

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Existentialism is not easily defined, as each philosopher has different formulation to define it as Macquarie states, “existentialism is a type of philosophy difficult to define because it does not have any agreed body of doctrine; it is rather a way of doing philosophy in which life and thought are closely related to each other” (Macquarrie in *The Encyclopaedia of Religion*, 1987:22). It grew rapidly after World War II, but it does not mean existentialism emerge at the same time. The pioneer, Soren Aabye Kierkegaard introduced existentialism before World War I, but it became well known in the 20th century.

The Passion for existence is actually one of man’s efforts in building his meaning of life. Someone can find the meaning of life when he thinks that he manages to actualize his idealism. By actualizing his idealism, man can find his identity. In the scope of the society, then his existence will be built. The existence of a man can be seen from two sides. From the outside a man appears to be just another natural creature and from the inside he is an entire universe, the center of infinity. Man is equal, but existentially man has his own world, which differs him from other individual. It is understandable only in the term of individual’s existence, his particular experience of life. Thus, to understand a man, somebody cannot merely

appreciate him from his physical appearance.

A man is valuable if he has an existence rather than has being or essence. A man's experience of life is unique, radically different as of everyone else's and it can be understood truly in the terms of his involvement on life or commitment to it. It strenuously shuns that view, which assumes an ideal of man or mankind, a universal of human nature of which each man, is only one example. Thus the researcher wants to study the existence of a man from the thought of existentialists.

Existentialism stands as a branch of philosophy that studies the path of man's effort to exist in the world. It emerged after the World War I. At that time, it could be found in the works of some great philosophers, such as Soren Aabye Kierkegaard, Friedrich Wilhem Nietzsche, Nicolas Alexandrovitch Berdyaev, Karl Jaspers, Jean-Paul Sartre, and many others but its echo has just appeared many years later. Kierkegaard (1813-1855), a Denmark philosopher and theologian, was known as the first philosopher who introduced existentialism. Basically, literature and philosophy are different in forms, but they have close relationship, since both of them concern with human being, his life, and his problems.

Literature is reflection of social realities and condition of social being in the society. It means that literature cannot be free from the social issue around the society. In edition, literature is closely related to sociology science that reflects the phenomena happening in the society. "Literature and sociology are not wholly

distinct discipline but on contrary, complement each other in our understanding of society”. (Laurenson and Swingewood, 1972: 20)

One of the literary works that shows the reality is movie. *Solomon Kane* is a 2009 epic action film directed by Michael J. Bassett based on the pulp magazine character Solomon Kane created in 1928 by Robert E. Howard. James Purefoy stars in the title role. Despite optioning the rights in 1997, filming did not begin until January 2008. The film is an origin story for the Kane character and intended to be the first of a trilogy. The plot follows a redemption story for Kane, from the end of his life as a privateer, through the salvation of his soul by rescuing a Puritan girl and the beginning of his life as the Puritan avenger of the source material. It was produced by a consortium of French, Czech and British companies and mostly filmed in the Czech Republic. The film was first shown at the 2009 Toronto International Film Festival. It went on general release in France, Spain and the UK over the end of 2009 and the beginning of 2010. Reception was generally favorable, with a Rotten Tomatoes rating of 82% following the UK release; the film's atmosphere and Purefoy's acting attracted the most acclaim. The movie has award from Audience Jury Award the category of the recipient in 2010.

One of directors who transfer the reality in screenplay is Michael J. Bassett. He was born and grew up in Newport, Shropshire in the West Midlands of the United Kingdom where he was educated at Adams Grammar School. Bassett is an English screenwriter and film director. He has produced a variety of films, both for television

and cinema. After a period of years, Bassett finally got some notice with a screenplay titled *No Man's Land*. Bassett's first feature, the horror film *Deathwatch* (2002), was set in the trenches of World War One and this film also won in Grand Prize of European Fantasy Film in Silver (2003). *Wilderness* (2006), *Bugs* (TV series 1995). Bassett's most recent project, *Solomon Kane* had a nationwide cinema release in the United Kingdom in 2010.

The film opens in North Africa, 1600, with the English mercenary, Solomon Kane, leading the crew of his ship into battle against the Ottoman occupiers of a fortress town. After defeating the Ottoman defenders, Solomon and his men enter the fortress, only to enter a room of enchanted mirrors. Demons trapped within the mirrors attack and kill most of the crew, but Solomon fights his way into the throne room of the fortress. Inside, as he helps himself to the fortress's treasure, a demon dressed in hooded black robes and armed with a flaming sword appears. The demon announces itself as the Devil's Reaper and tells Solomon his evil deeds have irrevocably damned his soul, and he is now destined for Hell. After a brief duel, Solomon cries "*I am not yet ready for Hell!*" and leaps from the throne room window into the sea. As he falls to safety, the Reaper snarls his soul will be the Devil's.

Solomon Kane is a bloodthirsty mercenary who loses his soul to the devil's reaper and is thereby destined for hell if he strays off the path of righteousness. He becomes a man of peace and tramps around having a series of pretty banal encounters before a Sorcerer named Malachi, turns up and starts trying to kill or enslave

everyone, including William and Meredith from Solomon's new family. He snaps and goes on the rampage trying to get Meredith back and somehow manages to receive a promised pardon from God if he succeeds.

