

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

The novel *Liza of Lambeth* is written by William Somerset Maugham, an English novelist. It is actually his first novel which Maugham wrote as a medical student in London's St. Thomas hospital. It was published in Great Britain by T. Fisher Unwin in 1897 when the author was only 23 years old. This novel has 124 pages and 12 chapters.

William Somerset Maugham was born in the British Embassy in Paris on 25th January, 1874. By the time he was ten, both William's parents were dead and he was sent to live with his uncle, the Rev. Henry Maugham, in Whitstable, Kent. After an education at King's School, Canterbury, and Heidelberg University in Germany, Maugham became a medical student at St. Thomas Hospital, London. While training to be a doctor Maugham worked as an obstetric clerk in the slums of Lambeth. He used these experiences to help him write his first novel, *Liza of Lambeth* (1897). Maugham achieved fame with his play *Lady Frederick* (1907), a comedy about money and marriage. By 1908 Maugham had four plays running simultaneously in London. During the war, Maugham's best-known novel, *Of Human Bondage* (1915) was published. This was followed by another successful book, *The Moon and Sixpence* (1919). Maugham also developed a reputation as a fine short-story writer, one story, *Rain*, which appeared in *The Trembling of a*

Leaf(1921), was also turned into a successful feature film. Popular plays written by Maugham include *The Circle* (1921), *East of Suez* (1922), *The Constant Wife* (1926) and the anti-war play, *For Services Rendered* (1932).In his later years Maugham wrote his autobiography, *Summing Up* (1938) and works of fiction such as *The Razor's Edge* (1945), *Catalina* (1948) and *Quartet* (1949).William Somerset Maugham died in 1965.

Novel *Liza of Lambeth* tells about love and violence for solving problems in their social life. Many problems in this novel, especially in the family but many of the men choose the violence for solving their problems. Liza Kemp is an 18yearold factory worker and the youngest of 13 children, now living alone with her ageing and incompetent mother. Very popular with all the residents—both young and old—of Vere Street, Lambeth, she cannot really make up her mind as far as her love life is concerned. She very much likes Tom, a boy of her age, but when he proposes to her she rejects him. In one occasion she has met with Jim Blakeston, an old man which 40 years old. Liza feels attracted to Jim. They never appear together in public because they do not want the other residents of Vere Street or their workmates to start talking about them. Liza's friend Sally gets married, has to stop working at the factory because her husband would not let his wife earn her own money, and soon becomes pregnant. Liza feels increasingly isolated, with Sally being married now and even Tom seemingly shunning her, but her love for Jim keeps her going. They do talk about their love affair though about the possibility of Jim leaving his wife and children, about Liza not being able to

leave her mother because the latter needs her help, about living somewhere else, about bigamy – but, strangely, not about adultery.

The novel builds up to a sad climax when it gradually turns out that all men maybe with the exception of Tom are like invariably beat their wives, especially when they have been drinking. Soon after their wedding Harry beats up Sally just because she has been away from home chatting with a female neighbor of theirs. What is more, he even hits Mrs Cooper, his mother-in-law. Liza, who happens to drop by and stays a little longer to comfort Sally is late for her meeting with Jim in front of a nearby pub. When she finally gets there Jim himself is aggressive towards her for being late.

Soon the situation deteriorates completely. Mrs. Blakeston, who is pregnant again, stops talking to her husband at home—this is her way of opposing his affair with Liza. Then she goes on to indirectly threaten Liza: She tells other people what she would do to Liza if she got hold of her, and the other people tell Liza. Liza, a "coward" according to the third person narrator, is frightened because Mrs. Blakeston is strong whereas she herself is weak. One Saturday afternoon in November, when Liza is going home from work, she is confronted with an angry Mrs. Blakeston. In the ensuing fight between the two women, Mrs. Blakeston first spits in Liza's face and then attacks her physically. Quickly a group of spectators gather round the two women—none of them even tries to separate the fighting women eventually, both Tom and Jim stop the fight, and Tom walks Liza home. Liza is now publicly stigmatized as a wrong one, a fact she herself admits to Tom. Despite all her

misbehavior, Tom still wants to marry Liza, but she tells him that "it's too late now" because she thinks she is pregnant. Tom would even tolerate her condition if only she could decide to marry him, but she refuses again.

