

# THE SOCIAL CHANGE AS THE IMPACT OF GERMAN'S INVASION IN JOHN STEINBECK'S THE MOON IS DOWN

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***ABSTRACT:** The Moon Is Dows is one of John Ernest Steinbeck's novels. It was published in 1942. Based on this novel, Steinbeck wanted to express his idea about the ambition of the German armies to conquer all Europe. Of course, the invasion creates conflict both to the government and the people of the country being invaded and it has impact to the social change.*

**Keywords:** Social Change, Impact, Invasion

## **Introduction**

Social change illustrates the development of a society. Widely, it describes all changes in the society which influence norms, status, roles, relation among people, and relation with other society. Mostly, all changes disrupt established routines and relationship and require new adjustments. Some changes that look quite innocuous may actually produce major disruptions. Paul P Harton and Robert L Harton (1983:108) state that social change is change in social structure and social relationship such as in status systems, sex relation, population distribution, power systems or organization.

The effect of social change make some old institutions, norms, roles and even relation ineffective and create new needs to fulfill. The result of the social change creates a modification of the normative and value of the structure of society.

*The moon is down* describes the situation of World War II. The novel was created by John Steinbeck in 1942, which was written to show his empathy in facing the situation of World War II. The novel presents the German invasion in Norway as a part of plans to invade many countries in European Continent.

John Steinbeck attempts to tell about the portrayal of war when the German invaded Norway. It exposes the feeling, emotion, and reaction of people that change social condition. He also presents the psychology of the Norwegian in facing German invasion. How their attitudes in facing the German armies change their social behavior before.

Further, *The Moon is Down* is a vivid picture of violence in the war, especially some abuse treatment that appears in it. It is a story of anger and refusal of people to German because of their treatment and motives. This novel also shows the social phenomena as response of German invasion cause the social change. Further observation explains that the social change has close relation with the chaotic situation as the impact of German invasion. The native makes reactions to the German armies. They produce many resistances and brought fearing to the German armies. They also tried to boycott the German's facilities and killed the German armies.

Mostly, in *The Moon is Down*, the social change is influenced by the German abuses. The forms of the German abuses are killing, torturing, and capturing toward them and it caused suffering to the natives. In accordance with illustration before, this writing intends to discuss whether it is true or not invention drive the social change. It also intends to discuss the proliferation of the social change.

### **The Impact of German's Invasion on the Norwegian Society in *The Moon Is Down***

- **The Social Condition before Invasion in the Moon is Down**

It was morning in the one of the town of the Norway. The town suddenly was occupied by the German armies. For a moment, the occupation was well done, the defenders defeated, and the war finished. Several hours before, the postman and the policeman were sent away to the ocean. Perhaps, these moments will change Norway in the coming several months. Those moments can be seen in the quotation below.

“By ten-forty five it was all over. The town was occupied, the defenders defeated, and the war finished. The invader had prepared for this campaign as carefully as he had for larger ones. On this Sunday morning the postman and the policeman had gone fishing in the boat Mr. Corell, the popular storekeeper. The postman and the policeman were several miles at sea when they saw the small dark transport, loaded with soldier, go quietly pass them”.

(Steinbeck, 1964:1)

The Norway loss above shows the condition of the national defense. Their national defense was inferior to the German armies. They were too weak to stop the invasion. Their armies were smaller than then German armies. It was caused by the social condition of Norwegian. In the past, the social condition developed peacefully for a long time. There was no war for a long time. They didn't know how to fight with others. “It's been so long since we conquered anybody or anybody conquered us” (Steinbeck, 1964:9)

When the German armies, led by Colonel Lanser, who was supported by fine officers: Captain Bentick, Captain Loft, Liutenant Tonder, Liutenant Prackle and Major Hunter successfully occupied Norway, the native still did not realize what happened to them. They didn't know whose man was in front of them, what they wanted and what they had to do. “They haven't had a war for a hundred years. They've forgotten about fighting”. (Steinbeck, 1964:31)

Perhaps, the Norwegian lived at peace for a long time. Since the Sweden invaded the Norwegian back in the late 1880, they never fought with other nation. In the first World War, they become a neutral state. “During World War I, Norway maintained an effective neutrality”

(1989:478). They rejected to joint with each groups in World War I. “They have lived at peace so long that they do not quite believe in war”. (Steinbeck, 1964:10)

The Norwegian are obedient and good people. At the time, they demonstrated to the German that they were a harmless people. Other behaviors of the Norwegian are shown in Hunter’s conversation below.

