



## SUBJECTIVITY ŽIŽEK'S PERSPECTIVE IN THE SHORT STORY ASH-SHABIYYU AL-A'RAJ BY TAUFIQ YUSUF AWWAD

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### Abstract

This article aims to examine Žižek's concept of subjectivity through a radical character in the short story *Ash-Shabiyyu al-A'raj*. This study employs a descriptive qualitative design with a textual approach, using the observation method with note-taking techniques, and is grounded in Slavoj Žižek's theoretical framework. The novelty of this research lies in both the choice of the material object and the precision of applying Žižekian analysis to the short story. The findings reveal that the existence of radical actions carried out by the character Khalil is shaped by a period of confinement that forms a radical attitude as a response to internal attachment. Khalil undergoes the stages of the imaginary, the symbolic, and the real, which ultimately construct him as a radical subject. Thus, Slavoj Žižek's theory is employed in this study to analyze the entity of the radical subject in the short story *Ash-Shabiyyu al-A'raj*. This research contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of Žižekian studies, particularly regarding the radical subject in *Ash-Shabiyyu al-A'raj*.

### تجريد

يهدف هذا المقال إلى دراسة مفهوم الذاتية عند سلافوي جيжек من خلال شخصية راديكالية في القصة القصيرة *الشاب الأعرج*. وتعتمد هذه الدراسة المنهج الوصفي النوعي ذا المقاربة النصية، باستخدام أسلوب الملاحظة وتقنية تدوين الملاحظات، مستندةً إلى الإطار النظري لسلافوي جيжек. وتكمن جدة هذا البحث في اختيار موضوعه وفي دقة توظيف التحليل الجيجهكي على النص القصصي المدروس. وتكشف النتائج أن وجود الأفعال الراديكالية التي يقوم بها بطل القصة، خليل، يتشكل من خلال فترة من العزلة والاحتجاز، أسهمت في تكوين موقف راديكالي بوصفه استجابة لتعلق داخلي. ويمر خليل بمراحل المتخيل والرمزي والواقعي، التي تنتهي بتشكله ذاتاً راديكالية. وبناءً على ذلك، تُوظف نظرية سلافوي جيжек في هذه الدراسة لتحليل كينونة الذات الراديكالية في القصة القصيرة *الشاب الأعرج*. وتسهم هذه الدراسة في إثراء الفهم الشامل للدراسات الجيجهكية، ولا سيما فيما يتصل بمفهوم الذات الراديكالية في *الشاب الأعرج*.

### الكلمات المفتاحية :

قصة قصيرة  
الشاب الأعرج  
الذات الراديكالية  
سلافوي جيжек

### Abstrak

Artikel ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji subjektifitas Žižek, melalui tokoh radikal di dalam cerpen *Ash-Shabiyyu al-A'raj*. Penelitian ini bersifat deskriptif kualitatif, pendekatan tekstual, metode simak teknik catat, berdasarkan teori

**Kata kunci:**

Cerpen ash-Shabiyyu  
al-A'raj  
Subjek Radikal  
Žižek

Slavoj Žižek. Penelitian ini memiliki kebaruan dari segi objek material dan ketepatan analisis pemikiran Žižekian di dalam cerpen. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan, eksistensi tindakan radikal yang dilakukan oleh tokoh Khalil, disebabkan oleh masa belenggu yang membentuk sikap radikal, sebagai respon keterikatan di dalam diri. Tokoh Khalil mengalami masa *the imaginary*, *the symbolic* dan *the real* hingga menjadi subjek radikal. Dengan begitu, teori Slavoj Žižek digunakan dalam penelitian ini, untuk menganalisis entitas subjek radikal dalam cerpen *Ash-Shabiyyu al-A'raj*. Penelitian ini dapat memberikan kontribusi pada pemahaman yang lebih komprehensif terhadap kajian Žižek, khususnya pada subjek radikal dalam cerpen *Ash-Shabiyyu al-A'raj*.

