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LYDIA MARIA CHILD

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Abstract
This research analyzed the moral values in *The Black Saxons*, a nineteenth century short story by Lydia Maria Child. It aimed to show the relativity of moral values to slavery portrayed in the story. Jacques Thiroux’s five basic moral principles, which are the values of life, goodness or rightness, individual freedom, justice or fairness, and honesty were used for this analysis. The writer hopes the study would be beneficial for English literature students in college.

Keywords: slavery, moral, short story

INTRODUCTION

Two centuries ago people literally still accepted the existence of slavery. The issue of slavery and its connection with moral aspects are interesting to be explored because such existence mostly violated the human rights. Slavery lied on the principle of property in man—of one man’s appropriation of another’s person as well as of the fruits of his labor (Genovese, 1974, p. 3). By definitions and in real meaning it was a system of class rule, in which some people lived off the labor of others (Genovese, 1974, p. 36).

Related to it, *The Black Saxon*, a short story by Lydia Maria Child, discussed the issue through a narrative fiction (1843). The portrayal of a slave in the short story connected to the idea that the system of the courts in the nineteenth century could never have sustained the right of a slave to self-defense (Genovese, 1974, p. 36).

Bringing the issues mentioned above, this research was aimed at showing the portrayal of the slaves’ lives through a narrative of a short story and how moral aspects implied in it. The analysis used David Thiroux’s moral principles to see the moral values in the story.

1. REVIEW OF RELATED THEORIES

Morality comes from the Latin *moralis*. It is defined as customs (Thiroux, 2007, p. 3). Morality deals basically with humans and how they relate to other beings, human or nonhuman. It deals with how humans treat other beings to encourage mutual welfare, growth, creativity, and meaning in a strain for what is good over what is bad and what it is right (Thiroux, 2007, p. 29). Nevertheless, Thiroux (2007, p. 3) states that when speaking about people as moral or ethical, it is usually meant that they are good people, and when speaking of them as immoral or unethical, it is meant that they are bad people. When it refers to certain human actions as moral, ethical, immoral, and unethical, it is meant that they are right or wrong. Amoral is indifferent to right and wrong or having no moral sense. This term can be applied to certain people who tend to act morally after the operation; that is, they have no sense of right and wrong (Thiroux, 2007, p. 5). While, nonmoral is out of the realm of morality altogether. For example, inanimate objects such as cars and guns are neither moral nor immoral. A person using the car or gun may use it immorally, but the things themselves are nonmoral (Thiroux, 2007, p. 6).

There are numbers of principle of Moral System. First is the *Value of Life* Principle. This principle can be asserted in several ways, but it will be better to assert it as follows: “Human beings should revere life and accept death” (Thiroux, 2007, p. 179). There is no ethical system can function or persist without some statement, positive or negative or both, that reflects a concern for the preservation and protection of human life. It is perhaps the most basic and necessary principles of ethic because, empirically speaking, there can be no ethics whatsoever without living human beings. It is morally wrong to take people’s lives against their will unless great justification can be brought forward; it also means that it is morally wrong.
to interfere with their death or dying against their will without similar justification. (Thiroux, 2007, p. 182) Each ethical system might differ in many of these areas for logical reasons, but there must be some sort of concern for human life for pragmatic reason alone. (Thiroux, 2007, p. 180)

Thiroux (2007, p. 182) categorizes the Principle of Goodness and Rightness as the second basic principle of moral system. This principle is sometimes presented as two separate principles: (1) The Principle of Beneficence, which states that one should always do good, and (2) the Principle of Nonmaleficence, which states that one should always try to prevent and avoid doing badness or harm. In actually, the Principle of Goodness or rightness demands that human beings attempt to do three things: 1. promote goodness over badness and do good (beneficence), 2. Cause no harm or badness (nonmaleficence), 3. Prevent badness or harm (nonmaleficence).