“Hunter said, ‘I wonder whether the man who wrote it was ever in occupied country. These people are harmless enough. They seem to be good, obedient people’”.

(Steinbeck, 1964:24)

Since the German armies occupied the Norway, the social condition of the Norwegian starts on a new stage. They are not autonomous states. They are under the control of German armies now.

Automatically Invasion changes the social condition. The Norwegian faces condition that they never face before. The invasion produces collective fear among them. It also creates a condition where the natives become strangers in their home. It is indicated in the quotation, “We have never been conquered for a long time (Steinbeck, 1964:11)

From the above description, for the Norway, it is clear that the Norway lived in a peaceful situation for a long time. There has been no war for a hundred years in Norway. Therefore, this condition affected the Norwegian behavior. The behavior becomes good, obedient, powerless, and peace loving.

- **The Social Process of Norway during the Invasion**

In the invasion, the social process is started by the identification of their identities, “who we are and who you are”. The identification raises labialization toward community or person in the society, In-group and Out-group. In previous chapter it is described that In-group has the same feeling of membership, such one’s family, clique, fraternity. Out

groups are all groups toward which one has no feelings of membership or belonging—other families, other clique, other club and organization.

The same feeling influences the social process between the German armies and the native. The German armies tend to interact with other than the native.

With regard to the description the labialization of the groups, automatically, give raise to the conflict. Then, the development of the invasion raises the social process between the conquerors and the conquered. Paul B Horton and Robert L Horton in *Introductory Sociology* define the social processes as “the repetitive kind of behavior through which people interact with one another” (1983:74).

Basically, the invasion forms two social processes in the society. The most common processes are associates and disassociate processes. The first processes deals with warm interaction between the invader and the natives. The second process is the symbol of the rejection of the natives. The probability of the social processes is shown bellow.

“ Mayor Orden said, I don’t know, either.’ He turned to the colonel. Sir, I am of this people, and yet I don’t know. Some people accept appointed leaders and obey them. But my people have elected me. The made me and they can unmake me. Perhaps they will if they think I have gone over to you. I just don’t know.”  
(Steinbeck, 1964:16)

As a leader, Mayor Orden cannot predict the acceptance of the natives. The associate process will happen if they cooperate with the German. Then, they will obey the German rules. When they refuse the existence is symbolized by rejecting the rules, the disassociate process is happen. This can be shown is the quotation below.

“They must. They are an orderly people. They don’t want trouble. ‘He waited for Major Reply and none come. ‘Is that not so, sir?’ the colonel asked. Major Orden twisted his chain. ‘I don’t know sir. They are orderly under own government. I don’t know how

they would be under yours. It unthuoched ground, you see. We have built our government over four handred years.”

(Steinbeck, 1964:15)

Implicitly, the quotation above indicates the tendency of the social process. For the native the German armies are strangers. This point of view can raise the associate or disassociate among them toward the German armies. The same thing is also stated by F. Paul B Horton and Robert L Horton, in *Introductory Sociology*,” Toward our in-group we tend to be sympathetic, helpful, trusting, and protective”. (1982:31)

#### **a. The Associate Process of Norwegians**

To Mayor Orden, something that is unpredictable is the threat of George Corell, a local man, who has helped the natives for a long time. Even, in the day of invasion he lent his boat and donated lunch, targets, cartridges and prizes for a shooting competition to local troops, postman and the policeman. The threat of George Corel is showed in the quotation below.

