

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

In this life, everyone has the desire to achieve the things they want. Desiring is a state of mind that is commonly associated with a number of different effects: a person with a desire tends to act in certain ways, feel in certain ways, and think in certain ways. Desire describes a state of attachment to something or someone, and the cloud of possibility that is generated by the gap between an object's specificity and the needs and promises projected onto it (Berlant 2012: 6). Bertrand Russell says in Irvine's book that desire is a subject upon which true views can only be arrived at by an almost complete reversal of the ordinary unreflecting opinion (Irvine, 2006: 1).

Desire is not a single line of force that runs between the subject and the desired object, but is more properly figured as a triangle in which the real energy of desire is provided by the mediator, who renders an object desirable (Cowdell, Chris Fleming, and Joel Hodge, 2014: 2). Desire can provide direction and meaning for an individual even if the objects she has chosen to pursue is not especially valuable. Desire always become manifest at the join of speech, where it makes its appearance, its sudden emergence, its surge forwards. Desire emerges just as it becomes embodied in speech, it emerges with symbolism (Lacan and Jacques, 1988: 234).

The realities and imaginations of an author which are reflected in literary work are created by the author by witnessing the fact and by undergoing the reality and social life. Every author can deliberately convey his or her view toward society through her work. One conflict of writers which reveals about psychological is an American author Elizabeth Gilbert in her novel entitled *The Signature of All Things*. It was published in October 1st 2013. It contains of 609 pages.

The title of the Elizabeth Gilbert novel is *The Signature of All Things*. In *The Signature of All Things*, Elizabeth Gilbert returns to fiction, inserting her inimitable voice into an enthralling story of love, adventure and discovery. The book begins with British ex-pat Henry Whittaker, a boy of humble origins, who, by the time he is an adult in the 19th century, turns himself into a captain of industry in the botanical and pharmaceutical industry, particularly quinine. As a boy, he pilfered from the Royal Botanical Kew Gardens and sold to others, and showed his mettle as an entrepreneur. The director, Sir Joseph Banks, eventually apprehended him. Whittaker's penance was to be sent on faraway travels, in order to prove himself worthy and edify himself in the realm of plants.

When Whittaker returned, he made it his life's work to eclipse Banks and become a wealthy self-made industrialist of the natural world. He got himself an educated Dutch wife, left Europe for good, and settled in Western Pennsylvania, where he built an elaborate estate that truly did rival the Kew Gardens, called White Acre. All alike envied his ostentatious mansion on the hill, and were impressed by his breathtaking, unparalleled gardens. He sired one daughter, Alma, and adopted another, Prudence.

Henry's prominence on the pages segues into his daughter's, Alma. The beautiful Prudence becomes an outspoken abolitionist, while Alma grows into a scholarly, tall, large-boned, homely, and privately carnal woman who becomes the flourishing main character. Alma is so fleshed out that and every moment in her life is organically rendered. As she becomes her father's daughter as a scientist, (but with a gentler disposition), the reader is taken ever further into her inner and outer journeys. She is not just a botanist and taxonomist, but in many ways, a philosopher, a noble thinker, with a sexual and sensual hunger.

The title of the book refers that all life contains a divine code or print, and was put forth by a 16th century German cobbler and early botanist, Jacob Boehme, one rejected by the Whittakers, for the most part, as medieval nonsense. He had mystical visions about plants, and believed there was a

divine code in “every flower, leaf, fruit, and tree on earth. All the natural world was a divine code.”

The novel tells in a curling leaf, a nesting bird, and when the stamens of one plant stick it to its receptacle. Every unique living creature, according to Boehme, contains the eponymous title. Alma meets an orchid painter who embodies this belief, and who pulls her into the world of mysticism. As an explorer and thinker, she is compelled to understand this notion.

Elizabeth Gilbert was born in Waterbury, Connecticut, Elizabeth Gilbert grew up on a family Christmas-tree farm and went on to study political science at New York University. Her first book, a short-story collection titled *Pilgrims*, was a finalist for the PEN/Hemingway Award. Her first novel, *Stern Men*, was named a New York Times Notable Book. Her first nonfiction book, *The Last American Man*, was a finalist for both the National Book Award and the National Book Critics Circle Award. Elizabeth Gilbert is an award-winning writer of both fiction and non-fiction. Her short story collection *Pilgrims* was a finalist for the PEN or Hemingway award, and her novel *Stern Men* was a New York Times notable book. Her 2002 book *The Last American Man* was a finalist for both the National Book Award and the National Book Critic’s Circle Award. Her memoir, *Eat, Pray, Love*, spent 57 weeks in the 1st spot on the New York Times paperback bestseller list. It has shipped over 6 million copies in the US and has been published in over thirty languages. Her follow-up memoir, *Committed*, also topped the New York Times bestseller list. Gilbert lives in Frenchtown, New Jersey.

