

## **Florentino Ariza's Loneliness Which Leads Into Self-Actualization In *Love In The Time Of Cholera* Movie**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Loneliness is the condition when one lacks of social relationship, particularly love or intimate relationship. The effect of loneliness can be varied. It must be painful but for some people it is the chance to deeply know about them so that they can achieve self actualization. *Love In The Time Of Cholera* is the film dealing mostly with loneliness issues. It tells about a man who is loyal to wait for his lover, Fermina Daza. In waiting his lover he suffers from loneliness yet he wants to be a respected man in society so that Fermina Daza will regard his presence as an honourable man. This study employs qualitative research which uses Psychological Approach. The concepts used in exploring *Love in the Time of Cholera* Movie are Self-concept, Loneliness, and Existential Approach and combined with Self Actualization theory proposed by Abraham Maslow. The analysis of the movie is based on the script and picture in the movie. That is why; it is worth also to use *mise en scene* studies to strengthen the analysis. This research reveals how Florentino Ariza can achieve his self actualization within his loneliness. Since he cannot bear on the pain, he gets rid of his loneliness by having sex with 622 women. Yet, he still feels lonely since his love need cannot be fulfilled. Actually, his sex habit only satisfies his physiological need which is the basic need in Maslow's hierarchy. Meanwhile, his loneliness which comes from his need of love will never be fulfilled if he cannot win Fermina's heart again because he also builds his self-concept to be an eternal love for Fermina Daza.

Keywords: loneliness, self actualization, love need

### **ABSTRAK**

Kesepian adalah kondisi ketika seseorang mengalami gangguan hubungan sosial, terutama hubungan cinta. Pengaruh kesepian bervariasi. Pengaruh yang paling umum adalah rasa sakit atau terluka, tetapi bagi sebagian orang hal itu bahkan merupakan sebuah kesempatan untuk mengenal diri mereka sendiri sehingga mereka dapat mencapai aktualisasi diri. *Love in the time of Cholera* adalah film yang bercerita tentang isu kesepian. Film ini menceritakan tentang seorang pria yang setia menunggu kekasihnya, Fermina Daza. Dalam penantiannya dia sangat kesepian tetapi ia ingin menjadi seorang pria yang dihormati di masyarakat dengan tujuan agar Fermina Daza menganggap dirinya sebagai pria yang terhormat. Penelitian ini menggunakan penelitian kualitatif yang menggunakan Pendekatan Psikologis. Konsep yang digunakan dalam mengeksplorasi *Love in the Time of Cholera* adalah *Self Concept*, *Loneliness*, *Existential Approach* dan dikombinasikan dengan teori *Self Actualization* yang diperkenalkan oleh Abraham Maslow. Analisis film didasarkan pada naskah dan gambar dalam film. Teori *mise en scene* juga digunakan untuk memperkuat analisis. Karena Florentino Ariza tidak tahan dengan rasa sakitnya akan Fermina Daza, ia mengobati rasa kesepiannya dengan melakukan hubungan seks dengan 622 wanita. Namun, ia tetap merasa kesepian sebab kebutuhan cintanya tidak dapat terpenuhi sebab kebiasaan seksnya hanya memenuhi kebutuhan fisiologisnya yang merupakan kebutuhan dasar dalam hierarki Maslow. Sementara itu kesepian yang berasal dari kebutuhannya cinta tidak akan pernah terpenuhi jika ia tidak dapat memiliki hati Fermina Daza lagi. Ia pun telah membangun konsep dirinya sebagai kekasih abadi bagi Fermina Daza. Namun, karena termotivasi oleh Fermina Daza, dalam rasa kesepiannya, ia berhasil mencapai aktualisasi dirinya yaitu dengan menjadi manusia terhormat yang dipandang oleh masyarakat.

Kata kunci : kesepian, aktualisasi diri, kebutuhan cinta

## INTRODUCTION

Human are innately social creatures so that they need other human being to live with or accompany them and make them complete, otherwise they will feel lonely. However, feeling lonely is not the same with being alone. Thus, a person who is alone cannot be considered lonely. In other hand, a person who has many companions cannot be considered that he or she does not feel lonely. This condition is called loneliness and it is clearly described by Peplau and Perlman (1982, p.3) as "the distress that occurs when one's social relationships are perceived as being less satisfying than what is desired". Therefore, it is understandable that loneliness deals with the self satisfaction in social life.