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**A. Introduction**

*Ash-Shabiyyu al-A'raj* is a literary piece written by a Lebanese intellectual known for his roles as a journalist and a diplomat. (Marthunis Nawawi & Chairunnisa Ahsana AS, 2021) The short story *Ash-Shabiyyu al-A'raj* explores the theme of suffering caused by poverty as experienced by a thirteen-year-old boy living with a physical disability. The prolonged hardship endured by the main character, Kholil, renders the narrative crafted by Taufiq Yusuf Awwad particularly compelling and worthy of scholarly attention. (Hidayah et al., 2022) The storyline centers on a tragic portrayal of the main character, whose childhood is taken away by the harsh reality of poverty that surrounds him. The main character who serves as the object of this study in the short story *Ash-Shabiyyu al-A'raj* is named Khalil. Khalil is a 13-year-old boy who is an orphan and has a physical disability.

He is raised by his uncle, who restricts him and forces him to earn money by begging on the streets. The money Khalil obtains from begging is taken by his uncle, who is also physically disabled, with a predetermined target set by the uncle of fifty cents. If the money he earns does not reach the target, Khalil will be beaten according to the number of cents he fails to obtain. Khalil experiences violence in both his family and social environment, which ultimately drives him to commit a radical act in order to put an end to the oppression he feels. In the story, a subject engages in radical action as a result of his desire to escape the symbolic pressures imposed upon him. Therefore, the radical subject in this study can be examined through Slavoj Žižek's theory, which explains the phase of the subject's emptiness, during

which one cannot act in accordance with one's own desires. The subject exists, yet is split due to the influence of the Big Other.

Žižek is a philosopher from the capital city of Slovenia, which at the time was still part of Yugoslavia. Slavoj Žižek was born into a middle-class bureaucratic family; he developed an interest in philosophy at the age of 17 and earned a master's degree in philosophy in 1975 (Wattimena, 2011). Žižek's philosophical development was shaped by the intellectual legacy of Lacan (accessed through the work of Lacan's son-in-law, since Lacan died in 1981 and Žižek did not have the opportunity to study with him directly) as well as by Jacques-Alain Miller. When conflicts involving Miller led to divisions within Lacanian psychoanalytic thought, Žižek completed a second doctorate in psychoanalysis, with a dissertation centered on the works of Hegel, Marx, and Kripke, read through a Lacanian lens. Over time, Žižek's theory emerged and was introduced in 2007 in an international journal known as the *International Journal of Žižek Studies*. (Koli, 2003)

After the conflict involving Miller's rejection of Lacanian thought, Žižek's concept of the subject was linked to the ideas of Hegel, Marx, and Lacan. Hegel's thought is connected to the discourse of the dialectics of the social subject, Marx is associated with the concept of ideology, and Lacan is employed to conceptualize the subject psychologically. By integrating these three frameworks into Žižek's theory, the notion of the radical subject in Žižek's perspective becomes coherent, and a critique of ideology is effectively formulated. In fact, Žižek does not explicitly propose the existence of a radical subject; however, the perspective he articulates implies a form of radicalization that the subject must undertake in order to avoid being trapped within the symbolic order experienced by the subject. Žižekian theoretical frameworks include Lacanian psychoanalysis; ideology (naivety and cynicism); the epidemic of ideology (desire and fantasy); subjectivity as a radical act; and Žižek's propositions on the subject. (Setiawan, 2022).

Lacanian psychoanalysis influenced Slavoj Žižek in his understanding of the structure of the unconscious and ideology, thereby complementing the dialectics of Hegel and Marx. (Campos, 2021). Lacanian psychoanalysis is a theory that develops Freud's ideas by emphasizing the importance of language and symbolic structures in the formation of human consciousness. Žižek employs Lacanian psychoanalysis as a primary framework for interpreting the thought of Karl Marx and Hegel. (Kaya & Zabcı, 2025). Hegel is a major philosopher who developed dialectics as an evolutionary process toward a comprehensive understanding of the self and the world. (Diaz, 2024). Žižek reconstructs Hegel's theory by

arguing that, for him, the Absolute Spirit represents an acknowledgment of radical loss and uncertainty. With regard to Karl Marx, Žižek interprets Marx in a critical and reconstructive manner. Žižek emphasizes the need to reread Marx through the concepts of Hegel and Lacan so that the subject becomes more complex and open. (Akbar et al., 2025)

The phase of subject formation within the Marxist framework that influenced Žižek, leading him toward Lacanian psychoanalysis, is divided into three stages, namely : *the real, the imaginary dan the symbolic*. (Andika, 2023) According to Lacan, the Real is the phase of wholeness when the child is in the mother's womb, during which the subject experiences a sense of complete safety. The Imaginary is the stage in which the subject searches for identity through the mirror; however, the subject is not yet able to fully recognize itself and has not yet been subjected to external forces such as language, culture, religion, and so on. *The symbolic* It refers to a condition in which the subject has already interacted with the symbolic order, such as external structures that were not yet present in the Imaginary phase. (Holis & Salam, 2019) Under the influence of Marxist and Lacanian conceptions of subjectivity, Žižek reverses the concept of subjectivity in his theory into the Imaginary, the Symbolic, and the Real. For Žižek, the subject exists, but it is a divided subject.

