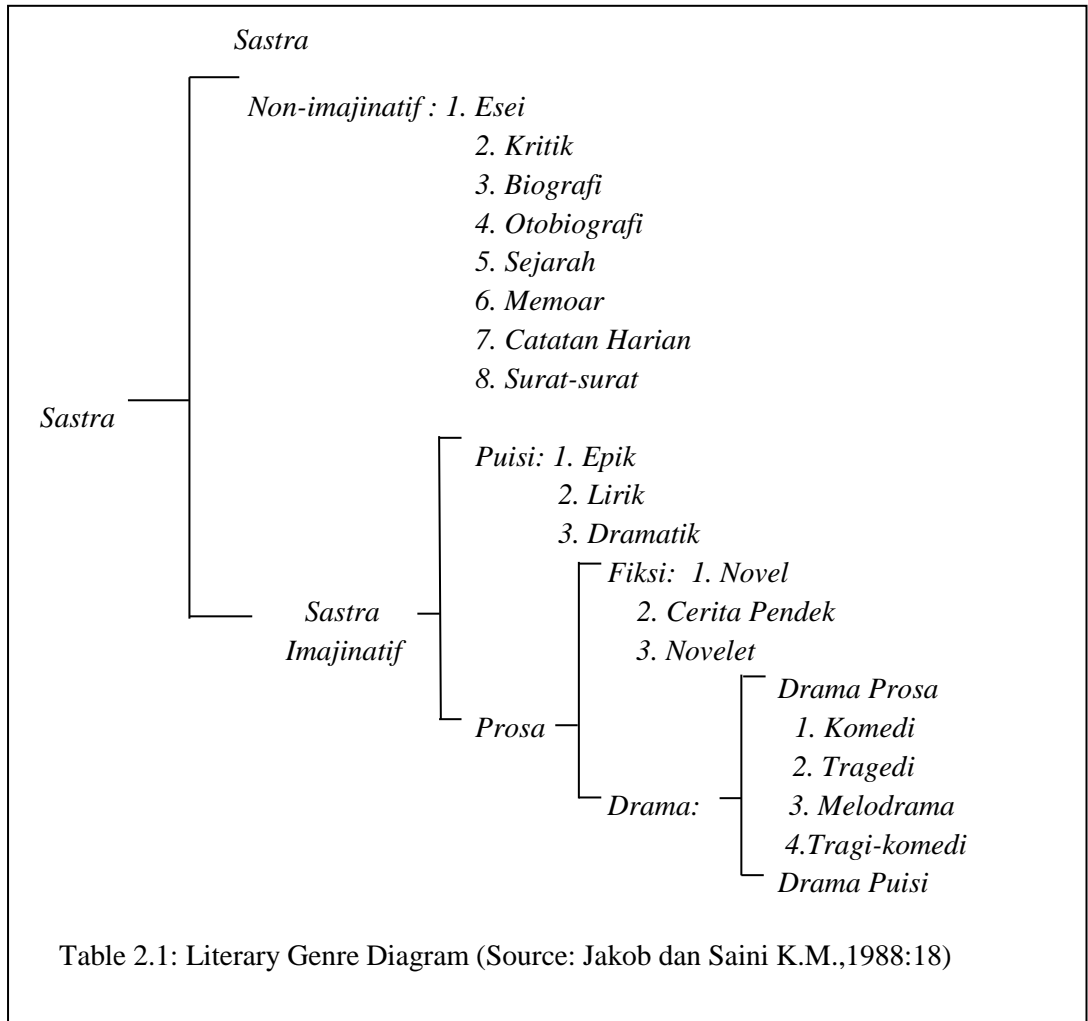# Chapter II
Theme in Mihardja's Atheis

2.1 Definition of Literature

Literature as stated on the first chapter is an art of language. So, as an art, literature is an activity of creativity which aims to produce a work that can represent the mind of the author about their responses to the circumstances that happened around them with language as the main media. What meant by the word "mind" is representative of views, ideas, and feelings of the authors. The main purpose of literature is informing those views, ideas and feelings of the author to the readers. So, the reader is able to feel the experience of the author and turn it into their own experience through reading the literary works.

According to Culler (2000: 27), "Literature, we might conclude, is a speech act or textual event that elicits certain kinds of attention." Next Culler (2000:33) also gives a limitation to the nature of literature into five categories; they are literature as the 'foregrounding' of language, literature as the integration of language, literature as fiction, literature as aesthetic object, literature as intertextual or self-reflexive construct.

