

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of The Study

Literature is not a way of knowing reality but a kind of collective utopian dreaming which has gone throughout history, an expression of those fundamental human desires which have given rise to civilization itself, but which are never fully satisfied there (Eagleton, 1983). It is not merely a form of an author's individual expression but rather, it is inspired from the human race subjects which then creating a figure universe significance. In line with Eagleton, Moody (1987:3) states that literature exists because of human interest in humanity problem that occurs in daily life. Therefore literature has the capacity to "replicate" the world through its form and content (Eisner, 1991:557). Moreover, Terry Eagleton in his book *Literary Theory* also mentions that literature has such power called the mode of production, how it becomes what it is; in the sense of having curious resemblance to the life of human ego (p.148).

Literary works are the invention of human mind as fictions, that although based on reality, are by definitions not literally true and might need to be interpreted for grasping the truth (Murfin, 1999: 502). A lot of fictions are actually inspired by true events that happend in the 'real world', such as war, life journey, or even romance. Despite of it being closely related to the reality, fictions is different from the real world, it is something "reflected" from it by the imaginations of the author. The author might add or develop the 'real world' through his or her creativity to make the literary work more interesting. It will also impact on various things in the work, for example: a story which takes place in the World War II might not only

talk about the war but also capable of providing a romance story. Like the *Novel Gone With The Wind*, which later also released as a movie with the same title, the story was in the American Civil War era but it tells about the relationship between the daughter of a Georgian plantation owner and a soldier instead of telling about the war itself. The real life reflected in “realism” and “individualism” feature of a novel makes it become a leading genre among other fictions (Klarer, 1999: 12).

Lois Lowry herself has stated that the novel *The Giver* is originally inspired by her childhood memories in Japan (Sanderson, 2003). Based on that, Lowry created an adventure in a world in which everything is in order. This corresponds to Abraham Maslow’s statement that children seems to want a predictable, lawful orderly world as an indication of the their needs for safety (Maslow, 1970:40). Beside safety needs, Maslow also mentions other needs as well: physiological needs, esteem needs, belongingness and love needs; and self-actualization. The fulfillment of each of these needs will lead a person the last need, which is being able to self-actualizing: acquiring the full potential of oneself. One can try to go in the direction of self-actualization by solving the lesser, prerequisite motivational problems (Maslow, 1970:64).

As mentioned before, in the novel *The Giver*, Lowry describes the environment as a well-structured community. A group of leaders called the Elders are taking care of the order in the community by setting up a set of rules to keep the community on track, The Elders also arrange almost all aspects of the community, from the Assignments, Naming and Placement of newchildren, and even Matching of Spouses (Lowry, 1993:48). In return, the Elders give to the community assurance that they will not live in hardships. Each of family units in the community has their own dwellings, the children spend their after-school hours in the Childcare Center, old people would be taken care of in the House of Old, and even adults whom children has grown up and live separately will live together in the home for Childless

Adults (Lowry, 1993:2;27;102). As quoted from the novel: “The community was extraordinarily safe, each citizen watchful and protective of all children...”; “No one in the community was starving, had ever been starving, would ever be starving...”; “Medication was always available to citizen, even to children, through their parents...” (Lowry, 1993:44;70;69).

The main character of the story, Jonas, had always been trying to follow the rules and avoid problems (p.62) and so he was first proud to be selected as the New Receiver in the community, for it is the most honorable job which can only handled by one, gifted person. However, as he learns as a Receiver, not only he found out his own needs but also that the facilities provided by the community are not the needs he actually think they were. Maslow mentions in his book *Motivation and Personality* that an individual does not only satisfy their needs based on the basic satiation in which the higher set of needs emerges after the lower ones are gratified, but it also can be for an individual has been through a change in human value and cognitive capacities (p.59-60). Maslow also adds that knowledge is enough to confine that we are aware of the kinds of work that have to be done in order to progress towards self-development (1976:83).

Associative learning strengthen the understanding and knowledge of oneself and to steady the growth of personality (Maslow, 1968:39) so as Jonas daily trains with the previous Receiver, whom preferred to be called The Giver, Jonas perceived a whole new description of needs that only he could comprehend. “He found that he was often angry, now; irrationally angry with his groupmates, that they were satisfied with their lives which has none of the vibrance his own was taking on. And he was angry at himself, that he could not change that for them” (p.99). Jonas faced a problem, that when he tried to fulfill his needs, his friends as a part of his environment could not understand what they actually get to satisfy. This is

supported by Maslow as he states that being true to ourselves may at times intrinsically and necessarily be in conflict with others (1967:121).

This study will discover Jonas' personality development by analyzing his needs and the conflicts he faces when trying to fulfill his needs as the main character of the novel *The Giver* by Lois Lowry using psychological approach.

1.2 Problem Formulation

Based on the background described before, some problems are required to be answered in order to fulfill the study, as follows:

- How does Jonas needs fulfillment lead to a personality development?

1.3 Objective of The Study

The objectives of this study are mentioned as follows:

- Discovering Jonas' personality development that is acquired through his needs fulfillment process.

1.4 Scope of The Study

This study will deal with the main character's personality development analyzed from his needs based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs and also the conflicts he faces when trying to fulfill those needs. The analysis will be done using psychological approach.

1.5 Significance of The Study

The significance of this study in general is to broaden our understanding of literary interpretation and to participate in the development of literature. Through analyzing the needs and conflicts faced when fulfilling them of the main character of the story, the writer hopes

that this study will help the readers in resolve towards needs and conflicts not only in literary field, but also invarious circumstances.

Hopefully, this study would stimulate the readers' interest on literary works based on the facts that we can learn a lot of valuable lessons from literature.

1.6 Definition of Terms

Some terms that play will be explained in order to gain same understanding that would help in discussing the ideas, as follows:

- 1) Need: A potential disposition in each individual that has to be fulfilled corresponding its nature, intensity and type (Murry&Maslow as cited in Asnawi, 2002).
- 2) Personality development: Self-actualization which frees the person from the deficiency problems of youth, and from unecessary problems of life, so that he is able to endure the 'real' problems of life (the unavoidable human problems to which there is no perfect solution) (Maslow, 1968).