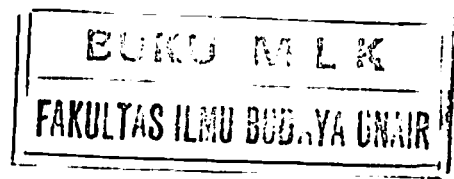


# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION



### 1.1 Background of the Study

Human experiences life stages from the time of birth until the death. During the process of life stages there is a process of personality development to adulthood which is influenced by the childhood experience. There are several events in human life that may be unacceptable for certain individuals. These events may influence the individual's personality development since the needs and the wills are not fulfilled and it influences the adulthood life. To apply the issues in this study, the main character in James Baldwin *Giovanni's Room*, David, is considered to have sexual ambiguity which can be categorized as Oedipus complex based on his childhood experiences. The Oedipus complex is about a boy's sexual desires toward his mother and also feelings of jealousy and hatred for the rival father (Myers 10). David is considered to have a sexual ambiguity in his adulthood life because he often memorizes many things related to his childhood such as he often screams about his mother and he has a bad relationship with his father. He finds and negotiates something that he had lost in his childhood after in his puberty.

This study mainly discusses the main character in the novel, David, who is considered to have a sexual ambiguity. To keep moving in his sexual ambiguity, he negotiates many things from the homophobic society. David has experiences

some psychological problems since he was five years old which can be explained using Freudian psychoanalysis theory.

*Giovanni's Room* novel is written by James Arthur Baldwin who is a black American novelist. He won a number of literary fellowships such as a Eugene F. Saxon Memorial Trust Award, a Rosenwald Fellowship, a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Partisan Review Fellowship and a Ford Foundation grant for the novel. *Giovanni's Room* is Baldwin's second novel, first published in 1956. He wrote *Giovanni's Room* novel in 1948, when he was 24 years old, and moved to Paris after leaving the United States in order to get a freedom in Europe

In *Giovanni's Room* novel, there are excellent reasons for the writer of this study in choosing *Giovanni's Room* novel as her research. The reasons are: first, this study is the first academic research which discussed sexual ambiguity for student in English Department, Airlangga University. It also proves that the idea which is contained in this research is original. Second, *Giovanni's Room* is the only Baldwin's works which contains no black characters and has homosexuality as its theme. This novel is also about freedom that David sought to discover by leaving United State and moving to Paris which is similar to the kind of freedom of Baldwin in his real life.

The setting of the novel is in the United States 1948. It is considered that there are many LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transexual) people who had yet to "come out" (publicly identify themselves as homosexual) in the 1950s (socialistalternativeonline). The Stonewall Riot or gay right movement was declared in 1969 which gave the people during the era the rights to defense the

minorities especially to those who are homosexual. Considering the problem above, the writer of the thesis finds that it is interesting to analyze this issue. It is the process of identifying David's sexual ambiguity in adulthood life based on the setting in 1948 in which David is observed as negotiating many things in homophobic society which lead him to his sexual ambiguity.

In *Giovanni's Room* novel, there are three significant experiences in David's life. They can be categorized as the important factors in David's sexual ambiguity. First, David's mother died when he was five years old. He has unharmonious relationship with his father. His father seldom speaks about his mother and also seldom speaks with David. Second, David has first sexual experience with a boy named Joey in his teens. He feels lonely in his family condition in his puberty. He needs a man to share anything about his problems. Last, David has a new life style when he lives in Paris, France. He wants to go far away from his father. In Paris, he has a girlfriend named Hella. After that, he meets an Italian bartender at a Parisian gay bar named Giovanni and then they make a relationship. The factors above may become the influences to David's sexual ambiguity in adulthood life.

The interesting issues of *Giovanni's Room* novel is David's sexual ambiguity. It is appropriate to use Freudian psychoanalysis theory because David's childhood life has a big role to his adulthood life. He begins experiencing the problems of life when he was five years old. He experiences personality development stage, especially from child, teenager and then adult. Freud's insights and psychoanalysis today sees a close connection between our

sexuality and our identity because the origin of our sexual being is in the nature of the affirmations or disruption of our sense of self that occurs in childhood (Tyson 24).

David's adulthood life, as stated before, is influenced by the experiences of some problems in his childhood. His mother died when he was five years old. He lost his mother's affection because there is a sexual instinct or libido between his mother and him. The condition of his family is strain. He has bad relationship with his father. The first three stages which can also be called as infantile stage, is connected with the Oedipus complex (Barry 97). There is the emotion resulted from the developmental stage, called fixation. It is potential personality problems which occur during any of the first three stages namely Oral, Anal, Phallic (Faulds 18). The issue in Freudian psychoanalysis theory is about close relationship between the children and the parents. In this case, according to Freud above, David can be categorized as Oedipus complex. It is considered to be the influences toward his sexual ambiguity in adulthood life.

Based on the previous explanation about the issue which is analyzed, this study focuses on analysis of David's sexual ambiguity and his negotiation of many things in the homophobic society. The writer of the thesis believes that the theory of Psychoanalysis by Sigmund Freud is the appropriate theory for the study, especially in identifying David's sexual ambiguity from his childhood experiences and defense mechanism as his negotiation to his sexual ambiguity from homophobic society.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problems**

Based on the background of the study above, novel *Giovanni's Room* is worth work, particularly its main character, David. The writer of the thesis tries to raise two statements of the problems:

1. How is David's sexual ambiguity portrayed in *Giovanni's Room* novel?
2. How does David negotiate his sexual ambiguity with homophobic society in *Giovanni's Room* novel?