Third is The Principles of Justice or fairness. This principle concerns itself essentially with the distribution of good and bad on a just and fair basis. It says that human beings should treat other human beings fairly in distributing goodness and badness among them. (Thiroux, 2007, p. 184)

Fourth is The Principle of Truth Telling or Honesty. This is the Principle of truth telling and honesty. It is extremely important, if for no other reason than to provide for meaningful communication, which is an absolute necessity in any moral system or in any moral relationship between two or more human beings (Thiroux, 2007, p. 185).

The last is the Principle of Individual Freedom. It is sometimes referred to as the Principle of Autonomy. It defines “morality” as “equal consideration, from which all other moral principles (justice, and so on) can be developed” (Thiroux, 2007, p. 186). It means that people have freedom to choose their own way of being moral as long as the choice does not seriously interfere with another person’s life or rights.

3. METHODOLOGY

This research used a qualitative method. By using a nineteenth story short story The Black Saxons as the subject, it is aimed at finding the relationship between the literature work with its moral values implication. Thus, the structures of the narrative needed to be found first. The Cause and Effect and Main Function which are parts of structuralism theory by Tzvetan Todorov are used for the narrative structure analysis. After the analysis of the narrative structures in the story was done, the moral values could be found. According to Todorov (1985, p. 51) the meaning of cause and effect itself is the structure of text which implies the chronological order in temporal and logical way (Todorov, 1985, p. 41). While function is the element that is built from some similar elements (Todorov, 1985, p. 43).

4. DISCUSSION

The following description discusses the cause and effect and the main function analyses. After the cause and effect and the main function are discussed, the moral values in the story are next explained.

4.1 The Narrative Analysis of The Black Saxons

4.1.1 Introduction of the Characters

Characters that often appear in the short story of The Black Saxons are Mr. Duncan and the slaves. These descriptions below are the brief analysis of those characters.

4.1.1.1 Mr. Duncan

Mr. Duncan is the major character in The Black Saxons. He is a good slaveholder. He always allowed his slaves to go to the Methodist meeting easily because he believed his slaves would not do something against him.

We were then at war with Great Britain; and though Mr. Duncan, in conversation with New England relatives and friends, often boasted the attachment of his slaves, and declared them to be the most contented and happy laborers in the world, yet, by some strange coincidence of thought, the frequency of Methodist meetings suddenly
suggested the common report, that British troops were near the coast, and about to land in Charleston. As suddenly came the remembrance of Big-boned Dick, who many months before had absconded from a neighboring planter, and was suspected of holding a rendezvous for runaways in the swampy depths of some dark forest. (Child, 1997, p. 2)

But then, he realized he might be wrong when he knew that the Methodist meeting probably had connection with the British troop. Mr. Duncan then felt curious about the Methodist meeting.

When the last one had departed, the master hastily assumed his disguise, and hurried after them. Keeping them within sight, he followed over field and meadow, through woods and swamps. As he went on, the number of dark figures, all tending toward the same point, continually increased. Now and then, some one spoke to him; but he answered briefly, and with an effort to disguise his voice. (Child, 1997, p. 4)

To get the answer about what the Methodist meeting that his slaves attended is discussed, Mr. Duncan followed his slave silently. He also joined the meeting and nobody there knew his identity.

4.1.1.2 The Slaves

The other characters in the story are the slaves. These slaves are the ones who wanted to fight their freedom.

"When we had our last meeting," said he, "I suppose most all of you know, that we all concluded it was best for to join the British, if so be we could get a good chance. But we didn't all agree about our masters. Some thought we should never be able to keep our freedom, without we killed our masters in the first place; others didn't like the thoughts of that; so we agreed to have another meeting to talk about it. And now, boys, if the British land here in Caroliny, what shall we do with our masters?" (Child, 1997, p. 5)

The quotation shows that through the Methodist meeting, they gathered to speak their mind among them about what they would do against their masters to get their freedom.

