

## **The Influence of Traditional Belief towards Self-Actualization in *Like Water for Chocolate* by Laura Esquivel**

**Kesy Yonita**

Universitas Balikpapan

kesyyonita99@gmail.com

**Siti Hafisah**

Universitas Balikpapan

siti.hafisah@uniba-bpn.ac.id

**Rosmiati**

Universitas Balikpapan

rosmiati@uniba-bpn.ac.id

### ***Abstract:***

*This paper explores factors of the influence of traditional belief toward self-actualization in Like Water for Chocolate by Laura Esquivel. There are two objectives of this research: 1) to determine the factors of traditional belief and 2) To describe the factor of traditional belief that influences Self-Actualization. The theory uses in this research is traditional belief theory by Edward Stuart Tylor and Hierarchy of Needs by Abraham H. Maslow; the methodology employed is qualitative research in which the researcher tried to present the issues descriptively. As for the data, they were collected from the novel Like Water for Chocolate by Laura Esquivel. The novel data were taken out as the primary data. The result of the research, the researcher found that the features of traditional belief toward self-actualization found in Like Water for Chocolate is in the first research question the researcher found common and belief, and in the second question the researcher found how the main character actualize herself, and then the result is 1) she can marry 2) the main character can be free from the rule of De La Garza tradition 3) the main character can continue on her life.*

**Keywords:** *traditional belief, self-actualization, Like Water for Chocolate, Laura Esquivel*

## INTRODUCTION

Literary work is an artistic work because literary works are formed from imaginative processes and objective reality processes. Characteristics of literary works will lead to a variety of thoughts and conclusions from readers or connoisseurs of a literary work. Faced with literary works, also dealing with a variety of life problems that have various problems that can bring humans to more mature thinking. Humans as creatures of God never stop asking who they are, therefore the emergence of literary works before humans need high thinking for the audience because literary works will generate various kinds of ideas for the audience. A literary work is considered a form of expression by the author. Literature can be a fictional story through inner experience (thoughts and imagination). As well as empirical experience (a real-life portrait of both the author and the reality that occurs around him) from the author.

In this research, the researcher examines this literary work use theory traditional belief by Edward Burnett Taylor and theory Hierarchy of Needs by Abraham Maslow who told about human needs to achieve something named self-actualization and then the researcher will explain the problem that occurs in the novel as happened to the youngest daughter is about cannot marry her boyfriend just because she has to obey her family traditions, which are contained in *Like Water for Chocolate* by Laura Esquivel. This novel by Laura Esquivel Takes the story of the De la Garza family tradition that originated in the country of Mexico, the youngest daughter who must obey every rule of her mother. That's why the last child experienced struggle towards her self-actualization to achieve her self- actualization.

In *Like Water for Chocolate*, there are traditional beliefs that exist in the tradition of the De La Garza family and this happens to the last child, the main character who is forced not to marry because the culture requires the last child to obey all the rules that are trusted by the family thus making she forced to have no clear purpose and direction in life, the belief in a culture that the last child must take care of her mother till dies and it's still asked to be required to preserve the culture from generation to generation and Tita is made powerless by this tradition because several people in her family strongly support the course of this tradition and also her fear of her mother's who has a very big influence on the culture of De La Garza. Thus making Tita afraid to argue with her mother and continue to follow the tradition even though she wants to refuse because of the injustice that has happened to her. These things happen because the family rules from the descendants of De La Garza tradition were so strong that Tita as the last child had to obey orders from her family not to get married while her sisters were given the freedom to marry and even clean all over the house, preparing her mother's needs for bathing and cooking have all become Tita's responsibility as the last child who has to take care of her mother until old age.

This is the tradition, traditional customs, beliefs, or methods are ones that have existed for a long time without changing so that traditional give rise to the factors contained in the novel, both of which are very influential so the researchers decided to examine these two factors. The first factor regarding trust is very superior in *Like Water for Chocolate*, the belief that believes that the last child should not marry and must continue to obey all the orders of his parents and must not break the rules and his mother does not accept any tolerance if she

arrives. violating the tradition even though for her it is an injustice and the second factor, the custom is something contained in the novel *Like Water for Chocolate* which makes her give up her youth not to marry or even not to marry for the rest of her life because she has to preserve the De La Garza Culture. In the end the traditional beliefs greatly influenced her so that to do self-actualization, self-actualization is how she tries to prove herself that she is independent and has the right to life.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **TRADITIONAL BELIEF**