When Mrs Kemp comes home and sees her daughter's injuries all she can contribute to mitigating the situation is to offer her daughter some alcohol (whisky or gin). In the course of the evening they both get drunk, in spite of Liza's pregnancy. During the following night, however, Liza has a miscarriage. Mr Hodges, who lives upstairs, fetches a doctor from the nearby hospital, who soon pronounces the hopelessness of Liza's condition. While her daughter is dying, Mrs Kemp has a long talk with Mrs. Hodges, a midwife and sick-nurse. Liza's last visitor is Jim, but Liza is already in a coma. Mrs. Kemp and Mrs. Hodges have switched the subject and are talking about the funeral arrangements when Liza's death rattle can be heard and the doctor, who is still present, declares that she is dead.

Liza of Lambeth is a novel that has many public responses. The responses come from readers, critics, market, and book industries. Maugham draws on his own experiences as a trainee doctor who would frequently be called to attend on people in the poorer areas of London. This novel has been reviewed in some mass media. Neil Gaiman wrote his review in *American Gods* that this book is not at all the sort of book that it seems to be from the first chapter. However, it does not take long for Maugham to reveal the hard reality of the daily lives of the inhabitants of Vere Street, in which all men beat their wives, women fight each other, and death is an ever-present

possibility. None of the characters ever seem particularly unhappy with their lot in life, facing their relative poverty with equanimity and good cheer, prosaically discussing the practicalities of having insured a person as they lie dying or excusing their husbands' violence as just being down to drink. In another review from Sandhya on December 30, 2012 it is stated that *Liza of Lambeth* (1897) is perhaps Maugham's only novel which I don't have the heart to revisit. Not because it is poor, but because it is so chillingly tragic. The graphic violence and the extreme misfortune of the lead character evoke a deep sense of horror.

There are pro and contras about the novel. The pros, said that *Liza of Lambeth* is another great book by Somerset. The characters are rich and fulfilling. One of the best author of time. Always a pleasure to read. This is the statement from Roger E. Vandenbeusque in Amazon Verified Purchase on February 24, 2013. Ashton, on July 28, 2013, he states that "The amazing thing about Somerset Maugham's writing is that this was what life was like in the London working class in the late nineteenth-century, and that life is depicted poignantly for us".

On the other hand, there are contras about this novel. The contra, on May 14, 2013 in Amazon Verified Purchase by Priscilla A. Porter said that "It was ok, but I did not particularly like the book, Perhaps it was the dialect that made it difficult to read. Then from Manojendu Choudhury "Manojendu" (Mumbai, Maharashtra, India) on July 31, 2001, states that the story plot is nothing extraordinary, nor are the characters unique, but what sets this short

novel apart from the rest is the vivid picture that Maugham creates of the lower section of the London society. Even so there are pros and cons about *Liza of Lambeth* novel, but the novel sold well and Maugham decided to abandon medicine and become a full-time writer.

There are five reasons why the writer is interested in studying this novel; first is because it was Maugham's first attempt at writing a novel, and this he did while practicing as a doctor. His work took him to the doorsteps of the poor and needy in the slums of Lambeth, and it is his experience and observations here that gave him the material for the book. To his own surprise, the novel was fairly well-received when it was published, and soon Maugham got more offers to write.

Second is because *Liza of Lambeth* novel is set among the working poor in the slums of Lambeth of the late nineteenth-century. Liza lives with her mother in a street with other working class folks and works in a factory. She is wild spirited and crass.

Third is the story of love from Liza's own life. Liza Kemp rejects the marriage proposal of the decent and worthy Tom and becomes the lover of a married blackguard Jim Blakeston. He treats her horribly and when she becomes pregnant with his child, his wife savagely beats her, causing a miscarriage and her eventual death.

Fourth is because the language used in the novel. Although there is criticism about the language used in the novel, it is also the knowledge for us about the language used by people who are not educated in that time.

“You’ll be ‘avin’ your little trouble soon, eh, Polly?” asked one good lady of another

“Oh, I reckon I’ve got another two months ter go yet,” answered Polly.

And the last point is because criticism against violence for solving problem becomes one of issue of this novel as well. At that time, a lot of men like to torture their wives. The wives often received a blow after their husbands drink beer. This is one of issue that the writer analyze to find out the reasons why they did it in that time.

Based on the explanation above, the writer is encouraged to entitle her research as follows, “CRITICISM AGAINST VIOLENCE FOR SOLVING PROBLEM REFLECTED IN WILLIAM SOMERSET MAUGHAM’S *LIZA OF LAMBETH* NOVEL (1897): A SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE”.

