

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

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### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

As a student of teacher training department, we learn literary works. We learn it because literature reflects human life. This idea was stated by Laurence D. Lerner in his book. He writes that literature is something general, such a "man's fate", or "human life" (Lerner, 1956:49). It is called as a human life because in general literature contains, incidentally, much information, especially much historical information; and it is possible to derive from it a great many facts dealing customs, beliefs, or events of the past (Brooks, Purser, Warren, 1946:1). In a simple way, we can say that literature contains the record of the peoples' values, their thoughts, their problems and conflicts (Little, 1963:1). Understanding the human life is important for us, a teacher to be, as later if we teach we will face human beings that have their own feelings; thoughts and the ways of life. By understanding their unique hopefully we can handle the problems which emerge with proper way. Literature helps us to learn to understand these problems because literature is the result of the same skill and sensitivity dealing no longer with everyday occurrences, but with a profounder insight into the life of human (Lerner, 1956:5). This reason makes the writer chooses literature as her thesis as she is interested in analysing and learning about life.

One of the literary works is novel. It is an interesting subject to be analyzed as novel contains of imaginary characters and situations. It may include reference to real cause of the imaginary characters and situations, people are taken to the imaginary world.

In the imaginary world, the readers can visualize what is described -- that is often the mark of an accomplished narrative - but we see what is pointed out to us by a narrator or narrative voice or source (Hawthorn, 1985:27). Moreover, reading a novel can make people see about themselves as it reflects their own lives. It can make people realize about what they have done. Besides, reading novel can help us to enrich our vocabulary, learn certain terms that are used in English and improve our reading ability.

In understanding the novel, we need to know the theme of a novel. By understanding the theme means we can understand the details, problems and message that emerges from the novel as it is stated by Perrine, "the ability to state theme is a test of our understanding of a story" (Perrine, 1970:106). In finding the theme, we can analyze it from several aspects, one of them is from character. It is stated by Kenney and Ryan that character plays an important role in expressing the central idea on analysing the theme (Kenney, 1966:94 and Ryan, 1963:51). Based on these reasons, the writer decides to analyze the theme of Maugham's The Moon and Sixpence through character, in this case the main charater. The writer also analysis the theme through plot.

In a novel, the story is built from many actions. The actions are connected to the plot of a story. Knickerbocker and Reninger (1963:17) said, "the word plot has been used to indicate almost any kind of action found in a story, including the closed plot, the open plot and straight narrative with little or no serious complication". From these sentences, it can be concluded that plot and action are related very closely, they cannot stand by themselves. A similar opinion is given by Kenney. In his book, he wrote.

"In fact, a plot is of the highest importance in expressing the meaning of a work of fiction. It is through plot that the author organizes the raw material of experience, and an author's way of organizing experience must tell us a great deal about his way of understanding experience --- that is, about the meaning experience has for him. Surely our sense of the meaning of experience is closely tied to our

understanding of what causes what, and it is the business of plot to clarify casual relationship" (Kenney, 1966:23).

As plot is the basic thing in creating a story, so the writer takes it as one of the elements in finding theme in the Maugham's novel The Moon and Sixpence.

Besides character and plot, there is one more element of a novel that is taken by the writer in analyzing the theme, namely setting. According to Kennedy the idea of setting includes the physical environment of a story, a house, a street, a city, a landscape, a region (Kennedy, 1991:80). Setting is not merely about the place where the action takes place, but setting can emerge in a kind of a spiritual background as stated by Holman, "setting is the physical, and sometimes spiritual background against which the action of a narrative (Novel, Drama, Short story, Poem) takes place" (Holman, 1960:491). Moreover Potter says that there is a great variety of possible setting, and relationships between the setting and the characters and action. ... the possible relationships between the setting and the other elements of the narrative, for those relationships make the choice of setting crucial" (Potter, 1967:27). Because of these facts, the writer also includes setting as one element that is going to be analyzed by her. Her reason in analyzing setting becomes stronger after she finds an article written by Kennedy in his book. He said, "in some fictions, setting is closely bound with theme (what the story is saying)... (kenney, 1991:82). That is why in this study, the writer uses the three elements in order to find the theme of The Moon and Sixpence.

There are lots of good writers in the world such as William Shakespeare, Jane Austen, Emmily Bronte, Charles Dickens and many more, one of them is William

Somerset Maugham. His stories have been read all over the world. In his critics about Maugham's works Edmund Wilson compares them with the symphony created by Ludwig van Beethoven. He said that the symphony was forever altered by Ludwig van Beethoven; no similar statement can be made about Maugham and the novel. He sought to tell a story with clarity and grace, to embody a set of attitudes and values, and to entertain his readers with insights into character and life ( Masterplots: 1844). In his novel, we can find that there were no stylistic flourishes, no evocative phrases and no graceful cadences. Immediate comprehensibility was the only criterion (Robson, 1970:39). With his ability, he is considered as a story teller of genius with sardonic view of human behaviour, antiromantic and mercilessly observant with unrivalled skill in realizing the climax of a story (Stapleton, 1983:577). He wrote his novel with a style highly idiomatic and fluent, revealing the qualities of simplicity, lucidity, and euphony which the author sought to attain (Magil:1844-1845). In Maugham's novel we can see what happens in our life, sometimes it is ended with happy ending, sad ending, or none of it.

