women's struggles, racism, oppression of rights and freedoms, and so on. This made Maya one of the most popular African-American writers.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the data analysis above, it can be concluded that in Maya Angelou's autobiographical novel I know Why the Caged Bird Sings, there are several habits that Maya did that led her to become one of the great writers of the United States. These habits are meticulous, diligent, courage, intelligent, and love to read and write. The habitus presented in the novel is motivated by several things, including the racist treatment received, which encourages Maya to become a brave figure and gives her resistance. The habit of diligently working is due to Maya's condition who comes from a family with low economic capital. Until the habitus likes to read and write which is caused by the psychological trauma he faced after being sexually abused and experiencing rape. All the bad things that Maya faced turned out to be sweet after being successfully passed with her thoughts, tastes and good habits.

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