

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

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## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background of the Study

In creating a good literary work, a writer usually uses the elements of fiction i.e. plot, characters, setting, point of view, and theme; beside that, a writer uses language to express his mind, to express human experiences and to show what life is. Charters (1983:5) states that "...If the story is well told, your imagination will be involved".

In line with the above idea, the writer assumes that the use of language in creating a literary work is very essential. Language may create kinds of image which sometimes lead the reader to action. One of literary forms which provides us with imaginary events and situations is Prose Narrative. Brooks (1979:40) defines that the intention of narration is to present an event to the reader(s) to give the impression of movement in time and to give the sense of witnessing an action.

From The Diamond Necklace by Guy de Maupassant we can read:

She was one of those pretty and charming young creatures who sometimes are born, as if by a slip of fate, into a family of clerks. She had no dowry, no expectations, no way of being known, understood, loved, married by any rich and distinguished man; so she let herself be married to a little clerk of the Ministry of Public Instruction. (Mansfield, 1971:129)

The two sentences at the beginning of the story provide an introduction into the situation and the character, and by reading this reader(s) already suspect that something unpleasant to the main character will happen; as reader(s), we can feel that the girl, not yet introduced by name is mistakenly placed by fate into the wrong society of the low rank workers, a circle of unwealthy people. Being so unfortunate, she married to a minor civil servant at the Ministry of Education. This adds to the unfortunate condition of the character.

In fact, analyzing literary works itself provides great advantages for the students, it reveals the essence and insights of life. As we are always curious about others and about ourselves, we always ask questions about the reasons behind our behaviour or action; through literature we may find some hints, suggestions and insight

which may broaden, deepen and sharpen our awareness of life. Burton (1967:7) says :

"Through literature, we explore the mysteries of personality as in life, it has a unique capacity for revealing the truth of human experience."

As human beings living in this universe, we play many different kinds of roles. Some are doctors, lawyers, preachers, artists, even robbers, murderers, corruptors and many others; through reading literary works we are able to penetrate into the character's inner self, as if we are part of them. Koesnobroto (1988:1) states "...readers derive pleasure from literature's power to imitate life..." The statement above may mean that through literature readers can try themselves many kinds of roles that human beings play in the real world, for instance how to be a murderer, to be corrupted in politics, to give one's life to religion, etc.

In relation with the aim of students at the English Department to improve their English Language skills or to gain native-like English competency, literature can be of a great value as English language teaching instrument. Dr. Thelma Kintanar states on "The Role of Literature in Culture Learning" (1972:3) as quoted by Markwardt (1978:5):

"Literary study can make a valuable contribution in tracing the development of a language as reflected in its writings; it can influence and in fact has influenced such development the history of any language would be quite different without its poet and major writers; a thorough study of the development of a language; therefore, entails a study of its literature."

Among various forms of literature works - novel, poetry, drama and short story - the writer has chosen novel as the subject matter of her study. To her, novel is like a reflection of real life, emphasizing what Hawthorne (1985:1) says, "A novel may include references to real places, people, and events, but it contains only such reference and remain a novel. However, eventhough its characters and actions are imaginary, they are in some sense 'representative of the real life' as the dictionary has it; although fictional they bear an important resemblance to the real".

The word Novel has a lot of definition from the broadest to the narrowest one to cover its features, as it is stated by Henry James in Dietrich (1967:8), "A novel is in its broadest definition a personal, a direct impression of life; that, to begin with, constitutes its value, which is greater or less according to the intensity of the impression." This intensity of the

impression will make the readers more vividly and more completely aware of the reality of the world around and in them.

In relation to the above viewpoints the novel that is going to be analysed in this study is Joseph Conrad's novel Lord Jim. It is considered as Conrad's masterpiece and indeed in some respect the greatest of Conrad's books, as Hugh Clifford in Moser (1968:362) states. The World Book Encyclopedia (1984) explains that Conrad's works deal with universal problems. Furthermore, Andre Gide as adapted by Stallman (1960:5) states "...the works of Conrad are as profitable as it is possible for art to be today..."

In Lord Jim, Conrad describes an Englishman who commits an act of cowardice that cut him off from his social life. Jim, the main character in the story, was born and brought up in an English parson's home. He decides to make the sea his career and he does well. He serves as a chief mate on an old steamer PATNA bound for the holy places with eight hundred Moslem pilgrims. He deserts the PATNA in the firm belief that she is already sinking. He abandons his responsibility as a chief mate on board and soon this becomes the shadow chasing him with fear all the time. It makes him move from one job to

another, from one city to another and at last he is sent to Patusan. There he finds his love and trust of all Malays but still it does not last long. Brown, an Australian renegade, comes up to Patusan. His arrival arises Jim's guilty conscience which at the end makes Jim give himself up. This is the result for letting Brown free which causes the death of the chief's son and many of Malay soldiers.

