

**STRIVING FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN DRAMA *RAINBOW'S END* (2005)**

**BY JANE HARRISON**

**THESIS**

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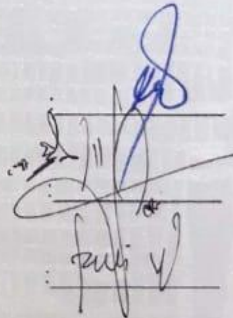
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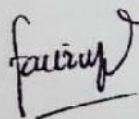
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## ABSTRACT

**Kyoko, Z.** 2023. Striving for Human Rights in drama *Rainbow's End* (2005) by Jane Harrison. *Thesis*. Universitas Negeri Padang.

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This thesis is the analysis of drama *Rainbow's End* (2005) by Jane Harrison. The purpose of this analysis is to find out which setting and plot(conflicts) reveal the efforts of the characters to strive for human rights. This analysis is related to the concept of Agency in postcolonial studies by Ashcroft et al. This analysis is supported by the text-based and context-based interpretation. The result of this analysis shows that the characters create opportunities and resist the oppression to strive for human rights.

**Key words:** striving, human rights, opportunities, resisting, agency

## ABSTRAK

**Kyoko, Z.** 2023. Striving for Human Rights in drama *Rainbow's End* (2005) by Jane Harrison. *Thesis*. Universitas Negeri Padang.

Skripsi ini merupakan analisa drama *Rainbow's End* (2005) karya Jane Harrison. Analisa ini bertujuan untuk menunjukkan mana setting dan alur(konflik) membantuk mengungkapkan upaya-upaya apa saja yang dilakukan oleh karakter untuk mendapatkan hak asasi manusia. Analisa ini berkaitan dengan konsep Agency di dalam *post-colonial studies* oleh Aschroft et al. Penganalisaan karya ini berdasarkan *text-based* dan *context-based* interpretasi. Hasil analisa ini menunjukkan bahwa karakter mengambil kesempatan dan melawan penindasan.

**Kata kunci:** berjuang, hak asasi manusia, kesempatan, perlawanan, *agency*

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Striving for human rights is ways to be free from the unfairness caused by dominant group (white people). Striving for human rights is an action that is relying on great effort to act through obstacles to achieve their desire for their human rights. This action is committed by people of minorities who experience injustice and unfairness due to being different from the dominant group. The injustice that they receive deals with the basic need of life such as the privilege to have food, housing, a decent job, education, health care, and the right to voice their ideas (Turner, 2006).

The injustice and unfair treatment are the results of discrimination towards race, gender, or religion. The most affected people are minorities. Minorities are mostly people who are being segregated. It is supported by Advani and Reich (2015) that segregated populations that deal with the dominant group are found to have a lower quality of governance, lower trust between citizens (could be people of the same race or different race), and worse education and employment outcomes, compared to the dominant group that are better integrated. These people suffer and have to put a lot of efforts to have a decent life where they can be treated as equals.

Segregation leads to the term social exclusion. According to the United Nations (2016), “social exclusion describes a state in which individuals are unable to participate fully in economic, social, political and cultural life, as well as the process leading to and sustaining such a state. (p.18)” As it says, social exclusion’s negative impact is the lack of participation and access to material resources, including income, employment, land and housing, or to such services as education and health care as the essential foundations of well-being. The limitation of access to participation also affects people to express their voices or interactions with each other. It is resulting in their rights and dignity are not

accorded equal respect and protection. Thus social exclusion entails not only material deprivation but also the lack of agency or control over important decisions as well as feelings of alienation and inferiority.

Upon the damaging effects of social exclusion, minorities try to strive for the limitations of social participation and human rights. They fight for a place where they are being acknowledged and freed from unfair treatment. Thus, they come with the term “inclusive society” as opposed to social exclusion. UNESCO (2012) described inclusive society “as a society for all, in which every individual has an active role to play. Such a society is based on fundamental values of equity, equality, social justice, and human rights and freedoms, as well as on the principles of tolerance and embracing diversity.” As it said, inclusive society aims to bring unity to every individual to have equal opportunities and experience human rights as well as freedom of choice. Accordingly, inclusive society is intended for minorities to feel welcomed and appreciated as members of society.

