

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Les Misérables is one of the outstanding novels in the world of literature. The reason I choose this genre is because novel for me is more like a picture of social phenomena in this life that reflects the life stream and I like this kind of genre. This novel describe about adventure, deeds of heroism, notable historical figures and events, and graphic pictures of the social conditions of the times social condition becomes the primary object of writing on his novel, because Victor Hugo interested in the struggles of the masses, especially lower class people. Liberty becomes his devotion when French government threatens people unfairly. This novel can be classified as tragic novel because there are many emotion struggles and sacrifices along the story and I like to involve inside the novel itself.

Victor Hugo, the man behind this novel spends almost fifteen years of his mature life to make this great story of all time. As a novelist, poet, and dramatist, he is one of the most important of French Romantic writers. That is why I choose one of his famous works for my paper. He was a great man indeed, in my opinion he could see what many people cannot see. Its purpose on writing this novel is as much political as it is artistic. Victor Hugo describes how the characters in his novel play interdependently even only the main character is the source of the whole story, it means that he represents only one character as the main focus his novel and what I can see is the other characters play a role as the supporters of the story development. For example, Bishop of Digne is the man who changes the main character's nature from evil to good. Besides from his plays, poems, and novels, his constant and sympathetic struggles in behalf of the political and economic freedom of the lower classes, Victor Hugo is a champion of liberty as a writer, he is outstandingly the greatest of all the French Romantic authors of the nineteenth century (Cooper, A.C. & Frisius A.A., 1981).

Through his work like *Les Misérables*, he put an issue about moral value that many people ignored. Among his best-known works are *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*(1831) and *Les Misérables*(1862). The story of *The Hunchback of Notredame* is

about love of a man to be accepted in his society because people see him as an ugly human being. This novel talks about human struggle for equality and love, where the main character tries to win his love with a beautiful gypsy woman. And then, with his effort he succeeds to fulfill his hopes, to be accepted in his society and won his love. As far I can see, I have study Victor Hugo's stylistic on his works, he always talk about struggle and fight to achieve something. And every struggle and fight needed effort and sacrifice.

What I am interested in *Les Misérables* is the picture of the society at that time is similar in nowadays, where justice sometimes cannot see the truth and morality still questioned. It means that this novel is a critical statement against human suffering, poverty, and ignorance. It also tells the story of the 1832 revolution and describes the unpleasant side of Paris. The novel is in essence a plea for humane treatment of the poor and for equality among all citizens (Cooper, A.C. & Frisius A.A., 1981). All Victor Hugo's works always talk about injustice of the society toward differences, so it sounds like Victor Hugo fighting for equality among the society. For example, in *Les Misérables* he fights for human rights of freedom to live. Once again through sacrifice and many hard ways the main character in this novel succeed to achieve what he dream off. That is why I like to make this novel as my thesis, because I concern about human life.

The main topics in "*Les Misérables*" are moral, relationship, law, and justice. This inspiring version of the classic story is focused tightly on Valjean and Javert. After the bishop's act of forgiveness re-orchestrates Valjean's life, Valjean plays the music of empathy and compassion toward everyone he meets, including his enemies. Javert, on the other hand, is so filled with self-disgust that he can only find release in hurting others. The contrast between these two lifestyles makes *Les Miserables* a convincing morality play and Victor Hugo focuses on the moral struggle that Jean Valjean faces, it is more like moral development of Jean Valjean. For example, in the event where the bishop gives Valjean the candlesticks with the morose statement that he is buying his soul for God. In other words, the redemption of finding morality as a good person becomes the main theme of this novel. The moral value which emerges from that occasion can change the nature of people miraculously.

The most important theme of the novel is about moral development, in the individual and in society. Meanwhile, the topic that I want to describe is the morality which exists in the novel. The story is based on the story of heroic sacrifice of a man through many hard efforts in purpose to be a good man. This novel becomes the symbol of soul purification through suffering. Jean Valjean, the chief protagonist, is transformed from a misanthropic and potentially violent ex-convict to a man capable for heroic love and self-sacrifice. The moral force that transforms him is love. That is the process of his moral development along within the novel, such an interesting story from Victor Hugo. Moral force becomes love and moral development to be a good man is the reason why I choose this topic.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The topic I want to discuss in my paper is about moral development. Hence from that, my analysis will be about how Jean Valjean's morality develops in this novel, and I also want to know the processes of Jean Valjean's moral development.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is definitely to answer the question that has been stated in the statement of the problem. I am going to analyze the main character's moral development. Then, I am going to continue the analysis on the main character's processes of moral development.

1.4 Significance of the Study

By analyzing the moral development I hope that the reader of my thesis will understand how Jean Valjean shows the value of morality and requirement that qualify to obtain, in other meaning the requirement to be a good man with good behavior and attitude toward moral values.

My next expectation is that by analyzing the moral development behind Victor Hugo's work and how it is implemented in this novel, this study can enrich reader's knowledge about the moral value that exists in our society and the way to understand it. Understand here means not just knowing it but also able to apply it in daily life.

1.5. Scope and Limitation

The scope is Jean Valjean's moral development in the novel and the limitation is the main male character, Jean Valjean.

1.6. Methodology

I am using psychological approach to analyze the moral development of the main character in *Les Misérables*, using concept of morality as the main device in analyzing the morality itself. I use the library research by searching as many as possible any books, articles, essays, or any other kinds of sources that are related to my topic about moral development. In addition, I use Kohlberg's Stage of Morality to observe moral development that happens to the character of Jean Valjean in the novel. By referring from Kohlberg's theory, I will analyze the development stages of Jean Valjean and to understand the moral growth inside his character. I also use some sources from the Internet to support the theories. However, I will only cite some theories that relate to the topic that I want to develop from those sources.

1.7. Organization of the Study

This paper will be divided into four chapters. The first chapter contains the background of the study, the purpose of the study, the importance of the study, the methodology and the organization of the study. The second chapter is the review related literature including the theories from the approach that I used to analyze the work on *Les Misérables*. They are moral theories, and also the theory from Kohlberg's Stage of Morality. The third chapter is my analysis about the development points from the chapter

one consist of the detailed outline including examples of events or quotations from the literary work of *Les Misérables*. The last one on chapter four is about the conclusion from the findings from my analysis that related from the significance.