

## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### A. Background of the Study

All people need to be prosperous in their life. According to Bob Proctor, every person is born rich. No one is born poor and weak. The problem is how we face this life (4). Prosperity is the major goal for every person. Prosperity, from the verb 'prosper', according to Wehmeier, it means the state of being successful, especially financially (1060). Prosperity is a noun, meaning success or wealth. In Indonesian dictionary, the meaning is not simple. Prosperity in Indonesian is '*Kemakmuran*' meaning that much benefit and enough in wealth (Budiono 330).

Fallacy in getting prosperity often occurs. Furthermore, the meaning of being prosperous in people mind-set is getting wealth. However, prosperity is not only success in wealth, but also how we get happiness in life (Proctor 56). According to Bob Proctor, there are three certain steps in reaching prosperity. The first is building image in our mind. Second is turning it over to Spirit. The last is expecting with our heart and soul that Spirit will reward us openly for our faith (80). The important thing in getting happiness is setting the way people think about their life.

Through reading, people can obtain and build the image about life. The power of the words can give effects to the reader's life. A Professor Emeritus, Department of Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences at UCLA, Smalley PhD gives us example:

For example, scientists have found that by hearing sentences about elderly people led research subjects to walk more slowly. In other research, individuals read words of 'loving kindness' showed increases in self-compassion, improved mood, and reduced anxiety. However words are not attended to equally by all. Studies reveal that we place our attention toward words differently depending on our own biological or personality traits (2008).

Most people do not realize that the power of word is chosen by author. The powerful words can be found in some of literary works. The literary works are often arranged well to attract, affect, and give impression to the reader. Poetry is one of literary works which contains huge meaning. Poetic consciousness is the main focus of the poetry. The consciousness is reflected in the form of symbols in order to point the humankind, the nature or the meaning of life.

Poetry is not only a simple language that is written in short lines. The language or word has meaning more than its length. According to Shira Wolosky, poetry has elements, and those elements are language of figures, in which each component has many meanings. Each word in the poem is chosen to make it beautiful and appropriate in meaning and sound (1-2). Poem uses powerful words to express ideas and criticism about the condition of life.

Every poet has his or her ideology or destination in writing poems. One thing may symbolize something. For example, when someone wants to say a word referring to his or her lover, she or he will symbolize him or her with rose, chocolate, star, moon or anything which is beautiful. Poetry contains symbols to

produce interesting poems. Symbol in the poem could be interpreted in various meanings depend on the reader's interpretation. According to Kennedy, symbol is a visible object or action that suggests some further meanings in addition to itself. He said that some symbols in literature are conventional. They are conventional since they can have a conventional or customary effect on us. He adds, if a symbol is not conventional, it has more than just one meaning (627). In addition, every poet sometimes has any control over our reaction. The poet will guide our response in a certain direction (638). By his statement the writer infers that each word in the poem is important to analyze for getting the whole meaning. In every poem, diction or chosen words are important to determine its meaning and theme. Furthermore, the diction influences the beautiful and romantic atmosphere for readers.

Talking about romantic atmosphere, one of the romantic poets in this world is Kahlil Gibran. He is one of the romantic poets from Lebanon who gives inspiration to many people. He is called romantic poet because of his romantic works. Many people are addicted in reading his works, they give inspiration in life. As Munir stated in his book, Gibran is a philosopher who brought peace from East to West (46). In Gibran's fans Site is said that his expertise is proven by huge number of publication and his works have been translated in many languages (2012). All of his poems in this book are picturing the nature and society.

One of his famous literary works compiled in one book is *The Prophet*. In this book, Gibran tries to answer the questions related to natural phenomena and social problems as prophet's answer. His words are wise and make the content is

readable and touchy. According to Kahlil Gibran' a Fans Site, *The Prophet* is Gibran's masterpiece (Online 2012). Furthermore, this book was published in 1923 and was translated in more than twenty languages. In America, this book has been sold more than nine million copies. It was the compilation of his poems with selected words and interesting theme. Besides, he took longer time in preparing the works to create one book. As his statement:

'I think I've never been without *The Prophet* since I first conceived the book back in Mount Lebanon. It seems to have been a part of me... I kept the manuscript four years before I delivered it over to my publisher because I wanted to be sure, I wanted to be very sure, that every word of it was the best I had to offer (online 2011).'