In Slavoj Žižek's perspective, the subject is unstable or divided. The subject exists within the limits of reality and under symbolic pressure. In this condition, the subject is entangled in a power relation with the Big Other, which renders its life incomplete. To escape the symbolic order that constrains its existence, the subject unconsciously carries out radical acts, as its mind is shaped by an imaginary form of subjective cynicism (Muzzayyanah, 2018). Broadly speaking, Žižek's theory can be described as a form of historical psychoanalysis, as it integrates Lacan's ideas in order to pursue historical ideals as envisioned by Karl Marx. According to Žižek and Marx, the free subject still exists, and this subject is capable of transforming structures and shaping history. Žižek maintains that "the subject exists even though it is always divided," in line with Lacan's conception (Akmal, 2017).

Research on Slavoj Žižek has been conducted by several scholars, including Krisnawaty et al. (2025), who discuss the radical actions of one of the characters in the novel "*Tuhan Izinkan Aku Menjadi Pelacur*", focusing on the character Kiran's naive consciousness as a result of the ideology that binds her. (Radikal et al., 2025). Furthermore, Sukirno et al. (2022) discussed the negative awareness of radical subjects in novels caused by self-rejection. (Sukirno & Triasputera, 2022) Further research by Merdika, (2021) which discusses the order of criticism of the subjectivity of novel authors which is examined through fantasy in "*Burung Terbang di*

*Kala Malam*".(Tiara Merdika, 2021). This research differs from previous research from the perspective of material objects, and also radical actions that are driven by opinions about the nature of life towards God..

This study aims to find acts of oppression that form a moment of emptiness (ex-nihilo) which is depicted in the main character in the short story *ash-Shabiyyu al-A'raj* based on the imaginary, the symbolic and the real phases, as well as analyzing the radical actions of the main character until the subject is in the real phase because of self-acceptance and trying to keep moving forward as a subject on earth in the *ash-Shabiyyu al-A'raj* story line.

In the short story *Ash-Shabiyyu al-A'raj*, Taufiq Yusuf Awwad provides space for readers to derive individual messages from the narrative of the main character as he endures wounds and suffering, ultimately performing a radical act to put an end to the pain he experiences. Therefore, to reveal the phases of the Imaginary, the Symbolic, and the Real of the main character based on the moments of emptiness he undergoes, this study employs Slavoj Žižek's theory, which addresses the factors that lead a narrative subject to engage in radical action. Accordingly, this research aims to contribute to Žižekian analysis through the narrative structure of *Ash-Shabiyyu al-A'raj*.

## B. Research Methods

This research is descriptive qualitative with a textual approach. The researcher uses a descriptive method to explore the events in the short story *Ash-Shabiyyu al-A'raj* (si Pincang).(Rika, Astari et al., 2013) Meanwhile, qualitative research is used to verify through analysis that researchers carry out on research objects.(Semi, 2021). The textual approach is used as a form of urgency of literal meaning in short stories. (Iqbal, 2025). The method used in this research is the listening method and note-taking technique, using Slavoj Žižek's theory of subjectivity.

Primary data in this study uses books *Strukturalisme dalam Sastra Arab Teori dan Aplikasinya* (Sangidu, 2018) The primary data are drawn from an anthology of short stories published by Gadjah Mada University Press. Meanwhile, the secondary data are obtained from articles related to Žižekian discussions. The data analysis in this study includes: carefully reading the short story *Ash-Shabiyyu al-A'raj*; classifying dialogues or narrative passages related to the subjectivity of the character; and analyzing these dialogues or narratives using the theory of subjectivity.

