

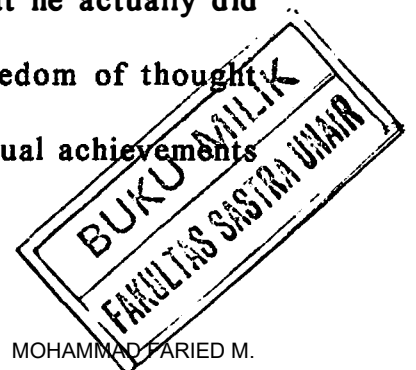
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the study

It is not a bombastic expression or an exaggeration to claim that Voltaire was the most appropriate figure who completely represented the Age of Reason, as what Henry S. Lucas writes in his book *A Short History of Civilization* (692). Voltaire was the literary lion of the age, much as Petrarch had been during the early Renaissance and Desiderius Erasmus during the Reformation. He had a keen intellect, a satirical-pen, and a lucid style. His life spanned the Age of Reason. Voltaire wrote poems, tragedies, comedies, tales, histories, and an encyclopedia; in addition, he carried on a voluminous correspondence. A complete collection of his literary labors embraces fifty volumes.

Voltaire was a multi-dimensional person who dedicated his activities to the revolutionary reformist and humanitarian programs. As it is written in *Introduction to Contemporary Civilization in the West*, Voltaire was the patron-saint of a secular age for what he actually did and said made him the symbol of the struggle for freedom of thought (Buchler et al., 831). In the same way that the intellectual achievements



of the eighteenth century centered around the names of Locke and Newton, this preoccupation with humanity and this moral bent of the Enlightenment centered around the name of Voltaire. Through his works and activities, Voltaire became the most influential propagandist for the ideas of the Age of Reason.

One of Voltaire's greatest and most popular works is *Candide*. It is generally regarded as one of the great works of the Enlightenment and a classic work in the literary history of the world. *The Norton Anthology of World Masterpiece* (1980) considers and posits *Candide* as the most representative work of the Neoclassical period. *Candide* is a romantic and adventure tale in which skepticism toward philosophy and religion and a tender feeling for the oppressed are combined. Within this *conte philosophique* (philosophical tale) Voltaire's propagandas as the response toward the contemporary social conditions can be seen. In *Candide* also Voltaire attacks war, religious persecutions, and unthinking optimism about the human condition. *Candide* is a perceptive satire on the all-embracing optimism ('All is for the best in the best of all possible worlds') propounded by the German philosopher and mathematician Leibniz. But actually his main target is a way of looking at the world.

To his literary activities, Voltaire added practical intervention on behalf of the oppressed. His intervention into practical politics caused the authorities forbidding the publication of most of his works, including the publication of *Candide*. To avoid and postpone the suppression of the authorities, some plans were prepared during the publication of the novel. It was published simultaneously in Amsterdam, Brussels, Geneva, London and Paris on February 22, 1759 and became a bestseller overnight. The publication of *Candide* was a masterful coup with four main aims : maximising publicity and royalties, frustrating pirate editions and flooding the market before the book could be suppressed. The plan succeeded brilliantly and *Candide* was not placed in Vatican's 'Index of forbidden books' until May 24, 1762. Written with incredible speed in 1758 (he claimed only in three days), *Candide* ran to some forty editions within twenty years. Voltaire's success can be measured by the continuing popularity of *Candide* to the present day (Anderson, et. al., 1428).

As the social sciences began to improve their status in the eighteenth century, historical documents also began to be treated as though they were scientific data to be gathered, classified, checked, criticized and combed for evidences of careless acceptance of hearsay or authority. According to R. Freeman Butts in his book *A Cultural*

History of Western Education, Voltaire was a scholar who was particularly interested in broadening the scope of history, in order to gain historical justification to many of the reforms he wanted in a broad range of fields (287). And this tendency is applied also in the writing of *Candide*. Voltaire uses historical facts to justify his ideas. He freely arranges some historical facts or contemporary social conditions in which the main character can get involve and, therefore, Voltaire is able to convey his propagandas. Henceforth, the reading of *Candide* needs the proper understanding on the contemporary historical situation of the period of its production. Moreover, it also needs the knowledge of the biography and bibliography of the author, for sometimes the figure of its author - with all experiences and impressions - embeds within the characters of the story.

