

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

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This chapter consists of two parts. The first part is the conclusion of this thesis, which is discussed in 5.1. The second one deals with the suggestions, which is discussed in 5.2.

5.1 Conclusion

After reading the theories and the analysis on law versus mercy in the previous chapters, without doubt, there is a paradox between law and mercy. One may question his confusions such as, "Mercy is true, but law is also true." "How can these two truths contradict each other?" "Doesn't one need justice and law to fight injustice?" "Doesn't one also need mercy?" The answer to the latter is that one need justice as much as one also needs mercy for how can one be moved by compassion for the poor if there is no justice and the means to uphold the law? But, why then it seems that they couldn't be in harmony? Why do they seem irreconcilable?

Law and mercy fundamentally are not two contradictory things. As being rooted in love for humanity and respect of others, law shares similar point with mercy. Thus, law and mercy is not contradicting each other. If law is rooted in the compassion and respect for others, then mercy is the fulfillment of justice and the law for by mercy one extends one's compassion and love to others.

But what seems contradicting between law and mercy as discussed in the previous chapters is Javert's own narrow understanding of law and justice. To him, law is everything and there is no other beyond it. He thinks that law is basically and ideally merciless and uncompromising; there is no love in the law. And yet this is not a true definition and understanding of the law. The reality that Javert understands is a reality strictly limited and defined by codes, condemnations, pitilessness and severity. There is no respect for persons and the value of life in this reality; therefore, it is basically a law devoid of its soul, a law without proper understanding of justice. A true concept of justice is a compassionate protection of the people in the face of evil disturbance by others. A true understanding of law is a loving commitment to guard innocent people from future crimes by punishing present criminals. Thus, justice without respect and law without compassion is injustice and lawlessness.

Even though law is rooted in loving compassion to others, for the sake of protecting the civil society, people need to codify, and absolutize their ideas of law. This is necessary for without this, crimes and criminals cannot be controlled effectively. Even though the law is rooted in the unconditional respect for others, the law in itself must be very strict, since without its strictness, the law will be manipulated by evil people to victimize others. But this doesn't mean that Javert's understanding of the law is correct since he is preoccupied very much with the law as a codified system and as an absolute rule. Javert's mistakes the meaning of the law. He misinterprets the letter or the code for the law's spirit. Javert regards the 'dead

letter” of the law as the spirit, the essence of the law itself. If this is true, then it would be justifiable for the law to punish other persons mercilessly and harshly. But if the spirit of the law is higher than just the letter or code, law is not contradictory with mercy, then Javert must respect other persons and appreciate their values.

However, even though mercy is not in contradiction with the law, mercy is clearly beyond the law for the surpassing character of mercy indicates that the breadth and the width of mercy cannot be contained within the limits of the law. Therefore, law must be operated strictly, but law must extend or surpass itself to be a mercy. Mercy by definition is gracious acceptance that goes above and beyond the strict demand of the law.

5.2 Suggestions

The writer of this thesis after having done her study on “Les Mis” have some suggestions to be made for the readers according to her experience during the making of this thesis. Her suggestions are as follows:

1. One must be interested in the subject he is analyzing for his thesis, since it will not bore him. With high spirit, one can complete the thesis.
2. One must have a great interest in the novel, one used, especially a very thick novel such as “Les Mis”, for if not, it will be a burden not an enjoyment.
3. To study a very thick novel, one needs a lot of time, energy, efforts, patience, and toughness to conquer it. He also must be ready to face before him a great

many details, which needed to be organized and classified in order to be studied and analyzed. It needs scrutiny in this kind of study.

4. The most important is that, pray for God's guidance and help whenever one feels hopeless and incapable for His grace is sufficient.

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