As we know, the scope of literature itself is so wide. Therefore, it generates some literary types and variety in the form of its work. Jakob Sumardjo and Saini K.M. (1988:18) in the Literary

Appreciation book divides those types of literary works like the table below:

Sastra

Non-imajinatif : 1. Esei
                2. Kritik
                3. Biografi
                4. Otobiografi
                5. Sejarah
                6. Memoar
                7. Catatan Harian
                8. Surat-surat

Sastra

Sastra Imajinatif

Puisi: 1. Epik
       2. Lirik
       3. Dramatik

Fiksi: 1. Novel
        2. Cerita Pendek
        3. Novelet

Prosa

Drama:

Drama Prosa
1. Komedi
2. Tragedi
3. Melodrama
4.Tragi-komedi
Drama Puisi

Table 2.1: Literary Genre Diagram (Source: Jakob dan Saini K.M.,1988:18)

Refer to the restrictions that can be seen in the table above, the literature is limited in two major categories. Those are the non-imaginative literature and imaginative literature that have advanced categories in it as well as can be seen in the table above. However, in this study, the writer only focuses on a certain type of literary works which is novel.

2.2 Definition of Novel

Novel is a kind of literary works which belongs to the category of imaginative literature that then bounded back into the category of prose, then bounded back into the category of fiction that written in a narrative prose text. Although novel and short story are same as a fiction story, both of them have the differences. Novel has a lot of character and complex conflict in the story, while the short story only has one conflict. A fictional story can be called as a novel if it has least minimum 35.000 words.

> According to Jakob Sumardjo (1988:29) in the extensive meaning, novel is a narrative prose with spacious size. This size here may have meaning that the story with a complex plot, many characters, complex themes, various settings and stories. It means that novel obviously different from short story.

A work of fiction is constructed from a series of structures, which is known as intrinsic elements that serve as elements that build these works from the inside of a work of fiction. There are some things that can be said as the intrinsic structures of a work of literature, named Plot, Character, Setting, and Themes. A discussion of these elements of the intrinsic structure will be done in the next section. The function of the intrinsic structure is to build a work of fiction. Therefore, by examining the elements of the intrinsic elements of a fiction, a reader is accurately able to understand a work of fiction, regarding to the reason and purpose of the works and what message conveyed by the author to the readers through the paper.

Universitas Pasundan

2.2.1 Plot

Plot is one of the main frameworks that become the cornerstone of the foundation of a story. The plot is very influential in a story because the plot can determine the sequence of events. By setting the sequence of events in a story, a writer can determine the direction of a story and specify the message and the impression conveyed by the story that has been made as well.

> *"Menurut Stanton (1965:14) dalam Nurgiyantoro (2012:113) ...Plot adalah cerita yang berisi urutan kejadian, namun kejadian itu hanya dihubungkan secara sebab akibat, peristiwa yang satu disebabkan atau menyebabkan terjadinya peristiwa yang lain."*
> "According to Stanton (1965:14) in Nurgiyantoro (2012:113) ... The plot is a story containing a sequence of events, but the incident only connected in the causal, one event caused or led to other events."

The plot works in relationships of causality of each sequence of events in a story. The relationship of causality ultimately makes the sequence of events in a story become connected and can convey the message and the impression that want to be delivered by the author.

> *"Menurut Kenny (1966:14) dalam Nurgiyantoro (2012:113) ...Plot sebagai peristiwa-peristiwa yang ditampilkan dalam cerita yang tidak bersifat sederhana, karena pengarang menyusun peristiwa-peristiwa itu didasarkan kaitan sebab akibat."*
> "According to Kenny (1966:14) in Nurgiyantoro (2012:113) ... Plot as the events is shown in the story that is not simple since the author weaves the events based causal link."

> *"Menurut Foster (1970(1927):93) dalam Nurgiyantoro (2012:113) Plot adalah peristiwa cerita yang mempunyai penekanan pada adanya hubungan kausalitas."*
> "According to Foster (1970 (1927): 93) in Nurgiyantoro (2012:113) Plot is the events of the story which have an emphasis on the existence of a relationship of causality."

4

Characteristic of plot is usually mysterious and intellectual because plot shows incident and event that contain some conflicts so that it can make the readers feel interested in the story of the novel. Beside that through plot authors can attract reader as if they fit into the story.

There are other plot details that called Freytag's Pyramid. Quoting from Ohio University, those are the explanations:

1. Exposition: Setting and scene. The writer introduces the characters and setting, providing description and background.
2. Inciting Incident: Something happens to begin the action. A single event usually signals the beginning of the main conflict. The inciting incident is sometimes called 'the complication'.
3. Rising Action: The story builds and gets more exciting.
4. Climax: The moment of greatest tension in a story. This is often the most exciting event. It is the event that the rising action builds up to and the falling action follows.
5. Falling Action: Events happen as a result of the climax and we know that the story will soon end.
6. Resolution: The character solves the main problem/conflict or someone solves it for him or her.
7. Denouement: (*a French term, pronounced: day-noo-mooh*) the ending. At this point, any remaining secrets, questions or mysteries which remain after the resolution are solved by the characters or explained by the author. Sometimes the author leaves us to think about the theme or future possibilities for the characters.

