

Materialism in *The Winner Stands Alone* and *Crazy Rich Asians*: Comparative Literature

Devi Selvia Panggabean^{*1}, Siti Norma Nasution², Siamir Marulafau³

^{1,2,3}University of Sumatera Utara

Abstract. This study attempts to investigate materialism portrayed in *The Winner Stands Alone* and *Crazy Rich Asians*. The author uses novels as the object of research, namely the *Crazy Rich Asian* novel (2013) by Kevin Kwan and the novel *The Winner Stands Alone* (2008) by Paulo Coelho. In this work, the author used the sociological theory of literature and the theory of social class to analyze the novel. The method used to write this thesis is a qualitative descriptive method. The results and analyzes found in the novel relate to differences in social class and the differences and similarities of materialism in the two novels. This class difference arises from the existence of social class groups in which they classify their social class, namely the upper class, the middle class and the lower class. he does not want to accept the middle or lower class in his group. The difference in social class is measured in terms of power or wealth, privilege and prestige, which affect the position, lifestyle, habits and behavior of the upper, middle and lower classes. This is why the gap between the three classes is so striking. The conflict that arises is a gap in the social status of a group and in life or family relationships.

Keyword: *Materialism, Social Class, Comparative Literature, Crazy Rich Asian, The Winner Stands Alone*

Received [30 Apr 2021] | Revised [22 May 2021] | Accepted [28 May 2021]

1. Introduction

Materialism is a phenomenon of the human tendency to obtain an excess of material and to obtain what it wants to do in insufficient and multifaceted ways. Materialism has become an issue in society, when people are interested towards something or things that actually they don't need, they will become obsessed about it and try to get much money, everything they do to get much money, and become money oriented.

According to Karl Marx in Social Class Theory (1977), In this world have several social classes, A social class is a set of subjectively defined concepts in the social sciences and political theory that focus on models of social stratification in which people are divided into a number of

^{*} Corresponding author at: English department, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Sumatera Utara

E-mail address: deviselviagabe@gmail.com

hierarchical social categories, with the upper and middle classes and lower being the most common. The first are upper class or commonly referred to as rich people, those who have a lot of wealth, which is obtained from their hard work or from their offspring. The upper class in modern societies is the social class made up of people who have the highest social status, are generally the richest members of society, and exercise the greatest political power.

The second is the middle class, this middle class can be made into two groups, the upper middle class and lower class, the upper middle class they do not have as much wealth as the upper class, but they live with sufficient wealth. The middle class is a type of people in the social hierarchy. The definition of the term "middle class" is highly political and is strongly opposed by various schools of political and economic philosophy. Contemporary social theorists, especially economists (whose arguments have clearly different explicit and implicit political motives behind them) have defined and redefined the term "middle class" in order to achieve their specific political goals.

The third is the lower class or the so-called poor people, those who live in shortages, and who do not have assets, Some of them have no homes at all or are commonly referred to as the working class (or working class), including those who do wage or salary work, particularly in manual and industrial occupations. Workers by collar color ") include blue-collar jobs, some white-collar workers, and most blue-collar jobs. Members of the working class depend solely on their income from wage labor; therefore, this category includes almost the entire workforce in industrialized countries as well as those in urban areas (towns, villages) are employed in non-industrialized economies or in rural labor.

Materialism also could be seen from literary works. According to Wellek and Warren (1982: 94), literature represents life, and life is a social reality, although the natural world and the internal or subjective world of the individual have also been the subject of literary imitations attempting to express his or her idea of what he is or she experienced in her life or what happened around her, from a natural phenomenon to the lives of the people in her community. There are lots of literary works from time to time that describe how society is judged from their material. Some of literary works that the author chose to describe about materialism are *The Winner Stands Alone* by Paulo Coelho and *Crazy Rich Asian* by Kevin Kwan, which have become the best sellers novel.

2. Research Method

This research conducted by using qualitative descriptive design in order to describe the materialism that found in *The Winner Stands Alone* and *Crazy Rich Asian* Novel. Qualitative research is an umbrella term for a wide variety of approaches to and methods for the study of natural social life (Huberman & Saldana, 2011). In this research, the writer only focuses on the

dialogues and events which are related to materialism in the novel *The Winner Stands Alone* that written by Paulo Coelho and *Crazy Rich Asians* that written by Kevin Kwan.

3. Result and Discussion

Both of these novels have got the similarities that deal with materialism that portrayed in society. The motive of these novels basically talks about materialism which described about social classes that showed by most of the main character and their relatives. In *The Winner Stands Alone*, there are two type of social classes which are upper and lower class, while in *Crazy Rich Asian* there are three types of social classes which are upper, middle and lower class.