There are several groups of minority, among them are black community and Asians who live in America, and Aboriginals in Australia. Aboriginals in Australia have faced the effects of social exclusion due to the invasion of colonists. The impact of colonization for Aboriginals in Australia is significant. This is due the low percentage of their population. According to National Geographic (2019), there are only three percent population of Aboriginal in Australia. These people to this day still face discrimination and no equal rights. In BBC News (2020), despite a number of government initiatives, Aboriginals continue to be disadvantaged on every level, from health and education to life expectancy.

Accordingly, retrieved from the Australian Social Inclusion Boards entitled Social Inclusion and Human Rights in Australia, social inclusion is defined as having access to the following resources, opportunities, and human rights-related capacities: learn (e.g., participate in education and training); work (e.g., engage in employment, unpaid or volunteer work, including family and caregiver responsibilities); engage (e.g., connect with people, use local services, and participate in local, cultural, civic, and recreational activities); and have a voice (influence decisions that affect them). Yet, Aboriginals have

not giving the access to feel included and treated as equals by imperial power (white people).

The issue of striving for human rights is appealing to discuss. It is because it gives new perspectives of how minorities have to strive for equal rights, opportunities and also being included in social life. Striving for human rights is portrayed in a drama called *Rainbow's End* (2005). The drama reflects on how characters (as Aboriginals) strive to possess their rights through various efforts. The characters' efforts to strive for their human rights are by creating opportunities and resisting oppression.

### **1.2 Striving for Human Rights**

Striving for human rights consists of two words: striving and human rights. In Merriam-Webster (2021), striving is to devote serious effort in order to achieve something. Striving in this analysis is related to how protagonists make great efforts to achieve human rights. Human rights in Encyclopedia (2018) in article 1 of the Charter states that one of the purposes of the UN is to promote and encourage "respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion."

In this analysis, the characters strive for their human rights to have their fundamental freedoms despite their race. They do great efforts to achieve their rights dealing with housing, a decent job, education, and the right to voice their ideas.

### **1.3 A Brief Description of the Author's Biography**

In her drama *Stolen* (2000), it says that Jane Harrison was born in 1960. She was a Muruwari descendant of New South Wales from the area around Bouke and Brewarrina. In her early career, she was an advertising copywriter, before becoming a playwright, novelist, writer and researcher. She was the 2006 Theatrelab Indigenous Award winner for *Blackvelvet*. According to Australian Play Transform official website (2021), drama *Rainbow's End* by Jane Harrison has had numerous productions since its premiere in 2003 and won the 2012 Drover Award for best touring production. Her other best-known work

is *Stolen*, which received critical claim and has toured nationally and internationally. She also won (with Dallas Winmar for *Aliwa!*) the Kate Challis RAKA Award for *Stolen* as a co-winner. Both *Rainbow's End* and *Stolen* have been placed on secondary school curricula. Aside from dramas, Jane also wrote a novel titled *Becoming Kirrali Lewis*. The novel won the 2015 Black and Write! Prize. It also was shortlisted for the Prime Minister's Literary Awards and the Victorian Premier's Literary Awards. Jane believes that her stories have the power to reframe Australia's national identity.

#### **1.4 *Rainbow's End***

*Rainbow's End* (2005) by Jane Harrison reflects on the issue of striving for human rights among Aboriginal people. The characters are treated unequally to white people and face many injustices and unfair treatment dealing with housing, a decent job, education, and the right to voice their ideas. The characters realize that they are being mistreated, so they strive for their rights. Their efforts to gain their human rights are shown through creating opportunities and resisting the oppression.

In term of creating opportunities, the characters creating opportunities of education and decent jobs. The characters participate on their education. The characters buy encyclopedias to support on education. They ask for help to teach how to write and read. The characters also find better occupations.

In term of resisting oppression, the characters vocalize their voices. They are independent in determining their own decisions without third-party involvement. The characters defend themselves.