Weiss (1973, p.9) said that loneliness is common problem and it is commonly experienced by British, European as well as American, but people in any hemisphere of the world can experience loneliness. Loneliness must attach to the deficiency of social relation or social network. While the cause of loneliness is varied, the effect must be varied also. The common effect of loneliness is usually unpleasant feeling. However, some theorists of Psychology like Jong Grieveld (1998, p.1) said that there is also a positive loneliness. Self actualization itself is the fulfillment of needs which is proposed by Abraham Maslow.

Meanwhile, the motives of someone in fighting against loneliness vary, but the common motives are to avoid pain and unpleasant feeling since loneliness must bring about these two things.

It is perhaps common phenomenon; this phenomenon, for example, is described in one of famous movies entitled *Love in the Time of Cholera*. Meanwhile, this study uses the other version, The Movie, which was released in 2007 and directed by Mike Newell.

Because the movie mostly talks about how Florentino Ariza, the main character, fights against loneliness while waiting his true love, the writer will also focus on analyzing the loneliness issues.

That is why this study will be entitled Florentino Ariza's loneliness which leads into Self Actualization in *Love in the Time of Cholera* Movie.

The study is important since it reveals how lonesome feeling can be transformed into

positive manner and can lead into self actualization. The writer hopes that this work can be applied to solve loneliness problem which might be happened in the society.

Loneliness, in this case can be regarded as self-concept. People feel lonely because they define themselves as lonely being.

In 1981, Perlman and Peplau had done various studies about loneliness in more empirical way. They define loneliness as "the unpleasant feeling that occur when a person of social relations is deficient in some important way either quantitatively or qualitatively (Perlman & Peplau, 1981, p.31). It can be pointed out that the core issue of loneliness is a subjective and negative experience and the outcome of a cognitive evaluation of the match between the quantity and quality of existing relationship and relationship standards.

Loneliness can be classified into several types according to its situations, cause and effect but in general loneliness is divided into two, positive loneliness and negative loneliness. Scholar named Weiss divides loneliness as emotional loneliness and social loneliness. There are eight approaches in seeing Loneliness.

Since the focus of this study is loneliness which is lead into self actualization, the writer will only describe about existential approach due to its relation to creativity which will be the core issue of self actualization.

The writer uses theory of loneliness to detect Florentino Ariza's behavior which is assembled with lonely behavior. This approach is developed by Existentialist scholars. They always believe that human are ultimately created alone.

Unlike the other scholars of loneliness, Moustakas emphasizes loneliness as the booster of increasing the experience of existence. Thus, the writer will use this approach to observe the transformation of loneliness to self actualization undergone by Florentino Ariza.

After they fulfill each of these needs, they just can reach self-actualization. Maslow regards motivation as complex things. It means that a person's behavior may spring from several separate motives. All people everywhere are motivated to fulfill the basic needs.

For Maslow, the lower level needs of the hierarchy of needs must be fulfilled before

the higher level needs to become motivators. The five needs are what are referred to as conative needs, meaning that they have a motivational character.

Self-actualization Needs is the highest need which according to Maslow can be fulfilled when the other four is chronologically fulfilled. Maslow (1943, p. 34) also said that self-actualized person allows individual to have a deeper, more profound sense of love and sex.

Self Actualization Theory is expected to find out what kind of Self Actualization which Florentino Ariza experiences, including the process of gaining it. It is meant that the writer will apply Maslow hierarchy of needs in Florentino Ariza's case. The application of Maslow's hierarchy of needs will be based on his behavior in fulfilling his needs.

Moreover, the discovery of evidences which support the writer's interpretation related to the loneliness problem and its transformation to self actualization will surely be taken from *Love in the Time Cholera Movie* as the material object of the study. Data identification and analysis will involve two concepts which have been explained above.

This qualitative research uses Psychological Approach concerning three concepts as the main theoretical framework to uncover the object of the study. Those concepts are Loneliness and Self Actualization. The writer also uses the branch of approach of Loneliness theory named Existential Loneliness. To uncover the problem of the study, the writer will combine Existential Loneliness and Self Actualization since these two are closely related in the case of the use of creativity.

According to Lathrop & Sutton (2005, p.1), *Mise-en-scène* is a French term meaning "putting on the stage". Therefore, it refers to all the visual elements of a theatrical production within the space provided by the stage itself. Film makers borrowed this term and extended the meaning to suggest the control of the director to the visual elements of a film so that it will build a special impression which can support the story of a film. There are basically four aspects of *mise-en-scène*. They are setting, costume, lighting and framing.

