

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### **Background of the Study**

In the life, there are many people experiencing unpleasant event such as natural disaster, accident, death, war, raping, insults, divorce, and poverty. These can result in an emotional shock called trauma. Some people feel trauma in a few moments, and others feel it in a prolonged time. However uniquely, even though men experience the same trauma, it is not definite yet that they will experience the same traumatic pattern. It depends on one's personality, the way to overcome problems, and the support from surrounding. For example people with small minded or mentally ill will process traumatized event more terribly than others with the same experience.

Some psychologists divide trauma into two categories: *screen trauma* and *constructive trauma*. The first refers to a traumatized memory covering and changing the previous trauma that is pressed deeply in his or her heart. The latter refers to a trauma that results in anyone to reach a better life (<http://www.kompas.com/kesehatan/news/0301/02/232546.htm>, February 02. 2003). Further, Alfred Adler states that traumatic experiences are just what suit our purpose (Ansbacher, 1964: 208). However it depends on individual's motivation whether he or she wants and be able to change it or not.

A traumatic person regards that he or she lives alone in the world (Gold, 2000: 64). The deep fears to the tragic event have influenced their behaviour. It can be seen from one or more symptoms: emotional out burst and suspiciousness. He or she also changes his or her activity,

speech pattern, and communication. Usually his or her withdrawal leads him or her to antisocial acts. But, if the traumatic experience is processed as a great motivation, the person will try to do hard to reach his or her goal in order to get a better life. Even though, there may be one or more unexpected behavior as mentioned above.

Traumatic experience is not only as one of interesting psychological phenomenon to psychologists but also to literary authors. Through their writing arts, they explain psychological conflict of human's life that is through the characters. The authors will show that every human has different behaviour.

One of the literary authors concerning with the psychological problem, especially the traumatic experience is William Faulkner (1897-1962). He writes a novel entitled *Absalom, Absalom !*. It is a novel published by Random House, New York, 1936. It is also the most challenging of Faulkner's works often proclaimed as the great masterpiece. When he completed this novel, Faulkner said, "I think it is the best novel yet written by an American" (<http://www.randomhouse.com/vintage/read/>, July 10, 2002).

*Absalom-Absalom* is a title taken from biblical story of Absalom, the third son of David, king of Israel and Judah. It is dynastic tale of incest, rebellion, revenge, and violent death told in the Old Testament. The novel of *Absalom, Absalom !* tells the story of Thomas Sutpen as the main character. He is the son of a poor white in Western Virginia experiencing trauma. It happens when he is fourteen years old, he delivers a message to the landowner, but a liveried black servant told him to go around to the back door of the house.

*He never give me a chance to say it and Pap never asked me if I told him or not and so he cant even know that Pap sent him any message and so whether he got it or not cant even matter, not even Pap; I went up to that door for that nigger to tell me never come to that front door again ... (A, A!, 1932: 237).*

This experience makes him very angry, and inferior. He feels that a poverty results in everyone does anything arbitrarily. Thus it leads him to have grand design, to be a rich person.

Therefore, this research will analyze William Faulkner's *Absalom, Absalom!*. It deals with the traumatic experience of Thomas Sutpen driving his personality development by using the Individual Psychology theory developed by Alfred Adler.

## **B. Literature Review**

There are many researchers who have examined this novel. The first is James L. Roberts. He writes notes entitled *Absalom, Absalom! Notes*. It consists of summary and commentary of the characters of the story. The second is Ismiary Wuryandari, a student of UNS, 1996. Her research is entitled *Ambisi Thomas Sutpen, Tokoh Utama Novel Absalom, Absalom ! Karya William Faulkner*. She uses existentialism philosophical emphasizing on the essence and the realization of Thomas Sutpen's ambition that is done through bad way. The third is Sugianto, a student of UNS, 2001. He analyzes the novel entitled *Racisme in Absalom, Absalom!: Faulkner Defence for the Blacks and Their Descendents Againsts Unfriendly Contemporary Social Condition in the US*. It is about blacks struggle in order to get a better life in US.

Further, there is no student of Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta who has analyzed *Absalom, Absalom !*. Thus, the present researcher will analyze it by emphasizing on the traumatic experience of Thomas Sutpen which influences his personality.

### C. Limitation of the Research

This study is limited to the traumatic experience of Thomas Sutpen, one of major characters, in the novel *Absalom, Absalom !*. This study uses the theory of Individual Psychology developed by Alfred Adler. It is as a means of analysis with consideration that man is social creature; in which formulation and development of personality are influenced by social factor that covering his life.

### **D. Problem Statement**

The major problem of the study is how traumatic experience influences Thomas Sutpen's personality development.

### **E. Objective of the Research**

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To analyze the novel based on its structural elements.
2. To analyze the novel based on the Individual Psychological approach.

## **F. Benefit of the Research**

The benefit of the study deals with:

1. Theoretical benefits are to improve the body of knowledge in studying literature and give contribution to literary studies on Faulkner's *Absalom, Absalom !*
2. Practical benefits are to fulfill the requirement for getting Bachelor of Education in English Department, and to be used as a book guiding in researching *Absalom, Absalom !*.

## **G. Research Method**

Research method covers type of research, source of data, method of data collection and technique of data analysis.

### 1. Type of Research

Type of this research is qualitative. It is the research that does not need statistic and calculation to explore the facts. The data of this research type are also concerned with word rather than numbers.

### 2. Source of Data

There are two types of data source. The first is primary data source that is the text of the novel *Absalom Absalom !* written by William Faulkner in 1936, New York . It involves words, phrases, and sentences. The second is the secondary data sources, that are consist of the other data having relationship with the research, such as essay, comments, Internet, and other relevant information.

### 3. Method of Data Collection

The method of data collection is library research. The writing process of this research consists of several procedures:

Reading the novel repeatedly and noting the important elements of the novel.

Identifying the topic of the novel

Determining the major character that will be analyzed.

Looking for the secondary data.

Classifying and determining the relevant data.

Arranging, researching and developing the selected materials into a good unity toward the topic of the study.

#### 4. Technique of Data Analysis

The technique of data analysis is descriptive. It describes the structural elements of the novel and Individual Psychological analysis. It is used to show the influence of Thomas Sutpen's traumatic experience on his personality.

### **H. Paper Organization**

This research paper consists of five chapters. Chapter I is introduction, it deals with background of the study, literature review, limitation of the study, problem statement, objectives of the study, benefit of the study, theoretical approach, research method, and paper organization. Chapter II contains underlying theory explaining Individual Psychology used to analyze the novel. Chapter III presents structural element and discussion of the novel *Absalom, Absalom !*. Chapter IV deals with the analysis of Individual Psychology toward the traumatic experience. Chapter V is conclusion and suggestion of the research.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **UNDERLYING THEORY**