#### **1.5 Problem of Study**

To reveal the issue of striving for human rights, the research questions for this analysis are:

1. What are the efforts conducted by characters (Dolly, Gladys and Nan Dear) that lead to Agency in drama *Rainbow's End* (2005) in order to expose the issue of striving for human rights?

2. To what extent do the plot, characters (Dolly, Gladys and Nan Dear) and setting in the drama *Rainbow's End* (2005) contribute in revealing the issue of striving for human rights?

### **1.6 Purpose of Study**

This analysis is going to reveal two main points. The first is what efforts are conducted by characters (Dolly, Gladys and Nan Dear) in drama *Rainbow's End* (2005) to expose the issue of striving for human rights. The second is to know to what extent the plot, characters (Dolly, Gladys, and Nan dear) and setting in drama *Rainbow's End* (2005) give contributions in revealing issue of striving for human rights.

### **1.7 Previous Study**

Two studies analyzed *Rainbow's End* (2005) by Jane Harrison. The first is analyzed by Ihsan Mohamed. According to Mohamed (2015), he fathoms that the drama *Rainbow's End* points to the theme of human experiences. He divides the themes into two: The Indigenous Experience as Critique on Australian Society and Struggle for Empowerment in Marginalised Communities. The first theme is the Indigenous experience as the critique on Australian society. This theme circulates around how Indigenous people experience racial segregation is portrayed by the characters. The human experiences are referring to the many examples of discrimination and inequity faced by the Dear family. Another human experience that is experienced by the characters is the economic inequalities that are driven by institutions such as the government, businesses, and general social structure. The last human experience is how the characters interact with white people. The second theme is the struggle for empowerment in a marginalized community. *Rainbow's End* depicts the struggle of indigenous characters who are determined to achieve economic and

financial success. Through their personal experiences, the characters encourage themselves to pursue self-empowerment.

The second study of *Rainbow's End* is analyzed by Cameron (2010). According to him, *Rainbow's End* focuses on the concept of belonging. The concept of belonging is divided into eleven issues which are the complexity of belonging, different attitudes of belonging, different people; different belongings, expectations and belonging, black and white worlds, shared burdens; different approaches, barriers to belonging, home and belonging, fighting to belong, family secrets, and identity and belonging.

The third study is The Struggle of the Main Character to Obtain Freedom in Colson Whitehead's *The Underground Railroad* analyzed by Fuaziah, et al. The purpose of this research aims at the displaying modes of oppression that the main character has to undergo as a dark skinned slave secretly trying to find ways to escape. The data are analyzed with a qualitative descriptive analysis method involving the intrinsic aspects and the theory of forms of oppression by Iris.

The last study is analyzed by Vanja Floryd (2019). Floryd analyzed *Burnt Shadows* (2009) by Kamila Shamsie from a postcolonial feminist perspective, with a focus on agency of women, representation and re-presentation, and cultural stereotypes. The degree of agency in the main characters Hiroko, Elizabeth and Kim is discussed, followed by an analysis of the re-presentation of Indian, Pakistani and Arab Muslim women characters in the text, with a focus on homogenization and voice.

These studies give contributions in revealing issue of striving for human rights in drama *Rainbow's End* (2005). This study is different from the other studies of this drama because it reveals about Aboriginal's efforts to get their rights. This study uses the concept of Agency to support the analysis. In this analysis, the efforts conducted by the characters are creating opportunities and resisting oppression.

## **1.8 Theoretical Framework**

This thesis is analyzed using the concept of agency in postcolonial theory. Postcolonial theory is used due to the setting of the drama. Klages (2006) argues that Postcolonial theory is:

“Postcolonial theories begin to arise in the 1960s as thinkers from the former colonies began to create their own forms of knowledge, their own discourses, to counter the discourses of colonialism: these postcolonial discourses articulated the experience of the colonized, rather than the colonizer, giving what’s called the ‘subaltern’—the subordinated non-white, non-Western subject of colonial rule – a voice. Postcolonial theorists examine how Western cultures, the colonizers, created the colonial subject, the subaltern, through various discursive practices, and examine also how subaltern cultures both participated in and worked to resist colonization, through various overt or covert, direct or subversive, means.” (p.153)

Based on the quotation above, it can be concluded that postcolonial theory is used to analyze literary works on how colonial subjects ‘the subaltern’ challenge colonial discourses through various means (overt or cover, direct or subversive). They want to show their values that have been neglected because of colonization. Their ways of showing their knowledge and power are by writing their own discourses and resisting the colonizer.