There are four reasons that make the movie be attracting to study and analysis.

First reason is because the movie is a literature that is interesting to analyze. It shows the reality of life, so that watching the movie will give people experience of life. Most of the inspiration will be gotten from watching movie.

Second reason is there is a unique character in this movie. The movie shows the ambiguity of the mayor character. The character is sometimes like a dirty and pure man in that motion of the story. Solomon looks like a person who is ambitious of doing war and careless to other people, but in other hand he is very good and willingly to help others. So it is interesting.

Third reason is the movie shows the war condition that makes it interesting to study. There is part of the reality condition of war that makes raise the imagination.

Fourth reason is the Personality behaviors of mayor character. The movie shows the unfairness condition to Solomon and finally grows up in the bad environment when life must go on. So that Solomon wants to do the best thing to his life. The movie shows Solomon's character as the good man after becoming devil. By watching the movie the emotional feeling would be gotten like involved in the stories.

Stimulated by all of facts clarified above the writer proposes a existentialist approach to study about the major character using Sartre's Existentialism theory and entitles this research paper: **PASSION FOR SAVING LIFE IN MICHAEL J BASSET'S *SOLOMON KANE* MOVIE : (2009) AN EXISTENTIALIST APPROACH**

B. Literature Review

The movie *Solomon Kane* by Michael J. Basset is interesting movie. As far the writer concerns, the research on the movie has been conducted by some researches.

The first Researcher is Kartika Rahmawati (2011) Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta, entitled *The Anxiety of Solomon Kane in Micheal J. Basset's Solomon Keane: (2009)* based on the title and background, the writer focuses on analyzing Solomon Kane id, ego, superego, and then his anxiety. The last, the writer makes an analysis of Solomon Kane character using anxiety. The outcome of the study shows that the film illustrates the anxiety of Solomon Kane in a hard world in the early sixteenth century. The research shows a bloodthirsty mercenary who loses his soul to the devil's reaper and then he must save and get redeemed for his soul. Finally, the conclusion of this analysis is that people must be brave to take the consequence of what they choose, in facing the problem they must be able to make up their mind so they will not regret and will reduce their anxiety.

Based on the previous research above, the positioning of this research is to try extending previous studies on Existentialist. In the study the researcher gives title: Passion for Saving Life in Michael J. Basset's *Solomon Kane* : (2009) an Existentialist Approach.

C. Problem Statement

Problem Statement is important in any research to find the answer of scientific question that emerge in doing research. The story in the *Solomon Kane's* character, concerning with his existence in looking for the meaning of life therefore, the problem statement of this study is "How the Passion for saving life is reflected in the movie *Solomon Kane* by Michael?"

D. Limitation of the Study

To accomplish the study, the research should limit the study. The study will focus on the passion for saving life process through the structural element of the movie based on the existentialism perspective.

E. Objective of the Study

The objectives of this study are:

1. To analyze the structural elements of *Solomon Kane* movie.

2. To analyze the movie based on the existentialism perspective and identifying the relationship between movie and the passion for saving life.

F. Benefit of the Study

This research is expected to give some benefits as follows;

1. Theoretical Benefit

To give additional information to literature research mainly the literary study on existentialism approach.

2. Practical Benefit

To answer the research's curiosity about Michael J. Basset movie especially *Solomon Kane*.

G. Research Method

1. Types of the Study

This type study is qualitative in which the researcher does not need statistic to collect, to analyze, and interpreted data.

2. Types of the Data and the Data Source

The Type of data is text, while the data sources are divided into two kinds:

a. Primary Data Source

The primary data sources of data are the literary work itself that consist of word, phrase, and sentence.

b. Secondary Data Sources

The secondary sources of data are books of literary criticism, and articles on internet.

3. Object of the Study

The object of the study is the movie of Michael J. Basset “*Solomon Kane*” Published in England by Co. inc and copyright in 1964.

4. Technique of the Data Collection.

In this research, the technique of data collection in this study is library research. It consists of some steps, as follows:

a. Observation

This step is used to make the analysis by watching the movie repeatedly to understanding about the movie.

b. Library Research

Finding out the important data and identifying the relevant element.

5. Technique of the Data Analysis

The data are analyzed by using descriptive qualitative analysis and analyzing the structural elements of the movie.

H. Research Organization

To make it easy to understand, the writer arranges the research paper into five chapters. The researcher systematizes this research into five chapters. Chapter I is Introduction, which consist of background of the study, literary review, problem statement, limitation of the study, objective of the study, benefit of the study, theoretical approach, research method, and research paper organization. Chapter II comprises of the underlying theory, which presents the notion of Existentialism, Structural Elements of the Movie, Basic concepts of Sartre's Existentialism, and Theoretical Application. Chapter III deals with the structural analysis of the work, which consists of character and characterization, plot, point of view, setting, theme, and discussion. Chapter IV presents the Existentialism analysis. Chapter V presents Conclusion and Suggestion.