Bushido Culture in Novel "47 Ronin" by John Allyn

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ABSTRACT

The research aims at finding out the portrait and implementation of the bushido culture in the novel of 47 Ronin. The research type is library research which applied sociological approach and data were analyzed through qualitative method. The research result shows that the influence of the bushido culture is upheld by the samurai. The novel is based on fact of the Japanese people at the period, the influence of religious values is then channeled into public life, and it is still adhered to today in some aspects of their lives.

1. Introduction

Literature has been widely known by many people and experts. The word 'literature' is derived from the word 'littera' in Latin which means letter. It refers to the written or printed words. However, now, the term 'literature' is more focused and restricted to merely imaginative works, which comes up from the imaginative mind of the story writers. Klarer (2004) states that in most cases, literature is referred to as the entirety of written expression, with the restriction that not every written document can be categorized as literature in the more exact sense of the word.

The definitions, therefore, usually include additional adjectives such as aesthetic or artistic to distinguish literary works from texts such as newspapers, Scientific textbooks, magazines, legal documents, brochures, and so on. Literature then, can be said as a creative writing by an author with aesthetic values which makes literature regarded as an art (Rahman & Weda, 2018). Literature as a writing form differentiates its form from other art products, and its aesthetic or artistic values make it different from other writings. Wellek & Warren (1963) also state that the term literature seems best if we limit it to the art of literature, that is, to imaginative literature. According to Rees (1973) states that "Literature is writing which express and communicate though feeling and attitude toward life".

Literature is also produced by imagination of the author. Literature is not just a document of facts, it is not just the collection of real events though it may happen in the real life (Rahman & Weda, 2019). Literature can create its own world as a product of the unlimited imagination. Literature has three general genres, they are Drama, Poetry, and Prose. The word 'drama' is derived from the Greek word 'dran' means 'to do' or 'to act'. Poetry is created in various forms and the classification is based either on technique of writing or content. The word 'prose' is derived from the Latin prosa, which literally translates to 'straightforward'. Prose is the ordinary form of written language (Rahman, 2018).

2. Literature Review

Prose is adopted for the discussion of facts and topical reading, as it is often articulated in free form writing style. (Roberts & Jacobs, 1995) classify prose into two, fiction prose and nonfiction prose. Fiction, originally meant anything made up or shaped, is prose stories based on the author's creation and imagination. It includes myths, parables, novels, romances, and short stories. On the other hand, nonfiction is literary works which describe or interpret facts, present judgments, and opinions. It consists of news reports, essays, magazines, newspapers, encyclopedias, broadcast media, films, letters, historical and biographical works and many other forms of communication.

A novel (from the Italian novella, Spanishnovela, Frenchnouvelle for "new", "news", or "short story of something new") today is a long narrative in literary prose (Indasari et al., 2020). It is prose narrative of considerable length and complexity, portraying characters and usually presenting a sequential organization of action and scenes (Taylor, 1981) in Understanding the Elements of Literature explains that a novel is normally a prose work of quite some length and complexity which attempts to reflect and express something of the equality or value of human experience or conduct.

Stanton (1965) states that themes are the meaning contained by a story. But there are many meanings conceived and offered by the story (the novel), then the problem is a special meaning which can be expressed as the theme. Stanton (1965), suggested the plot is a story that contains the sequence of events, but each incident is only connected in cause and effect, an event which caused or led to the occurrence of other events, promoted to the plot as the events shown in the story is not simple, because the author set the events based on the relation of cause and effect.

Abrams (2004) says that "Character is people who are appeared in a narrative prose or novel and it is interpreted by the readers as a person who has moral quality and certain tendency such as being expressed in what they say and what they do". Whereas the conflict is something that dramatic, referring to the struggle between two forces are balanced and imply action and retaliation (Wellek & Warren, 1963).

Rene & Austin (1982) is concerned with the places where story take a place. Setting refers to geographical location of the story, time period, daily lifestyle of the characters and climate of the story.

Culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. (Tyler,1870) is the British anthropologist cited by (Avruch,1998). Furthermore, (Hofstede,1991; Fairuz, et al., 2022) states that 'Culture is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another.'

The story of the 47 Ronin is one of the most celebrated in the history of the samurai. This was perhaps all the more so because it occurred at a time when the samurai class was struggling to maintain a sense of itself warriors with no war, a social class without a function. The tale could be said to have begun with the teachings of Yamaga Soko (1622-1685), an influential theorist who wrote a number of important works on the warrior spirit and what it meant to be samurai.

Bushido has usually been considered an ethical code that was set to a certain standard, just as the ten commandments are. This analysis suggests that it was in fact not a set of moral laws, but that bushido was embodied differently by every Samurai. Bushido was ultimately a guideline, just like rules in religion. It was a path that one was to adhere to as well as they could, but history has made it clear that it depended upon the circumstances in which a Samurai lived; the life of a Samurai in the twelfth century would fill with fighting for their master and practical use of the code; far different from that of a Samurai living during the first half of the 1800's, who would be keeping track of the business operations of their master instead of fighting.

Because of these differing conditions, Bushido has changed constantly through time, proving that they Way of the Warrior was far more than an established ideal; it was a deeply personal code.

Bushido's derivative word, bushi, was the original term for the upper warrior classes. The spiritual aspects of it arose from two main sources: Buddhism and Shintoism. Buddhism provided the necessary components for bravery in the face of death. Buddhism furnished a sense of calm trust in fate, a quiet submission to the inevitable, that stoic composure in sight of danger or calamity, that disdain of life and friendliness with death. Zen Buddhism, another integral part of Bushido, took hold with the Samurai after its introduction to Japan in the twelfth century.

