

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This chapter discusses about the conclusion after discussing Chapter 4. In addition, it gives some suggestions for the further library study on symbol and also connecting a literature to philosophy.

5.1. Conclusion

5.1.1. Conclusion of the symbols and the true meaning of the story

Having analyzed “Metamorphosis” by Franz Kafka, the writer found 5 crucial symbols as well as the true meaning of the story and how the story represents the concept of nihilism. The symbols found in the story is:

1. Vermin. The symbol is categorized as archetype. The meaning of the symbol is a disgusting creature.
2. Apple. The symbol is categorized as archetype. The meaning of the symbol is cursing words.
3. Food. The symbol is categorized as metaphor. The meaning of the symbol is the family’s treatment.
4. A picture of a woman in fur and furniture. The symbol is categorized as metaphor. The meaning of the symbol is Gregor’s identity (furniture) and Gregor’s purpose of life (a picture of a woman in fur).
5. Gregor’s metamorphosis. The symbol is categorized as allegory. The meaning of the symbol is Gregor’s change throughout the story/

5.1.2. Conclusion of the Meaning of the Story

As what is seen in Chapter Four, basically the story tells about how a man named Gregor was suddenly struck by a disgusting illness which also incapacitate him to do his job, which is a way how he expresses his love for his family. Despite of Gregor's hatred of the job, he still did it for his family because his family is his purpose to of living. However, the family does not love Gregor as much as he loves them.

Tragically, once he is struck by the illness which causes both physical and mental deterioration, the family does not show love as much as Gregor showed them through his dedication of work. The only one who takes care of him is his sister. She feeds him and cleans his room initially, but gradually the tasks are for the maid to do since she is also busy earning money for the family to survive.

After several months has passed, Gregor's mother finally meets Gregor. She is accompanied by Gregor's sister who also informs the mother that she thinks that Gregor is burdened by his predicates and responsibilities when he was still healthy. Out of mercy, both of them attempts to relieve Gregor from the burdens by making him realize that he is now an incapable man and should not think too much about it. At first, Gregor is already anxious, but he lets them be because he understands that neither of his sister nor his mother have bad intention to him. However, due to their lack of understanding of Gregor, the mother and the sister go too far and attempt to make Gregor to forget his love for his family,

which is apparently Gregor's purpose of life. This misunderstanding leads to Gregor's violent acting even if he means to defend himself, not to offend his mother and sister. However, this action is mistaken by his father as an offense, so Gregor is cursed by his father.

The curse of the father makes Gregor's condition rapidly worsening. During this time, the family found their new source of money, in other words, Gregor's replacement. They treat their new money source so specially that Gregor is upset. After all, this new source of money takes the family's special treatment without appreciation. Out of appreciation, Gregor approaches his sister. This approach scares the source of money and the sister is greatly repulsed by Gregor's act. She then does not bother to show her disgust and hatred towards Gregor in front of the parents.

Gregor then decides to return to the place where he should have been in order to calm down the family's situation. Given his critical condition, he passes away alone in his room and is found by a housemaid, not the family. Even when the family learns that Gregor has passed away, the atmosphere, instead of filled by sadness, is filled with relaxation as if the family's nightmare has come to an end.

5.1.3. The conclusion of nihilism representation in the story

As what have been mentioned in the Chapter Two of this thesis, existential nihilism, according to Alan Pratt (2001), is identified by meaninglessness of life, insignificance of humans due to their purposelessness, and each individual's isolation since no one actually understands each other.

In meaninglessness of life, it is seen how Gregor desperately loves the family, yet despite his effort to make his family happy (regardless of his being twisted due to the illness), he is abandoned in the end. One may say that Gregor is not meaningless for he has a purpose of life. However, it occurred to him that his own purpose of life, his love to his own family, is the one which 'murders' him. Therefore, it is not necessarily one's having purpose which make a human's life meaningful, because if the purpose ends up attacking back at the owner, then that purpose is as good as meaningless.

