

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

I have chosen Paulo Coelho's The Zahir to analyze. Paulo Coelho is one of the biggest-selling authors in the world, "Paulo Coelho is not only one of the most widely read, but also one of the most influential authors writing today," (<http://www.paulocoelho.com.br/engl/bio.shtml,2002,page1>). In fact, he is a well-known novelist, essayist, songwriter and columns writer. Paulo Coelho has written many best-selling novels, and for that, he has been awarded with Crystal award and many others. "Coelho's most important contribution has been to touch and unite so many different cultures through the power of language." (<http://www.paulocoelho.com.br/engl/bio.shtml,page2>).

The Zahir is Coelho's fiction in 2005. The Zahir is the most popular work that he has ever written. "The Zahir has been published in more than 150 countries, been translated into 56 languages, and sold more than 50 million copies worldwide. On its publication overseas, The Zahir was a bestseller in Britain, Europe, Latin America, Russia, and India." (<http://www.paulocoulho.com/engl/bio.shtml,2002,page2>). The Zahir

tells about an intriguing and sophisticated yet insightful story, which makes the readers learn to control and lead a life to betterment.

I have decided to discuss the portrayal of the protagonist. According to Dictionary of Literary Terms: portrayal is “to draw forth”, “to depict”, refers to the portrait (characterization) of individuals presented in literary selections... (Shaw, 1972:295). It is clear that characterization is an important way to analyze the portrayal of characters.

I refer to the characterization techniques from M.J.Murphy’s book, Understanding Unseens. The characterization techniques based on Murphy are speech, past life, personal description, conversation of others, character as seen by another, reactions, direct comment, mannerisms, and thoughts. The techniques that I am going to use are speech, reactions, and character as seen by another. Based on speech, the author can give us an insight into the character of one of the persons in the book through what that person says (Murphy 1972:164). From character as seen by another, the author can describe a character directly through the eyes and opinions of another (Murphy 1972:164). While from reactions, the author can give us a clue to a person’s character by letting us know how that person reacts to various situations and events (Murphy 1972:168).

I consider that the author portrays the protagonist as a round character to show the changes of the characteristics of the protagonist. According to X.J. Kennedy “a round character is shown in much greater detail, and shown more deeply.”(Kennedy, 1991:78).

In analyzing the portrayal of the protagonist, I divide the portrayal into two stages of condition, before the protagonist’s wife disappears and after the protagonist’s wife disappears. The purpose of it is to analyze the characteristics of the protagonist from the

beginning of novel to the very end while observing the changes and differences that happen in the course of the story.

Statement of the Problem

In order to analyze the novel, I state the problem as follows:

1. How does the author portray the protagonist?
2. How does the development of the protagonist's characteristics in the course of the story?

Purpose of the Study

The purposes of this writing are:

1. To analyze how the author portrays the protagonist.
2. To find out the development of the protagonist's characteristics in the course of the story.

Method of Research

In this thesis, I use the library research. First, I read The Zahir by Paulo Coelho as primary text. Next, I explore further through other reference books and Internet websites to obtain more relevant information about the topic. Finally, from the information, I analyze the primary text and conclude my analysis.

Organization of the Thesis

I divide the thesis into three chapters. Chapter One contains Background of the Study, Statement of the Problem, Purpose of the Study, Method of Research and

Organization of the Thesis. Chapter Two contains an analysis of the portrayal of the protagonist. Chapter Three is the Conclusion. The thesis ends with Bibliography and the Appendix, containing a synopsis of The Zahir and the biography of the author.