

CHAPTER I

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1.1 Background of the Study

Basically, reading a literary work is interesting. It gives some pleasure in mind. Literary work such as novel, short story, drama and etc is commonly known as literature. According to Kennedy (1991:xxxix) literature is a kind of art, usually written, which offers pleasure and illumination. And by reading of a good literature can bring a man more closely into contact with the "real world" that he could ever have brought with a degree of personal experience for which the span of most lives is insufficient (Mayhead, 1965:12). This statement is supported by Scholes, Klaus and Silverman (1978:xxv) who said that literature enriches our lives because it increases our capacities for understanding and communication. It means the experience of reading literature should enrich your sense of life and your sense of language.

For the writer herself, studying literature can help her to grow, both personally and intellectually. Literature provides an objective base for her knowledge and understanding; it helps her to connect herself to the broader cultural, philosophic, and religious world of which we are apart; it enables her to recognize human dreams and struggles in different places and times that she would never otherwise know. Literature also helps her to develop mature sensibility and compassion for the condition of all living thing. Literature also enables her to develop a perspective on the event that occurs around us and in the world at large; and thereby it enables her to gain understanding and control (Roberts and Jacobs, 1989:2).

One of the literature forms is Novel. According to Havighurst, Mc Farland, Jewet, and Lowory (1968:562), Novel is a long prose narrative which its length allows the novelist to present fully the world he has chosen to describe. Furthermore, according to Scholes and Kellogg (1966:7) said that the novel itself is a picture of real life and manners, and of the times in which it is written. The novel gives a familiar relation of such things, as

pass everyday before our eyes, such as may happen to our friend or to ourselves. In other words, it takes us into the lives of other people, and thereby enlarges our life.

Eventhough a novel is a fictional prose narrative which is usually too long to read at a single sitting, it does not stop the writer to analyze a novel. Because like Doren, Jewet, Achtenbagen and Early (1968:591) said that a good novel leaves us with the sense of having been absorbed into a whole world, complete in itself, characters, actions, and themes are fully developed, form, forms the single most essential quality of a novel, and the best novels project this equality as no other literary form can.

In this study the writer takes Graham Greene as the author because he is considered to be one of the great English novelists of war period. His conversion to Roman Catholicism at the age of twenty-two has influenced Greene to use his faith as background for his works (Yates, 1969:13). Ultimately Green concerns himself with the problems of good and evil in human life not so much as they exist within the Catholic church but as they exist in

the great world. His novels deal primarily with the fall of man. Green chooses to deal with the seedy, the unlikable, the unhappy - those in whom he feels the strange power of God (Yates, 1969:10). Further, also when Greene is concerned with sin and the possibility of redemption, he is at best (Yates, 1969:10). So convincingly he describes the human dilemma that his readers must comment on his people as though they were living beings (Yates, 1969:13). Moreover, Greene concerns with the capacity of the human heart for sacrifice and greatness within a world governed by a God who seems unreasonable, hostile, and often-times indifferent; and Greene also concerns with the all-pervasive nature of grace, the incontestable mystery of good and evil, and the inability of man distinguish between the two (Yates, 1969:7).

The Power and The Glory is one of Green's best. It is chosen by the writer because it is challenging for her who is not a Catholic to observe a Catholic novel. It is a story of a priest who is on the run and he alone defies the authorities and keeps faith alive in his corner of

hell (Spurling, 1983:36). Moreover, the problems in it are very concrete that whether the whisky priest can achieve his perfect contrition and absolution or not in the situation which forbids the presence of religion. It is absolutely impossible for the Catholic people who have sins to make any confession in order to have absolution for their souls. So the only way for the whisky priest to have absolution is to commit a perfect contrition. An act of contrition in which he has to feel sorrow for offending God because he has hurt the love of God as the sorrow reason.

Based on that reason, the writer encourages herself to make a study on contrition and absolution in the major character, the whisky priest, in this novel.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

This study is intended to analyze the whisky priest's contrition and absolution in Graham Greene's novel "The Power and The Glory". The questions that she would like to answer are:

1. What efforts are done by the whisky priest to achieve perfect contrition ?
2. Can the whisky priest achieve absolution ?

1.3 Objective of the Study

In Graham Greene's novel "The Power and The Glory", the writer wants to find out whether the whisky priest is finally achieved his perfect contrition and absolution or not.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The writer hopes that through her study, people will know more about Graham Greene as a religious writer. Also the writer expects that this thesis will motivate another students to make further discussion in the novel in general, and especially in analysing a religious novel.

1.5 Limitation of the Study

The writer limits her study only discussing on the major character, the whisky priest. Concerning on his attitudes toward his sins and his efforts in trying to achieve perfect contrition and absolution, for have hurt the love of God.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

The writer puts some key terms that are used in this thesis in order to avoid misunderstanding. They are:

1. Literature is a kind of art, usually written, that offers pleasure and illumination (Kennedy, 1979:v).
2. Novel is a picture of real life and manners, and of the times in which it is written (Scholes and Kellogg, 1966:7).
3. Character is a person in a literary work who generally refers to his whole nature, such as his personality,

his attitude: toward life, his spiritual qualities, as well as his moral attribute (Potter, 1967:3).

4. Setting is the time and the place in which an action happens (Knickerbocker, 1960:437).
5. Contrition is sorrow for offending God, with a firm intention of not offending Him again (MacLoughlin, 1955:216).
6. Perfect Contrition is when the motive which causes the will to detest sin is the love of God for his own sake (Smith, 1953:942).
7. Imperfect Contrition is when the motive which causes the will to detest sin is the fear of God (Smith, 1953:942).
8. Absolution is a result of what is known as an act of perfect contrition (Smith, 1953:935).

1.7 Organization of the Study

This thesis consists of five chapters. The Introduction is presented in chapter I. Chapter II will discuss about Review of Related Literature. In chapter III

will describe the Methodology of the Study. Chapter IV concerns about the analysis of the contrition and the absolution in The Power and The Glory. And chapter V presents the writer's conclusion and suggestion.