

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

A protagonist in a novel is regarded as a representation of a real human being; therefore, an author creates the protagonist of his novel to represent someone in a particular setting of time and place. This makes the author's portrayal of the protagonist become interesting to discuss. This thesis presents an analysis of the portrayal of the protagonist in Albert Camus' *The Fall* and tries to reveal the author's purposes in creating such a character.

Albert Camus was a French philosopher who was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1957 for his literary work *The Fall*, which is said to illuminate "the problems of the human conscience in our times" ("The Nobel Prize in Literature 1957"). The Nobel Prize in Literature is given to "the person who shall have produced in the field of literature the most outstanding work in an ideal direction" ("Facts on the Nobel Prize in Literature").

Albert Camus has written many literary works. *The Myth of Sisyphus* is an example of his major works, but his masterpieces are *The Stranger* and *The Fall*.

Most of Camus' works are basically related to Absurdism. Absurdism basically talks about the meaninglessness of people's lives in this world. Absurdism is "a philosophy stating that the efforts of humanity to find meaning in the universe will ultimately fail because no such meaning exists (at least in relation to humanity)" ("Albert Camus and Absurdism"). Thus, I conclude that Camus is not an ordinary author. This fact has motivated me to analyze one of his works, entitled *The Fall*, in my thesis.

I am interested in analyzing Camus' *The Fall* because I find this novel interesting. I also read some people's opinions that make me want to know more deeply about the novel. An opinion by Petri Liukkonen says, "*THE FALL* (1956), is an ironic novel in which the penitent judge Jean-Baptiste Clamence confesses his own moral crimes to a stranger in an Amsterdam bar. Jean-Baptiste reveals his hypocrisy, but at the same time his monologue becomes an attack on modern man" (Liukkonen). Another opinion from the book crazy sites tells that "Camus was a good author" ("Albert Camus – The absurd hero"). Another opinion that makes me more interested in analyzing this novel is:

The Fall is a little novel that makes the reader ponder big questions, questions of meaning and existence and death, of how we live our lives and of what motivates our actions. It is, in other words, a novel that articulates the open-ended questioning characteristic. But it is more than that, for it is

also perhaps the finest work of one of France's greatest Twentieth Century authors, a work that deserves to be read, re-read and pondered. (Botatoe)

These opinions have made me more interested in analyzing the novel.

The Fall is a story of a man named Jean-Baptiste Clamence. He is a successful Parisian Lawyer. He is portrayed in the novel as a man who lives in a false life. He is a pretentious man who does many good deeds because he wants to portray himself as a good and well-educated man in front of the society. At the end of the story, Clamence's pretentious life brings him to his downfall.

I choose to analyze the protagonist of the novel because I want to understand the author's purpose in creating this character. Character is defined as "a verbal representation of a human being as presented to us by authors through the depiction of actions, conversations, descriptions, reactions, inner thoughts and reflections, and also through the authors' own interpretive commentary" (Roberts 66). Based on this information, I want to analyze the portrayal of the main character of this novel and I also want to reveal the purpose of the author in creating such a character.

Statement of the Problem

Based on the Background of the Study, I formulate the problem of my study the following questions:

1. How is the protagonist portrayed in the novel?
2. What is the purpose of the author in creating such a character?

Purpose of the Study

The analysis of the protagonist of *The Fall* in this thesis has two purposes:

1. To show how the protagonist is portrayed in the novel.
2. To show the purpose of the author in creating such a character.

Method of Research

I used library research in my analysis, which I started by reading *The Fall*, a novel by Albert Camus. To support my analysis I browsed many Internet sites to get necessary information related to the novel and the author.

Organization of the Thesis

This thesis is divided into three chapters. The first chapter is the Introduction, which includes the Background of the Study, the Statement of the Problem, the Purpose of the Study, the Method of Research, and the Organization of the Thesis. Chapter Two is the Analysis of the Portrayal of *The Fall*, whereas Chapter Three is the Conclusion. The thesis ends with a list of references in the Bibliography and the Appendices, which contain Synopsis of *The Fall* and the Biography of Albert Camus.