4.1.2 Cause and Effect

Mr. Duncan was reviewing about the Norman Conquest History when his slave came to ask permission to attend Methodist meeting and the slave got the permission. After Mr. Duncan with his New England relatives and friends discussed the suspected coming of the British Troop, he felt angry imagining that his slaves were in the Methodist meeting supporting the coming of the British troop. Mr. Duncan could not do anything against the complaint that he was too kind to his serfs and he got the admonitions to take personal safety because he might endanger himself by allowing his serf to attend Methodist meeting. He then tried to find the information about the Methodist meeting from his slaves and he also tried to find the place of the meeting.

The other day, without being recognized by his slave, Mr. Duncan followed the slave to the meeting. Mr. Duncan felt scare with the slaves’ rebellious intention towards their master that they show in the meeting, but he still tried to hide his identity and became a part of them. A man in the meeting said about their agreement to join the British troop that had been discussed in the last meeting, and for the current meeting he argued whether they would killed their master or not that built pro and contra opinion among them. Another man had the thought to treat their masters as the same as how they treated their slaves and he asked if
there were some of them who could give mercy towards their master’s treatment. Some of them agree to forgive their masters, but the others disagree about it. A man showed how his master’s treatment caused him hurt in his body and questioned why there were still some of them who could forgave their master after all. Two men spoke out their mind that they disagree to punish their masters by killing them, because not all of the masters treated their slaves arbitrarily, some of the masters were kind to their slaves, and one of the men who spoke was Mr. Duncan’s slave. Another man did not agree with the mercy given to their masters because he thought that white people themselves created the slavery and they believed that they were made by God to be the masters so they could treat another races as they wanted and unfairly. A middle age man told the mulatto how he learned to read so that he could told them who come to the Methodist meeting about the coming of the British troop, it then made him had the opinion that they must fight to get their rights for freedom and they would be able to make if they got education.

The discussion finally made decision that they would not kill their master but they still would fight their freedom, some of attendant felt dissatisfied with the decision though. After the meeting, Mr. Duncan learned that before the meeting he only saw his race’s fight to get freedom that in fact now he knew there was still another race (colored race) whose freedom was bridled because of his race. However, Mr. Duncan had to do contrast with his deep empathy towards the black Saxons, so he advised the magistrates not to allow the black people had all the meeting.

4.1.3 Main Function

“The Black Saxons” has two functions. First function implies the plot to kill the masters. The situation is revealed when a man in the meeting said that besides planning to join the British troops, they must consider whether they would kill their master or not to reach their freedom. A mulatto said that he wanted the masters to be treated like how they had treated their slaves and he asked audiences if there were some of them who gave mercy to their masters. A man said that he could forgive the masters because God taught human about forgiving. A man showed his gashed shoulder because of his master’s torture. Two dark men disagree for killing their masters said that not all the masters treated their slaves badly and one of these disagree men was Mr. Duncan’s slave. Another man spoke that he had an opinion that white people themselves who created the slavery and they think they were made by God to be the masters and treated another races unfairly. A middle age man spoke in front of them and told them that they had to learn what their master had learned. After some discussions and argumentations, they finally decided not to kill their master although some of them were disappointed with the decision.

The second function is about Mr. Duncan’s sympathy and dilemma. Mr. Duncan felt regret giving permission to his slaves to attend the meeting when he knew that British troops had landed because he could predict the Methodist meeting was the way for the slaves’ intention to join the British troops. After following his slave silently, he then witnessed the actual meeting situation and no body there knew his identity. The meeting finally gave the result that they would not kill their master but they still would take their freedom, although some of the attendant felt disappoint. After the meeting, Mr. Duncan began to realize that those black people got unfair treatment because of Slavery. It then created his opinion that those black people in the Methodist meeting were just like his Saxon ancestors who had a struggle to get freedom. Through a big determination in his mind, Mr. Duncan gave more attention to his duty by advising the magistrate to forbid every meeting of the slaves being continued, although his empathy towards the black Saxons was deep.