B. Literature Review

Liza of Lambeth novel (1897) by William Somerset Maugham is an interesting novel. As far as the writer concerns, in Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta, none of the reseacher was concern to study in *Liza of Lambeth* novel. But the writer had found the study about *Liza of Lambeth* novel in among others is a research conducted by Christina Halim by entitled “A Study of Liza's wrong decision and its fatal effects in W. Somerset Maugham's *Liza of Lambeth*”. Here, the thesis writer is curious to know the factors that influence Liza in taking the decision to accept Jim and refuse Tom to be her lover. Then, she also wants to find out how this wrong decision brings fatal effects to her. For this purpose, the thesis writer uses literary theories by applying the theory on characterization and conflict. The theory on

characterization is used to analyze Liza's domestic and nondomestic factors that influence her in making a decision. The theory on conflict is used to analyze the fatal effects of Liza's wrong decision. Beside literary theories, the psychological theories are also used in order to analyze Liza's non-domestic factors that influence her in making a decision. In conclusion, the thesis writer realizes that Liza's life is considered to be tragic because having lost her father makes her try to find the father's image in her suitor. It is one of the factors that makes her choose Jim to be her lover besides the other factors as well which she feels unable to find it in Tom. Yet, the thesis writer also finds that Liza never gets love and affection from her parents, especially her mother. Furthermore, the thesis writer also finds the tragic ending in Liza because in the end of her life, she has to die as an unmarried mother.

The object of the research is *Liza of Lambeth* novel and violence for solving problem. While the differences are the theory used in that research is in sociological perspective. That's why this research is crucial to be conducted.

C. Problem Statement

Based on the previous background of study, the writer proposed the problem "How is criticism against violence for solving problem reflected in *Liza of Lambeth* novel?"

D. Limitation of the Study

The writer focuses this research on analyzing criticism against violence for solving problem reflected in *Liza of Lambeth* novel (1897) written by William Somerset Maugham based on sociological perspective.

E. Objectives of the Study

Based on the problem statement above, there are two objectives of the research that the writer concerns:

1. To describe the structural element of *Liza of Lambeth* novel.
2. To analyze criticism against violence for solving problem reflected in *Liza of Lambeth* novel (1897) based on sociological perspective.

F. Benefits of the Study

The benefits expected from this study are as follows

1. Theoretical benefit

The study is projected to give novel contribution and information to the larger body of knowledge, particularly in literary devices.

2. Practical benefit

The study is expected to enrich the knowledge and experience of the writer and other students at UMS or other universities interested in literary studies.

G. Research Method

1. Type of the Study

In this research, the writer uses a qualitative research. It is library research while data sources are using literary data. It purposes to analyze

novel using sociological perspective. The steps to conduct this research are (1) determining the type of the study, (2) determining the object of the study, (3) determining data and data source, (4) determining technique of data collection, and (5) determining technique of data analysis.

2. Object of the Study

The object of the study is *Liza of Lambeth* by William Somerset Maugham published in 1897 by William Heinemann Ltd 1897.

3. Type of the Data and Data Source

There are two data sources that are needed to do this research, namely: primary data sources and secondary data sources.

a. Primary data sources

The primary data sources is *Liza of Lambeth* novel (1897) written by William Somerset Maugham.

b. Secondary data sources

The secondary data sources from other sources related the study, such as: website, dictionary, some books that support the analysis.

4. Technique of Data Collection

The technique of data collecting is note-taking, and the steps are as follows:

a. Reading a novel for several times.

b. Determining the character that will be analyzed.

- c. Taking notes of important thing both of primary and secondary data source.
- d. Classifying and determining the relevant data.
- e. Browsing on the internet to search information that relates with novel, such as novel's subtitles, identity, response of the public, etc.

5. Technique of Analyzing Data

The technique used in analyzing the data is descriptive analysis. It concerns with structural element of the novel on criticism against violence for solving problem reflected in *Liza of Lambeth* novel (1897) written by William Somerset Maugham using sociological perspective.

H. Research Paper Organization

The research paper organization of "Criticism Against Violence for Solving Problem Reflected In *Liza of Lambeth* (1897) written by William Somerset Maugham" is as follows: Chapter I is introduction, which consists 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 consists of the underlying theory, which presents the notion of sociology of literature, the notion of criticism against violence, the violence against women, types of violence, men and violence, problem solving, the steps in problem solving, structural elements of the novel, and theoretical application. Chapter III deals with Social Historical Background of English Society in the Late Nineteenth-century. Chapter VI deals with the structural analysis of the novel, which

involves the structural elements and discussion. Chapter V presents the Sociological analysis. Chapter VI presents Conclusion and Suggestion.