



21-22 OCTOBER  
**2024**

# **PROCEEDINGS**

**THE 12<sup>TH</sup> LITERARY STUDIES  
CONFERENCE (LSC)**

***LITERARY AND CULTURAL CRITICISM  
IN THE AGE OF POST - THEORY***

E-ISSN: 2963-3532

**UNIVERSITAS SANATA DHARMA, YOGYAKARTA**

## Table of Contents

<b>Greetings from the Rector of Universitas Sanata Dharma</b>	1
<b>Greetings from the Committee</b>	3
Unveiling Power Relations and Resistance in Fantastic Mr. Fox through a Post-Structuralist Marxist Framework <i>Muhammad Emir Abdillah</i>	5
Malin Kundang and Bawang Merah dan Bawang Putih: Orientalism's Representation in Indonesia's Children's Literature <i>Bella Valencia B</i>	13
Imagining New Worlds in Southeast Asian Post-Apocalyptic Narratives <i>Hazel Ann P. Cesa</i>	20
Womanhood in England's Peter Pan and West Nusa Tenggara's Folklores "Tempiq-Empiq" and "Putri Mandalika": A Comparative Analysis <i>Ellysabeth Sahasrara Excelsaputri</i>	32
Folklore and Efforts to Maintain Relationships with Nature in Nutmeg Cultivation in Fakfak Regency <i>Wabilia Husnah, Dina Srirahayu, Suribidari</i>	41
Eating Onomatopoeia in Japanese Manga and English Webtoon: A Contrastive Analysis <i>Raditya Jagadhita, Yufita Ria Oktiani, Elisa Debora Silalahi</i>	55
Redefining the Human-Nature Relationship through Sara Teasdale's "There will come soft rains" <i>Yosafat Andrew Gabrian Kameo</i>	66
'Gundala' (2019) and 'Batman Begins' (2005): Personal and Cultural Value in Forging Hero's Path <i>Bernardus Angjaya Kusuma</i>	69
The Cultural Meaning of the <i>Tasi Mosa</i> ritual song in Palu'e Island, Nusa Tenggara Timur <i>Fauzi Bin Abdul Majid</i>	77
The Influence of Cultural Tradition on The Attitude of Mothers <i>Bernad Leon Jonathan Manik</i>	84
Comparative Study of Sri Asih and Wonder Woman: Women's Empowerment and Personal Fulfillment <i>Maribeth Manuhutu</i>	92
Female Characters in the Films "Hunger Games" and "Divergent": Exploring Feminism Theory and Social Issues <i>Oriza Fidei Metanoia Nahusona</i>	102
Prom and Prejudice and Prada and prejudice: Pride and Prejudice in 21st Century <i>Tri Pramesti, Adeline Grace Marianne Litaay</i>	108

Representation of Marginalization Experienced by Nyai Ontosoroh as a Subaltern Woman under Dutch Colonialism in the Novel <i>Bumi Manusia</i> <i>Wira Yudha Ramadhan Iksan Aulia Subekti</i>	117
Democracy, So Confusing: The Integration of Stan Culture into Indonesian Political Landscape on X (Twitter) <i>Priska Jeanny Rosanty, Medina Qatrunnada Zulfa</i>	123
Graphic Novels and Cultural Evolution Through Raymond Williams' Residual-Dominant-Emergent Perspective <i>Maya Sekartaji, Rukayah</i>	130
Community in <i>Winnetou Gugur</i> : Analysis of Postcolonialism <i>Kustri Sumiyardana</i>	138
Comparison between Mistress Status and Prostitute Profession in Subaltern Female Characters in the novel <i>Bumi Manusia</i> <i>Cita Putri Artika Sunjoyo, Hanny Aulia Mathilda</i>	146
Resistance through Hybridity by Characters in the <i>Bumi Manusia</i> Novel <i>Zahra Fakhirah Syahrani, Alicia Marta Yulianti</i>	152
The Pain of Losing in Han Kang's <i>Human Acts</i> <i>Zefanya Wynona, Susanne Andrea H Sitohang</i>	158
From Post-colonial to Postmodern: Space and Place in the Historical Novel <i>Michelle Ramos Ylaya</i>	167
A Barthesian Analysis of Postcolonialism in the Anime <i>The Journey</i> : Religiosity as Instrument against Imperialism <i>Alexander Pedestrian Garda Paska, Michelle Amelia Sugijanto</i>	176
Repetitive Language Style in the Song Lyrics of the Album "Semoga Sembuh" by Idgitaf <i>Siti Lailiyah, Iwan Marwan</i>	187
The Superhero Genre: Modern Myths in Filipino Fantasy Films <i>Carmenchu M. Lacsamana</i>	196
Homelessness as Portrayed in <i>American Girl</i> Movie (2021) <i>Lea Maria Moningka, Mike Wijaya Saragih</i>	202
Proses Dekolonisasi Karakter Minke Dalam Novel <i>Bumi Manusia</i> <i>Mohamad Athallah Azhar</i>	207