Meanwhile in humans' purposelessness, Gregor as a person is not that significant. Once he stops working, Gregor loses his value to his family and even if it is not immediate, the family eventually believes that Gregor is a great burden to the family. In other words, the family only values Gregor as breadwinner, never as a person. Now, since Gregor is unable to play his role, the family is furious. Even in the beginning of Gregor's transformation into being a vermin, no one actually bothers to hide their negative emotions towards him. Also, the purposelessness of life is at most apparent when Gregor is replaced by the three gentlemen who provides money for the family by renting a room in their flat. The family truly treats the three gentlemen even better than Gregor since they have already felt the suffering of having no one paying for their bill.

In isolation of individuals, it is seen how each of family member leads different way of living. While Gregor was working, he changed into the person the family does not know. Added with the fact that his job made him rarely together with his family, he actually has been isolated from the family since he

was working. In the story, each of them refuses to understand the fact that people are prone to change, trapped in belief that they are still the person they once knew. This leads to severe misunderstanding and the isolation of Gregor. In addition, their misunderstanding also leads to Gregor's further deterioration of mind for the family itself, his very own purpose of existence, tries to deny Gregor's love towards them even if they only mean not to burden Gregor with his prior responsibility.

In conclusion, this masterpiece called "Metamorphosis", according to this study, indeed nihilistic since both of the three concepts of existential nihilism—meaninglessness of life, purposelessness of humanity, and isolation of individual—are represented in the story.

5.2. Suggestions

The writer is more than aware that a thesis discussing about topic such as symbol and philosophical view, in this case nihilism, is a very rare one. Due to the rarity of the topic, the writer had difficulty in finding inspiration for this thesis; things like what to write, how to write, et cetera. Therefore, this thesis is not a perfect one. Despite the rarity, the writer truly enjoys writing this thesis since a thesis such as this requires deep thinking, creativity, and the most important ones; searching and reading. While searching far and wide brings personal satisfaction when the writer found a nice reading, the reading, just like what people have always said, adds new knowledge to the writer—in this case, understanding those

nihilistic philosophers' view of life. The writer has always liked understanding different views of life, so she takes pleasure in writing this thesis. For those who are not interested in deep thinking or has quite busy life, the writer suggests not to take topic such as this. It truly requires deep searching, deep reading, deep thinking, and most importantly, expressing what has been learned into writing.

To those who are interested to write thesis with similar topic, the writer can only suggest to be patient when searching for reference or merely inspiration about how and what to write. One needs to remember that when finding the desired reference, one will feel undescribed personal bliss. After all, what is also needed in conducting the study is one's efforts to stay focus. Also, consulting to advisor is a wise decision when in confusion, for the advisor surely knows a lot of things more than college students.

This thesis mainly intends to make its readers not to judge things simply in one look. This novella called "Metamorphosis" is mostly considered as confusing one and mistaken as a mere entomological fantasy. However, that is not necessarily the fact. Behind a confusing story, there is a chance that the story contains symbols which the readers need to interpret by themselves. There is also a chance that the author of the story desires to express quite controversial way of thinking which will wreak havoc in society should it be written in its literal meaning.

From this thesis, the writer also suggests to the readers to be open-minded to many view of life. Not everyone in this world leads happy life, has cheerful

personality, and has things all bright. It is reasonable for those who do not have such bright life to question their own purpose of existence. For if one truly lives a life of Gregor, which the writer considers very possible for someone to lead, there is a chance that one despises his/her own situation. This kind of thought can make anyone to question whether one's life has meaning, whether one's is significant, and whether one's relationship with the others is good. This may eventually lead to the questioning of God's existence. Every person in this world has his/her own life which they lead by himself/herself and thus create how he/she sees the world—his/her own belief. What is believed for a person, does not necessarily also true for another, and one should never be offended by another's opinion because once again, every person lead their own life and no one has the right to judge, unless their actions damage the others.

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