

CHAPTER I

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

I.1. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Literature has been found over the centuries to have certain kinds of value for human being, because it illuminates some aspects of human life and behavior. So literary works may be viewed from one of these different aspects of life, such as the moral, religious, social, psychological, or philosophical aspect; and each one of these aspects may provide a view on human life to readers. As Graham Little says in Approach to Literature:

"Good literature adds to our understanding of life in the world around us. It embodies thought and feeling on matters of human importance." (1966 : p.2)

So, it may be said that literature gives us an insight into the nature and condition of our existence.

The novel, as one of the forms of literature, has always been thought of as the literary form which was closest to the raw material of life, the one most bound up with the society and the reality at the time it is written. This is so because the author of a novel had more to say about life in general as he saw it. He has looked long and hard at the life

he knew: in consequence, he has arrived at an interpretation of it, in the form of a novel.

The novel I chose to analyse here is El Ingenioso Hidalgo Don Quixote de la Mancha, mostly known as Don Quixote, by Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra from Spain. It is Cervantes' most successful work and was published in two parts: in 1605 and 1615. It was a best seller the first year it appeared, and still does until today. It is also considered to be one of the world's greatest and best-loved book and has been reprinted in Spanish as well as in translation into other languages. In other words, Don Quixote is a most well-read novel than any other novels in history.

This novel has some qualities that makes it a great novel: there is a felicity to natural happenings, realistic detail portrayed as if in painting, and it may be read as a social satire, philosophical tale, adventure story, parody, and comedy. But, in this thesis, I tend to see the novel as a parody. Parody here, as van Ghent states in The English Novel, Form and Function, means "a burlesque imitation of something, showing the weaknesses or falsehood of the object imitated" (1953 : p. 13).

Don Quixote is seen as a parody because the whole story tells about an old man named Alonso Quixano, who, out of too much reading books of romances of chivalry, is so completely devoted to the ideals of knight-errantry, that he imitates the appearance of a knight, and believing in these

ideals. sets out righting wrongs in the real modern world, without realizing that it is an impossible ideal.

Since the focus of the novel is about Don Quixote. I choose to analyse his character. Don Quixote dares to practice the idealism of chivalry in the real world. He practices the idealism by becoming a knight just like those in the books. The ways in which he expresses his idealism are always in reference to the books of chivalry that he had read. He creates many adventures, since all the commonplace things in his path are changed by his imagination into objects of romance: an innkeeper into great lord of knights, a windmill into a giant enemy, a flock of sheep into an army, and a barber's basin into the helmet of Mambrino.

He makes the people involve in the adventures that he creates out of his faith in the ideals of chivalry. As a result, some of them beat or throw stones at him and some of them even play tricks on him for their own amusement. All of them treat the Don as a mad fool, except for his faithful squire, Sancho Panza. Despite the treatment that the Don received from the people around him and all the mess that he made, his faith in the ideals remains undiminished. This idealism really affects his character, and his faith in the ideals is the base of all the adventures in the story. Based on this reason, I want to emphasize on this aspect in the analyses of the Don's character.

I.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

From the background above. I want to state that the problem of this thesis are:

- What are the effects of the ideals of chivalry in Don Quixote?
- What does he do when he is faced with reality?
- What are the changes found in Don Quixote at the end of the novel?

I.3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To prove that the ideals of chivalry has affected the Don's character, especially his mind, which makes him imitate a knight: in appearance, deeds, and thoughts.
- To prove that he practices the ideals of chivalry in real world with his own way, that is, seeing everything in relation to knight-errantry.
- To show the changes of Don Quixote, from a practical idealist into a realist in his deathbed at the end of the novel.

I.4. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

I surely hope that this thesis can enrich the readers' literary knowledge in general. It may give a better understanding and a deeper appreciation on literature, especially on Don Quixote and its author, Miguel de Cervantés, so

that the readers will have a new experience in enjoying and appreciating the novel and other literary works.

This thesis is also expected to give the readers another view on an aspect of human characters and on society, so that we can have an insight about the characters of the people in real life. Beside that, this thesis may increase the readers' knowledge in the field of science, especially in the fields of History and Psychology.

I.5. SCOPE AND LIMITATION

The scope of this thesis is on the major character in Don Quixote, that is Don Quixote himself. One remarkable aspect of Don Quixote's character is his faith in the ideals of chivalry. So I limit the study on the character by emphasizing on his faith in the idealism, since it is the basis of all his deeds and thoughts. Because of this reason, I use psychological approach to help me in making the analyses clearer. This psychological approach is applied by the use of psychological terminology.