Loneliness as defined by Perlman and Peplau is "the unpleasant feeling that occur when a person of social relations is deficient in some important way either quantitatively or

qualitatively (Perlman & Peplau, 1981, p.31). Thus, a person who undergoes loneliness is the people who need more social relationship. Florentino Ariza is one of those people. His loneliness might be from something he does not have in life or actually he desires something which he cannot complete or fulfill. After watching the movie closely, the writer classifies the cause of Florentino Ariza's loneliness into these three things: unrequited love, the death of Florentino Ariza's mother and the willingness to win Fermina's heart again. Each of them will be explained in detail as follows.

According to Maslow (1943, p. 370) the higher level of need can be completed after the lower level accomplished successfully. The analysis will be based on this pyramid hierarchy to describe the fulfillment of Florentino Ariza's needs.

The analysis will begin from the lowest level which is biological and physiological needs.

## FINDING AND DISCUSSION

### Florentino Ariza's loneliness

After watching the movie closely, the writer classifies the cause of Florentino Ariza's loneliness into these three things: unrequited love, the death of Florentino Ariza's mother and the willingness to win Fermina's heart again. Each of them will be explained in detail as follows.

The unrequited love is the first reason of Florentino Ariza's loneliness since it is the main cause why Florentino always feels sad and lonely. Florentino deeply loves Fermina and wants to marry her. Unfortunately, she has married to Dr. Juvenal Urbino who is rich, bright, well-known and honoured by the society due to his contribution in healing people from cholera, in saving the city from cholera. Meanwhile, Florentino Ariza is only a telegraph operator whose mother is a widow. They are unknown men who lived in a rent, almost crumbled house.

Some scenes in the movies show how Florentino Ariza and Dr. Juvenal Urbino might differ. People can easily evaluate each social status by the way they dress.

Each scene must depict the importance of some element of *mise en scène*. Here is the first element of *mise en scene* which can describe the social status of the characters. The movie scene shows that Dr. Juvenal Urbino

always wears a white or black suit when seeing Fermina. There is always a classic, special hat which is always worn by the wealthy to show their social status.

The second reason of Florentino Ariza's loneliness is the death of his mother. It is told that his mother named Transito Ariza turns insane since Florentino Ariza's sex habit reminds her of his dead Father, Pius, who actually never admits Transito and Florentino Ariza as his wife and son. The chronic depression drives her into insanity and even death. Regrettably, the death of Transito Ariza is preceded by the death of Olimpia Zuleta who becomes Florentino Ariza's sex partner. Florentino has fallen in love with her but their affair is recognized by Olimpia Zuleta's jealous husband who eventually kills his own wife.

In Florentino Ariza's problem, he experiences true loneliness since he feels really lonely as the love tragedy with Fermina Daza, the death of his mother and the willingness to wait and win Fermina's heart again. In this pitiful condition, Florentino Ariza tries to express his feeling in writing poems, letters, working, etc. But in the middle of the pain of true loneliness, he also tries to look for activities with others, for example: in having sex with 622 women. Thus, it can be inferred that he experiences true loneliness, but because his pain in true loneliness is too deep since it lasts until fifty years, he cannot deny the anxiety of feeling lonely. However, his loneliness becomes the booster of his self-actualization. Since he is still motivated to win Fermina Daza's heart again, he uses his potency in the core of loneliness to achieve his motives.

### **The transformation from loneliness to self actualization (Fulfilling the hierarchy of needs)**

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The analysis will begin from the lowest level which is biological and physiological needs. In the movie *Love in the Time of Cholera*, it is clearly described that Florentino Ariza can fulfill his basic needs. The second level of needs is safety Needs - Once physical needs are somewhat satisfied, focus

on safety needs take precedence and dominate our behavior. For the second level of need, Florentino Ariza accomplishes it since he is always saved from civil war and cholera epidemic, while many others become the victims of civil war and cholera.

The third level is the need of belongingness and the need for love. Human is a social creature that has to live with any other human beings. This matter obliges human to love and to be loved (Maslow, 1943 p.381). This is the main problem of Florentino Ariza. Since he is deeply in love with Fermina Daza, he builds his own need to be loved back by Fermina. However, because Fermina Daza belongs to someone else, she cannot love him back, although in the early encounter, they attach each other as a couple through letters and secret dates. As Florentino Ariza cannot forget her and does not have any willingness to forget, he still keeps his feeling inside his heart. In fact, this feeling seems to kill him slowly.

For esteem needs, this level is completed when one feels comfortable with what they have accomplished from a success and status standpoint (Maslow 1943, p.380).