Culture is a term that can define the whole way of life of a social group as it is structured by forms of representation and power. Thus, it is not associated with efforts to claim for oneself social distinction and good taste. Within cultural studies, it is a network of representations – texts, images, talk, codes of behavior, and the narrative structures organizing these – which shapes every aspect of social life. However, within this carefully localized definition, something very interesting happens because this may be seen as a very good starting point for understanding traditional belief in a more general way. Thus, while we have to attend to the particularities of local cultures and recognize that what counts as a traditional belief may differ from one geographical location to the next (and even be the object of differences within the same country or institution), there are common approaches which enable some meaningful dialogue to take place between practitioners operating in different parts of the world. It is important, then, to stress that the contextualizing material is drawn (mainly) from the narrow, if highly influential. This narrative strategy has been adopted as a kind of shorthand to give an idea of how different theories have developed to one another. But (to practice the self-reflexivity mentioned above) this shorthand has to be treated self-consciously and critically. Andrew Tudor (in Walton, 2007, p. 19) has written, just like tribal societies, emergent disciplines are drawn to myths of origin, where stories “stabilize otherwise recalcitrant histories by identifying founding figures”. The belief is that the traditional working classes took an active role in making, choosing, and adapting culture to their ends. Belief can be evaluated according to a different standard. we can evaluate a given belief to the consequences, or the expected consequences, of its being held, or concerning how it's being held would affect the achievement of some desired aim. (Kelly, 2002, p. 163). From the definition mention previously about. The researcher concluded that culture and traditional beliefs have a connection. It can be concluded that culture defines a lot of various cultures in this world, cultural studies may differ from one geographical location to another geographical locations and it might be preserved. The traditional belief is defined as something very trustworthy and something that is highly desired, believed, and trusted by a group of people who have the goal of achieving something that is considered true and believed by some people and society. According to Tylor, there are several factors of traditional belief, they are knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, and custom. (1871, p. 1) Even so, the researcher only takes two factors: custom and belief as portrayed in the novel

## **Custom**

In *Primitive Culture*, Tylor's central concept is culture, „that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and other capabilities and habits acquired by man as members of society (Tylor, 1871, p. 1) Foremost among these was an evolutionary model of human culture, which was central to Tylor's work – the idea, based on the Darwinian premise that historical processes operated in a slow continuous manner. In his declaration that “the tendency of culture has been similar throughout the existence of human society, and that we may fairly judge from its known historic course what its prehistoric course may have been, is a theory entitled to precedence as a fundamental principle of ethnographic research” (Tylor, 1871, pp. 32-33), the relationship between archaeology and prehistory and the development of “Mr. Tylor's Science” is made explicit. Customs, opinions, and so forth, which have been carried on by force of habit into a new state of society different from that in which they had their original home, and they thus remain as proofs and examples of an older condition of culture out of which a newer has been evolved. (Tylor, 1871, p. 16). In this research the researcher reveals the custom in the novel, which requires the last children or youngest children not to marry and must to follow the tradition of De La Garza, just as Tylor said that custom is a habit that is carried over by the people themselves so the evolution of a custom into something new or not depends on the people who hold fast to the custom and tradition again but based on research conducted by researchers it has been stated that Tita as the main character she wants the custom to be stopped and do everything according and do anything, therefore it can be said that Tita wants to evolve in a new direction of her life and not static.

## **Beliefs**

Understood in this way are not necessarily intellectual or doctrinal but pedestrian patterns of thought and assumptions. Clifford Geertz remarked, (in Tramlett, Harvey, & Sutherland, 2017, p. 109) belief does not necessarily entail some form of abstract Baconian deduction and omitting it from the study of religion attempts “to stage Hamlet without the Prince”. Without it, religion is genuinely indistinguishable from categories like “culture” and “ritual”, we could not distinguish symbolism from claims about reality, for example, that a law court's statute of justice is understood symbolically while a Cathedral's image of the Virgin Mary represents a being whom practitioners claim can intervene in their lives (Tramlett, Harvey, & Sutherland, 2017, p. 55). Beliefs structure the cosmology of actors, providing a framework within which actors presume to act. For example, sacrifice can be accounted for by a variety of factors, but the fact that there is belief in beings with needs and desires like those of human beings is indispensable when explaining such actions (Tramlett, Harvey, & Sutherland, 2017, p. 54) Tylor argued that even the spontaneous experiences of folklore and religion including sightings of ghosts, visions of gods and saints, trances and shamanic flights, always conform to specific cultural types.

