

## Chapter I

### Introduction

#### A. Background of the Study

It is not easy to be calm when something is going on, especially for youths. When a person was born “abnormally” for being homosexual, for example, he then realizes that he is different from the others. He will feel that he is in a solitary world. However, as a human being he needs to acknowledge, at least to himself, that even for him actually it is difficult.

Homosexual, especially male homosexual or known as gay, has always been an interesting issue to discuss as many people believed that homosexuality is something weird. There is no certain cause why a person becomes a homosexual. Even the person himself cannot explain why he is being a homosexual. It is mentioned in *The Encyclopedia Americana* that many researches indicate that psychological and sociological causes are more assuring than biological ones (1977:324). There are countries, such as the Western ones, which have legal status for homosexuals. In spite of this, not all people can accept the legalization. Mostly the people consider it as immoral so that they can hardly accept those who are homosexuals. However, this is a difficult position for homosexuals. They, then, can hardly express themselves freely.

Yukio Mishima, one of Japanese most outstanding writers, wrote *Confessions of a Mask*, his first famous novel published in 1949, telling about a boy who is dealing with his homosexuality. Born in Tokyo on 14 January 1925,

he is also the writer of some other outstanding novels such as *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion* (1959), *After the Banquet* (1963), and the tetralogy *The Sea of Fertility* (1965). Most of his novels are the stories about beauty equated with violence, the yearning for love and its rejection when offered, and an exquisite attention to detail in the delineation of character. He has also been several times nominated to get a Nobel Prize on Literature. Due to his attempt for a revision of the government constitution that would permit rearmament had no effect on the government; he committed *harakiri* (Japanese ritual suicide) on 25 November 1970. However, Mishima is more known as a great Japanese writer than as a politician (Japan 976).

The novel *Confessions of a Mask* is the story of a boy named Kochan, who searches for his belonging and his acceptance of his homosexuality. Solely he deals with his own emotion to face the fact that he is uncommonly different from other boys due to his sexual preference. With his sado-masochistic fantasy he tries to conceal his homosexuality from society.

The main character, Kochan, while concealing his homosexuality, is trying to solve his problem himself—whether he would accept it or not. He does not want people around him to know what actually he is dealing with because he does not think that they will be helpful. People believe that homosexuality is something senseless. If it is concerning with the value of manhood expected in the society, it becomes something appalling. As he starts to interact with the outer world outside his family, his findings confirm that he is different. His struggles to conceal his true self-identity suffer since he is always trying to deceive himself. In the

development, the burden he is carrying is getting heavier. Eventually, he is trying to find some other resolution. Hiding behind the false status the society considers him as a heterosexual, he is trying to find a way to accept what he actually is.

The writer is interested in the main character's inner conflict since the character has become two different persons at the same time as he conceals his homosexuality; being a heterosexual as the society assumed him so far and being what he actually is as a homosexual. This bounds the main character's self-expression. Kochan, with all his problematic pursuit of belonging as a homosexual through his homosexuality concealment, is a reflection of a process of self awakening, which happens to people, especially youths, in reality when they have something uncommon inside them. During his concealment, Kochan gradually learns to accept what he actually is even though he thinks most of the society would not accept him. As a human being is created as a dynamic being, his or her existence is often related to his or her constant changing. Kochan, the character in the novel being studied, develops himself from within in a long and winding way. He is trying to figure out the essence of his existence due to his pervert condition of sexuality. Being different from the main stream world sometimes drives a human into some otherness. He is afraid of being his own self. This psychological state can be accused as a concurrent conflict of a human's process of finding a settled condition in which he is comfortable (Hjelee 144). Thus, the following discussion will focus on the main character's psychological conflict.

## **B. Statement of the Problems**

After reading the novel, the writer formulates the problems to be discussed as below:

1. How far is Kochan driven to conceal his homosexuality?
2. How does Kochan struggle to conceal his homosexuality?
3. How does this concealment affect Kochan's personality development?

## **C. Objective of the Study**

Concerning the problems above, the writer comes to the aims of the discussion:

1. To explain how far is Kochan driven to conceal his homosexuality.
2. To describe the way Kochan struggles to conceal his homosexuality.
3. To convey the impact of the concealment toward Kochan's personality development.

## **D. Significance of the Study**

Since the focus is the main character in the novel, it is necessary to observe anything which has something to do with the character. The purpose of the discussion is to know about certain situation, the conflict that is brought, the struggles within, and how the character's personality changes.

By analyzing the story of Yukio Mishima's *Confessions of a Mask*, which is focused on the main character, hopefully the reader will get not only something valuable to enlarge their understanding of knowledge about literary works, but

also contribution for the learning mainly about specific character in story.

Moreover, the study would develop the reader's outlook about life, especially the way to face this life, to learn how to accept ourselves as what we are, and to be honest especially to our own selves.

### **E. Scope and Limitation**

This thesis concentrates on the analysis of the main character, named Kochan, related to his homosexuality concealment and its impact to his personality development in Yukio Mishima's *Confessions of a Mask*.

To reach this purpose, the writer limits the focus of attention in the main character and the environmental setting. Thus, the writer will use the intrinsic approach since analyzing these intrinsic elements of the story is considered to be sufficiently appropriate as the starting point in discussing the problems.

The writer is using sociological and psychological approaches as well in order to make a deeper analysis when focusing on the main character. It is intended to observe the main character who is a homosexual through sociological and humanistic perspectives.

### **F. Theoretical Background**

The intrinsic approach is used to analyze two internal aspects of the novel; the character and setting. This is in order to start the analysis which is focused on the main character, Kochan.

Sociological approach is used to support the analysis of social background that influences the main character's actions, while psychological approach is used to support the analysis on the main character's personality development. Certain theories related to the approaches are used to support the analysis. Mead's sociological theory and Maslow's theory of humanistic are applied in the analysis.

### **G. Method of the Study**

In working on this thesis, the writer makes research by collecting any data and information from books, articles, encyclopaedias, and other printed materials in some libraries which are needed to support the analysis. Other information from internet is used as well. The writer also gets information from particular books which are dealing with the approaches and theories that will be applied to the analysis.

Descriptive analytic method is used in the analysis. The writer applies descriptive explanation of the problems in the work through dialogues, events and actions in the story itself. The analysis is also supported by other information from particular books concerning the work.

### **H. Definition of Key Terms**

**Homosexual** : a person who regularly practices sexual thoughts, feelings, fantasies, and overt sexual acts with members of the same sex (Corsini 151)

- Homosexuality** : sexual thoughts, feelings, fantasies, and overt sexual acts involving a member of one's own sex (Corsini 151)
- Conceal** : to hide something; keep in secret
- Concealment** : acts to hide something or to keep something secret
- Sado-masochistic fantasy** : daydream or imagination in which the object (can be the self or others) of the fantasy is sadistically tortured in regards to sexual pleasure (Sadism and masochism: 1)

## CHAPTER II

# LITERATURE REVIEW