

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

As a fiction writer, Joseph Conrad achieves numerous credits from critics for his ability. A.C. Ward states that Conrad's prose was considered a "distinguished work" and of a "recognizable quality". (Ward 279). Moreover, Gavin Young, a literary critic who traces Conrad's journey in the past claims that 'I could see how skillfully he [Conrad] had laid a fresh layer of history on the places he had written about' (Young 3). When in his era during the late 19th Century until the early 20th Century the European colonization is rapidly spreading, Conrad becomes a bridge to send a message to the English society about what the European explorers have met and have become especially in the foreign islands through his early novels. Therefore, 'Conrad is not only one of the greatest novelists who wrote in English, but he is particularly important for understanding twentieth-century British culture.' (Schwarz xiii).

For my thesis writing, I choose Conrad's An Outcast of the Islands, which is set in the 1896. As An Outcast of the Islands is his second novel, I assume that

the work may still be reliable to present the originality of his writing that has not been much influenced by the society's demands and critics. It 'reflect[s] his state of mind and reveal[s] his values' (Schwarz 3) as it shows 'the complexity of his temperament [which] is implicit in the very styles . . . [that] are modernistic in their black comedy or absurdity.' (Watts xxvi). By using this book, I hope I will be able to make an analysis on a fiction that concerns with the problems faced by European traders in the tropical islands.

In the novel, I find that Conrad spends many pages to give a clear description of the setting of place, 'One of the striking features of An Outcast of the Islands is the descriptive richness: repeatedly the narrator's view moves from some figure in the foreground to the surrounding natural vista.' (Watts xix). It makes me interested to know why Conrad portrays a lot about the settings and what it is used for.

To make a clear definition of the term of the element of setting of place in a literary work, I agree with Murphy's statement in Understanding Unseen that 'the setting of the novel is the background against which the characters live out their lives.' (Murphy 141).

In accordance with the theory mentioned above, Conrad applies the setting of place to introduce the natural tropical surroundings (as the background of the story) to the readers who are not well acquainted with it in order to help them create a vivid portrayal of the place in mind. Moreover, he also uses it to create a certain atmosphere to the readers. Atmosphere is '... a kind of mood or emotional aura suggested primarily by the setting and helping to establish the reader's expectations.' (Kenney 41). By using this technique, Conrad may manipulate the

unfamiliar aspect to help creating a strong atmosphere, and used for other purpose as well.

Through the element of the setting of place, I believe that Conrad also intends to use the element of the setting of place as a tool of foreshadow for the story by describing it intensely. 'The term 'foreshadowing' is used whenever specific details necessary to implement a later event are planted in the reader's attention early.' (Eastman 13). Subsequently, the element of the setting of place becomes an element that presents functions more than what it is supposed to serve.

Statement of the problem

Through An Outcast of the Islands, I would try to analyze several problems:

1. How is the element of the setting of place portrayed in the novel?
2. How does the setting of place used as a foreshadow of the story?
3. Why does the author use the setting of place as a foreshadowing?

Purpose of the Study

The analysis is constructed in sequences:

1. To acknowledge the portrayal of the setting of place in the novel.
2. To relate the description of the setting of place as a foreshadow of the story.
3. To observe the effects created from the use of the setting of place as a foreshadowing.

Method of Research

I first start my research through library research. As the analysis is an intrinsic analysis, I focus myself on searching in several sources that provides the data involved for my study.

Organization of the Thesis

The thesis proposal is organized as several linked-chapters. The first chapter consists of Background of the Study, Statement of the Problem, Method of Research, and Organization of the Thesis. The second chapter contains the Analysis on the use of the setting of place as a foreshadow of the story in Joseph Conrad's An Outcast of the Islands and the Conclusion from the analysis. The last chapter includes an Appendix, Biography of Joseph Conrad as the writer of the novel, and the Synopsis of the novel.