The character in Conrad's novels is made real to the reader. Albert J. Guerard states as adapted by Moser (1968:396) "... offers a major dramatic image of the will and the personality in conflict, of the conscious mind betrayed by the unconscious...". Jim is essentially a simple man but the problems he raises are complex and profound, reaching right down to the roots of conduct. Lord Jim shows reader(s) how a hero behaves in a real crisis, sees what happens, what we have to do, when the ideal is indifferent with actual world and when it fails.

In relation to the lines above, the writer intends to analyse the conflict of the main character in Lord Jim in terms of social and internal conflicts.

Andrian H. Jaffe and Virgil Scott (1960:3) in "Studies in the Short Fiction" states that conflict is the backbone of a story. It is conflict that provides us with

pattern and direction and also gives us the sense of a story going somewhere. They also say that conflict is the basic principle to arise and maintain the reader's interest in reading a story. It is also conflicts that make readers keep on reading a story till the end, as they are curious to know what will happen next to the characters. According to Potter (1967:25) conflict may be overt and violent, or implicit and subdue; it may be visible in action or it may take place entirely in a character's mind. Under these considerations the writer presents this thesis entitled "A Study on Conflicts of The Main Character in Joseph Conrad's Lord Jim".

## 1.2. Statement of the Problem

Related to the background of the study, this study is intended to analyse the conflicts in Joseph Conrad's novel entitled Lord Jim. Lawrence Perrine (1966:44) defines conflict into three basic categories: the conflict between man against himself, man against other person(s) and man against nature. Accordingly, the problems which arise and will be discussed in this study :



- What kinds of conflicts does the main character in Joseph Conrad's Lord Jim struggle with ?
- What are the sources of those conflicts which the main character in Joseph Conrad's Lord Jim is dealing with ?

### 1.3. Objective of the Study

In line with the problems stated, the objective of this study is to analyse the kinds of conflicts which the main character in Joseph Conrad's Lord Jim is struggling with both externally and internally, as well as the sources of the conflicts.

### 1.4. Significance of the Study

This study is expected to give contribution to the English Department students of Widya Mandala University in understanding a literary work through analysing the main character's conflicts of Conrad's work, Lord Jim.

This study is also expected to sharpen students' awareness of life and to develop the students' analytical

skill, to broaden their knowledge and to enrich their literary experience for studying literary works.

### 1.5. Limitation of the Study

Since there are many kinds of conflicts which may arise in a certain kind of literary work, in this study the writer limits the analysis on the conflicts of the main character in Joseph Conrad's Lord Jim, both externally and internally.

### 1.6. Definition of Key Terms

Before proceeding to further discussion, it is better to clarify some key terms applied in this thesis in order to avoid misinterpretation.

1. NOVEL, according to Oxford English Dictionary "a novel is a fictitious prose narrative or tale of considerable length in which characters and actions representative of the real life of past or present times are portrayed in a plot of more or less complexity."

2. CONFLICT, the word "conflict" comes from the Latin word "contra" ("against") and "fligere" ("to strike") (Barry, 1966:23). The word "conflict" not only implies the struggle of a protagonist against someone or something, but also implies the existence of some motivation for the conflict on some goals which are to be achieved by it. Conflict is the raw material out of which plot is constructed. It is a struggle which grows out of the interplay of the opposing forces in a plot (Holman, 1972:119)
3. PLOT: It is the arrangement of tied-together chronological events which have casual and thematic connection (Koesnosoebroto, 1988:29)
4. CLIMAX: A major crisis or turning point in the whole action of a plot. It is the point at which the fatal step is taken and the essential decision is made which results in the action concluding one way or the other
5. CHARACTER: It is an extended verbal representation of a human being, the inner-self that determines thought, speech and behavior (Robert & Jacobs, 1989:143)
6. MAIN CHARACTER: It is the most important one in terms of the plot, yet there are certain kinds of minor characters who, though sometimes not really involved

with the action at all, are nevertheless very important to the development of the plot, or even to the tone and implied. Potter (1967:21)

### 1.7. Methodology of the Study

In this study the writer employs Practical Criticism or Applied Criticism which deals with the discussion of particular works and writers. Practical Criticism is divided into:

- a. Impressionistic Criticism that concerns with the feeling of an individual.
- b. Judicial Criticism that concerns with analysing and explaining the effects of a work in terms of its subject, organization and techniques and to base the critic's individual judgements on general standards of literary excellence. (Abrams, 1971:36)

The combination of these two criticism would be a suitable method for this analysis. By reading a novel, readers will get a particular impression from the feelings of an individual for sure. The use of impressionistic criticism only would not be enough in this study, since each individual may have different impressions and

perception. To qualify a study, an analysis should rely on a general standard of literary excellence, the writer, therefore, also employs Judicial criticism as the approach in this literary research; by giving her individual judgement based on the theories reviewed in chapter II

### **1.8. Organization of the Thesis**

This thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter I deals with Introduction including also the background of the study, statement of the problem, the significance of the study, the limitation of the study, definition of key terms, methodology of the study, and the organization of the thesis. Chapter II concerns with the review of related literature. Meanwhile, the methodology of the study will be elaborated in Chapter III, Chapter IV will discuss the finding and the analysis of the novel, and finally the conclusion of the study and suggestion will be in Chapter V.