Postcolonial theory has a lot of concepts. One is being agency. According to Ashcroft et al. (2000), agency is crucial in post-colonial theory because it refers to the ability of post-colonial subjects to initiate actions related to resisting imperial power (p.6-7). As it said, agency is willpower produced by the agent to exert their power or ability to achieve what they desire. One of the desirable things is freedom. Tully (2000:38-59) emphasizes that ‘indigenous struggles for and of freedom’. They struggle to gain control of self-government and their territories. It is also a resistance against the structure of domination as a whole and for their freedom as people. Agency in postcolonial theory is about colonized people exerting their power or ability to achieve freedom from the oppression of the colonizer. Their ways of expressing agency can be various. As Klugman et al. state that agency can make agent express itself in multiple ways, as mentioned through making one’s own decisions, through one’s relationships, through possessing properties or privileges such as land, education or health, through participating in politics and through movement (p.35). As stated above, Klugman’s definition of agency is referred

to the meaning of rights. Agents' expression of their ability and power to express their desire for freedom refers to the definition of rights. According to Turner (2006), human rights is described as everyone having the privilege to have food, housing, a decent job, education, healthcare, and the right to voice their ideas. Based on Turner's idea of human rights, human rights should be possessed by everyone. To conclude, agency is agents' expression of their ability to initiate actions related to resisting imperial power in order to get their human rights fulfilled.

The analysis of this novel is supported by text and context-based interpretation. According to Guerin (2005), text-based interpretation means the approach that is based on the analysis and interpretation of the text itself and context-based interpretation is the approach that is based on the circumstances of the culture, history, politics and society. It means the analysis of this novel not only focuses on the text itself but also involves phenomena that happen in the real world.

The analysis of the drama *Rainbow's End* (2007) uses fictional devices such as character, plot and setting. The character is an important element in revealing the meaning of the novel. According to Abrams (1990):

“Characters are the person represented in a dramatic or narrative work, who are interpreted by readers as being endowed with particular moral, intellectual, and emotional qualities by inferences from what the persons say and their distinctive ways of saying it-the dialogue-and from what they do-the action.” (P.32)

The quotation above means that character is the main focus of a novel. They carry feelings and meaning with them. The meaning can be revealed if there is a character. Character also creates images to make the reader understand the story. Characters can also be the representative of a real event. It portrays how the novel will be perceived. The analysis is analyzed based on the characters' dialogue and what actions they do to reveal their thought, tension, and conflict.

The second fictional device that is used in this analysis is the plot. According to Abram and Harpham (2009:265), a plot is constituted by its events and actions, as these are rendered and ordered toward achieving particular artistic and emotional effects. It shows



that the plot gives the interrelated sequence of how the story is going to be. The plot is how the story develops, unfolds, and moves in the sequence of time. The plot gives the meaning of the conflict due to the character's actions throughout the story.

The third fictional device is the setting. The setting is also an important element in revealing the meaning of the novel. According to Abrams (2002:216), "setting refers to the foundation of the story, suggesting the sense of place, time relationship, the social environment and the occurrence of events." The quotation shows that the setting is the one that makes up the story. The role of the setting is important because it shows every aspect that completes the story. From the setting, it can be seen how the atmosphere affects the meaning. The social environment also makes the readers understand the situation of the protagonists (p.216). In this analysis, the setting creates insight into the reasons why the characters strive for their human rights.

### **1.9 Methodology**

The analysis drama *Rainbow's End* (2005) by Jane Harrison is done through text and context-based interpretation. It is done by analyzing some parts of the fictional devices, such as the plot, characters, and setting. Characters and plot are used to reveal the act of striving for human rights by analyzing the characters' actions towards the conflicts. Then, the setting deals with the circumstances and atmosphere. It gives contribution to the process of analyzing by giving help in revealing the meaning. In addition, these elements are analyzed by the concept of Agency by Ashcroft et al.