In article about The Moon and Sixpence, Anthony Curtis and John Whithead writes that Maugham's novel decries the attitude to life of the hero (Curtis, Whithead:10). In this novel, we can find Strickland, a successful businessman decides to become an artist at age forty. He leaves his wife and his family in poverty. He leaves to France without taking any money, all that he brings is his clothes that he wears. In France, he makes enemies rather than friends. He takes a man's wife to live with him and hurts her. He lets the woman commit suicide. He goes to Tahiti and lives with a native woman, has children, and makes the greatest work in the world but burns it with his death.

In the story, we can find primarily of adults in conflict with one another and with social mores (Kohler:1845). He also said that Maugham's characters grow in tolerance and acceptance of human life, which is portrayed somewhat pessimistically. His characters based upon people whom he had known or whose lives he had somehow come to know; their actions are presented with consummate realism. They are motivated by their passions or emotions and by their attempts to control their destinies, not by an ideology or set of ideals. Though they may experience inner turmoil and conflict, they are seldom tormented by such emotions. Like their creator-narrator, the characters often have the ability to view themselves with clinical detachment and objectivity, to cast a cold eye of life (Kohler:1845). This opinion can be found in Maugham's The Moon and Sixpence, which is based on Gauguin's life. When Strickland is asked by narrator why he leaves his family he says that he wants to paint. When the narrator says that the chance to be a great painter is million to one against it, he still says that he wants to get to paint. Moreover, Strickland says, *"I tell you I've got to paint. I can't help myself. When a man's falls intom the water it doesn't matter how he swims, well or badly: he's got to get out or else he'll down"*. This small part of the dialogue shows us how the protagonist in this story is motivated by their passion and emotion.

Strickland also has the ability to view himself with clinical detachment and objectivity to cast a cold eye on life. Here is a part of the conversation that show it.

*"Why don't you ever send your work to exhibition? I should have thought you'd like to know what people thought about it."*

*Strickland answers: "Would you?"*

*"Don't you want a fame? It's something that most artist haven't been*

*indifferent to "*

*"Children, how can you care for the opinion of the crowd, when you don't care twopence for the opinion of the individual?"*

*"We're not all reasonable beings"*

*"Who makes fame? Critics, writers, stockbrokers, women."*

From that part of the conversation, we can see how Strickland does not care about fame and does not believe where the fame comes from. We can find more and more conflict in Strickland's life in this novel.

As this novel has conflict like in the real life, the writer becomes more certain to take this novel to be analyzed.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Based on the reason stated above, this thesis tries to answer the question below.

What is the theme in The Moon and Sixpence ?

## **1.3 Objective of the Study**

This study is intended to find what the theme of Maugham's The Moon and Sixpence is which will be seen from the main character, plot and setting.

## **1.4 Significance of the Study**

This study is expected to give some contribution to the students learning literature in English Department of Widya Mandala University in comprehending such literary work.

### **1.5 Limitation of the Study**

The subject of the study is Maugham's novel The Moon and Sixpence. The writer is interested in analyzing the theme of this novel through, character, plot, setting and theme.

### **1.6 Definition of Key Terms**

To avoid misinterpretation of this study, the writer will list some terms that are used in this discussion. The terms are:

#### **a. Novel**

A fictitious 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 (Oxford English Dictionary, Hawthorn, 1985:12).

#### **b. Theme**

The principal thought. It expresses - what has to say. A principal idea or statement to which all of its parts are related in some significant manner (Little, 1963:12).

#### **c. Character**

A character is a fictional person, usually distinguished by name, who says and does things and is described in various ways. He or she may be an agent whose words or doings have consequences which affect the action, or means by which the action is brought to pass. He may forms some opposition or contrast to the central character. Each character will be situated in relationship to the central action of the novel and will be treated in relation to his significance to it (Milligan, 1984: 102).

**d. Plot**

An order, organized sequence of events and action (Hawthorn, 1985:53).

**e. Setting**

Where the action of a novel takes place and this does not just mean its geographical setting; social and historical factors are also important (Hawthorn, 1985: 59).

**1.7 Theoretical Framework**

In analyzing The Moon and Sixpence, the writer uses psychological theory. The theory is written by Maslow, a stratified needs.

**1.8 Organization of the Thesis**

This thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter I deals with the background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, significance of the study, *limitation of the study, definition of key terms, and organization of the thesis.* Chapter II contains of review of related literature. Chapter III contains methodology of the story. Chapter IV is about analysis and discussion about the character, plot, setting and theme. Chapter V is about conclusion and suggestions.