

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1. 1. Background of the Study

Roberts & Jacobs (1989) state that literature refers to either written or spoken composition that is designed to tell stories, dramatize situation, interest, entertain, stimulate, broaden, and ennoble readers. Roberts and Jacobs (1989: 1) also state:

Some writers, wishing to move us deeply, may describe a great person undergoing misfortune, or more happily may show us people becoming successful in forming human relationship. Other writers, wishing to tell us about new ways of thoughts and feeling ... Still other writers, to involve us in some kind of action, may inform us and also try to inspire us to copy the examples which they tell us about.

It means that literature has broad purposes to entertain as well as to educate and influence human's life. From this point, literature, as one of the written arts that has been famous for its accuracy to the reflection of human's life, plays important role in carrying out the reflection of life. However, Literature is apparently underestimated by the public since it has no interesting aspect toward human life. This makes most of people including students of the English Department of Widya Mandala Catholic University Surabaya not into literature. Whereas, literature might cover all the reflection of human life and all life fields from which people could learn experience and knowledge. From these remarkable reasons, the writer decides to take literature as her choice for conducting her thesis. Literature

has many functions for human's life. According to Roberts and Jacobs, literature helps the audience grow, both personally and intellectually.

The function of literature is broadly defined. Superior literature transcends mere action. It presents author's insight into human character and reveals the complex ways in which character and action interrelate to generate chains of consequence and results. Still, finer literature reveals the complex interaction between action, individual character, and the evolving character of the society in which the action takes place. ("Introduction to Character," 2000, para. 1). From this point, one of the purposes of literature art being created is to define and express human characters. Human characters are the core points that enable the audience to know how a person is like, how they interact with other people, how they treat other people as well as to know their plan for future. Characters are the elements of human life that form a human as the way he is in this world. Characters vary from one to another and they have a great ability to create a unique, exquisite, and outstanding picture of a person all at once. Characters are actually difficult to picture, yet literature could present them very well.

According to Roberts and E. Jacobs (1989), literature is classified into three major genres: (1) prose fiction, (2) poetry, and (3) drama. Human characters are accurately conveyed through live action and plot. The genre of literature that is accurate to convey human characters is drama. In drama, characters are presented and performed by actors who are able to show them beautifully through live action. Onyeka Iwuchukwu (2008) points out

Drama is different from other genres of literature. It has unique characteristics that have come about in response to its peculiar nature. Really, it is difficult to separate drama from performance because during the stage performance of a play, drama brings life

experiences realistically to the audience. It is the most concrete of all genres of literature. (p. 3)

Drama uses actors to convey a writer's message. This brings the reader to the issue of **mimesis** or **imitation**. Drama is mimetic which means it imitates life. "You may have heard people say that drama mirrors life. Yes, it is the only branch of literature which tries to imitate life and presents it realistically to the people" (Onyeka Iwuchukwu, 2008, p. 4).

The writer decides to analyze drama as it represents the reality as well as the reflection of human life realistically. One of the most outstanding aspects of human life is characters. The writer reckons that drama provides the most accurate reflection of human characters and human experience. It is lively performed so the characters of a figure in a play could resemble the characters of a human in reality.

As defined previously, human characters are very important in human's life as they describe how a person is, how a person interacts with other people, and how he/she lives his/her life. For this, human characters have a great tendency to show a person to be a bad figure, tragic figure, or even a great hero. A figure of hero then elicits the curiosity of the writer to research this.