## **SELF-ACTUALIZATION**

Even when all of these needs have been met, we still often feel (if not always) that new feelings of contentment and restlessness will soon develop, unless the person does what is individually appropriate for him or her. (Goldstein, 1994, p. 56) said “a musician must create music, an artist must work, a broadcaster must write poetry if, in the end, he wants peace he must be honest with his nature. We can call this need self-realization. This book is used in a much more specific and limited sense. The term refers to people's desire for self-realization, namely to the tendency of manifestation, namely the tendency to manifest themselves according to their abilities. This tendency can be expressed as a desire to become more and more special, to become what one is capable of becoming. Humans actualize because they want to achieve the things they want to achieve in their life, for example, a doctor wanting to be a doctor cannot be direct like magic, today they want to become a doctor, and tomorrow they can immediately become a doctor but they have the step by step to go through many things, such as studying nursing school, then going to college to get a doctor's degree and getting a job as a doctor. And from the example of a doctor, that humans can be only said to be actualized when they can reach what they want.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The research method used in this research is descriptive qualitative where the data in this study are described descriptively. There are two categories of sources in this study, namely primary and secondary sources, The data collection method used is a literature study. In the process of collecting data, researchers take several steps to research the problem on the novel *Like Water for Chocolate* by Laura Esquivel, and then the trustworthiness of the data analysis is necessary to be checked to reduce the researcher's biases and prejudices. Then the researcher does the data validity. Incorrect data will result in an incorrect conclusion, valid data will result from incorrect conclusions of research results. that the researchers will explain but the researcher only uses investigator triangulation to make sure the validity of the data.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **FACTORS OF TRADITIONAL BELIEF**

In this part, the researcher would review details about the factors of cultural belief related to the data. This traditional belief is defined as something very trustworthy and something that is highly desired, believed, and trusted by a group of people who have the goal of achieving something that is considered true and believed by some people and society. In this part, the researcher argues that Tylor presents theory culture belief is a theory that has several

factors, namely customs, arts, morals, knowledge, law, and belief but the researcher refers to 2 factors namely belief and custom.

### **Belief in the La Garza Tradition**

“If he intends to ask for your hand, tell him not to bother. He’ll be wasting his time and mine too. You know perfectly well that being the youngest daughter means you have to take care of me until the day I die.” (p.13)

In this research, the researcher found the data of belief in the De La Garza tradition if the youngest daughter cannot get married it because she must have to take care to her mother till die, so it means she cannot get married to anyone if her mother is still alive and must be obey to her mother’s orders.

### **Custom in the De La Garza Tradition**

“You don’t have an opinion, and that’s all I want to hear about it. For generations, not a single person in my family has ever questioned this tradition, and no daughter of mine is going to be the one to start.” (p.14)

In this research the researcher found the data of Common in the De La Garza Tradition so from the data above no one from De La Garza Family Tradition can break the tradition, they all should be obeying her mother and they all should be preserving that tradition, and devoting themselves to the culture.

## **SELF ACTUALIZATION**

In this part, the researcher reviews the details about how the factors of traditional belief influence self-actualization related to the data. This self-actualization is defined in the theory of Abraham H. Maslow. The theory human can be said to actualize when they can feel freedom. Self- actualization is the last stage of the hierarchy of needs and human will be fulfilled when they can actualize themselves, In this thesis a researcher found 3 results from this researcher that is: 1) the ability to get married, 2) free from the tradition, 3) free to continue living, and the researcher will show the data below.

### **The Ability to get Married**

“Of course! There’s nothing to stop you. And do you know what? Once we’re married, I’d like to have a child with you. We still have time, don’t you think? Now that Esperanza is leaving us, we’ll need some company.” (p.212)

In this research, the researcher found the data of self-actualization from the excerpt above Tita said no one else would be stop, taking all her happiness, and she continue her life with the one she loved, no more. Her mother always asking Tita to obey the rules of De La Garza tradition which required the last child not to be born to get married but all is over and she can marry with Pedro.

### **Free from the Tradition**

“Well, you think so too late. Nothing can be done about it now. I entreat you, never bother me again for the rest of my life, and don’t ever dare to repeat what you’ve just said to me, my sister might hear it and we don’t need one more unhappy person in this house” (p.136)

In this research, the researcher found the data of self-actualization from the excerpt above Tita is against all the rules that exist in the De La Garza tradition. Tita does not want any of her lineage to suffer the same fate as her, she wants that tradition not to be continued again at any time.

### **Free to Continue Living**

“I know who I am! a person who has a perfect right to live her life as she pleases. Once and for all, leave me alone; I won’t put up with you! I hate you, I’ve always hated you!” (p.180)

In this research, the researcher found the data of Self-Actualization in this excerpt Tita said to her mother if she wants to have a perfect life and she wants to be free from De La Garza Tradition.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the result of research and analysis that has been done it can be concluded that: in this section the researcher found two research questions. In first research question found two factors of traditional belief and in the second is custom who influenced Tita to actualize herself. Self-actualization can impact Tita to actualize herself in three ways: 1) the ability to get married, free from tradition and free to continue living.

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