“He said, very formally, ‘your Excellency, our friend, George Corell, prepared this town for the invasion. Our benefactor, George Corell, sent our soldier into the hills. Our dinner guest, George Corell, had made a list of every fire arm the town. Our friend, our George Corell”

(Steinbeck, 1964:13)

The statement also indicates the first associate process between George Corell and German Armies. Not only does the he welcomes their coming but also help them in preparing invasion.

The kindness of George Corell does not only preparing the invasion. He also helps them in locating the armies. He prepares his warehouse for the house of the armies.

“By ten-thirty-eight the riddles six were buried, the parachutes were folded, and the battalion was billeted in Mr. Corell’s

warehouse by the pier, which had on its shelves blanked and cots for a battalion.”

(Steinbeck, 1964:12)

Now, the German armies invaded Norway. The local troop was defeated in a moment. The townsman stared the gray-helmeted men who carried sub-machine guns in their arms astonishingly.

Later the leader of the German armies, Colonel Lanser, sent a letter to the local government. He needed an appointment with the local government to ask the local to cooperate with them. Surprisingly, the local government accepted the request. They also prepared his arrival well as below.

“By ten forty five Mayor Orden had received the formal request that he grant an audience to Colonel Lanser of the invader, an audience which was set for eleven sharp at the mayor’s five room palace”.

(Steinbeck, 1964;2)

This appointment shows the strategy of German armies to reach their motive. They use collaboration with the local government rather than build their own government. This collaboration means that there are associate processes between the local government and the German armies.

In the following days, the existence of German armies in Norway gives a great impact on the German armies’ psychology. The German armies, as conquerors, face a dilemma. As soldiers they must do their job but as human, they need to interact with the natives. Young says that man, as human organism, lives in environment both physical and social (1956:11). In this context, the German armies must do the order of the leader including kill the native. On the other side, as a part of social environment, they also interact with the Norwegian. This situation can be seen from the dialogue between Colonel Lanser and Lieutenant Prackle below.



“And the girl, ‘Lanser continued, ‘The girl, Lieutenant, you may rape her, or protect her, or marry her-that is of no importance so long as you shoot her when it is ordered”.

(Steinbeck, 1964:102)

The quotation above also indicates the social process of the German armies. The German armies attempts to interact with the native even though they must shoot the native if the leader order it.

In the associate process above we see two phenomena. First, the associate process happens between the local men with German armies. It happens before invasion and after invasion. Second, the associate process happens between the local government and the German. This process shows the domination of the German armies to the local government.

#### **b. The Disassociate Process of Norwegians**

The German armies enter a new step, where the invasion effect to the consideration in the townsman. Slowly, the people denounce the Norwegian attitude toward the invaders. Some people reject the order to work with them. Some people denounce by closing their mouths to invaders. Furthermore, this situation will influence the presence of the German as suggested by the following lines:

“At the mine the soldiers carefully search every every miner who went into the shaft, searched and researched. And the soldiers were nervous and rough and they spoke harshly to the miners. The miners looked coldly at them, and behind their eyes was a little fierce jubilation”.

(Steinbeck, 1964:105)

Calmly, the social process between the native and German armies develops into cold situation. Communication cannot be effectively among them. The native close their mouth and the German armies are nervous in facing the native. Moreover, the native do not feel comfortable with this situation.



On the contrary, the German's oppression on the local man provokes reaction from the native. Young says that anger, which obviously becomes associated with many hostile reactions, is demonstrated in various ways (1956:30). From this statement, it is understandable that the native people demonstrate in many ways. The people do not use banners protesting the German's presence or shoot the German Armies but they disturb the German's facilities.

“Accident happened on the railroad, which clung to the mountains and connected the little town with the rest of nation. Avalanches poured down on the tracks and rails were spread. No train could move unless the tracks were first inspected.”

(Steinbeck, 1964:57)

However, an atmosphere of disassociate processes dominate toward the presence of German Armies. And it is realized by the German Armies before. In relation with the atmosphere, they establish a new government which sustains the local government. This method cannot stop the reaction from the Norway.

