

CHAPTER I

I N T R O D U C T I O N

I.1. Background of the problem

As one of the literary works, drama is an important human creation among other arts. Drama offers the best examples of human problem of the virtual world, a world which seems to be but is not the real one, and reflects how people live. Drama rather presents human life and human activity through its characters' action and dialogues than through description as another literary work. As Reaske said (1966,5) that a drama is composition which delineates life and human activity by means of presenting various actions of - and dialogues between - a group of characters .

In this thesis the writer would like to analyze the play A Doll's House, a modern drama, which is one of Henrick Ibsen's work. Ibsen is a modern dramatist and poet posing a current social question in a thought-provoking way. Through his works Ibsen offers or understanding of the social problems which raised at his time. As Austin E.. Quickley said:

" With Ibsen's work, we take a large step towards understanding an evolving conception of modern drama, one in which the drama serve not as a dispenser of social slogans or social programmers, but as an incitement to exploration and inquiry. This inquiry explores new possibilities in the generic nature of the on-stage world, as a means of shed-

ding new light on the nature of an off-stage world which it not only selectively reflects, but also aggressively confronts, challenges and illuminates." (1985,114)

In this case, the scientific explorers are needed to dig up causes and effects in society as the social problems. Ibsen's self awareness as a playwright leads him to answer the contemporary social problems on the stage.

A Doll's House is one of Ibsen's famous work. It is regarded as the first truly great realistic drama of modern time. A Doll's House is the result of Ibsen's reaction to the world, a man-dominated world. Frederic Wedmore said that The Doll's House is a drama written partly to show that in life of civilization a woman must not be considered as man's creature alone - a ministrant or a toy (Egan, 1985,107). In society there is unfair social, a neglect of the feminine - society was in too great a degree masculine. It seemed that man and woman differ basically in their reaction to the world.

For that reason the writer of this thesis would like to analyze A Doll's House, emphasizing on the main character's problem. In this play Nora Helmer, the main character, has a serious problem in her life. She is a woman who cannot be herself in contemporary society. In contemporary society, a married woman, as Nora Helmer, is a wife who suffers in life because of the greed of man or her husband. In the play, Nora, as a married woman, has

not the same right as her husband's has.

Torvald Helmer, Nora's husband, is the reflection of contemporary society that has the social attitude and notion towards woman. Helmer regards his wife as a plaything or a doll to make his feeling happy rather than as a human being or as an independent person who has a soul. He treats his wife as unliving thing or his pet that can be controlled her life by him. Besides that Helmer is more concerned with his position in society than for the emotional needs of his wife. He won't accept his wife's action which can destroy his prestige in society, although his wife does it to save his life and prove her love to him. He accuses her as a liar who is not fit to educate their children. Beside through Torvald Helmer, the unfair social attitude and notion towards woman is represented through the other characters in the play.

On the other side, Nora is getting aware of her poor position. She thinks that woman should be treated as a human being, and not as a mere doll. Every woman ought to emancipate herself and sacrifice all rather than permit herself to be merely a pretty plaything. Nora tries to maintain her rights and dignity by opposing the unfair social attitude and notion towards her.

That is the reason the writer chooses *A Doll's House* focusing in Nora's efforts to get her rights, in

this case women's right, as the reflection of her defense against the social attitude and notion. On the other word how does the character of woman in the play defend of the her rights ? and how does the attitude and notion of society towards women, especially married women ?

1.2. Objective of the study

In analyzing Henrick Ibsen's play A Doll's House, the writer of this thesis primary objective of the study. That is to know the character of woman in the play, especially her attitude, in facing her society's attitude and notion towards woman and to know the social attitude and notion towards married woman in the play itself and in the Victorian age.

The writer of this thesis tries to find out her aim through two points. The first point she find it through the intrinsic components of the play, i.e. plot, characterization, and setting based on the objective theory and literary approach. The second she proves it through the external points of reference, such as by psychological approach and sociological approach based on mimetic theory. later.

1.3. Significance of the study

By analyzing Henrick Ibsen's A Doll's House, the

writer of this thesis hopes to get deep insight of the social problems during the Victorian period, especially the position of contemporary married women and the development of women's right movement at that time, because when we study the play A Doll's House, we will know that A Doll's House represents some social aspects of the Victorian age.

She also hopes to contribute to the body of knowledge and contribute the understanding about women's conflict in society and women's attitude in facing her conflict. She hopes it give a valuable introduction for further research about women's rights, so women feel aware with their position in society.

This thesis is also hoped to give some aspects of human life, especially psychology and sociology aspects, to the readers. So the readers will have a deeper insight into human problem and human characters, in this case women's rights movevent.

1.4. Method of research

In analyzing this play, the writer uses the library research to get some information which support her analysis. In library research she collects the data from book, dictionaries, encyclopedias, or some printed materials dealing with Henrick Ibsen's work, especially A Doll's House. Besides that she collects some critics about the

play and Ibsen's view. The writer also find some information from other books dealing with her approach.

After collecting the data from some information in library research, the writer of this thesis also uses descriptive analysis. It means that she collects some words from the script as her datas. Sometimes she analyzes those datas and quotes them in pure form. But sometimes she describe those data or simbols; which have conotative meaning, by paraphrasing them, and quotes them. So her analysis there are many quotations to support her analysis. She analyzes her datas and arranges them in chronological order.

Dealing with background of the problem, analyzing the main character's problem in the play A Doll's House as a study the motives of characters, the writer of this thesis uses interpretive analysis. In this analysis she wants to interpret what the play means to her or illustrate her idea of the play's meaning. To do this, she selects and arranges some of the incidents and dialogues from the play which support her interpretation. Her selection and arrangement are subjective, guided by her individual view of the book. But her interpretation is reliable because it does not contradict the text or anything people know about Henrick Ibsen's intension in writing the play.