

CHAPTER THREE

CONCLUSION

Having analysed Fyodor Dostoevsky's Poor People, I come to the conclusion that the portrayal and actions of the protagonist play an important role in revealing the theme. Dostoevsky has portrayed Devushkin in a skilful way because his characteristics are very lifelike. Devushkin is portrayed as a religious, strong-willed and unmaterialistic person who values pride highly. Thus, these characteristics which are so mundane can take the readers' empathy, which make them understand more about the protagonist's problem in the story.

Dostoevsky's skill in portraying Devushkin also makes the existentialism value outstanding in this story, and that can be clearly seen in the protagonist's actions which show human's freedom, choice, and responsibility in taking the consequences. The unbearable consequences he faces later bring him to surrender totally to God, which shows Kierkegaard's theory of leap of faith. At the end of the story, Dostoevsky portrays Devushkin as a better person with a better life. Through the portrayal and action of Devushkin, it is clear that the theme of Poor People is that

as a religious person, one has to use one's freedom in accordance with God's rule in order to have a better life.

I am of the opinion that the theme is universal because it can be applied by anyone who has faith in God anywhere and at anytime. It reflects clearly the message Dostoevsky wants to convey to the readers; God is omniscient and omnipotent, He can give solution to all our problems.

Having learned existentialism, I can understand more about Poor People as it deals with problems in life. This theory also gives a new perspective that teaches the readers to struggle for their own freedom like the author, Fyodor Dostoevsky. He also encourages that,

'Man, for Dostoevsky, is limited by society, economic conditions, laws, history, the church, and especially by God. He is classified, defined, and fixed by a hundred institutions and conditions. Man, however does not want to be defined and limited – he wants to be free and he wants to be totally and completely free...man is right in wanting to be free, for freedom is the essential attribute of his identity.'

(<http://www.historyguide.org/Europe/dostoevsky.html>).

The form of the novel also helps me understand the story better. Being written in the form of letters, the novel gives several advantages: I can know the characters' feeling, thought, and experiences very clearly and intimately so that I can understand the character's problem more easily. Besides, the use of the first person point of view 'I' makes me involved directly in the story.

From the novel itself I can learn some lessons: We have to be a realistic person and to make a good relationship with our surroundings. This is due to the fact that man is a social being that cannot live alone. The most important thing is that we have to rely on God and surrender in every kind of situation and condition. Therefore, I conclude that this novel is worth reading and analysing.