Florentino Ariza's esteem is shown when he is old. After watching a movie performance in town, in fact Fermina and Urbino are also there, Florentino is able to show himself directly even shakes hands with Urbino and also shows respect gesture to Fermina by raising his hat. It is happened since he has confidence due to his higher position as the president of the Caribbean River Company, which makes him very rich now. It is very different to the years which passed by, he had never shown himself directly to them, he just always watch them from far away.

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### **Florentino Ariza's Self Actualization**

Self actualization is an instinctual need possessed by humans to make the most of their abilities and potency to strive to be the best they can be. One who is in the effort to achieve his self actualization has some values to be considered. Those values are truth, uniqueness, simplicity and totality. (Maslow ,1943. p.389).

The first value is truth. Truth is thing which happened in the reality. Although it is painful, Florentino Ariza never denies that he is in love with Fermina in his entire lifetime. He admits that he was born to this world to love Fermina. That is why; he always waits for Fermina's love back.

The second value is uniqueness. It means that the potency or the talent that people have. It can be figured out that Florentino Ariza has a talent to art- things, such writing poem and playing violin. In fact, to get rid of his loneliness, he uses a letter and a pen to express his feeling.

The last value is totality. A person must totally do what he can do to achieve self actualization. In his entire lifetime, the writer infers that Florentino Ariza wants to marry Fermina so much, yet he cannot. However, his willingness drives him to keep on waiting for Fermina. He might have plenty sexual relationships but he never wants to marry any of those women. He always insists to wait and marry Fermina Daza.

In the end, finally Florentino and Fermina sail together in the ship hoisted by cholera flag. They seem to be happy and complete. And in this stage, Florentino declares that what he chases for that long has been fulfilled. Thus, his self actualization drives him to get his main life desire to win back Fermina's heart.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

### **Conclusion**

Florentino Ariza, the main character of *Love in the Time of Cholera* Movie suffers from loneliness due to his love tragedy with his loved one, Fermina Daza. Their different social status separates them. Fermina Daza is proposed by and married to the rich man, Dr. Juvenal Urbino, while Florentino Ariza remains single and waits for her. For at least 50 years, Florentino Ariza struggles to win back Fermina's heart. He passes those 50 years with the feeling of loneliness and tries hard to get rid of those feeling by having sex with 662 women. Unfortunately, he never finds a true love and remains lonely. However, he can achieve his self actualization within his loneliness and the main motivation is Fermina Daza.

There are three conclusions that can be drawn from the analysis from the previous chapter of how Florentino Ariza achieves his self actualization within his loneliness.

The first is, Florentino Ariza's loneliness (the lack of intimate relationship) is fulfilled by having sex with 622 women. However, it cannot get rid of his loneliness feeling since his sexual activities routines seem to be like rust. Yet, it is the only way which can decrease the love pain within his loneliness.

The second, Florentino Ariza's loneliness can be decreased by sexual intercourse with as many women as possible but his life purpose to marry Fermina Daza has not been achieved yet. Thus, simultaneously within his loneliness, he tries to reach his self-esteem so that he can be an honoured man in society. He is now the president of the Caribbean River Company. By being the honoured man, Fermina Daza regards his presence and respects him as well. Therefore, Fermina Daza is the main motive for him to actualize himself.

The last, Florentino Ariza can fulfil all the need in Abraham Maslow's hierarchy but the order is changed. Consequently, it can be concluded that to achieve the higher need, people do not need to fulfil the lower needs. The fulfilment of each level can be reversed. In this case, Florentino Ariza achieves self actualization by fulfilling the first (basic) need which is physiological need such as eating, drinking, sleeping and sex. Then continuing to the second need which is safety, then directly jumping to the forth need which is gaining self

esteem. After gaining his self esteem, Florentino Ariza can also fulfil the fifth or the highest need which is self actualization. At last, when he accomplishes the highest level of need, he is back to the third level which is love need.

In short, by gaining self actualization, finally Florentino Ariza can fulfil his life purpose to win Fermina's heart again and this thing makes him extremely joyful.

### **Suggestion**

The writer suggests the next researchers to continue the research by comparing two object materials. The first is indeed *Love In The Time Of Cholera* and *Bel Ami* movies. These two objects have the similarities in sex topic. While, *Love in the Time of Cholera* tells about how a man becomes sex addict to avoid his loneliness, *Bel Ami* tells about how man uses sex as the way to get political power in his country. The next researchers may use post-modern approach to analyze these two since the theory is able to reveal how the modern world sees anything which is not the way it seems to be.

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