By his statement the writer is curious in discussing Gibran's poems due to his long time to choose the words to write the poems. The writer is also eager how Gibran relates symbol as a unity.

The writer chooses three poems from 28 poems in *The Prophet* book. They are "Houses Chapter IX", "Buying and Selling Chapter XI", and "Eating and Drinking Chapter VI". Those titles are chosen because human needs those elements in life, such as house, eating, drinking, buying and selling. The way we fill them can determine how prosperous our life. The writer chooses the general title because the basic need of human is included in those words. The writer is also curious in symbols that Gibran's use in representing the prosperity from the formal element.

In this study, the writer finds the association of the symbols by using New Criticism. The writer uses this theory because New Criticism is relevant with analyzing the poem and finding the meaning through the formal elements of the poem itself. On the other hand, New Criticism provides step without giving attention to history or relationship between the author's lives with those poems. As Bunchbinder stated, that attention to the author of the text distracts from the centrality of the text itself, and is more likely to emphasize the dissociation of sensibility than to harmonize disparity (20).

By this theory, the meaning of some symbols will be found out as a part of the text. Furthermore, to get the goal of New Criticism, those parts will be compiled in a unity or a wholeness meaning of the poem itself. The prosperity symbol in those poems can be found by compiling the unity meaning of symbol from formal elements. Formal element includes images, symbols, metaphors, rhyme, meter, point of view, setting, characterization, plot, and so forth, which, because they form or shape the literary work (Tyson 137). Through these formal elements, the writer will be helped in finding the unity meaning of the symbols of prosperity.

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

In order to analyze the poet's attention the words, especially symbol, the writer of the study will be guided by the formulating questions as follows:

1. What symbols of prosperity appear in Kahlil Gibran's poems, such as "Houses Chapter IX", "Buying and Selling Chapter XI", and "Eating and Drinking Chapter VI"?
2. How do the symbols in those poems present the unifying meaning of prosperity?

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

Concerning to the statement of the problems, the aims of her analysis of these poems are:

1. To find out the prosperity symbols which appear in the poems.
2. To find out how those symbols present unifying meaning of prosperity.

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

Some people said "We can hold the world if we write a literary work". Literary work is a kind of message in life. Some poets try to spread the life value through the beautiful words. The significance of this study is to give an example about how the life value spreads out in literary works. Furthermore, hopefully, readers can learn the meaning of prosperity from Gibran's poems through the symbols. In this study, the writer hopes it can be a worthy study in Airlangga University, especially for the students of Faculty of Humanities who are studying English Literature. The writer also hopes this study will be the reference for those who analyze other poems, particularly those written by Kahlil Gibran.

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

In order to limit this study in focus analysis, scope and limitation are needed. The writer chose three from twenty eight poems in *The Prophet* collected poems. The writer chose “Houses Chapter IX”, “Buying and Selling Chapter XI”, “Eating and Drinking Chapter VI” because those can represent the essential need of human life.

As the statement of problems above, the writer also decides scope and limitation on formal elements of the poem focusing on the symbols. Those elements support the writer in explaining and finding the meaning of the symbols of prosperity. In addition, the writer analyzes the relationship between the symbols and the central idea as the wholeness.

### **F. Theoretical Background**

This study focuses on the symbols spread in the poems. It is appropriate if the writer uses theory of New Criticism. This theory actually has the most important concept concerning the nature and the importance of textual evidence. This theory has method, called ‘close reading’, it give big attention only on text itself (Tyson 135).

According to Tyson, New Criticism thinks that there is *timeless*, autonomous verbal object in literary work. It means that the reader and reading may change, but the text is only like that. We cannot evaluate the text with the separate word, because of the word placed on the specific relationship with others (137).

