

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Background of the Problem

It is undeniable for long time a literary work has become means of people to devote their imagination, to convey their messages, and sometime to express themselves in their society. Literary works which include short story, novel, poetry, and drama give entertainment to their readers and their audiences. As it is said by X. J. Kennedy states in *Literature: An Introduction to fiction Poetry, and Drama* 'Literature is a kind of art usually written, that offers pleasure and illumination' (1979:v). It is the reflection of what human being has been seen, experienced, felt, heard, and thought which is written or staged to give entertainment to people. Literary works are fiction which are made up, imagined.

It is emphasized by X.J. Kennedy in *An Introduction to Fiction*, third edition:

'Fiction (from the Latin *fictio*, "a shaping a counterfeiting") is a name for stories not entirely factual, but at least partially shaped, made up, imagined. It is true that in some fiction, such as a historical novel, a writer draws upon factual information in presenting scenes, event, and characters. But the factual information in a historical novel, unlike that in a history book, is of secondary importance' (1983:3).

Thus, we know that there is the difference between literary works and other writings based on factual events. In historical novels, the factual events are not important, while in history books, the history itself is very important.

Among the literary works the writer wants to analyze the drama. Drama that originally comes from Greek and means *to do* is a literary work presented in action. Some writers state that drama is incomplete until it is staged. As Martin Steinmann says in *Literature for Writing* that 'Drama is a work of imaginative literature consisting entirely of dialogue, in prose or in verse, intended for actors to speak with accompanying gestures before an audience, it is incomplete until it is staged' (1966: 317). Nevertheless, we also can find drama that is not meant to be acted. The kind of the drama is called closet drama, Martin Steinmann in *Literature for Writing* explains (1966;120).

The writer is interested in analyzing the drama entitled *Mourning Becomes Electra* besides the reason of the author, Eugene O'Neill, the drama itself is very unique. It is written around 1920. The author pays no attention to the expected length of play. *Mourning Becomes Electra* sequence runs for nine hours. The author makes his characters wear masks, split one character between two actors, reintroduces ghost, choruses, and Shakespearean-style monologue and direct addresses to the audience. He employs sets, lightings, and sounds to enhance emotion rather than to represent a real place. *Mourning Becomes Electra* is a tragedy drama. According to Adhy Asmara DR in *Apresiasi Drama*. "Tragedy drama is drama consists of sadness and pity because the main character since the beginning until the end of drama always faces the unlucky or unhappy fate' (1983:50). While tragedy according to the *Dictionary of Contemporary English* by Longman says the first, a serious play that ends sadly, especially with

the main character's death, and is often intended to teach a moral lesson. The second, plays like this considered as a branch of literature. The third, a terrible, unhappy, or unfortunately event. In this drama the main character of the drama is Mannon family consisting of Ezra Mannon, Christine (his wife), Lavinia (their daughter), and Orin (their son).

The title chosen by the writer is *The Analysis of the Cause and Effect of Tragic Life in Mannon's Family* Eugene O'Neill's *Mourning Becomes Electra*. It is clear that the writer is interested in analyzing the extrinsic element of the play. *Mourning Becomes Electra* peels a life of a famous, rich, influenced family with their rottenness and their weaknesses. Mannons is well known in his society. He has business, a beautiful wife, a son and a daughter, and credibility. However, he is not happy with all things he has. There is something lost in his life, he never wins love from his own wife. He joins the civil war for he needs to do something to make himself busy. His ship company, his career as a judge and a mayor are not enough to keep him busy. His wife together with Brant, his wife's boyfriend, plan to kill him. However, Lavinia, his daughter, witnesses the murdering. Lavinia does not accept this. She influences Orin his brother to fight against their mother. Among them there is self - conflict causing Christine commits suicide and so does Orin. Being felt guilty to her boy friend, Peter, Lavinia tells him her betrayal while she is in the island and asks him not to marry her.

After understanding the plot, the writer finds the cause and effect of tragic life in Mannon's family. The cause and effect of tragic life in the family are interesting because the cause is related to each other and so do the effects of them.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

From the above the background of the problem, the writer finds two problems to discuss. They are as follow:

1. What is the tragic life in *Mourning Becomes Electra*?
2. What the causes of Mannon's family tragic life in *Mourning Becomes Electra* are?
3. What the effects of Mannon's family tragic life in *Mourning Becomes Electra* are?

1.3 Hypothesis of Study

Before discussing about the problems having to do with the title taken by the writer, the writer needs to make hypothesis. According to *New Webster's Dictionary* states hypothesis is a supposition used as a basis from which a draw conclusion, a theory (1983 : 189). They are as follow : First point is talking about the tragic life in Mannon's family, consisting the unhappy life of Ezra Mannon, the unhappy life of Christine, the unhappy life of Lavinia, and the unhappy life of Orin.

Second point is talking about the cause of tragic life in the family. It includes Christine's selfishness, Orin's narrow mindedness.

The third discussion is talking about the effect of Mannon's family tragic life. The point is talking about the death of Ezra Mannon, the revenge of Lavinia, Christine's suicide, Orin's suicide, and Lavinia's loneliness. By the hypothesis, the writer and the reader may have guide to analyze and understand the problems discussed.

1.4 Objective of the Study

The objective of the study are as follows :

- 1) To describe the tragic life of Mannon's family in *Mourning Becomes Electra*.
- 2) To analyze the cause of the tragic life in Mannon's family.
- 3) To analyze the effect of the tragic life in Mannon's family.

1.5 Significance of the Study

By analyzing the drama *Mourning Becomes Electra* written by Eugene O'Neill, the writer intends to:

1. Train, understand, investigate and know further about a literary work especially drama.
2. Make it as a further comparison study.
3. Make it as a base of reflection of the real life.

1.6 The Scope of Problem

In order to avoid broader discussion, the writer needs to make limitation. The writer will only discuss about the tragic life in Mannon's family, the causes of tragic life in Mannon's family including Ezra Mannon, Christine, Lavinia and Orin. The conflicts among them build the causes and the effects of their tragic life. Finally, about the effect of their tragic life among themselves. For further discussion, it is mentioned in the next chapter.

1.7 The Thesis Organization

The thesis is divided into four chapters. Below is the systematic arrangement of the discussion :

Chapter I. The introduction which involves seven points, those are; the background of the study, the statement of the problem, hypothesis of the study, objective of the study, significance of the study, the scope of the problem, the thesis organization.

Chapter II. Clarifies the theoretical framework and the research methodology. The theoretical framework covers the meaning of the analysis, cause, effect and tragic life.

Chapter III. The discussion of the problem. It consists three points. The first point discusses tragic life in *Mourning Becomes Electra* . The second, the

cause of Mannon's family tragedy which is divided into four points and the third, discusses the effect of Mannon's family tragic life.

Chapter IV. The conclusion.