## The Pain of Losing in Han Kang's *Human Acts*

Zefanya Wynona, Susanne Andrea H Sitohang

zefanyawynona@gmail.com

susanne.sitohang@uki.ac.id

Universitas Kristen Indonesia

### Abstract

*Human Acts* is a story about people looking for justice against the government in Gwangju. This book was written by Han Kang and discusses the life stories of 5 characters who have to live with the grief of government violence that causes them to lose their loved ones. Dong Ho is the main character in this book who struggles to find his friend Jeong Dae who was shot by the soldiers, but what Dong Ho did caused him to die. Dong Ho's death gave deep grief to his mother and 2 friends. Dong Ho's two friends named Eun Sook and Jin Su went through their lives tragic past stories and made them haunted by the guilt of Dong Ho's death. Dong Ho's mother also experienced a very deep sadness for losing her loved one and she tried to stay alive and seek justice for her son. Jeong Dae's dead spirit also narrates his point of view as a victim who also feels the injustice of what he experienced. This research aims to discuss the grief experienced by the characters due to injustice. The writer also uses a descriptive qualitative method by analyzing more deeply the conversations in *Human Acts* book. The results of this study show that 5 characters experienced physical and mental pain. This research also shows that each character experiences different stages of grief and they go through it in different ways.

**Keywords:** Grief; Gwangju Uprising; Losing; Violence

---

### Introduction

"The thread of life is as tough as an ox tendon, so even after I lost you, it had to go on. I had to make myself eat, make myself work, forcing down each day like a mouthful of cold rice, even if it stuck in my throat." (Kang, H, 2014, p. 129). This is a quote from Dong Ho's mother, one of the characters in *Human Acts* book who experiences grief. Stories about grief can be found in various literary works and one of them is written by Han Kang. Han Kang is one of the famous writers from South Korea who wrote this book, *The Vegetarian*, *The White Book*, *I Do Not Bid Farewell*, etc. Han Kang is a well-known and accomplished South Korean writer because she wrote many interesting books and received a lot of awards. She became the first South Korean novelist to receive the French prestigious Prix Medicis Award and won The Man Booker International Prize for fiction in 2016 for her *Vegetarian* book.

This book tells about violence and rebellion that occurred in Gwangju, South Korea, in 1980. At that time, Gwangju experienced a very dark and traumatic period in Korean history because of the demonstration of people against the military government who committed injustice in the society. The people only want justice from the government but what the society did caused a bad impact on themselves (Lee, 2012). Violence caused by the government makes people experience injustice and even face the death of their loved ones. Death is a significant and traumatic life event that is a universal experience. The majority of people experience the death of at least one loved one in their lifetime. The death of a family member has a huge impact on other surviving family members. Every death is unique in their own way, so each death

will impact each person differently (Glatt, 2018). The death and grief experienced are sometimes covered up by many people so that they are not visible on the outside, but in fact they cannot be completely forgotten. All humans live with grief that should be expressed, but many people hide their feelings. Grief is unpredictable and can even appear and go away instantly. The grief experienced should be expressed because grief wants its burden to be shared with humans (McConnell, Moules, McCaffrey, & Bouchal, 2012).