### C. Result and Discussion

Based on the narrative of the short story *Ash-Shabiyyu al-A'raj*, there emerges a radical subject formed in a manner consistent with the concept of subjectivity in Slavoj Žižek's theory. This subject engages in radical action in order to break free from the symbolic order within himself and to seek a complete life as desired by the subject, without being bound by the structures of other people's lives. The subject referred to in this study is the main character named Khalil, who has a physical disability in the form of a limp in his right leg.

#### 1. The Ex-Nihilo Moment of the Protagonist

The ex nihilo moment arises from the divided subject. That is, the subject experiences an entity of emptiness within himself as a result of the influence of external symbolic pressure. The symbolic pressure felt by the subject is caused by moral oppression, namely oppression that emerges through the internalization of moral and cultural values, which compels the subject to submit and renders him unable to resist. This moral oppression is indirectly embedded within Khalil, leading him to obey his uncle as a form of respect and deference. Accordingly, the orders to beg and to hand over the collected coins to his uncle are carried out without resistance. The ex nihilo moment within Khalil becomes evident during the incident of raids and evictions targeting beggars and vagrants on the streets, which profoundly affects Khalil's psyche. The moral oppression that shapes the formation of the phases of the Imaginary, the Symbolic, and the Real is reflected in the following narrative:

ممنوع! ... ممنوع مدّ الايدي من الآن و صاعدا! ممنوع طرق الأبواب ، وإيقاف المارّة و الدّعاء بطول الأعمار . لماذا ؟ سؤال هائل إرتسم على وجه خليل الأعرج ، لا يعرف له جوابا. كل ما كان يعرف من هذه الحياة أنّ عليه الرجوع كلّ مساء بخمسين قرشا يسلمها إلى العمّ إبراهيم. أفاق على نفسه على هذا الشكل من الحياة، و على الرغم من العذاب الذي يلاقيه فهو يتمنّى أن تدوم الحال على ما هي.

*"From now on and henceforth, the lame boy was forbidden to beg, to go from house to house, and to bless the generous donors who gave him coins with prayers for long life, abundant sustenance, safety, and so on. He had to abandon a job that was deemed disgraceful and accursed. Why was this so? He did not know the answer. Why must he stop doing this work? Why must he leave behind his daily routine? All of this was surrendered to the fate of his wretched life. Every evening he returned to his dilapidated hut with fifty cents to hand over to his uncle. He resigned himself to living in*

*hardship and misery, even though the torment he endured never ceased despite the fact that he never wished for such a life."*

Khalil is a 13-year-old boy with a physical disability, and not many people know his name, as he is more commonly referred to as "the cripple." During his life while living with his uncle, Khalil devoted himself and remained obedient to his uncle by earning a living through begging on the streets, and later by selling bread and sweets as an alternative to being a street beggar. This occurred due to government raids that prohibited the presence of vagrants and beggars on the streets.

Another ex nihilo moment experienced by the crippled subject occurs as an implication of Khalil's sense of pressure when he fails to obtain the required fifty cents from his efforts as a beggar in the following days. As a result, he becomes afraid to face his uncle, since the amount he earns falls far short of the fifty-cent target. Khalil's fear is illustrated in the narrative excerpt in which he manages to collect only twenty-seven cents from his efforts. The excerpt is as follows:

وإلى الأعرج أن يصدق حساب النهار الذي كان قد قام به أكثر من عشر مرّات، فلمّا وصل تحت المصباح الكهربائيّ المعلق على المحطّة الأخيرة من المحطّات الترامواي، تناول القروش من جيبه و أخذ يعدّها مرة أخرى. فإذا هي سبعة و عشرون قرشا، لم تزد شيئا قطّ ! فأرجعها إلى مكانها وهو يرف بعينيه و قد همتا بالبكاء، وواصل مشيته العرجاء ببطء.

