

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

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1.1 Background of the Study

Literature means everything that has been written. It also means something to read. People read literature for a variety of reasons. These reasons change with their age, their interests, and the literature they read. People's basic reason for reading is probably pleasure. They read literature mostly because they enjoy it.

Reading literature for pleasure may take various forms. People may read literature just to pass the time. Or, they may want to escape from the four walls that usually surround them. Reading literature serves as a jet airplane that speeds people away from themselves into the worlds of other people.

People often read literature for information and knowledge. They find pleasure in learning about life. They also find possible solutions to their problems especially when they meet people in books whose problems are like their own. Through literature, people sometimes understand situations they could not otherwise understand in real life.

Furthermore, people naturally feel impelled, in their turn, to express their own thoughts. How pitiable it is

when people have ideas which come to nothing because they cannot effectively express them to others. To help people towards effective expression, there is no better way than the study of literature for when people see how others have achieved something, they are in much better position to achieve something by themselves. This indicates how important literature is.

The importance of literature is also strengthened by Graham Little in his book entitled Approach to Literature (1966: 1) in which he says that "wherever there is education, there is the study of literature. Men have always found it essential, from the most primitive stages of society to the most advanced, to teach their scriptures, lore, and legends to their children."

Among several kinds of literature, novel is the one that is interesting to be discussed for it is one of the most popular forms of literature in the shape of a long fictional story written in prose. The subject matter of novels cover the whole range of human experience and imagination. This is to say that some novels portray true-to-life characters and events; some focus on the thoughts and feelings of one or more characters in a story; some portray idealised versions of life; some explore purely imaginary worlds and may describe events that take place in the future or on other planets.

The novel that is going to be discussed in this thesis is Gulliver's Travels written by Jonathan Swift. The option on this novel is due to its fame as a satire. It was most popular among those who were satirized, that is the politicians, scientists, historians, and Englishmen in general. This opinion is strengthened by Tenn Sewanee as quoted in Robert A. Greenberg's book entitled Jonathan Swift: Gulliver's Travels—An Annotated Text with Critical Essays as follows: "Gulliver's Travels is a complex book. It is, of course, a satire on four aspects of man: the physical, the political, the intellectual, and the moral." (1961)

Jonathan Swift himself is the well-known novelist who has shown great concern in human relationship. He is also a humanist who has viewed with realistic concern the position of man in the world. But, he himself is also one of the strangest figures in English letters who to his biographers, is still an enigma. It is also said by J. Middleton Murry in his book entitled Swift: "Jonathan Swift is the most enigmatic and paradoxical figure among the great ones of English literature." (1955)

The thesis writer in discussing the novel, would like to analyse satirical attacks that can be found in it. The satirical attacks in the novel are so interesting to be discussed for they are also the elements that make the

novel famous. This study is also intended to show the readers about the author's feeling of his country and his opinion about his country.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Satire as a means of attacking people's foolishness, vice, and institutions is something often used by an artist or a writer in his works. In satirizing those elements, an artist or a writer sometimes does not show his satire directly. Such way can be found in Jonathan Swift's Gulliver's Travels. In this novel, Jonathan Swift is so cleverly satirizing those elements that if the readers do not look deeply into the novel, the readers will consider it as only a story book for children. The satirical attacks in this novel is the topic to be discussed by the thesis writer in her study and concerning the topic of the thesis, there is a problem which is going to be analysed. The problem is: what are attacked through satire?

1.3 Objective of the Study

By looking at the statement of the problem above, the objective of the study is to find out the satirical attacks that can be found in the novel. Through the analysis of the study, the readers will find out that

there are so many satirical attacks by Jonathan Swift in Gulliver's Travels such as on politics, science, education, and men in general.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The thesis writer hopes that the result of this study can give contribution to the fellow students especially those of Widya Mandala Catholic University in studying novel especially Jonathan Swift's and in understanding the satirical attacks that can be found in the novel. In broadest sense, it is hoped that by reading this study, the readers will appreciate literature better and will develop their ability in studying literature. It is also hoped that the study will become a reference for the readers in analysing the same novel or topic.

1.5 Limitation of the Study

In order to make the study on Gulliver's Travels not too broad, the thesis writer would like to stress her study only on the satirical attacks on politics which include the satirical attack on politicians, political system, government, religious war, tyranny, customs and laws; the satirical attacks on science including men's intellect and men's pride in reason and science; the satirical attacks on education including history, and

experience: and the satirical attacks on men in general.

Actually, the thesis writer sees that there are other satirical attacks in the novel such as on political rules, war in general, and modern philosophy but she would not like to discuss them for the sake of the effectiveness of her study.

1.6 Definitions of Key Terms

In this part of chapter I, the thesis writer would like to present the definitions of key terms that have connection with the topic of the thesis. The key terms to be defined are *satire*, *criticism*, *sarcasm*, and *irony*.

Satire has the same meaning as ridicule, parody, and scorn. *Criticism* has the same meaning as complaint, protest, and judgment. *Sarcasm* is similar to mockery or insult whereas *irony* is derision or aspersion.

1.7 Organisation of the Study

The thesis writer divides her thesis into five chapters. Chapter I deals with introduction, consisting background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, significance of the study, limitation of the study, definitions of key terms, and organisation of the study.

Chapter II consists of review of related literature in which the thesis writer describes the theories that concern with the discussion.

Chapter III has to do with methodology of the study in which the thesis writer explains her methods in finding the data and analysing the data for her thesis.

Chapter IV presents the analysis. In this chapter, the thesis writer analyses the problem as stated in the statement of the problem.

Chapter V deals with summary and further research.