From its teachings Samurai learned how to meditate; employing this technique would help the attempt to reach enlightenment. Shintoism supplied the ideals in Bushido that Buddhism was unable to provide, rounding out the code of ethics. Such loyalty to the sovereign, such reverence for ancestral memory, and such filial piety as are not taught by any other creed, were inculcated by the Shinto doctrines, imparting passivity to the otherwise arrogant character of the Samurai. Selfless devotion and a welcoming of death seem very courageous, but there was more to Bushido than displaying bravery in the field and mediation.

Benevolence was another component, emphasizing feeling for others and love for the human soul. Samurai was also to be polite and respectful, as were all Japanese; they are customs that those in Japan still take very seriously. They were always to seek the truth, justice and hold their duty to their master as their greatest responsibility. Bushido also dictated that Samurai be educated men of culture, capable of appreciating fine art, or the simple pleasure of a cup of tea.

Controlling one's emotions at all times was paramount, most of all when faced with the action of Seppuku (ritualistic suicide).

Bushido was institutionalized under the Tokugawa regime, and it became law for only Samurai to be able to carry weapons in public. The Bushido code consisted of these seven virtues; rectitude, courage, benevolence, respect, honesty, honor and loyalty, and were put into law as such. Samurai also began to have more in common bureaucratic nobles than the lifestyle of a warrior, leading to differing views of the warrior code. They were basically paid to draw calligraphy and drink; their swords became symbols of power instead of actual weapons. Samurai still possessed the rights of the military class, and although they still retained the right to cut down a commoner if they disrespected them, how often that actually happened remains a mystery.

The government also made Daimyos reduce the size of their armies, and thus created the social problem of the Ronin; unemployed Samurai that would wander the country and cause trouble. Although institutional Bushido would come to an end in 1873 as a result of the Meiji Restoration, the concept of Bushido lived on through World War II into today, as several Japanese businessmen employ it. Some of them have taken the approach that "business is war", and have adjusted their tactics to fit those ramifications.

With growing age, the cultural development is changing significantly. Where these developments may be positive or negative in the life of society. Therefore, we should be able to understand the culture which are positive and try to keep and which one is positive and does not follow it or repeat it. The research is limited to values and character of the Bushido Culture in the novel.

The significances of the research are theoretical that desiderate to have contribution to the development of knowledge in literature study, and practical that to help reader know the character in novel "47 Ronin.

3. Methodology

This research used the method library research or library research. Literature study was a technique data collection by holding book study review, literature, notes, and related reports with the problem solved. This paper used journals, materials and information relevant to collect, read and reviewed, recorded as a guide or reference sources. Theoretical data in this paper was collected by study technique library, it meant that the writer collected the data through reading various activities literature and media use relevant internet to complete data with the theme of the paper. In addition, the data was studied naturally without treatment or researcher intervention (Idris et al., 2020; Saleh et al., 2021).

4. Result and Discussion

Bushido serves as the foundation of Japanese deity spirit. It combines the concepts of Buddhism and Confucianism. These three schools have been integrated to develop morality and justice uniquely possessed by Japanese. Japanese culture features "shame". "Shame" refers to avoid doing something which loses a person's face. Bushido unconsciously dominates Japanese nationals and has become some power unable to resist.

They admire individual accomplishments and believe in humanism. An individual's specialty is considered important cultural property and is encouraged by the government. Humanism valuing technology and citizen cultivation is the greatest social resource in Japan. They advocate technology and skills without shutting themselves from others. Consequently, they are able to be innovative on a basis of tradition. Japanese do not copy everything. They have been impacted by Chinese and western culture. They sensitively adapt themselves to the world trend of development while continuously and quickly receiving new concepts and things. They combine the new trends with their traditional culture and then create a new type of hybrid culture.

Central to the code of Bushido was honor. Honor manifested in the words and actions of the warrior honesty and integrity. Samurai was rigorously trained to develop psychological, physical and spiritual self-discipline. Discipline was viewed as essential to ensure right judgment and right action regardless of the circumstance. Samurai was imbued with a strong sense of responsibility. Not to take ownership for their actions, or not to accept and acknowledge the consequences of their actions was considered a great disgrace. Taking responsibility reflected courage. Avoiding responsibility evidenced cowardice. In extreme circumstances, samurai took ultimate responsibility for their actions by taking their own lives seppuku.

Some of the values of Edo society still play an important role in modern Japanese life. A favorite Japanese proverb is "the nail that sticks out gets hammered down." Japan continues to be a society where self-discipline and loyalty to the group are highly valued. For much of the 20th century, the Confucian duties and obligations between a lord and his samurai

were reflected in the relationship between Japanese companies and their employees. The samurai evolved into the modern "salary man" or businessman who carried a briefcase instead of a sword. The company expected a lifetime of loyal service from employees. In return, it guaranteed them lifetime security. Although various sectors in Japanese society such as business, the state, and the media, still promote these traditional ideals, life in Japan has begun to change. Family life has suffered as a result of the dedication of Japanese men to their jobs women have full responsibility for managing the household and raising children, and children get to spend little time with their fathers. As a result, shows that the influence of the bushido culture is upheld by the samurai and society until now.

5. Conclusion

The conclusion of the research of the novel 47 ronin samurai or ronin, no man's land is while respecting and applying bushido cultural values in their lives. Among the values of courage, loyalty, honesty, fairness, decency and other values in the teaching of bushido, so that the sacrifice of their actions in the past or is still valued by the community until today. Today, with the dying out of Samurais, Bushido no longer has a military force in Japan. However, Bushido's ethical foundations still play a major part of Japanese culture and society. Bushido's stress on loyalty to the head of a group is still evident in the strong sense of loyalty workers have to their employers, students to their teachers, apprentices to their masters and to their country.

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