"Surprisingly enough, people need heroes because a hero equals hope, a role model to follow, a certainty that things will fall into their rightful place." ("Why is Important," n.d., para. 4). This statement inspires the writer to analyze a figure of hero since she believes there is no other figure that is better than a hero. A hero appears as a noble figure who dares to sacrifice himself for the sake of others and a hero is usually able to change the condition of people's lives to be better. The writer thinks that the one who has these traits is the most exalted figure of a human. The figure of

a hero can be distinctively carried out by a certain playwright who has been considered as one of the most influence figures in literature field, mainly drama. He was George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950). A.K. Ramabushanam (2007) who states:

George Bernard Shaw, who at the beginning of his career was regarded in literary circles as a writer without a serious moral purpose, is today looked upon not only as a brilliant wit but also as a profound thinker. He saw the truth and revealed it through art which in his opinion is the best vehicle of teaching. (p. 1)

The quotation above clearly states that Bernard Shaw had been creating plays as his vehicle in delivering his ideas, viewpoints, and critics, that could teach as well as to educate society. Nehru in Ramabushanam (2007) says “Shaw was not only one of the greatest figures of the age, but also the one who influenced the thought of vast number of human beings during two generations” (p. 1). He created plays mostly in order to illustrate his criticism and opinions over the English stage and the wars that occurred in the following era.

Bernard Shaw has two major personalities which the other playwrights do not have. First, Bernard Shaw considered drama as a play of ideas. Second, he was a non-conformist or unconventional person. It means Shaw did not really care of what people say toward him or whether people like his plays or not.

Other important plays by Shaw are *Major Barbara* (1905), *The Doctor's Dilemma* (1906), *Androcles and the Lion* (1912), *Heartbreak House* (1920), *Saint Joan* (1923), etc. Those plays were invented in order to express his brave arguments and criticism which ranged from politics up to undercover sexual life.

Previously defined, a hero is very important, now or from the era back then. Bernard Shaw created some of the heroic figures who are very interested to be revealed. A figure of a hero during a war as well as in romance is then taken to be analyzed in this study. One of the most capable plays that meet these criteria is his famous comedy play *Arms and the Man* (1894). Marti Maraden (2003: 2) says:

Arms and the Man, one of the earliest plays written when he was 38 years old, was first performed in London 1894. The success of *Arms and the Man* has been consistent right from its first production. The original staging of the play was so well received that Shaw's reputation as one of the greatest wits in the London drama was almost instantly established. It was and still one of the most popular and most frequently produced comedies. It was published four years later in a collection called *Plays Pleasant*. (p. 2)

Raza and Siddiqui (2012) point out that *Arms and the Man* is a wonderful play by Bernard Shaw that reflects the elements of realism. In this play, Shaw attacks the romantic notions of war and love. *Arms and the Man* is one of Bernard Shaw's plays that reveals a heroic and gentle figure of a man who renders a service in a peaceful condition after a war as well as in romance (p. 44).

One of Shaw's aims in this play is to debunk the romantic heroism of war; he wanted to present a realistic aspect of war and to remove all pretensions of nobility of war. It is not, however, an anti-war play; instead, it is a satire on those attitudes which would glorify war. ("About Arms and the Man," n.d., para. 1).

Arms and the Man was set at the height of Serbo-Bulgarian war in 1885 and while the man of the house is away, a bourgeois lady, Raina

Petkoff, meets a mysterious enemy soldier namely Captain Bluntschli who climbs through her balcony window in the cover of night. Raina then decides to hide him. Before sending him on his way, the young Raina Petkoff furnishes him with chocolate crèmes, charming conversation, and her father's coat as a disguise. The soldier steals away safely and comes to return the coat several months later when the war was at an end.

Captain Bluntschli's returning to the Petkoff home reunites him with former Bulgarian enemies Major Petkoff, Raina's father, and Sergius Saranoff, Raina's fiancé, who was considered as the hero of the cavalry charged of the war. The declaration of peace brings a business partnership between the three men. However, Sergius makes love secretly to Raina's female servant, Louka.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

This study is intended to find out who the real hero in Bernard Shaw's play *Arms and the Man* as well as to find out the comparisons between the two major male characters. This thesis also presents the messages that Bernard Shaw tries to deliver in terms of realism and idealism.

From the discussion defined above, the writer puts the objectives of this paper which are to answer these following questions:

1. What are the personalities of the two major male characters in Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man*?
2. Who is the real hero in Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man*?
3. What messages are reflected through Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man*?