It is also similar to Arnold's opinion in Bertens' book that New Criticism is an art's timelessness and Liberal Humanism. The words timelessness is universal values or literature, is not constrained by the time. We should not take relation between the text and the time was written. Furthermore, Liberal Humanism points us to interpret the text freely. Liberal Humanism should be limited in collecting data in interpreting text (2002). Again, the writer must be aware that she is not allowed to make connection between text and the author's life.

Due to author is absent from the text, and cannot determine its meaning, the reader's role is correspondingly made more important. Buchbinder also asserts that good reader will be two *personae*. The first is an *ideal reader personae* who is aware of structures and strategies operating in the text. Second is an *actual reader personae*, which must imagine him or herself to be the speaker's interlocutor (Buchbinder 23-24).

The reader's skill in interpreting is important to get the goal or major assumption of New Criticism. According to Bressler, the major assumption of New Criticism is organic unity. In the all elements (such as form and content, intrinsic elements, and tension) form an organic unity (61).

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

This study will analyze the three of compiled poems by Kahlil Gibran. The main resource which the writer uses is the e-book of *The Prophet*, which is

published by poemHunter. Those three poems are “Houses Chapter IX”, “Buying and Selling Chapter XI”, and “Eating and Drinking Chapter VI”.

One thing that cannot be separated from literary research, especially for New Criticism is a close reading. In close reading there are three levels used in analyzing the poems.

The first is *Linguistic reading*. By using this first level, the writer takes attention in linguistic elements of this poem. For example: grammar and vocabulary. From this level the writer know the style of the poet in writing. This grammar is important to find the plot and organizing of the events. It is important to know the plot of the poem, because it determines the meaning. Second level is *Semantic Reading*. In this level the writer takes big attention in the meaning of the words. In this step the writer tries to find the information of the each word which may have intrinsic or extrinsic meaning. The third level is *Structural Reading*. In this level the writer tries to connect the meaning of the words in whole form.

According to Charles E. Bressler, there are seven steps which can help the writer analyzing the poems. The important thing for New Criticism is formal elements. However, intrinsic element is a part of formal elements of the poem. The first step is examining the figure of language. In this step, the writer finds the denotations and connotations from the texts (44). The denotation can be found in the explanation of the illustration of the poems. Furthermore, the connotation can be found in the first interpretation in the general meaning of those poems.

The second step is analyzing the form or pattern. In this step, the writer examines all allusion found which appear in those poems. This step will help the

writer in understanding the plot (Bressler 44). The writer analyzes the words which have connection with the previous events or literary works. The Bible and The Holy Koran will be references in finding the allusion. It is because the works of Kahlil Gibran are not far from those books. It is stated by Miftahul Munir. He said that Gibran in his teenage placed Holy Koran as the Arabian Literature which brings spiritual, social, and literary inspiration. It is also supported by Dr Suheil that Gibran ever said; he brought Jesus in his side of chest and Mohammad in another side of chest (47).

Furthermore, the third step is analyzing all images, symbols, and figures of speech within the text. The writer will note the relationship of those elements. By using this step, the writer will stress the connection of all elements to the centered in symbols (Bressler 44). The fourth step is examining the analyzing the various structural patterns that appear within the text, the technical of the poet in writing or musical devices. By finding the kind of musical devices, the writer makes association among other previous elements with the musical devices. This part will appear the ambiguity of the meaning.

Bressler includes the tension on the fifth step; the writer will consider the recent result of the element such as tone, theme, point of view, and any other elements. It is for focusing the meaning with the dramatic situation. Sixth step is finding interrelationship of all element (many parts) and ambiguities as the whole meaning or wholeness. After the all examination, the last step is achieving the meaning of those symbols (Bressler 45).

## H. Definition of the Key Terms

**Prosperity** : is the internal awareness of the opulence, wholeness, and connectedness successful in the spiritual realm (Proctor 70).

**Formal Element:** Images, symbols, metaphors, rhyme, meter, point of view, setting, characterization, plot, and so forth, which, because they form or shape the literary work (Tyson 137).

**Symbol** : A person, an object, an event, etc. that represents a more general quality or situations (Oxford 1371-2).

# CHAPTER 2

# LITERATURE REVIEW