

## CHAPTER II

## GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE OBJECT OF THE STUDY

The Heart of The Matter ( 1948 ) is one of the two principal novels of Graham Greene outside The Power and The Glory ( 1940 ). The novel consists of three parts, each of which is still subdivided into some chapters.

The Heart of The Matter represents all the characteristics of Graham Greene's novels which lack confidence, and show loss of faith and hope, the sense of failure, and the need for advice and authority ( Nuraini, 1994 : 15 ). Through his competence Graham Greene has put his main characters in complicated situation in which they struggle hard to survive. As a devoted Catholic, he mostly involves many ideas of his faith in this novel. In describing the good and evil traits of human character he is much influenced by his religious point of view.

The Heart of The Matter is a novel based on an abstract concept of the nature of existence. The phrase 'the heart of the matter' refers to the innate sinfulness of man and his need of divine mercy ( Kettle, 1961 : 172 ). It is a tragic story of Major Henry Scobie who as an honest policeman eventually cannot maintain the moral conduct that he has gained from his faith. Scobie as we will always call him in the next chapter is depicted as a good-hearted man and lives in West Africa, a colony full of corruption and deceit.

Conflicts that Scobie experiences are begun when he has a lack of communication with his wife, Louise, because of the death of an only child, Chaterine. He does not love his wife anymore, all that remains is a pity for her. Therefore, what Scobie wants to do is just to make his wife happy, such as trying to get commissioner position, though finally he fails. Further, he also tries to send Louise to South Africa though he must borrow money from Yusef, a Syrian smuggler, or even does something that actually hurts his heart- Scobie lets Louise become close to Wilson, a man who has the same hobbies as Louise and who Scobie believes finally can fall in love with his wife.

Further, his relationship with his mistress, Helen Rolt, a young woman who is an injured boat passenger he has helped when he is on his duty, seems capable only of pity. His feeling for her is clouded by this. Scobie sees Helen as a suffering young widow who needs care and protection. This relationship that finally overwhelms him and ultimately destroys him. Scobie cannot leave his wife, Louise nor marry Helen because he is a Catholic.

The other conflicts that cause him to feel more desperate and lonely are the ones with people surrounding him. However, the worst thing he does in his life is after he makes friend with Yusef. Feeling that Yusef has helped him by lending him money for Louise's passage Scobie finally is not able to refuse Yusef's request.

Scobie helps Yusef to smuggle diamonds and even finally lets Yusef kill his loyal servant, Ali to save his own reputation from the society. All these finally make him feel as a responsible man for all the mess and according to him the only solution for his sins is by committing suicide.

The Heart of The Matter is really an interesting novel. But as other literary works The Heart of The Matter written by Graham Greene cannot escape from the critics. Some critics have criticized both the content and the way this novel is presented to the readers. One of them is Arnold Kettle. In his initial comment Kettle concerns with the content- the concept that Graham Greene tries to provide. According to him, Graham Greene actually is not a great novelist because Greene has reduced life by pressing it into a narrow mould. This, as he adds, is caused by the fact that Greene, as the other novelists at that time partook overwhelmingly in the values of the society he tried to depict. The Heart of The Matter is full of narrowness and pessimism that are represented by its main character, Scobie. Scobie is a description of a man who is in his last degree unhopeful. From this it seems that Greene considers life as meaningless. Greene has associated the nature of the man existence with the worst things such as Scobie's suicide.

Kettle gives disagreeable comment on The Heart of The Matter, however; he actually cannot ignore some aspects

that Graham Greene has in this novel. Therefore, besides the content he also tries to view the way this novel is presented. Kettle admits that Greene is good at conveying an atmosphere of unromantic corruption, has mastered most of the slick technique of the efficient film- technique of rapidity, shows a spare and taut qualities useful in counteracting the underlying pretentiousness, and even inherits the chief technical achievements of the American 'sociorealist' novelist of the between the wars period. He further states that they are such as the perfecting of a very effective narrative style particularly suited to the conveying of a sense of physical action, and the capturing of a tone of conversation at once colloquial and pointed to reflect the live and sensibility of working people, of common man as opposed to the refined one, to take the novel right out of the genteel atmosphere of middle class living, though it cannot be said that Greene was truly succesful. This is because Greene tends to reflect the sensibility not of the mass of the working class but of men and women on the periphery of that class.

Based on all these Kettle finally states that the case against *The Heart of The Matter* is not that it fails to create a coherent impression or to involve a much penetrating observation, but in the content- the concept Scobie holds which has reduced life by pressing it into a narrow mould as he says before. Therefore, referring to

what Kettle says I would like to analyze one of the aspects that can make this novel 'The Heart of The Matter' coherent, that is cohesion.

## **CHAPTER III**

# **PRESENTATION OF DATA AND ANALYSIS**