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<tr>
<th>Main Functions</th>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plot to kill the master</td>
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</table>
5.1 Moral Aspect

The moral values in the short story are analyzed by using the functions that are concluded from the structural analysis. Before the description of the analysis, it is better to see the systematic explanation through the table below:

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<th>No</th>
<th>Short Story</th>
<th>Functions</th>
<th>Morality</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>The Black Saxons</td>
<td>2.1 Plot to kill the masters</td>
<td>The value of life, individual freedom, justice or fairness, goodness or rightness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.2 Empathy and Dilemma</td>
<td>Goodness or rightness, individual freedom, justice or fairness</td>
</tr>
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5.1.1 Moral Aspect in the story of The Black Saxons

The moral aspects in the short story of The Black Saxons are analyzed by relating its events to Thiroux’s basic moral principle. The first main function that is explored is plot to kill the masters that relate to four principles: the value of life principle, the principle of individual freedom, the principle of justice, the principle of goodness. Whereas, the second function is Mr. Duncan’s empathy and dilemma, which consist of two principles: the principle of goodness, the principle of individual freedom.

5.1.2 Plot to Kill the Masters

The value of life principle and the principle of individual freedom relate to the event in the Methodist meeting, a man among the slaves said that they had agreed to join British troop and he argued if they should kill their master or not to fight their freedom.

"When we had our last meeting," said he, "I suppose most all of you know, that we all concluded it was best for to join the British, if so be we could get a good chance. But we didn't all agree about our masters. Some thought we should never be able to keep our freedom, without we killed our masters in the first place; others didn't like the thoughts of that; so we agreed to have another meeting to talk about it. And now, boys, if the British land here in Caroliny, what shall we do with our masters?" (Child, 1998, p. 5)

It shows that the slaves wanted to get their freedom to fight against their master who controlled their life. These slaves were still confused about what they should do to their master. Some of them wanted the masters were killed, but some other did not wanted it. In this arguing, it is clear that they still considerate to their masters, although their master had taken their individual freedom that made them had no rights in most aspects of their life.

Though most of the slaves were treated not well by their masters, finally these slaves decided not to kill their masters.

After various scenes of fiery indignation, gentle expostulation, and boisterous mirth, it was finally decided, by a considerable majority, that in case the British landed, they would take their freedom without murdering their masters; not a few, however, went away in wrathful mood, muttering curses deep. (Child, 1998, p. 10)

Some of them were not satisfied with the decision, but they had to accept it. At least they would fight for their freedom and murdered the masters was not their main intention. It proves that in any case, the slaves’ morality even better than their masters who thought these black people were immoral.

For the principle of goodness, it relates to the event that shows a slave said that he wanted the masters got treatment like how bad they had treated their slaves. This man also questioned if there were some of the salves who gave mercy to their masters.
He stepped down, and a tall, sinewy mulatto stepped into his place, exclaiming, with fierce gestures, "Ravish wives and daughters before their eyes, as they have done to us. Hunt them with hounds, as they have hunted us. Shoot them down with rifles, as they have shot us. Throw their carcasses to the crows, they have fattened on our bones; and then let the Devil take them where they never rake up fire o’ nights. Who talks of mercy to our masters?" (Child, 1998, p. 6)

The quotation implies that the masters were really treat the slaves badly that made the slaves felt it would be right for them to do revenge to their master, like treat them the way they had treated the slaves. Nevertheless, some of the slaves thought that forgiving was the best way to treat their masters. A man in the meeting said “…I know we have been fed like hogs, and shot at like wild beasts. Myself found the body of my likeliest boy under the tree where buckra rifles reached him. But thanks to the blessed Jesus, I feel it in my poor old heart to forgive them…” (Child, 1998, p. 6) This man represented the slaves that had opinion that God taught them to forgive other, as it is known that all what God or religion taught are surely about goodness.

The implication of the principle of justice or fairness relates to the event when a man showed that his master had tortured him and for that reason, he questioned the multitude why they still should not kill their masters.