The present writer found 4 studies that are similar with the topic. These two topics discuss *Human Acts* by Han Kang. The first writer is Putri (2021) uses Sigmund Freud's theory to analyze the anxiety of the characters. She pointed out the anxiety felt by the characters, such as breathing problems, body tremors, feelings of insecurity, and restlessness. The second writers are Audi, Benedicta, Bejo (2021) who focus on the victims in the story. They underlined that even though the characters are under heavy pressure, they still have a sense of concern for each other. The present writer also found research that discusses topics related to grief and loss. The first is Arin (2019) which discusses C.S Lewis in the novel *Shadowlands*. The writer uses the narrative method to analyze the character and also uses Sigmund Freud's theory to find out what fears the character experiences. Fear is divided into real fear and neurotic fear and what is experienced by C S Lewis is real fear. Second, Nurjanah (2023) discusses the grief felt by the main character. The writer aims to find the stages of grief experienced by the character by using Kubler Ross's theory. The writer finally shows that the main character named Lewis can manage the stages of grief he experiences due to the loss of his wife. From the previous studies, the present writer did not find any discussion that discussed grief experienced by the characters due to the loss of their loved ones in *Human Acts* by Han Kang. In this discussion, the present writer aims to find out what pain Dong Ho, his mother, Jin Su, Jeong Dae, Eun Sook experienced in the book.

## **Methodology**

The methodology used in this research uses descriptive qualitative research by reading directly from the source. The source of this research is the book *Human Acts* by Han Kang. The present writer will analyze this book by collecting data or by analyzing every conversation in the book. To support this research, the writer will use journals as a tool. In this study, the present writer will analyze *Human Acts* through the pain that are felt by the characters.

## **Gwangju Uprising**

The uprising in Gwangju was caused by violence committed by Chun Doo-Hwan, who implemented the military. Before the violence in 1980, South Korea experienced military problems with North Korea resulting in unfavorable democratic reforms. After the death of President Park Chung Hee in 1979, Korea began to be led by Chun Doo Hwan and this was the beginning of the violence against the people in Gwangju. At first there were 6000 students of Cheonnam National University in Gwangju who demonstrated to the government to discuss democracy at the Jeolla provincial government building.

According to Katsiaficas in Oktaviani (2018) after the large number of people who practiced democracy in Gwangju at that time, on May 18, 1980, president Chun Doo Hwan declared military emergency in all regions in Korea. At that time people began to be attacked by the military at Cheonnam National University and Chosun University. The first victims were deaf people who couldn't hear the military fire. There were many dead bodies packed inside trucks and there were many people who had been beaten by the soldiers and attacked with knives.

According to Stiftung in Oktaviani (2018) on May 19 there were still many people gathered on the Gumnamro road and the police fired tear gas at the crowd. The people were angry about that and threw stones at the police and soldiers at that time. Chun Doo Hwan announced that 144 civilians, 22 soldiers and 4 policemen were killed in the uprising and anyone who made an issue of the dead would be arrested. The results written from the victims of the uprising in Gwangju were 2000 citizens who disappeared as a result of the incident. At the end of this assault a lot of people were surrounded by the government, and many of them were killed. (Song, 2023, p. 366).

## **Stages of grief**

When a person loses someone they care about, they will go through a very deep grief and also go through some phase of grief. This stage of grief is a phase of grief experienced by individuals due to sad events experienced and this stage was developed by Elisabeth Kubler-Ross, a psychiatrist and writer from Zurich, Switzerland. The grief experienced by someone who loses someone they know, or love is divided into 5 stages, but apparently not everyone experiences these 5 stages sequentially or even in a certain order, so there's a possibility that not everyone has the same stages of grief (Kubler-Ross & Kessler, 2009).

There are five stages of grief such as denial, this is the first stage that humans experience when they feel sadness due to the loss of someone they love. Kobbler in Widyaningrum & Adzahani (2024) said that someone will experience feelings of denial or disbelief when they find out that someone they love has died. At this stage someone will feel that life is very heavy and meaningless, there will be feelings that refuse to believe in the situation they are experiencing. This stage makes victims feel numb and start to wonder why they have to experience this and how to get through it (Kubler-Ross & Kessler, 2009), and next is anger. Kobbler Ross in Parkes says that anger is the second stage experienced by a person when feelings of denial have disappeared. These feelings will turn into anger, envy, rage, and revenge, and this is a situation that is difficult for people to overcome. According to Kubler Ross in Widyaningrum & Adzahani (2024), when someone is aware of the real situation, it will make them angry because there is no justice, so they also feel dissatisfied and annoyed.