Another method also concern approaching the townsman. The following quotation shows another German's method to stop the people's resistance:

“Mayor Orden, you know our orders are inexorable. We must get the coal. If you people are not orderly, we will have to restore that order by force. ‘His voice grew stern. ‘We must shoot people if it is necessary. If you wish to save your people from hurt, you must help us to keep order. Now, it is considered wise by my government that punishment emanate from the local authority. It makes for a more orderly people.”

(Steinbeck, 1964:47)

The way German approaches the natives is by threat. They threaten the native by their force. They will also emanate the leader of the government from the local authority.

All the German efforts in approaching the native fail. The native shows disassociate process dominantly. They reject the presence of the German armies.

▪ **The Social Change as the Impact of Invasion**

Social change is a change in social structure and social relationships-such as in status of systems, sex religion, population distribution, power systems or organization. Cultural change is change in the culture of society- in its norms, values, technology, art, literature, or religion. This distinction is not very important, and the terms are often used interchangeably; or the term social change is simply used to include both (Paul B Horton and Robert L Horton, 1983:108).

It is easy to see how the invasion speeds the social change. It is started from the ruin or sustains the government and followed by the acceptance of the invader. The invasion also creates opportunities in shifting differential powers. Besides it must be remembered that conquers brings another culture. The armies have some orders in the Norway.

**a. The Changes of the Social Behavior**

In further development, some changes appear after the invasion. The silence is more encompassing after sunset. Light sting from the windows of a few remaining building. Only monosyllable voice come from another world, penetrates the windows flitting between the leaves, and then disappears in the hills dark. The townsmen pass the time in discussions or in a nightly prayer gathering closed.

The routine and relation change. They still work in the coalmine like before. But slowly, the townsmen feel hatred to the German. They close their mouth to them. They look like a cool man. It is described in the statement below.

“In the town the people move sullenly through the streets. Some of the light astonishment was gone from their eyes, but a

still of anger had not take its place in the coal shaft the workingmen pushed the coal cars sullenly. The small tradesman stood behind their counters and served the people.”  
(Steinbeck, 1964:39)

The warm situation also disappears. The situation becomes full of anger from the people. The people leave their habit to stand in the street. Now, they like to leave the street stay in their homes. The condition can be seen from the quotation below.

“The people did not stand in the street along, but they entered the door closed and there seemed to be eyes looking from behind the curtains, and when the military went through the street or when the patrol walked down the main street, the eyes were on the patrol, cold and sullen.”  
(Steinbeck, 1964:51)

In the previous pages, it is mentioned that the Norwegian cannot fight. Therefore, the reaction does not present violence. To Norwegian flourish in their new behavior is also part of reaction toward German armies.

The Norwegian see a good opportunity the revenge. Waiting a moment to make revenge will establish their behavior slowly. They become silent to the German armies as one of the development of their behavior. “the people of the conquered country settled in a low, silent, waiting revenge”. (Steinbeck, 1964:57)

When the interaction is symbolized in cold interaction, the German armies face dead people. They are afraid of this condition. The following quotation depicts the evidence: “These people! These horrible people! These cold people! They never look at you. He shivered. ‘They never speak. They answer like dead man. They obey; the horrible people and the girl are frozen!’”

(Steinbeck, 1964:60)

## **b. The Changes of the Governmental Institution**

The displacement of the government institution is the consequence of the invasion. The successful invasion cannot be separated from the new institution. The government is under the control of the invader. Thus the invader will take over the control of the government.

In a minute invader could control the town. At ten forty five, the invader finished the invasion. “By ten-forty-five it was all over. The town was occupied, the defeated, and the war finished”. (Steinbeck, 1964:1)

When the German armies finished the battle and the government is under the control, normally, the leader of the government usually is changed by the invader. But Colonel Lanser, the leader of invader, takes the local government to handle the authority. He does not make a change.

“The colonel said quickly, ‘we know that, and so we are going to keep your government. You will still be the major, you will penalize and reward. In that way, they will not give trouble’”.  
(Steinbeck, 1964:15)

The police is taken in order to reduce the reaction of the local man. More importantly, it will stabilize the social condition. It is also hoped that the local government makes collaboration with the invaders.