1.3. Objectives of the Study

The core purposes of this study are to find out the brief personalities between two major male characters' personalities, Major Sergius Saranoff and Captain Bluntschli and who the real hero of the play is. This thesis also aims to convey what messages Bernard Shaw tries to deliver to the audience through the play *Arms and the Man* in terms of realism and idealism.

1.4. Theoretical Framework

This study is based on these following theories:

1. Theory of Drama/Play

Drama is an adaptation, recreation and reflection of reality on stage. Drama is divided into two kinds which are **tragedy** and **comedy**. Tragedy refers to the fall of an individual or a sob story of a person. Comedy shows the regeneration or reformation of an individual, a group of people or society and it is usually humorous or ridiculous. Drama has several elements such as setting, character, plot, and theme.

2. Figure of a Real Hero

A real hero refers to a person who is well-known for his self-sacrifice and effort to other people. A real hero is also commonly considered as the one who has the capability to create alteration of a certain situation and lead it into a better one. Furthermore, a real hero is also the one who dares to defeat his own ego and fear.

3. Objective Theory of Literature

Objective theory is a literary approach which the major point is to see the work (the art) as the way it is. Objective theory believes that an art should have these following elements: setting, plot, characters, and theme.

4. Realism

Realism is a way of seeing, accepting and dealing with situations as they really are without being influenced by emotions or false hopes.

5. Idealism

Idealism is an ideology believing that nothing exists except human minds and their contents and states.

1.5. The Significance of the Study

The result of this research hopefully gives benefits to the readers especially those who take an interest in literature. The writer hopes that this thesis has some significance as follows:

1. It will give information and knowledge about the characters that show the figure of a hero in the aspect of war and romance.
2. It will help the students who are interested in literature to know what characters that show the figure of a hero so that the students will be able to imitate the characters.
3. It will give beneficial reference for the next researchers who want to analyze the characters, especially the heroic ones of the same play.

1.6. Scope and Limitation

The writer notices that there will be lots of aspects that are needed to be observed and be questioned. From this, the writer states the scope and limitation on the heroic figure and the heroic actions of play *Arms and the Man*.

The writer analyzes the two major male characters of the play, Captain Bluntschli and Major Sergius Saranoff. The writer presents and compares their both characters and finds who the real hero between them.

The writer also analyzes the messages that are reflected through the play in terms of realism and idealism as reflected through the characters of Bluntschli, Raina Petkoff, and Sergius.

1.7. Definition of the Key Terms

To avoid misinterpretation and/or misunderstanding, it is necessary to define the key terms. The key terms that should be defined are stated below:

1. Hero

A real hero refers to a person who is well-known for his self-sacrifice and effort to other people and the one who has the capability to create alteration of a certain situation and lead it into a better one.

2. Play/Drama

Drama is something one goes to see, which is organized as something to be seen and it is enacted fiction an art form based on mimetic action. The whole story is acted out by some actors in a stage for a particular audience and the source is usually taken from a script.

3. Bernard Shaw

Bernard Shaw (1815–1885) was an Irish dramatist, literary critic, a socialist spokesman, and a leading figure in the 20th century theater. In 1925, he was awarded the Noble Prize for his contribution in literature field.

4. Arms and the Man

Arms and the Man is a play written by Bernard Shaw in 1894 when he was 38 years old. The play was first produced on April 21, 1894 at the Avenue Theatre, Westminster, London. It was first published in 1898 as part of Shaw's *Plays Pleasant* volume. The story is about comedy, romance and heroism during Serbo-Bulgarian war.

1.8. Organization of the Thesis

This thesis consists of three chapters. Chapter I deals with the background of the problem, statement of the problem, objective of the study, theoretical framework, significance of the study, scope and limitation of the study, definition of the key terms, and the organization of the thesis. Chapter II defines and reveals the review of related literature. Chapter III presents the research methodology which consists of research design, source of the data, the data, instrument, procedure of collecting data, and the data analysis procedure. Chapter IV presents the analysis of the findings. It answers the problem questions stated on the statement of the problem as well as provides additional information related to the play. Chapter V, the last chapter, contains conclusions and suggestions