*"The lame boy could not believe the calculation he had done earlier that afternoon, repeated ten times. When he reached the electric lamp hanging above the tram station, he took out the coins from his pocket and counted them once more. The amount remained the same twenty seven cents, not a penny more. He returned the coins to his pocket, his eyes blinking with the urge to weep and to cry out at once. He continued his journey unsteadily and slowly."*

The incident constitutes a moment in which a sense of "emptiness" is formed within the crippled boy, connected to the painful experience of being forbidden to beg, to enter people's homes, and to pray for the benefactors who gave him coins. He resigns himself to a life of suffering, even though he does not wish for such conditions to continue. After the raid, the crippled boy is only able to bring home two cents each day, which means he receives forty-eight blows with a wooden cane. Eventually, he grows weary of his life and protests to God as an expression of his refusal to accept the life he is forced to endure. Khalil's lament can be seen in the following excerpt:

يا الله، هذا شئى كثير

*"O Allah, this trial is too heavy for me."*

This was followed by an incident when he was bullied by three thugs who ruined the bread and sweets he sold from a small box. Since the day he was extorted by the thugs, the lame boy received even harsher punishments from his uncle, Ibrahim. Because his goods were gone and the coins that were supposed to be his earnings were also lost. This incident is reflected in the following excerpt:

ذات يوم أطبق الغلمان الأشرار على خليل في حي {الكرأويا} وأخذوا يشدون بشعره، وأمسكه أحدهم برجله العوجاء يدقها بحجر و يضحك عليه قائلا : يا أعرج ! يا أعرج !

*"One day, the thugs ambushed Khalil in the al-Qurawi neighborhood. They began pulling his hair. One of them grabbed his lame leg, beat him with a stone, and laughed while mocking him: 'Hey, cripple! Hey, the lame one!'"*

The dialogue above illustrates the occurrence of oppression toward the character Khalil, who is derogatorily called "the lame." This oppression shapes the *ex nihilo* period, which is influenced by the "big Other," including Khalil's uncle, Ibrahim, as well as a group of street thugs. The form of oppression carried out by Uncle Ibrahim is moral oppression. Unconsciously, the cultural norms of society compel Khalil to obey his uncle, while his uncle's behavior reinforces a moral ideology that ensures Khalil's submission to him. The next form of oppression comes from the street thugs, who seize Khalil's bread and sweets, his merchandise. This act represents a form of ableist oppression, in which the oppressors perceive themselves as more complete or superior than the oppressed subject.

## 2. Radical Actions of the Character Khalil

The oppression experienced by Khalil constitutes a symbolic form of domination, or a sense of being internally constrained. Unconsciously, Khalil shapes himself to break free from the unwanted symbolic order through a radical act. In this way, the subject is able to liberate himself from the symbolic order and move toward the phase of the Real, living a complete life without pressure or oppression. The radical action undertaken by Khalil begins with the emergence of a sense of "resistance" within himself, after he meets and is taught martial arts by a wealthy merchant named Karim.

At that time, Khalil was being harassed by street thugs who habitually bullied him. At first, they merely took Khalil's merchandise. Over time, the thugs began to pull Khalil's



hair, grab his crippled leg, beat him, and mock him. Then Karim arrived to help Khalil by shouting at the street thugs who were harassing him. Karim assisted Khalil because he felt a familiarity with his own youth. Karim was a well-known figure in his village who had once been part of street gangs but had since abandoned his life of crime. After confronting the thugs, Karim invited Khalil to learn how to strike back so that he could defend himself against the thugs who frequently harassed him and took his goods. This incident is depicted in the following dialogue between Karim and Khalil :

ألا تعرف {البوكس} ؟

إجمع كفك اليمنى

ها ! هكذا ؟

فتناول كريم كفه وسوّاها له جمعا و قال :

إذا جاء إليك الأولاد مرة أخرى فاجمع كفك مثل الآن واضربهم. و صوّب الضربة دائما إلى الدّقن أو الأنف أو

الخصر، أفهمت ؟ إضربني لأرى !

*"Do you know boxing?"*

*The Lame answered, "No, I don't know boxing."*

*Karim said again, "Clench your fist! Like this!" (Karim demonstrates by clenching his fist.)*

*Then Karim took the Lame's hand and adjusted his head while saying, "If those young thugs come to bother you again, clench your fist like this and strike them. Aim your punches at the chin and the nose, the midsection, or the temple. Understand? Now try hitting me first as a test."*

After mastering martial arts, a spirit of rebellion and resistance arose within Khalil toward those who had oppressed him. It began with confronting the street thugs who frequently harassed him, and later extended to his uncle, who often beat him whenever he failed to hand over fifty cents. The quotation that illustrates Khalil's radical actions can be found in the following passage:

ودنا زعيمهم ذو القنباز المشقوق بين الفخذين. دنا ببطء، برباطة جأش، وهمّ بإخال يده في الصندوق. فما كان من الأعراج إلا أن جمع كفّه اليمنى و أمسك باليسرى ناصية خصمه ثمّ ضربه بوكسا على يافوخه إنطرح تحته على الأرض، وقد سبق رأسه رجليه. فهجم الثلاثة الآخرون، فشدّ خليل رجله الصحيحة على بلاط الرصيف

كالرصاص وإنهال على الثلاثة : لهذا ضربة على أنفه، ولذلك ضربة على خصره، وللثالث ضربة على خصيتيه،  
كما علمه كريم، فما صمدوا له لحظة حتى تفرقوا هارين.