Next, there is Bargaining and this is the stage where a person really wants to return time to the way it was before, they try to do anything so that people close to them can be saved. There will be a sense of bargaining so that the person they love can stay alive and a very deep feeling of regret when the loss has occurred. In this situation a person will feel whether they can escape from a very deep nightmare and there will always be the statement "what if" or "if only" which is a feeling of guilt. Someone wants to try to return life to the way it was before, such as trying to find a disease more quickly, recognizing a disease more quickly, and even trying to stop accidents from occurring (Kubler-Ross & Kessler, 2009).

And there is also depression. Depression is the fourth stage after bargaining and in this situation all the feelings felt will become one, resulting in a feeling of emptiness and deeper sadness. This depressive phase doesn't mean that someone is experiencing mental illness, and this is a response to someone's feelings when they feel a loss. A feeling of withdrawal from life, filled with feelings of sadness and questioning. When someone experiences depression it is something that is very abnormal and this is something that must be overcome. When someone feels the loss completely, they will realize that someone has gone and will never come back, which is very disappointing (Kubler-Ross & Kessler, 2009).

And the last is acceptance. This stage is the final stage of the Kubler Ross model of grief and in this situation a person does not mean they have completely felt okay. When someone experiences loss they will not feel okay, and this situation is a stage where someone is more accepting of the fact that someone has

physically gone and is fully aware that this is a permanent reality. Everyone will never like reality or agree with the loss they feel but try to accept it and learn to survive and move on. Trying to move on even though we lost someone in our life. When someone can accept the situation, they might be able to get through the day better than before. When someone starts to get back up and enjoy life, there will be feelings of guilt towards the person who has left, and someone will never be able to replace what has been lost, but they can find new things in life (Kubler-Ross & Kessler, 2009).

## Results and Discussion

In this research, the present writer will discuss the characters' sadness due to the injustice that happened in Gwangju at that time. The situation very chaotic and terrible. There were a lot of people who were tortured, died, and it makes many people feel lost. In this story there are 5 characters who experience grief and injustice that made them have to face the sad reality of losing someone they love.

### The Pain Felt by the Characters

This story shows that grief is the main feeling felt by the characters due to the loss and injustice they experience. What happened in Gwangju had a bad impact on the characters so they had to go through a sad experienced and try to stay alive even though their lives were filled with deep grief. The 5 characters in this story experience pain physically and mentally.

### The Mental Pain Experienced by the Characters

The characters in the story face a very bad situation so that they feel very deep mental violence and experience a phase of grief due to loss. The pain they felt at that time had a bad impact on their lives in the future. Each character feels different stages of grief and can be seen from the circumstances experienced by Dong Ho. He is a boy who lost his friend named Jeong Dae and tried to find his friend.

*"Don't worry, I'll just finish helping out and then I'll come home. After I've found Jeong-dae."*  
(Kang. H, 2014, p. 24)

*On the other hand, though, you need Jeong-mi to help you find her brother.*  
(Kang. H, 2014, p. 32)

The quote above shows that even though Dong Ho was afraid to meet Jeong Mi because he was afraid of being blamed, in fact, Dong Ho felt that in looking for Jeong Dae, Jeong Mi was the person Dong Ho really needed. Dong Ho's life is filled with sadness and the responsibility to find his friend. When a person loses their closest person, they might be in the acceptance stage. Dong Ho shows an acceptance stage where he still continues his life by looking for Jeong Dae and hoping that Jeong Mi can help him. Kubler Ross's stages of acceptance show that even though someone can move on with their life, it doesn't mean they don't experience sadness. They can still feel sadness but try to move on. Dong Ho can still feel the sadness of the loss, but he continues to live and tries his best to find Jeong Dae.