Through *Candide*, specifically, and his other works, generally, Voltaire conveys his propaganda as the response toward the contemporary social conditions which were not appropriate with the spirit of the Enlightenment. He labored to stir up public opinion against the unenlightened elements of life. *Ecrazes l'infame*, "crush the infamous thing," was his famous phrase that often appeared at the end of his letters. The study of how Voltaire conveys his propagandas as the response toward the contemporary social conditions in *Candide* in this

thesis is interesting and meaningful since Voltaire's criticism, individually, and his age, generally, are influential in the development of intellectual history of mankind.

B. Statement of the Problem

This study is conducted to answer the following two questions:

1. How does Voltaire convey his propagandas by the medium of literary elements?
2. What principal thoughts or ideas are conveyed through the elements of literature in Voltaire's *Candide*?

C. Objective of the Study

This study is designed to reveal and to analyze the ways Voltaire presents his propagandas by the medium of literary elements. The writer also intends to subject Voltaire's literary specifications to close scrutiny.

After scrutinizing how Voltaire conveys his propagandas by the medium of literary elements, the writer steps further to explore and analyze the principal thoughts or ideas conveyed in Voltaire's *Candide* through the elements of literature. The concern of the analysis is the propagandas directed against the aspects of life which are not

appropriate with the spirit of Enlightenment.

D. Significance of the Study

This study is expected to evoke the historical consciousness within our worldview. It is fundamentally important since the presents and the future conditions are formed or influenced by the past. Furthermore, historical consciousness in its right place can make people more responsible to their present and future.

This study is also important to understand the development of the intellectual history of human race. It is widely known that the Eighteenth century is a strategic age since it marked the end of Enlightenment, a transition age towards the modern world preceded by the industrial revolution. By analyzing the work of Voltaire, hopefully, we know and understand the root of our existence in this modern world. The modern world never exist without the preceding classical one.

Eventually the writer also expects that the result of this study will give a meaningful contribution to the development of literature, especially in the English Department of Airlangga University. And it can be an effective medium in broadening and stimulating our mind, making us aware of wider human responsibility, and enhancing our enjoyment of life.

E. Scope and Limitation

In gaining the objective findings, the writer, firstly needs to limit the analysis upon how Voltaire makes use of literary elements in conveying his propagandas. The writer emphasizes the analysis primarily upon the main characters as the source of dialogue in which the principal thoughts or ideas of Voltaire flow, and also setting where the series of events of the story take place.

Secondly, the writer steps further by analyzing the elements of Voltaire's propagandas. The analysis is focussed on the propagandas which are directed against the unenlightened contemporary social conditions that Voltaire alludes. Those are in metaphysics, religion, toleration, power, and humanity.

F. Theoretical Background

In this study the writer uses the *New Historicism Theory* since it is considered as the appropriate and relevant one to analyze the novel. The use of the New Historicism Theory is appropriate with the need to analyze a literary work comprehensively, both intrinsically and extrinsically. The use of the theory is also relevant, for it accomodates the necessity to consider any historical aspects and since the reading of the novel being analyzed needs historical knowledge on the social

conditions of the age of its production. The New Historicism is supported by the Structural and Biographical Approach.

The employment of the *Structural Approach* is inevitable since it is important to analyze the structural element of the novel. Through this structural approach the analysis on the thoughts or ideas conveyed by the author can be developed. The writer also uses *the Biographical Approach* for it contributes to deepen the analysis by providing information on the author and his ideas.

G. Method of the Study

Two methods are used in this thesis. Initially, the *Descriptive-analysis Method* is used to obtain the description of the elements of literature being analyzed. Supported by the biographical approach, the results of this descriptive analysis are then developed to formulate the principal thoughts or ideas of Voltaire by the use of the *Content-Analysis Method* since it refers to the revelation of the main thoughts of author rather than to describe it. The use of the two methods is expected to combine simultaneously the intrinsic and extrinsic analyses in this paper.

H. Definitions of Key Terms

- Propaganda** : The more or less systematic efforts to manipulate other's people beliefs, attitude, or actions by means of words. Deliberateness and a relatively heavy emphasis on manipulation distinguish propaganda from casual conversation or the free and easy exchange of ideas.
- Deism** : Skeptical view on God's intervention in the affairs of this world. Deism is empirical, tolerant, reasonable, and is the major positive religious component of the Enlightenment.
- Auto-da-fe*** : The burning of some individuals over a slow fire for the prevention to avoid total destruction.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RELATED STUDIES