*"The leader of the street thugs was approached by the lame, slowly and without the slightest trace of fear. The leader attempted to empty the lame's box, but the lame quickly clenched his right fist and struck the thug's forehead, sending him sprawling to the ground. The other three also attacked, yet swiftly and skillfully he pressed them one by one and countered their assault. The first blow landed on one of them, the second struck another's waist and nape, and the third targeted yet another's groin. These varied punches were exactly as Karim had taught him. Witnessing this, the three thugs ceased their resistance and fled in panic".*

After rebelling against the street vagrants who often harassed him, Khalil began to consider standing up to his uncle, who frequently beat him without mercy. He had grown weary of Uncle Ibrahim's tyrannical behavior. Khalil's radical action against his uncle is illustrated in the following excerpt:

وقام على الأثر من فراشه كالألة، لا يخاف ولا يفكر بشئ، وذهب تَوّاً إلى العصا المعلقة فوق رأس عمّه و تناولها بيده، وقبضها جيّداً، ثم أخذ ينظر إلى شاري العم إبراهيم يصعدان و يهبطان ، و يصغى إلى غطيظه يشتد ويخفت. ثم كشرعن أسنانه كابن النمر، و رفع العصا إلى فوق، بكلتا يديه ، و انهال بها على وجه العم إبراهيم :  
على شاربيه ضربة، و أتبعها بالثانية و الثالثة على الجبين و الذّقن، قبل أن يستطيع عمّه صباحاً

*"The lame stood upon the bed, unafraid of anything. He stepped toward the stick that hung above his uncle's head and carefully took hold of it. He gazed at his uncle's mustache while listening to his terrifying snores. His uncle's teeth resembled those of a tiger. The lame raised the stick and struck his uncle's face. The blows landed on his beard, stomach, and jaw, until the uncle cried out in anguish".*

This is then followed by a narrative representing the radical act carried out by Khalil against his uncle Ibrahim, as follows:

وكان يلحق بالأعرج من زاوية في الكوخ لعلّه ينزع العصا منه، فيناولها حاملها الضربة على يده، و على بطنه، فيشتدّ عواؤه ويختلط بقصافات الرّعد في الخارج وقهقهات تنكات الكاز على سطح الكوخ،  
في تلك الليلة اليّلاء

*"Inevitably, the stick struck the oil lamp hanging in the middle of the dilapidated hut. Meanwhile, the Lame continued to beat his uncle's face with the stick, again and again. The oil lamp shattered, spilling its contents onto his uncle's bed. Flames quickly engulfed the fragile hut. The Lame stepped outside, locked the door from the outside, and left his uncle trapped within".*

The radical actions carried out by Khalil are rooted in the symbolic phase he experienced. This symbolic phase took the form of both moral and ableist oppression. Such conditions rendered Khalil a bound and divided subject. Thus, unconsciously, through the martial arts skills taught by Karim, Khalil transformed into a subject seeking liberation from the symbolic bondage of oppression. Consequently, whether consciously or unconsciously, the subject engages in radical actions as a response to the oppression within him.

After committing radical acts against the street thugs, the subject continued with a radical act toward Uncle Ibrahim. This was done by blocking his uncle's way out in the midst of the burning of the dilapidated hut they lived in. In the end, Khalil came to accept his fate as a human being with a limitation his lame right leg. Khalil's acceptance of the life destiny granted by his God is reflected in the following passage:

كَلَّمَا تَقَدَّمَ الْأَعْرَجُ فِي الْمَشْيِ زَادَ فِي طَوِيلِهِ وَاسْتِقَامَتِهِ ، وَاخْتَقَّتْ مِنْهُ الْعُرْجَةُ ... حَتَّى خِيلَ إِلَيْهِ أَنَّ أَوَّلَهُ عَنْهُ رَجُلُهُ

العوجاء ، وَآخِرُهُ مَعْلَقٌ بِتِلْكَ النُّجْمَةِ الْمُرْتَجِفَةِ الَّتِي انْقَشَعَتْ عَنْهَا الْغَيُومُ فِي أَفْقِ السَّمَاءِ!