“It isn’t that, ‘he said. ‘We have found that when a staff lives under the roof of the local authority, there is more tranquility. ‘you mean, ‘said Orden, the people feel there is collaboration involved?’”  
(Steinbeck, 1964:17)

In supporting their policy, the invaders use the house of Major Orden as headquarters. “Upstairs in the little palace of the Mayor, the staff of Colonel Lanser made its headquarters”. (1964:19)

This policy is part of the strategies of the German armies in order to get their motive to get mines. They do not show the domination

explicitly. Implicitly, they drive the local government. The German armies cover their aim under local authority.

Of course, the strategy of making Major Orden as a leader does not automatically makes a peace but more than that. The resistance is bigger. When it is realized, the invader changes the strategy and takes the control of authority directly.

“Lanser shook his head slowly and then he called, ‘Sentry! The door opened and a soldier appeared in the doorway. ‘Sergeant, ‘said Lanser, I have place Mayor Oren under arrest. You will see that Orden is guarded and you will bring Winter here immediately’.”(Steinbeck, 1964:104)

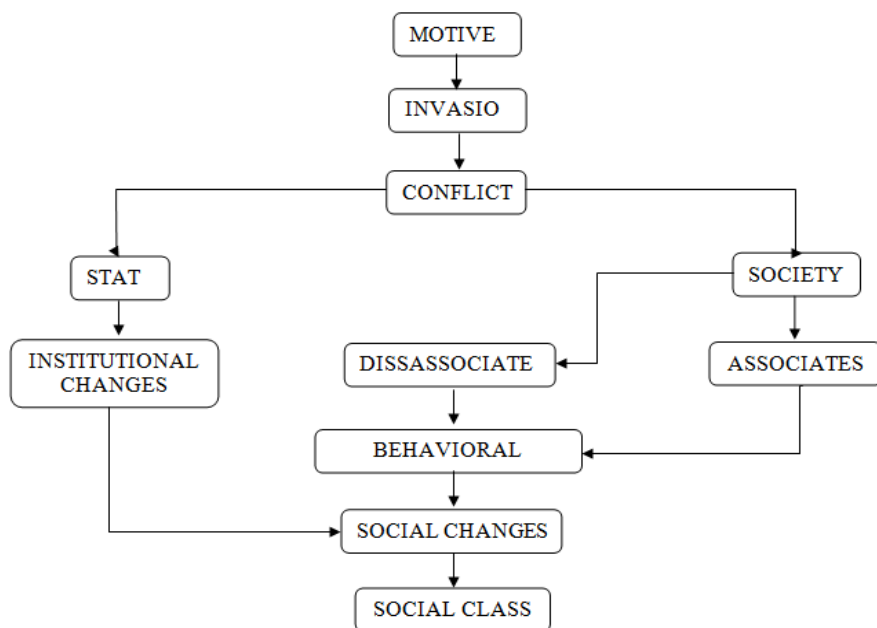
## **Conclusion**

From the analysis, we find that the German invasion is inspired by the movie. The motive of the German armies is to get the coalmines. The German need the violins to support their great ambition in conquering the Europe.

Because the ambition of the German armies to conquer all Europe whether or not their motive to gain the coalmines in Norway is so strong in order to support their ambition. By getting the coalmines they believed to have powerful support to fulfill their ambition. Therefore, they invaded the Norway.

Invasion normally will create conflict both to the government and the people of the country being invaded, including the Norway. To the government of Norway the conflict resulted in the institutional changes and to the society in disassociates and associates process. The two changes bring about social changes which eventually caused social class.

These are all the side effect of the German’s invasion to the Norwegian and the social process of the social changes which are described in the scheme below:



What we can learn from discussion is that the social change is dynamic and therefore it always develops. It is true that the change is caused and affected by social phenomena in a society, what happens in Norway is one example of how the Norway has encountered the change.

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