

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the background, statement of problem, research objective, research significances, and definition of key terms.

1.1 Background

The character is one of the most important things in the narrative elements (novel). Character has a major role in determining the artistic of a fiction. In a literary work, character is a representation of the human being in real life. Minderop (2011:53) said that picture of a character in a literary work is a mix of images, actions, and way of thinking and living, environment, power, emotions, and desires. According to Abrams (1999:32), characters are the persons represented in a dramatic or narrative work, who are interpreted by the reader as being endowed with particular moral, intellectual, and emotional qualities by inferences from what the persons say and their distinctive ways of saying it—the dialogue—and from what they do—the action. As the definition above that a character can never be separated with each other to form a mental quality that character's personality.

As we know that literary work is definitely related to our life and also the result of imitation of the universe, whether it be in the form of social life, politics, psychology, and others. Literary works, like novels, drama and poetry in modern times lade with psychological elements as manifestations: psychiatric author, the fictional character in the narrative and the reader. Literary works also certainly will never escape from a variety of psychiatric conditions of authors in presenting characters. The author makes a

literary work with seeing, hearing, and feeling the reality condition that bear down his era. Minderop (2005:36) said that an author in creating a literary work dealt with the possibility of unconsciousness in a string of words, setting, character and plot in a story. Through literature we can find various information and phenomena that occurred in the past, present, and predict the future.

Literary works is the result of imitation of life. Various phenomena of life will be presented by an author with a realist, naturalist, or romantic. One phenomenon that enough attention is about identity. The identity is a discourse and a fairly complex phenomenon in our lives. Sometimes we are not aware of our identity. It is reasonable because we are often in conflict with actual reality, even within ourselves.

Weinreich and Saunderson (in Burke & E. Stets, 2009: 112) defines the identity as the whole idea of one's self, where ideas are formed in the present and there is continuity between how one establish himself in the past and how he established himself to be one in the future. So it can be said that one's identity is formed based on past experience, continuously deals with the situation in the present and the future aspirations of a person.

In forming an identity will be friction between the id, ego, and superego. Id, ego, and superego within us will perceive various phenomena that occur in the environment. The three structure of mental will determine the identity of who we really are. Erikson (in Schwartz, et al, 2011:32) said that identity as a subjective feeling of self-consistent and evolving over time. In various places and various social situations, a person still has the feeling of being the same person. So, someone else who realizes the continuity of the individual characters can respond appropriately.

The character and identity is one of the results of the conflict struggles and of course it is representation of the state of human psychology in the real life. Equal with it that the

literary work to show and provide information about human behavior. As Koeswara (1991:4) said that literature, history, and religion can provide valuable information about human behavior and identity.

The Known World is one of the representations of nature, and that offers a complex and contradictory view of slavery and the racism in Manchester County. The novel consists of many of the classical elements known to belong to slave narratives and novels about slavery, for example the horrors of slavery, the journey from South to North and the concept of passing.

In *The Known World*, Henry Townsend is one of the central figures (main character) in the narrative was a black slave owner was one feature of many that intrigued me. He has the background of the black family, the time period of slavery and racism is still so strong at that time. At that social condition, Henry Townsend will grow up and determine to be a powerful master of the black slaves. The situation makes difficult to the character of Henry in determining his identity. Since childhood, he had been close and familiar with a white family that would give color and influence on the development of his character. That interaction makes him to imitate the way of life of his master.

In this research, the researcher focus on mentality of Henry Townsend character and the remote causes for his motivation dealing with his choice of becoming a slave master. The reasons for this being interesting are, as stated above, not only racially related, but also that this is contrary to his parents' convictions and their legacy. Henry Townsend is a black man who was ever felt and become slave but had a few slaves later. Since, it is indicated that Henry Townsend have a dual identity, ambivalence and problem in his mentality. It is mean that one side of him as a black man, in the other side he became the master of the black slave.

The Known World approach has not been widely explored through psychology. This novel explored a lot, especially the problem racism and other forms of slavery. As in Quratul Aeni thesis (2009) of UIN Malang, she analyzes *the Racial Discrimination Reflected in Edward P. Jones's The Known World*. The thesis focuses on the problem of covering racism in the political, economic, social and educational. Then, Tobias Anderson (2006) from Lund University, he analyzes *The Development of Henry Townsend in The Known World by Edward P. Jones*. The thesis focuses on the contradiction with his parents Henry Townsend conviction and legacy. For these reasons, the researcher focuses study on issues mentality of Henry Townsend character in determining his identity and use psychology approach because the character of Henry Townsend relates directly to the psychological aspects of the character and personality to be studied.

1.2 Statement of Problem

The researcher focuses this analysis on the mentality of Henry Townsend's character and the remote causes for his motivation dealing with his choice of becoming a slave master. Henry Townsend is one of the central figures (main character) in the novel. He has the background of the black family, the time period of slavery and racism is still so strong at that time. At that social condition, Henry Townsend will grow up and determine to be a powerful master of the black slaves. The situation makes difficult to the character of Henry in determining his identity. As the explanation above, the researcher elaborates some focusing point in the questions below:

1. What is Henry Townsend's structure of personality described in Edward P. Jones novel *The Known World*?
2. How is the construction of Henry Townsend's personal identity?

1.3 Research Objective

This research is aimed to find the answers for the questions mentioned above as accurately as possible. Thus, the purposes of this research are:

1. To find out the description of Henry Townsend's structure of personality in his novel *The Known World*.
2. To explore the construction of identity of Henry Townsend's character.

1.4 Research Significances

There are two significances of the research; it is academic and practical significance. Academically, this research can be used as a reference for students who intend to analyze the mentality of Henry Townsend's character influencing his identity in terms of Sigmund Freud's theory.

Practically, referring to Sigmund Freud's theory in analyzing characters personality and human mind or psychology in the main character of this novel, the researcher hopes that this analysis can be as primary source and useful for those who wants to study literary works in relation to psychology especially for English Department student in UIN Sunan Gunung Djati.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

Key terms are taken from the word in the paper of research. These key terms provide to make the reader of the research easier to comprehend about the problem of the research. Not only to make the reader easier to comprehend the research, but also had it provided to avoid misunderstanding to comprehend the research. The key terms that the writer use in this research as follows:

Character: is one of the most important things in the narrative elements (novel). The use of the term character itself in a variety of English language literature suggests the two senses, namely as the characters are displayed, and the attitudes, interests, desires, emotions, and moral principles which owned the character (Nurgiyantoro, 1995:165).

Identity: is defines having essentially unchanging characteristics; the basic unity of a personality, especially the self-image (David, 1981: 68). Weinreich and Saunderson (in Burke & E. Stets, 2009: 112) defines the identity as whole notion a person, where the idea was formed in the present and there is continuity between how one established himself in the past and how she formed her into someone in the future. So it can be said that one's identity is formed based on past experience, continuously deals with the situation in the present and the future aspirations of a person.

Mentality: is the state and activity of the soul (mind), ways of thinking, and feeling in a person. The mentality related to structure of personality in the operational of personality.