*"His lame leg filled him with doubt and anxiety, leading him to imagine that he had suffered from this disability since childhood. In the end, he could only place his hopes and surrender his wretched life's fate to Allah, the Lord of all creation".*

The quotation illustrates the arrival of boundless love within Khalil. He strives to accept the fate entrusted to him by Allah, to the point that he imagines his lameness as something he has endured since childhood. Yet, from the story it can be inferred that Khalil's condition may have been the result of an accident or another incurable circumstance. As indicated in the synopsis above, Khalil lost his childhood to the poverty in which he lived, to the extent that his physical body appeared aged, even though he was only thirteen years old.

### 3. Subjektifitas Tokoh Khalil

The subject of Khalil in the short story *Ash-Shabiyyu al-A'raj* by Taufiq Yusuf Awwad represents a divided subject identity. By a divided subject, it is meant that Khalil lives under the attachments and constraints imposed by others, leading him to live a life he does

not desire. The divided subject within Khalil is evident in his willingness to devote himself to his uncle under the pretext of moral and cultural values, namely obedience to elders. Khalil as a subject can be interpreted through the lens of Karl Marx's concept of subjectivity as employed by Žižek. Khalil merely carries out his uncle's commands without fully understanding the reasons behind his actions.

The character Khalil undergoes three Žižekian phases influenced by Lacan. Khalil's phases are as follows: the Imaginary phase, which occurs when he willingly endures beatings from his uncle as compensation for the remaining cents he fails to obtain. This phase is also reflected in the violence inflicted on Khalil by street thugs when he changes his occupation to selling bread and sweets after being a beggar. The Symbolic phase within Khalil emerges when he feels afraid to return home with less than fifty cents; he imagines his uncle's blows and becomes exhausted by his uncle's treatment. This condition leads Khalil to act radically by striking his crippled uncle with a cane, knocking over the oil lamp on his uncle's bed, and locking the hut as it burns. The Real phase of Khalil is seen in his "freedom" from his uncle's daily beatings and from the oppression of the four street thugs. Moreover, the Real phase implicitly reveals Khalil's affection for his uncle, as he ends his uncle's life and crimes in this world so that he may return to his God.

In the Symbolic phase, Khalil unconsciously experiences moral oppression from both his uncle and the street thugs. The moral oppression endured by Khalil shapes him into a radical subject who resists the injustice of the life he has long experienced. Hegelian dialectics in this study are situated within the Real phase attained by Khalil. In addition, Khalil's explicit narrative of "returning his life's destiny" to the Creator in the course of living his days with a physical disability is also emphasized.

#### D. Conclusion

The researcher finds Žižekian subjectivity in the character of Khalil in the short story *Ash-Shabiyyu al-A'raj*. Khalil undertakes a process of liberation from the symbolic order that has constrained him. His life is dominated by external forces (the Big Other), which compel him to live a life he does not desire. After losing his parents, Khalil devotes himself to his uncle as a beggar, and he is beaten with a cane whenever he fails to earn fifty cents each day. Khalil does not resist this treatment, justifying his obedience on moral grounds toward his uncle. In addition, he experiences disability-based oppression from street thugs due to his physical

impairment. After passing through the Imaginary phase, Khalil engages in resistance in order to break free from the symbolic Big Other that constrains him and move toward the Real phase.

The application of an analysis of Khalil's subjectivity through Slavoj Žižek's theory highlights the urgency of this research in contributing to the development of scholarship, particularly in the field of Žižekian studies. The practical implications of this research lie in providing an example of how subjectivity, as conceptualized by Žižek, can be applied. Upon completing this study, the researcher hopes that future research will be able to identify narratives or cases of subjects to be examined that align more precisely with Žižek's notion of subjectivity. The foundation of Žižek's concept of subjectivity is shaped by the influence of Lacanian psychoanalysis, Hegelian dialectics, and Karl Marx's theory of ideology.

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