## **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The aim of this study is to reach several objectives that are expected. The following objectives are intended to answer every question proposed in the statements of the problem:

1. To identify the portrayal of David's sexual ambiguity in *Giovanni's Room* novel.
2. To investigate the negotiation between David's sexual ambiguity and the United States homophobic society in *Giovanni's Room* novel.

## **1.4 Significance of the Study**

This study attempts to give contribution to the study of Literature particularly in English Department, Faculty of Humanities, Airlangga University in the case of how David's sexual ambiguity is associated with his childhood experiences. He negotiates many things from the homophobic society. Finally, it

is hoped that after reading the study the readers will get more values and experiences about sexual ambiguity and the negotiation of sexual ambiguity in homophobic society.

### **1.5 Scope and Limitations**

The writer of the thesis limits this study only on the main character, David. There are many issues, problems, events, and conflicts in discussing *Giovanni's Room* story. The study is focused on the process of David's sexual ambiguity which is associated with his childhood experiences and his negotiation of many things from the homophobic society. The involvement of the major characters and dialogues also become the primary sources of this research. The other subject outside the limitation is not be considered in the process of the study analysis.

### **1.6 Theoretical Background**

In analyzing David's sexual ambiguity based on the problems proposed, the writer of the thesis applies some main subjects of the theory of Psychoanalysis by Sigmund Freud. The theories are Oedipus complex, fixation, and defense mechanism: repression, denial and displacement.

It is based on the Freud's idea that an individual has psychological problem which is caused by a conflict between the id, ego and superego (Kosslyn 2). In a mature, mentally healthy individual the id, ego and superego interact in a balanced way. In all of us, however, the three components of the mind can create anxiety and guilt (Renninson 40). They have to work in balanced way.

Freud divided the personality development into three: infantile stage (0 - 5 years old), latent stage (5 - 12 years old), and genital stage (> 12 years old). The process of personality development produces a fixation of the main character, David, in his infantile stage, especially in phallic stage. Fixation is potential personality problems occur during any of the first three stages namely Oral, Anal, Phallic which refers to a Freudian process (Faulds 18). From the process of personality development stage, fixation is considered to be the influences toward adulthood life.

The first three stages or can be called as infantile stage, it is connected with the Oedipus complex, whereby says Freud the male infant conceives the desire to eliminate the father and become the sexual partner of the mother (Barry 97). Oedipal complex is a dysfunctional bond with a parent of the opposite sex that the child does not outgrow in adulthood and that does not allow them to develop mature relationships with their peers (Tyson 26). It means that Oedipus complex is the process from which a child builds sexuality in their personality development stages.

To avoid the danger, anxiety and pleasure from child to adult, it needs the devices such defense mechanism. In this study, the writer only uses several types such as repression, displacement and denial. In *Giovanni's Room* case, the main subject which is explored in the analysis is how David's sexual ambiguity which is associated with his childhood experiences.

### **1.7 Method of the Study**

The primary source of the study is the novel entitled *Giovanni's Room*, written by James Baldwin which portrays sexual ambiguity. This novel is 160 pages of length, which is divided into two parts and published in 1956. Part one of the novel is divided into three chapters while part two is divided into five chapters. *Giovanni's Room* novel is the only one novel by a young black writer containing no black characters and having homosexual as its theme. This novel is also about freedom of the same kind of freedom that Baldwin sought to discover by leaving United States and moving to France.

This research is a qualitative research. The data are in the forms of written dialogues and sentences in the novel which have explicit and implicit meanings. In collecting data, the writer of the thesis takes some steps in analyzing the novel, namely:

1. **Conduct close Reading:** Reading the novel is the basic step in data collection in literary study. The writer thoroughly read the novel several times in order to understand the whole content of it, especially elements which are related to the topic.
2. **Collect the data information:** The writer collects the data from some theories, books, journals, articles, commentaries, other printed and unprinted materials and the internet sources using library and internet online.
3. **Apply Freudian Psychoanalysis to answer the statement problems:** First, the writer identifies David's childhood experiences which support his sexual ambiguity in adulthood life with Oedipus complex and fixation theory. The



personality development stages are the exact way in which the main character's ego deals with the id and superego. This process is determined during childhood as a child. Second, David negotiates his sexual ambiguity with homophobic society with defense mechanism theory such as repression, denial and displacement.

Furthermore, the writer of the thesis uses descriptive analysis through events and actions that are described in the novel relates to the statement of the problems which are analyzed. Psychoanalysis theory by Sigmund Freud is applied in the analysis to find out how David's sexual ambiguity in adulthood life and also how he negotiate many things about his sexual ambiguity in his adulthood with homophobic society.

### **1.7 Definition of Key Terms**

- Defense mechanism* : Unconscious strategies of the ego to distort reality and prevent anxiety.
- Fixation* : Unhealthy emotional attachment resulted from certain developmental stages.
- Oedipus complex* : The male child feels desire toward his mother and jealously regards the father as a rival.
- Sexual desire* : The largely of instincts or desires regulated or forbidden by social convention or pleasure principal.
- Sexuality* : The sexual instinctual impulses accompany life from birth as an important role.

*Stay in the Closet* : The condition which more concerned with individual thoughts and feelings than with other people or happening outside

## **CHAPTER 2**

# **LITERATURE REVIEW**