I.4. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

I regard Don Quixote as a parody, since Cervantes presents a "knight", not in the Middle Ages, but in a real modern world, where the people think that knighthood is out

of its proper time. Cervantes also presents us with the social life in Spain at the time the novel was written. Because of these reasons, I choose to use the Mimetic Theory in analysing this thesis. According to M.H. Abrams in The Mirror and the Lamp:

"The mimetic orientation -- the explanation of art as essentially an imitation of aspects of the universe -- was probably the most primitive aesthetic theory. It is the fable or plot 'that is the end and purpose of tragedy', its 'life and soul, so to speak', and this because tragedy is essentially an imitation not of persons but of action and life..." (1971 : p. 10)

This theory tends to describe literature in relation to something outside itself. It defines literature in relation to life, seeing it as a way of reproducing or recreating the experiences of life in words.

Besides the Mimetic Theory, I also use extrinsic approaches, i.e., the history of Chivalry in the Middle Ages, and the background of the time the novel is written. so we may understand the situations and the conditions of the people in Spain in the sixteenth century. And then, there is also the psychological approach to help me in analysing the character. The application of this approach in the analyses is by using psychological terms only.

I.7. METHOD OF RESEARCH

I use the method of library research in analysing the topic of the thesis, that is the faith in the ideals of

chivalry in the character of Don Quixote. Research itself means "a systematic and thorough investigation of a subject in order to make certain precisely what the available and applicable facts and theories concerning it are" (Dictionary of Literary Terms, Harry Shaw, 1972, p. 321).

So, library research here means that the research is done by finding and collecting data from books and other printed materials that deal with Literature, especially on Cervantes' Don Quixote, History, and Psychology, in libraries where they are found.

I analyse the topic of the thesis by using descriptive analysis method. Analysis, as Harry Shaw stated in his Dictionary of Literary Terms, is:

"In literature, analysis is applied to criticism and evaluation which view a work of art as an entity, an autonomous whole, and implies that the meaning, significance, and artistic worth of a selection can be unearthed by applying careful and logical systems of study to its individual parts and their organization." (p. 19)

So, the analysis of the thesis is done by describing the character of Don Quixote and his idealism to give a detailed examination. The description of the character is clarified by the use of the data found in library research.

I.8. DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS

- **Delusion:** A delusion is a false belief, held despite evidence to the contrary, and one which is not explicable in terms of the patient's educational and cultural background. It is held with complete conviction and cannot be shaken by argument (p.142).

- **Ideal Self:** An image or representation of oneself as one would like to be. Derived from societal values and significant others, the ideal self is composed of wished for (but possibly unattainable) modes of behavior, values, traits, aspect of personal appearance, etc (p.291).

- **Idealization:** In the widest sense, this is the process of regarding a person as perfect. It involves overlooking or denying attributes of the person that do not fit the idealized picture. In Freudian psychoanalytic terminology, it refers to the mental process whereby objects may be construed as ideally good. An ideal is a conception of something in its absolute perfection. It also refers to an honorable or worthy principle or aim. An idealist is one whose conduct is influenced by idealism. It also refers to one who is unrealistic and impractical (p. 291).

Source: The Encyclopedic Dictionary of Psychology, Rom Harre and Roger Lamb, The MIT Press, Mass., USA, 1983.

- Dream: Essentially symbolic fulfilments of unconscious wishes. (Literary Theory. An Introduction. Terry Eagleton, 1983. p. 157)

I.9. ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

In chapter I: I first explain the background of the thesis. Don Quixote is so completely devoted to the ideals of knight-errantry, that he imitates the appearance of a knight and, believing in these ideals, he sets out to perform his duty as a knight, according to what he had read in the romances of chivalry. People treat him as a mad fool. Yet he still believes in the ideals of chivalry. The problems I state in this chapter are: what the effects of the ideals of chivalry are in the Don's character, what he does when he is faced with reality, and what the changes in his character are at the end of the novel.

The primary objective of the thesis is to analyze the character of Don Quixote, especially on his faith in the ideals of chivalry, because this faith makes him look like a mad fool in trying to revive chivalry in real world. The scope of the study is on the major character, and I limit it by emphasizing on his faith in the ideals of chivalry. The theory used to analyse the topic is the Mimetic Theory, with Historical and Psychological approaches also used to make the analyses clearer. I use library research and descriptive

analyses method in analysing the topic.

In Chapter II. I further explain about the Mimetic Theory and the extrinsic approaches. I also depict about character, and present some related studies on the same subject: Don Quixote, to give the readers a view on the aspects of Don Quixote. The background of the period the novel is written will be discussed separately in Chapter III.

Analyses on the character of Don Quixote regarding his faith is presented in Chapter IV. To clarify the analyses, I have provided some quotations from the novel and from History books, and some psychological terms. As a conclusion, which is discussed on the last chapter, I found that he is only an idealist who has a strong will to practice his idealism in the real world. In expressing his faith, he does it according to the books of chivalry, yet he has the noble virtues of a knight. Although in reality the society treats him as a mad fool, his faith remains undiminished.