Dong Ho's mother also felt sadness because she lost her beloved son. She continued her life with endless feelings of guilt and grief.

*Sometimes I wonder whatever possessed us to let the annex out...was it all for such a paltry bit of rent? I think about how if Jeong-dae had never set foot in this house, you wouldn't have put your own life at*

*risk trying to find him... but then I recall the sound of your laughter on those Sundays when the two of you used to play badminton, and it's my fault, I'm the only one to blame. I shake my head to try and shake all the bad thoughts out. I'm the one with the mark on my conscience, bearing a grudge against those poor kids. I'm the only one to blame. (Kang. H, 2014, p. 129)*

After losing her child, Dong Ho's mother not only experienced sadness but also guilt. Dong Ho's mother can no longer physically see her child but she can only recall memories of her child. The quote above shows Kubler Ross's stages of sadness regarding bargaining. The words *if Jeong Dae had never set foot in this house, you wouldn't have put your own life at risk trying to find him* show that Dong Ho's mother felt that being friends with Jeong Dae was what made Dong Ho die. The bargaining stage experienced by Dong Ho's mother shows that she also blamed herself and thought that maybe she could change the past so that Jeong Dae and Dong Ho would not be friends and her child could stay alive. In the end, she still blamed herself for having such thoughts towards those innocent children.

*I steadied myself against the railing, unfurled the banner, and screamed. Chun Doo-hwan, you murdered my son. Let's tear that bloodthirsty butcher to pieces. I carried on screaming until the police came charging up the emergency stairs, seized hold of me, carried me back down to one of the wards, and bundled me into a bed. (Kang. H, 2014, p. 131)*

Dong Ho's mother's anger is also shown in this quote. When someone feels a loss, there are stages of anger that a person experiences. According to Kubler Ross, when we lose our family or friends, we may become angry because there is no justice in life. The quote above also shows that Dong Ho's mother experienced the same thing. Losing someone you love is not an easy thing, therefore anger is one of the emotions that is a response to loss. *Chun Doo-hwan, you murdered my son. Let's tear that bloodthirsty butcher to pieces* clearly means that Dong Ho's mother was very angry and blamed the president who was ruling at that time.

*The thread of life is as tough as an ox tendon, so even after I lost you, it had to go on. I had to make myself eat, make myself work, forcing down each day like a mouthful of cold rice, even if it stuck in my throat. (Kang. H, 2014, p. 129)*

After losing Dong Ho, his mother had to continue living even though everything was not easy for her. The quote above shows that after losing Dong Ho, what she had to face throughout her life were deep wounds and never-ending sadness. This quote also shows the stages of acceptance from Kubler Ross. The words *so even after I lost you, it had to go on*, this sentence gives the understanding that whether Dong Ho's mother wants it or not, she has to continue living without her child.

Jin Su was Dong Ho's friend when he was a volunteer at the provincial office and he is one of the people who was close to Dong Ho. Jin Su also received bad treatment when the rebellion occurred in Gwangju.

*Jin-su had been sleeping like the dead, but that voice startled him awake. "Dong-ho?" he demanded in a muffled whisper, seizing hold of the boy's arm. "Didn't I tell you to go home? Didn't you promise you would?" His voice was getting louder. "What the hell were you planning on doing here? You know how to fire a gun, do you?" "Don't be angry, Jin-su," the boy ventured. There was a rustling sound, as those woken by the argument got stiffly to their feet. "You'll surrender at the first opportunity," Jin-su insisted, still not letting go of the boy's arm. "Surrender, have you got that? Go out with your hands up. There's no way they'll harm a kid with his hands up." (Kang. H, 2014, p. 132)*



Jin Su is one of Dong Ho's friends and in the story, he experiences violence in his life during the demonstration in Gwangju. Jin Su experienced violence and injustice from the soldiers. Jin Su has to experience sadness in his life, not only because of violence but also the feeling of guilt that still haunts him. Before Dong Ho was shot, he was with Jin Su and Jin Su was very worried about him. He felt he had a responsibility to look after Dong Ho and thought that it was impossible for the soldiers to kill Dong Ho, but it turned out that Dong Ho was still killed.