In the midst of the confusion, an athletic, gracefully-proportioned young man sprang upon the stump, and throwing off his coarse cotton garment, slowly turned round and round before the assembled multitude. Immediately all was hushed; for the light of a dozen torches, eagerly held up by fierce, revengeful comrades, showed his back and shoulders deeply gashed by the whip, and still oozing with blood. In the midst of that deep silence, he stopped abruptly, and with stern brevity exclaimed, "Boys! shall we not murder our masters?" (Child, 1998, p. 7)

The quotation implies that the man who wanted to kill the masters was only tried to fight against the unfair treatment of his master. His question why they still doubted to kill the masters although they had been treated injustice was one of his rebellions against the injustice of the slavery system itself. However, as it is shown in this quotation, "Would you murder all?" inquired a timid voice at his right hand. "They don't all cruellize their slaves." (Child, 1998, p. 7), not all the masters treated their slaves badly. Therefore, they made the final decision that they would not kill the masters.

5.1.3 Sympathy and Dilemma

In Mr. Duncan’s sympathy and dilemma, there are three principles of moral that have relation to it. Those principles are the principle of goodness, the principle of individual freedom, and the principle of justice that relates to the event when Mr. Duncan realized that everything seemed unfair for the serfs who got unpaid although they had forced to work very hard for the slaveholders.

With thankfulness to Heaven, Mr. Duncan again found himself in the open field, alone with the stars. Their glorious beauty seemed to him, that night, clothed in new and awful power. Groups of shrubbery took to themselves startling forms; and the sound of the wind among the trees was like the unsheathing of swords. Again he recurred to Saxon history, and remembered how he had thought that troubled must be the sleep of those who rule a conquered people. A new significance seemed given to Wat Tyler's address to the insurgent laborers of his day; an emphatic, and most unwelcome application of his indignant question, why serfs should toil unpaid in wind and sun, that lords might sleep on down, and embroider their garments with pearl. (Child, 1998, p. 10)
Mr. Duncan’s thought implies automatically the violation of justice. There was no justice for these black people, even they had also no freedom to live their life. It can not be imagined how these slaves could survive under hard pressure from their masters who had taken away their freedom. These slaves had no right to say it is immoral to treat, control, and discriminate them like that. It is clear that the principle of individual freedom also was not in the slaves’ life. That was the bitterest moment for the black people in America in the Slavery age. It is implied when Mr. Duncan thought that these black people were as equal as his Saxon ancestors who needed to fight to reach the freedom.

"And these Robin Hoods, and Wat Tylers, were my Saxon ancestors," thought he. "Who shall so balance effects and causes, as to decide what portion of my present freedom sprung from their seemingly defeated efforts? Was the place I saw to-night, in such wild and fearful beauty, like the haunts of the Saxon Robin Hoods? Was not the spirit that gleamed forth there as brave as theirs? And who shall calculate what even such hopeless endeavors may do for the future freedom of their race?" (Child, 1998, p. 10)

However, Mr. Duncan’s status did not support him to let his sympathy influenced his action towards the slave. He had a complicated dilemma whether he had to let the slaves got their freedom or he did his duty not to let the slaves continuing their struggling against the slavery. In this case, it can be related to the principle of goodness. Since, Mr. Duncan had to choose the goodness for the slaveholders and the Government or the goodness for ‘the black Saxons’ who had been living in suffer for centuries because of Slavery. Though, like it is quoted in the story, “After a painful conflict between contending feelings and duties, he contented himself with advising the magistrates to forbid all meetings whatsoever among the colored people, until the war was ended.” (Child, 1998, p. 10). Mr. Duncan finally forbade all meeting among the slaves with the reason to prevent the worst possible happened that could cause many people die.

6. Conclusion
From the narrative analysis The Black Saxons has two main functions which are plot to kill the master and sympathy and dilemma that are experienced by Mr Duncan, the master. In the first function, plot to kill the master, there are four moral principles that relate to the characters’ actions in the story. They are the value of life, individual freedom, justice or fairness, goodness or rightness. In the second function, sympathy and dilemma, three functions are related to the events and the characters’ actions. The three principles are Goodness or rightness, individual freedom, justice or fairness. In conclusion, The black Saxons shows that slavery mostly violates the principle of morality. Most of the systems in slavery often give negative effects to the victims and huminity.

REFERENCES