

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

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1.1 Background of the Study

Literature can be defined as an artistic creation. However, it also can refer to any printed materials. Therefore, in order to avoid misunderstanding of what literature in this thesis is, the writer confines the term "literature" to "imaginative literature". According to Roberts and Jacobs (1989:1), imaginative literature, which next in this thesis will be called simply literature, refers to "written (and also spoken) compositions designed to tell stories, dramatizes situations, and reveal thoughts and emotions, and also, more importantly, to interest, entertain, stimulate, broaden, and ennoble readers". It means that a literary work is written with some purposes. First, it conveys the tone and the attitude of the author. Here, the author wants to tell his idea and feeling about things he found or experienced. Second, literature is composed to be enjoyed. Mayhead (1965:9) says that literature is made for relaxation. It brings distraction from day-to-day monotony. So, by having pleasure, one can sink deeper into a literary work without feeling of distress. Third, literature tells things that one would not otherwise have known. To this statement, Mayhead (1965:10) says that literature can equip someone with an adequacy and understanding he could not ever have been brought. This means that literature can enrich people's knowledge and outlook through the stories shared.

In literature, there are kinds of work. One of them is novel. The term *novel* is borrowed from the Italian *novella*. This form was applied in the Elizabethan period

to the brief tale or story, which had a compact plot and no special concern on the characters. However, along the civilization, everything has changed, so has the storytelling. People require more realistic stories, the ones that are able to describe what life is like at a particular time. Thus, novel comes into being. In the most broadest sense, Kennedy (1991:213) defines a novel as “a book-length story in prose...” To what Kennedy has said, Little (1963:68) regards novel as the longest form of prose fiction, in which one may find the most extraordinarily wide range of writing. It is because a novel is full of details. It develops some organizing principles of narrative such as theme, plot, character, and setting, to explore human issues in depth. Besides, Kennedy (1991:213) adds that in a novel, the author tries to create the sense that while one reads, he experiences actual life. Here, Shaw (1972:189) gives support by saying that every novel is an account of life. For example, in Emily Bronte’s Wuthering Heights, the characters are invented as well as the sayings and doings. Yet, people believe that Wuthering Heights describes the real social value and condition at that age. Thus, though one remotes from the period of the novel, he still can feel a sense of participation in it. It is because everything in a novel is made such a way as a real world. In other words, everything in the novel is narrated in detail so that readers have clear description and better understanding.

In this thesis, the writer has conducted a study on one of Jane Austen’s novels. Jane Austen is regarded as the greatest of English women novelists. Her main interest is in the moral, social, and psychological behaviour of her characters. Indeed, Jane Austen is the novelist of manner. Lord Macaulay, as quoted by Wright (1972:18) praises, “...among the writers who have approached nearest to the manner of great

master, we have no hesitation in placing Jane Austen whom England is justly proud." Besides, Jane Austen as quoted by Wright (1972:13) wrote in one of her letters that three or four families in a country village is a valuable material to work on. This implies that she is able to create good works on the limited subjects through acute observation. Schorer (1959:6) flatters this ability by saying, "...to read Jane Austen is like sipping the driest white wine, often the best champagne." Thus, with Jane Austen's genius, it is not surprising that her novels have lasted so well and proved so popular.

There are six novels of Jane Austen's. However, in this thesis, the writer has chosen Jane Austen's first novel: Sense and Sensibility. Sense and Sensibility grew from an early sketch Elinor and Marianne. The story was reworked for fourteen years before its publication in 1811. This shows that Jane Austen seriously improved the story before being satisfied. Craik (1972:5) states, "...of Jane Austen's six novels, there can be only a handful one who would choose Sense and Sensibility as their favourite." It means that as an early work, Sense and Sensibility has a mark of good work. It has a strength that cannot be read only in the first reading. Further, Craik (1972:5) says that if Jane Austen had written only this novel, she would have been sure of her place among the immortals.

As the title suggests, Sense and Sensibility is a contradiction between two qualities of human capacity in perceiving stimulus from the world. The word *sense* is concerned with the ability to make reasonable judgement while *sensibility* is concerned with sensitivity-ability to perceive and appreciate delicate impressions. Here, these two qualities are represented by the heroines of the novel, the two sisters,

Elinor and Marianne Dashwood. According to Kelly (1989:123), the story of two sisters or brothers was a common form for novels of education in the late eighteenth century. This form of novels sets two protagonists in a parallel faith and allows many morals to be drawn. Here, Butler (1975:182) says that those novels compare the beliefs and conduct of two protagonists with the object of finding that one is invariably right and the other is invariably wrong. Indeed, those novels are didactic. They are designed to teach moral lessons, which are meant to present an ideal education for young person (Holman and Harmon, 1986:145). Here, the term *moral* itself is defined by Altenbernd and Lewis (1970:30) as an "exhortation" to good behaviour, which tells people how to get along in life. In relation to what has been explained, Butler (1975:182) informs that by its very nature, Sense and Sensibility is a didactic novel. In this case, the novel's story advances that what happens to one of the heroines must happen to the other. However, the similar happenings are faced with different attitude by each girl. Here, their characterization is contrasted to convey the moral lesson of the novel. Indeed, all of these have aroused the interest of the thesis' writer to conduct a study on this novel. Here, first of all, she wants to find out how the heroines are contrasted to each other. After that, she wants to discover how the contrast reveals the moral lesson of the novel, that is the good behaviour proposed by the author. Indeed, inventing the moral lesson of the novel is the writer's ultimate purpose of the thesis.

1.2 Statements of the Problem

Basing on the reasons above, this thesis tries to answer the following questions:

1. How are the heroines contrasted to each other?
2. How does the contrast reveal the moral lesson of the novel?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

In line with the problems above, this thesis intends to find out first, how the heroines are contrasted to each other, second, how the contrast reveals the moral lesson of the novel.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The result of this study is expected to give contribution to the teaching of literature, especially on the novel. With this study, the writer hopes that the students of English Department of Widya Mandala Catholic University are able to understand this novel better.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

In this thesis, the writer does not analyze all elements of the novel. She limits her analysis on discussing the plot, the characters, and the setting of the novel. In discussing the characters, the writer restricts to Elinor and Marianne Dashwood. It is because they are the important characters in conveying the moral lesson of the novel.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

To avoid misinterpretation, some key terms used in this thesis are explained as follows:

a. Character

Character is defined as any person who figures in a literary work. It also refers to his whole nature-his personality, his attitude toward life, his "spiritual" qualities, his intelligence, even his physical build as well as his moral attributes (Potter, 1967:1.3).

b. Moral lesson

It is a lesson found in a didactic or educational novel of the late eighteenth century. Here, the lesson is an exhortation to what one should or should not do in getting along in life (Altenbernd and Lewis, 1970:30).

c. Plot

Plot is the structure and pattern of action within the story. This structure is step by step organizes and directs the action toward a particular conclusion (Hurtik and Yarber, 1971:6).

d. Sense

It is an ability to make reasonable judgement. It is also concerned with rationalism (Longman, 1993:1198).

e. Sensibility

It is a capacity for feeling or sensation. It implies quickness and acuteness of apprehension of feeling. In general, it indicates emotionalism rather than rationalism (Holman, 1986:245).

f Setting

Setting concerns several related aspects of a work of fiction. They are place, time, social environment, and atmosphere of the work (Griffith, 1986:52)

1.7 Organizational Patterns of the Study

This thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter is introduction. The second chapter deals with review of related literature. The third chapter concerns the methodology of the study. The fourth chapter contains the findings of the study. The fifth chapter presents the conclusion and suggestions.