*..... Now do you understand? The kids in this photo aren't lying side by side because their corpses were lined up like that after they were killed. It's because they were walking in a line. They were walking in a straight line, with both arms in the air, just like we'd told them to. (Han. K, 2014, p.93)*

After that incident, Jin Su was haunted by guilt. Jin Su is one of the leaders who is a mentor to Dong Ho. Jin Su decided to kill himself through a story from his old friend when he was still in prison for demonstrating. Before Dong Ho died, Jin Su had told him to surrender but unfortunately Dong Ho was shot. The quote above shows that before Jin Su killed himself, he saved a photo in which Dong Ho was present. Jin Su must struggle with the violence he experienced at that time and the guilt caused by Dong Ho's death. This is what made him decide to kill himself because of the grief he was experiencing. Eun Sook is a high school student who also volunteered in Gwangju in May 1980. She worked with Dong Ho to collect the bodies of people at that time.

*Dong-ho.*

*Eun-sook bites down on her lip, hard, as multicolored streamers flutter down from the ceiling onto the stage. Scraps of silk on which funeral odes are written. The actors gathered in front of the stage abruptly straighten up. The old woman stops in her tracks. The boy, who had been inching along behind her, turns to face the audience. (Han. K, 2014, p.73)*

After losing Dong Ho, Eun Sook continued her life as an editor at a company, and at that time she had to go to a show from her office. When the performance started, Eun Sook saw a performance where there was a small kid there. Without realizing it, Eun Sook begins to face her grief from the past. The little boy at the performance reminded him of Dong Ho. From the initial quote above, it shows that Eun Sook feels guilty and starts to worry. Eun Sook has never talked about her past trauma, she experiences feelings of denial and after what she experienced at that time made her realize that she had to accept the fact that Dong Ho was dead and the grief that were in her remained. Jeong Dae is Dong Ho's friend and they had a good friendship but they had to die due to the cruelty that occurred in 1980.

*Where were they, right now? Even if they hadn't died, they would still have souls, so surely, if I bent all my thought on the idea of them, I would be able to sense them, touch them. I wanted to shuck off my body as a snake sheds its skin. I wanted to sever the pure strength, that force thin and taut as a spider's web, dilating and contracting, from the inert lump of rotting flesh. I wanted to be free to fly to wherever they were, and to demand of them, why did you kill me? Why did you kill my sister, what did you do to her? (Han. K, 2014, p.40)*

These are Jeong Dae's words when he realized he had died and was still angry about the situation. He showed anger towards the soldiers who had killed him. What he said shows that there were stages of anger from Kubler Ross. He, who lost his sister, felt that what happened was not normal, therefore he wanted

revenge against the person who had killed him and his sister. He felt this was unfair because he had not committed any crime but was killed.

## The Physical Pain Experienced by the Characters

In this story, the characters not only feel mental pain due to the loss of their loved ones but also feel physical pain due to the violence committed by the government against them.

*I jumped down, dashed over to the desk opposite, and scrambled up before anyone had time to blink, the hem of my white skirt fluttering at my ankles. There was a photo of the murderer hanging on the wall—I pulled it down and smashed the glass with my foot. Something splattered across my face—tears, or maybe blood. The blood kept spurting from my foot, so the policemen had to take me off to the hospital. (Kang, H, 2014, p. 130-131)*

Even though Dong Ho's mother has accepted the fact that her son died because he was murdered, she still upholds justice for Dong Ho. Dong Ho's mother decided to meet with the parents of the victims and hold a demonstration when the president at that time was coming to Gwangju. The quote above shows that when looking at the photos of the killers, the anger felt by Dong Ho's mother made her not realize that she was also hurt.