3.1 Result

a) Similarities

No	Social Classes	Similarities	
		The Winner Stands Alone	Crazy Rich Asian
1	Upper Class	"He must wait until tomorrow morning to find out. His plan is to bring Furies, an ancient figure from Greek mythology, with black wings into the blue and white landscape full of diamonds, botulinum toxin and high-speed cars." No one needs it because they only carry two passengers. With the little things he brought, all these dreams of power, success, fame and money can be realized immediately" (2008: 17).	"He was born at the highest stage of wealth in Asia: a secret and narrow family circle, these families are almost unknown to outsiders, and have huge wealth. Initially, his father was from Liangshan, Penang, and Penang was from the Strait. Her ancient family has a monopoly in palm oil production. In order to be more attractive, her mother is the eldest daughter of Sir James Young and "Shang Sui" (2013: 47).
2	Lower Class	All girls believe that their dreams are achievable, and one day their talents will be recognized until a penny drops: there is only one magic word: "contact." They distributed the books as soon as they arrived in Cannes, and now they have been looking at their phones. Invite them to participate in all the activities and activities they can do, and try their best to reach out to those who can't, and always keep their dreams. . Someone invites you to participate in an evening or gives you the highest price in your dreams-invites you to stroll on the red carpet of the Palais des Congrès (Palais des Congrès). However, this may be the most difficult dream. It is so difficult	"Everyone in Singapore thinks I marry you for your money, Astrid." "No, you just can't see it! But I can't wait to be with the Minister of Finance, I don't understand the artistic genius or own the whole damn The tycoon of the museum had dinner again on Nassim Road or Tyersall Park. To commemorate him, he felt like a piece of meat. To them, I have always been Astrid Her husband. These people, your family, and your friends looked at me with this judgment. They all thought: "A, I can marry the prince, the president. Why do you want to marry Toa Payo (Aero Beng (the name of Derogateri Hokkien-a

		that when rejection and frustration affect their ability to use the happy expression that they must always wear, even if they are not happy at all, they really have not considered it. (2008: 110)	cool youth with no education or taste))?" (2013: 464)
--	--	---	---

b) Differences

No	Social Classes	Differences	
		The Winner Stands Alone	Crazy Rich Asian
1	Middle Class	_____	"He is a complete stranger, the son of a middle-class school teacher from Toa Payo. At first, her parents were shocked and confused about how she might come into contact with this type of person, but they eventually realized Astor Astrid played a role: she chose an outstanding power commander, a fierce handsome fleet of outstanding national scientists (Fierce handsome fleet), and a computer system expert trained at the California Institute of Technology. (2013: 75)

Table 3.1 Similarities and Differences of Materialism in The Winner Stands Alone and Crazy Rich Asians

3.2 Discussion

If we looked at their social class, both of the novels tell a lot about the upper class who have wealth, power, and are also respected by many people, In the Crazy Rich Asians, , the main focus of the story is about the love story between Nick and Rachel, but many subplots discuss other things, for example when the story frame moves to Nick's mother, Eleanor Young, asserting that marriage is determined from who and where you come from, material and background. family is very important, love is not the first thing that becomes the foundation of a marriage, and how the lifestyle of socialite mothers.

There is also a story about Astrid and her husband, who is poorer than his wife, how feeling depressed and disrespected when the wife can do anything without needing her help, the ego of a man is well described here. Then the story about Eddie, another cousin of Nick, who is married, has several children and lives in Hong Kong. Eddie is obsessed with perfection, he demands his family to do the same, which his wife and children don't really like. Eddie is also depicted as a rich husband who can do anything, for example, having several affairs even though his wife is flawless and comes from a well-respected family too. Kevin Kwan described

that even rich people with seven generations can feel unhappiness even though they have grasped the world.

Meanwhile, *The Winner Stands Alone* novel, tells about a millionaire who justifies any means to get his ex-wife back, Russian millionaire Igor is highly targeted by women and men who want to take advantage by making connections with himself, in order to get money, power, and fame people are willing to do anything even at what price they have to pay, they do not care, the important thing is they can get money, power and fame and that is what happens in the world. this time. But unfortunately, Igor understands all the seductions and tricks they made, so it is not easy for him to trust other people including his ex-wife whom he still loves. Set in the Cannes film festival, the novel wants to tell an epic drama and also the tension between the characters within 24 hours but the power and fame as well as the fame that they achieve are in contrast to their personal lives which are full of competition, cunning, worry and loneliness which creates apparent happiness.

4. Conclusion

Both of these novels have got the similarities that deal with materialism that portrayed in society. The motive of these novels basically talks about materialism which described about social classes that showed by most of the main character and their relatives. . In the novel *The Winner Stands Alone*, the main character Igor was a millionaire who can do anything including killing people to get his ex-wife back.

While the theme of *Crazy Rich Asian* is actually simple, the love story of the rich and the poor, about how your spouse will determined with how much money they had. This book opens with a prologue echoing the wealth of the Chinese people, about the racist issue that has been experienced by the Chinese, that no matter how rich you are, if the Chinese are still underestimated by westerners.

But both of this novel had different ending, *The Winner Stands Alone* has a sad ending, Igor as the main character decided to kill his ex-wife, because Ewa doesn't want to life with him anymore. According to Igor, It's better to kill Ewa rather than watch her to live with another man. While the *Crazy Rich Asian* has a happy ending. At the end of the story get the blessing of Nick's mother and also Nick's extended family.

REFERENCES

- [1] M. J. Sirgy, "Materialism and quality of life," *Social Indicators Research*, 43(3), 227–260. 1998 <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1006820429653>
- [2] K. Kwan, *Crazy rich asians*. New York: Doubleday, 2013.
- [3] K. Marx, *Capital : A critique of political economy*. Moscow: Progress Publishers. 1977.
- [4] M. B. Miles, A. M. Huberman, and J. Saldana, *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook*, 3rd edition. London: Sage, 2014.
- [5] P. Coelho, *The winner stands alone*. New York: Harper Perennia, 2008.
- [6] R. Wellek, A. Warren, *Theory of literature*. London: Penguin Books, 1982.