The writer uses a psychoanalytic approach to study the personality of human beings in a novel, because personality has connections with psychology of human beings. A psychoanalytic approach is a theory that is proposed by Sigmund Freud. This theory is applied to different aspects of psychology the approach basically provides an explanation of a specific topic from a certain point of view. Freud in Newman (1983: 385) described three components of personality; the id, the ego, and the superego. The Id is the most basic system of personality, totally unconscious, the ego is authorized

by reality principles and connects with real world, and the superego as the principle of morality consists of some values and evaluated norms.

The researcher has four reasons why she wants to analyze this novel. The first reason, the researcher is attracted to analyze the novel because the researcher likes to observe the desire of woman especially Alma's desire. The novel has good story. It inspires the writer to observe her struggle to realize her dream. Although she has complicated life but she has ambition to realize her dream. The second because the moral values given by the author are a lot especially spiritual, divine and the magical values that are very dominating story in this novel, and we can increase our knowledge about the science.

The third reason is the author of the novel tells the story not in one place but also a lot of places and the authors use flow back and forth so the reader does not feel bored to read the novel. The fourth reason is because the title that makes us want to read and so curious to know the story as told by author, because the novel spans much of century (1800s) and circumnavigates the globe in a page-turner that is equal parts family saga, love story, and meditation on the origin species.

From the illustration above the researcher will propose to conduct a research entitled Desire Reflected in Elizabeth Gilbert's *The Signature of All Things* (2013): A Psychoanalytic Approach. Gilbert wants to describe Alma who has a desire in her life. It puts the emphasis on ambition.

B. Literature Review

Based on researcher's observation, at least in Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta, the writer finds there is no research that has been conducted in Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta to study Elizabeth Gilbert's *The Signature of All Things* by using psychoanalytic approach. So that the researcher cannot compare this research.

C. Problem Statement

The problem statement of this paper is “What are the factors that cause desire in Alma Whittaker?”

D. Limitation of the Study

The researcher focused on analyzing the desire of *Alma Whittaker* as the major character of the novel based on psychoanalytic approach.

E. Objective of the Study

The objectives of study are as follows:

- a. To analyze the novel based on its structural elements.
- b. To analyze the novel based on psychoanalytic approach.

F. Benefit of the Study

The study is expected to give benefits as follow:

a. Theoretical Benefit

To give a new contribution to the other literary research, especially for those who study popular novel.

b. Practical Benefit

To give information, better understanding, and additional knowledge to literary research especially dealing with the novel.

G. Research Method

To analyze the data found in this novel, the researcher used the qualitative method in this study. A qualitative approach is one in which the inquirer often makes knowledge claims based primarily on constructivist perspectives or advocacy/participatory perspectives or both (Creswell, 2003: 18). The writer has some steps as follow:

1. Object of the Study

Object of the study is Elizabeth Gilbert's *The Signature of All Things*.

2. Type of the Data and the Data Source

There are two types of the data namely primary data and secondary data that are needed to do this research paper.

a. Primary data source

The primary data are those which are collected afresh and for the first time, and thus happen to be original in character (Kothari,2004:95).The primary data are taken from the novel itself *Alma Whittaker* by Elizabeth Gilbert,in which the data are analyzed using structural analysis and psychoanalytic approach.

b. Secondary data source

The Secondary data are those which have already been collected by someone else and which have already passed through the statistical process(Kothari, 2004: 95). The secondary data sources are some material related to the data required, such as writer biography, the data taken from official website, etc.

3. Technique of the Data Collection

The method used for collecting data is library research by collecting and selecting both primary and secondary data. The researcher involved some required steps:

- a. Reading the novel to get the messages, and better understanding.
- b. Reading some related references to observe the theory, data and information.
- c. Making notes of important part in both primary and secondary data sources.
- d. Classifying the data into some categories

4. Technique of the Data Analysis

In analyzing data, the researcher employed“descriptive qualitative research” in which the writer just collects the data,

classifies the data and analyzes it, then the last makes conclusion from each data.

H. Research Organization

The researcher systematized the research into five chapters as follow: the first chapter is introduction, covering the background of the study, the problem of study, literary review, limitation of study, the objective of study, benefit of study, research method and research paper organization. Second chapter presents the theory of psychoanalytic by Sigmund Freud. The researcher connects the study with Freud's psychoanalytic theory, such as the psychoanalytic theory, system of personality, which consists of the id, ego and superego, desire and the last is application of it. Third chapter is research method using structural analysis of the novel, which includes the structural elements of character and characterization, plot, setting, point of view, style, theme, and the discussion, while the psychoanalytic analysis deal with the problem of the major character is presented in fourth chapter. And in the last chapter is conclusion and suggestion.