*The phone rings, then cuts off. She dries her wet feet with the towel, and as soon as she steps back into the room the phone rings again. She reaches out to pick up the receiver, then changes her mind and yanks the cord out at the wall. "What will happen if I answer?" she mumbles to herself, rolling out the thin mattress and cotton quilt. She isn't hungry. She could force herself to eat something, but it would only give her indigestion. It's cold under the quilt, and she huddles into a ball. That phone call just now would have been from the office; probably the boss. She would have to answer his questions. I'm okay, it's just that they hit me. No, only slaps. I can still come to work. I'm okay, I don't need to go to the hospital. My face is a bit swollen, that's all. Good thing she'd pulled the cord out. (Han, K, 2014, p.49)*

When Eun Sook experienced violence until her face became swollen and bloody, the quote above shows that she experienced fear, even depression. She showed very worrying behavior because even when she heard the sound of the phone, she felt very scared and confused. The violence experienced by Eun Sook also caused her to experience digestive problems due to the stress she experienced while being hit. From Eun Sook's story, experiencing violence made it difficult for her to live her life because she was worried about the violence that she might continue to experience throughout her life. Eun Sook also seems to be fooling herself by saying that she is still fine even though she is physically devastated.

*What I heard was that the soldiers made him get his penis out and rest it on the table, threatening to cane it with a wooden ruler. Apparently, they made him strip and took him out to the patch of grass in front of the guardhouse, where they tied his arms behind his back and made him lie down on his stomach. The ants nibbled at his genitals for three hours. I heard that after he was released, he had nightmares about insects almost every single night. (Han, K, 2014, p.77)*

Before Jin Su killed himself, he experienced a lot of grief due to extremely brutal violence. The grief shown through the character Jin Su in this book, shows a cruelty that should not be accepted by a human like Jin Su who only defends society. Jin Su was treated very bad, and it made him face trauma and grief that will never go away.

*Where shall I go? I asked myself. To your sister. But where is she? I made an effort to keep calm. My body was at the very bottom of the tower, so there was still some time before the fire consumed it. Go to those who killed you, then. But where are they?* (Han, K, 2014, p.46)

This also shows that Jeong Dae is still looking for a way to meet his sister. As a spirit, he didn't know where to go, he looked like a confused spirit. This quote shows that Jeong Dae's spirit is still facing grief because of her sister's death. Even though Jeong Dae has become a corpse, here it can be seen that he also feels physical pain because his body was shot to death.

## Conclusion

*Human Acts* is a book that discusses the cruelty that occurred in 1980. At that time South Korea experienced demonstrations due to the government's injustice to the people, making many people ask for justice for their lives. At that time South Korea experienced huge demonstrations due to the government that did injustice to the people, making many people ask for justice for their lives. The Gwangju Uprising is a sad story because many people felt fear, pain, sadness, and even lost their loved ones. This book tells the story of 5 characters namely Dong Ho, Dong Ho's mother, Jeong Dae, Jin Su, and Eun Sook who became victims of the cruel government at that time. The writer found that each of these characters have different grief due to the rebellion that occurred at that time.

Each of these characters lived their lives with deep trauma and pain. Dong Ho's story of losing his friend made him feel very guilty and tried to find his friend's corpse. Knowing that his friend had died was a reality that was not easy to accept. Dong Ho experienced mental pain due to the traumatic events at that time and from the 5 stages of grief, Dong Ho experienced the acceptance phase. There is Dong Ho's mother who also struggled throughout her life to get past the fact that the child she loved died. Throughout her life, Dong Ho's mother was haunted by guilt and endless sadness and this character experiences three phases of grief such as anger, bargaining, and acceptance. A character who also experiences pain due to loss is Eun Sook who continues to live her life as if everything is fine but it is not. She experienced physical and mental abuse during she worked. The grief of the past and the guilt of losing Dong Ho resurfaced after a long time. This character shows that Eun Sook lied about her own feelings and tried to be strong. The writer found that Eun Sook experiences pain physically and mentally and experiences feelings of denial.

Jin Su and Jeong Dae who also experienced this grief that made them experience physical and mental pain. Jin Su blamed himself for Dong Ho's death and experiencing injustice in prison after the uprising in Gwangju. The bad things that happened to him made him feel depressed and empty so he decided to kill himself. Jeong Dae is a character who was also a victim of the cruelty in Gwangju and died at that time. In the story, his spirit recounts the grief he experienced towards the cruelty of the government at the time. This character experienced mental abuse when he realized that his sister also died. Even though he has become a spirit, he also feels the stages of grief, that is anger and blaming the people who killed him and his sister.

