

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

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### 1.1 Background of the Study

Literature refers to written (and also spoken) compositions designed to tell stories, dramatize situations and relevant thoughts and emotions, and also more importantly, to interest, entertain, stimulate, broaden and ennoble reader (Edgar V. Roberts, Henry Jacobs. 1989:1)

The great eighteenth-century English critic, DR. Samuel Johnson, once said that literature is like light: everyone knows what light is but few can define or even describe it. (Iriving Howe, John Holander, David Bromwich. 1979: 1-2).

Little (1963:1) states that men have always found literature essential because the literature of a people is the principle element of its culture. It contains the record of the people's values, thoughts, problems and conflicts, in short, their whole way of life.

Here the writer is interested in literature because she thinks literature can stimulate the readers to be more sensitive in appreciating the literary works. Literature portrays or deals with human existence. It provides

valuable thoughts, feelings, and emotions of one's character. Besides, the reader will know about the author most of literary works will reflect the author's characters.

On this opportunity the writer chooses a play for her study because she wants to analyze the fiction of the author. According to Robert Schole (1978:731) as literary art, a play is a fiction made out of words. It has plot, characters, and dialogue.

Drama is a peculiar literary form, in that it may be treated as literature to be read privately, or as theatre to be seen in public performance. (Little. 1963:112). But Kennedy (1991:213) argues that drama comes alive only when actors perform it; poem only when a bard sings or chants it. Play, is a story to be communicated by performing on the stage or reading privately, at whatever moment and at whatever pace the reader desires.

Henrick Ibsen is the chosen author because he is generally considered as the Father of Modern Drama. He (1882-1906) has sometimes been called the Father of Modern Drama probably because he was the first important playwright to realize in practice the profound possibilities of dramatic realism (Anthony Caputy 1966:xviii).

According to Oscar Mandel (1974:54). Ibsen was one of the first to argue for women's rights. Already the question of women's emancipation was in the air, and Ibsen decided to propose female voting rights in the male-dominated Scandinavian Club of Rome (Mc. Graw-Hill. 1972:3) Ibsen usually chooses a woman as his protagonist in his play.

The symbolism in Ibsen's plays is rarely over-worked. Carefully integrated to unify the setting, events, and character portrayals, the symbols are incidental and subordinate to the truth and consistency of his picture of life (Cliff's notes. 1965:51).

Since, Henrik Ibsen is the Father of Modern Drama, the writer wants to analyze why Ibsen usually takes a woman to be his protagonist and always talks about woman's rights.

The play that will be analyzed is "A Doll's House". This play is written in 1879. A Doll's House is also a work crucially intertwined with the moral and spiritual history of modern humanity, especially with the trouble relationships between modern men and women (Irving, John, David Bromwich. 1979:1881). When the play was first put on the stage, its subject was considered daring, perhaps subversive, even today, a century later, it arouses strong feelings.

At a recent New York revival when Nora finally takes leave of her home in Act III, there were cheers from women, and some man, in the audience who saw her decision as an early instance of feminist rebellion (Iriving, John, David Bromwich. 1979:881).

In *A Doll's House* (Et dukkehjem, 1897), Ibsen proclaimed the justice of women's quest for self-respect (Mc. Graw-Hill. 1972:3).

The specific problem of this drama deals with the difficulty of maintaining an individual personality-in this case a feminine personality-within the confines of stereotyped as Nora, the doll, strives to become a self-motivated human being in a woman-denying man's world (Marianne Sturman. 1965:31).

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Based on the background of the study, the problem which arises and will be discussed in this study is "How does Nora maintain her individual personality?"

## **1.3 Objective of the Study**

The objective of the study is derived directly from the above formulated problem. The objective is to analyze Norma Helmer's characters in which the writer will be able to find the way how she maintains her individual personality.

**1.4 Significance of the Study**

The writer hopes that the findings of this study and the way the study is conducted will make the students of the English Department of Widya Mandala University interested and more sensitive in appreciating the literary works.

**1.5 The Limitation of the Study**

In the play of "A Doll's House", Norma Helmer (Nora) is by far is the most interesting character. Many critic have pointed out that such as immature, ignorant creature could never have attained the understanding and revolutionary qualities that Nora has at the time she leaves home. However, the writer decides to limit the study only analyze Norma Helmer's character.

**1.6 The Definition of Key Terms**

Some terms employed is this study:

1. Norma Hekmer (Nora). Norma Helmer is pampered by her complacent husband Trovald, who treats her as an adorable but scatterbrained chaild (Mc. Graw-Hill, 1972:9)
2. Effort. Effort is the concious exertion of physical or mental power (Webster's Dictionary, 1986:725).
3. Personality. Personality is the condition or fact of relating to a particular person (Webster's Dictionary, 1986:1687).

## 1.7 Organization of the Thesis

This study consists of five chapters. Chapter I deals with Introduction including also the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the objective of the study, the significant of the study, the limitation of the study, the definition of key terms and organization of the thesis. Chapter II is concerning the review of related literature. Chapter III is dealing with the research methodology. Chapter IV contains the analysis, and chapter V is about the conclusion.