

CHAPTER V

Conclusion and Suggestion

This chapter presents about what the writer concludes from her study and what she suggests to investigate for further study.

5.1 Conclusion

The Scarlet Letter is a kind of novel, which contains moral message. It provides the reader with depiction of a mortal sin, which is committed by an illicit couple; Hester Prynne and Minister Arthur Dimmesdale. The author, Nathaniel Hawthorne explores a lot of thought and emotion of the characters specifically the illicit couple. He concerns the way the illicit couple confront the situation differently; one chooses to confess it publicly earlier; and another chooses to hide it and enjoy the pain caused by guilt for years. Guilt and public confession, which have significant relation toward the novel specifically to the major character, Dimmesdale, interest the writer to investigate. Hawthorne is able to portray the condition of puritans' legal system on 17th century. It can be seen that at that time they held the interpretation of the Bible as a law tightly. The sinners must confess their sins and they must be ready to accept the punishment. As they realize that they have done something forbidden by feeling guilty they are deserved to ask forgiveness. Therefore, puritans seem to base their morality on guilt. They recognize the authority inside them that controls their behaviors and show them which is right and wrong. The authority itself reflects edicts of God so that there

is no reason to reject it. Guilt inflicts a deep pain when someone is experiencing it. He needs to wipe that feeling out soon. He has to repay what he has done (something which is wrong). Thus, punishment is an effective solution.

In this novel, Minister Arthur Dimmesdale is not experiencing shame but guilt. Shame concerns to the audience. It inflicts someone to have a “good reputation” in front of the audience. He does not realize that he should do one thing because it is right but he should do that to be viewed as a right man. On the other hand, guilt concerns to the person and the deed. It inflicts someone to accept the authority inside him which leads him to do the right things. If he forbids the authority he will be feeling guilty. To wipe it out he needs repayment, the punishment. Punishment here is not always about prison and fines but something that can redeem him from his wrongdoing. Guilt is ever experienced in someone’s live. If it can be explained in vast definition, guilt may be not only connected to moral. Someone may also feel guilty as they are not able to accomplish their duties or obligations. Thus, this study has given an insight and a reflection of guilt for the writer’s own live.

The scarlet letter tells about Arthur Dimmesdale’s guilt. As the writer focuses on Minister Arthur Dimmesdale since the beginning of her study, she can assume that Nathaniel Hawthorne provides depiction of Arthur Dimmesdale’s character as a spiritual leader who is trapped in sinful act. Eventhough he presents his deep suffering and guilt, he is able to survive until his death.

To Arthur Dimmesdale guilt does not only mean he has done something forbidden but also failed to accomplish his mission as the spiritual leader on earth.

He is not able to apply what he teaches or what he preaches into real actions. When he is thinking how he can condemn himself, his guilt complicates his life and gnaws him physically and mentally. Then, it leads him to public confession as his payment toward what he has committed. Unfortunately, he cannot begin his new life after the public confession. His body cannot restrain his suffering any longer. Then, death picks him up.

After conducting this study, the writer concludes that:

Guilt is destructive. If someone is experiencing feeling guilty, it can affect him physically and mentally. He feels remorse inside. Thus, what he feels inside will affect his physical appearance because he cannot do all his daily activities as usual before he feels guilty, he may not sleep tight, he may not have appetite, or he may have bad illusion continuously.

When someone is feeling guilty, he needs a repayment. He thinks he has done something wrong. Then, it will emerge such pain. Therefore, the repayment functions effectively to wipe the pain out. The repayments are not only fine and prison. As Dimmesdale's case, the repayment is a confession. When he does not repay anything for his mistake, it will inflict a serious anxiety.

5.2 Suggestion

Based on the discussion and conclusion, the writer would like to put forward some suggestions.

First, the writer suggests that the students read more of Nathaniel Hawthorne writings because those contains valuable lessons related to morality such as House of Seven Gables, The Blithedale Romance and The Marble Faun. It will eventually improve their knowledge about values and morality. The students can enrich their vision to face the real life problems.

Second, the writer suggests that the students read more some similar novels as The Scarlet Letter, which have vast vocabulary and specific terms related to a certain religion, tradition and culture. This will eventually improve their fluency in English and improve their knowledge about another religion, tradition and culture.

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