All characters experienced deep grief due to violence and the loss of their loved ones. There are two pains experienced by the 5 characters in this story, which are physical and mental pain due to the injustice experienced by the government at that time. *Human Acts* by Han Kang is an interesting and sad story. What happened in Gwangju at that time made many people feel pain, grief, injustice, and even deep trauma. Each character chooses a different path to deal with the grief they experience. This research shows that the grief

of losing our loved ones is a feeling that will never heal perfectly and this sad feeling unfortunately can be felt by everyone even though many people refuse to feel this feeling. Everyone cannot avoid grief and loss, what we can do is keep trying to live even though the grief stays in our hearts. Future researchers could discuss this story by developing topics that focus more on the history of Gwangju and could also use this research as an example or reference.

## References

- Yi, J. (2011). Dying and cultural meaning: recommendations for psychological support of Korean Americans.
- Parkes, C. M. On Death and Dying By Elisabeth Kubler-Ross.
- Kübler-Ross, E., & Kessler, D. (2009). The five stages of grief. In Library of Congress Catalog in Publication Data (Ed.), On grief and grieving (pp. 7-30).
- Petma, D. R. THE EXPRESSION OF SADNESS IN SONG LYRICS. Abstract of Undergraduate Research, Faculty of Humanities, Bung Hatta University, 2(2), 40-41.
- Widyaningrum, N. R., & An Adzhani, S. (2024). STAGES OF GRIEF PRESENT IN THE LONELIEST GIRL IN THE UNIVERSE (2017) NOVEL (Doctoral dissertation, UIN Surakarta).
- James, K. (2009). Death, gender and sexuality in contemporary adolescent literature. Routledge.
- Koopman, E. (2014). Reading in times of loss: An exploration of the functions of literature during grief. *Scientific Study of Literature*, 4(1), 68-88.
- Breen, L. J., & O'Connor, M. (2007). The fundamental paradox in the grief literature: A critical reflection. *OMEGA-Journal of Death and Dying*, 55(3), 199-218.
- Hartanto, E. C. S. (2018). Reading Han Kang's Human Acts: The process of remembering and forgetting the memory of the past South Korea. *Proceeding Icon-ELite*, 1(1), 265-270.
- Hakola, O., & Kivistö, S. (Eds.). (2014). *Death in literature*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- McConnell, S., Moules, N. J., McCaffrey, G., & Bouchal, S. R. (2012). *The hidden nature of death and grief. Journal of Applied Hermeneutics*
- Yundayani, A., Larassaty, B. L., & Sutrisno, B. When solidarity and misery meet in the shadow of a massacre: Moral values reflected in the novel "Human Acts". *EduLite: Journal of English Education, Literature and Culture*, 6(1), 105-119.
- Prihatiningsih, T., & Anwar, D. (2019). Brutality in Han Kang's Novel Human Acts (2014). *English Language and Literature*, 8(3).
- Kirana, P. F. A., & Setyabudi, T. (2021). *The Characters Anxiety in Han Kang Human Acts Novel (2016): A Psychoanalysis Perspective*
- Lee, H. (2012). *The Gwangju Uprising: A Movement, A Memory, A Myth of Modern South Korea* (Doctoral dissertation, Vanderbilt University. Dept. of History).
- Glatt, A. (2018). A death in the family: The differential impacts of losing a loved one. *Canadian Journal of Family and Youth/Le Journal Canadien de Famille et de la Jeunesse*, 10(1), 99-118.
- Arin, L. A. (2019). Fear Within CS Lewis in Shadowlands Novel: The Pain of Losing.
- Nurjanah, H. (2023). Five stages of grief in CS Lewis's Novel A Grief Observed. *Jurnal CULTURE (Culture, Language, and Literature Review)*, 10(1), 11-21.
- Oktaviani, R. A., & Mulyana, A. PERLAWANAN MASYARAKAT KOREA SELATAN MENUJU GERBANG DEMOKRASI TAHUN 1980. *FACTUM: Jurnal Sejarah dan Pendidikan Sejarah*, 7(2), 227-240.