We can think of the denouement as the opposite of the exposition: instead of getting ready to tell us the story by introducing the setting

Universitas Pasundan

and characters, the author is getting ready to end it with a final explanation of what actually happened and how the characters think to feel about it. This can be the most difficult part of the plot to identify, as it is often very closely tied to the resolution.
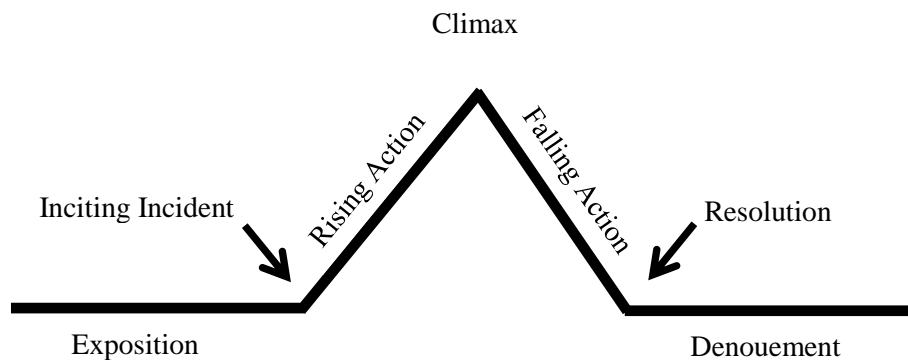

Table 2.2 Freytag Pyramid in the plot structure. Source: http:/paulgorman.org/

2.2.2 Character

Character is a term used to denote the people or the perpetrator's present in a story. The character is one of the very important elements or can be said to be the most important element in a story because the character is the perpetrator of an event. Therefore, there will not be an event without the presence of the character as the perpetrators of the incident.

> *"Menurut Stanton (2007: 33) Terma'Karakter' biasanya dipakai dalam dua konteks. Konteks pertama, karakter merujuk pada individu-individu yang muncul dalam cerita seperti ketika ada orang yang yang bertanya; "Berapa karakter yang ada dalam cerita itu?". Konteks kedua, karakter merujuk pada percampuran dari berbagai kepentingan, keinginan, emosi, dan prinsip moral dari individu-individu tersebut seperti yang tampak implisit pada pertanyaan; "Menurutmu, bagaimanakah karakter dalam cerita itu?".*

6

"According to Stanton (2007:33) Term ' character ' is commonly used in two contexts. The first context, the characters refer to individuals who appear in stories like when anyone who asks; "How many characters are there in the story?". The second context, the character refers to the mixing of various interests, desires, emotions, and the moral principles of such individuals as it appears implicit in the question; "Do you think, how do the characters in the story?".

A fictional character in a literary work of fiction can be separated into several types, such as the main character, protagonist, antagonist, additional character, etc.

"Menurut Nurgiyantoro (2012: 165) Istilah "tokoh" menunjuk pada orangnya, pelaku cerita, misalnya sebagai jawab terhadap pertanyaan: "Siapakah tokoh utama novel itu?", atau "Ada berapa orang jumlah pelaku novel itu?", atau "Siapakah tokoh protagonist dan antagonis dalam novel itu?", dan sebagainya."
"According to the Nurgiyantoro (2012:165) the term "character" refers to the person, the perpetrator of the stories, such as an answer to the question:" who is the main character of the novel is that? "or" how many people the number of perpetrators that novel? ", or" who is the protagonist and antagonist characters in the novel? ", and so on."

Characterization is the process conveying information about character in a literary work. The information may be such as personality, appearance, age, gender, social status, sexual orientation, beliefs, motivation, etc. Through the characterization, the reader can understand each character and therefore be able to understand the whole story.

The characterization of character in fictional work can be described either by implicit or explicit delieation. Abrams (1981:21) stated that characters are expressed in what they say (the dialogue) and

7

what they do (the action). The alternative methods available by author in characterizing the persons in narrative are *showing* and *telling*.

In *showing* (also called *the dramatic method*), said Abrams, the author simply presents the characters talking and acting and leaves the reader to infer the motives and dipositions that lie behind they say and do. It means that the author does not describe or convey the character explicitly; the reader is free to appreciate the characterization of the character based on their subjectivity.

In *telling*, the author intervenes authoritatively in order to describe, and often to evaluate, the motives and dispositional qualities of the characters. With *telling method*, the reader is straightly given the description of the characterization by the author. In other words, the description is not implicity described in the dialogues, but usually is described explicit the narration.

2.2.3 Setting

Setting is environmental aspects that influenced an event. Setting refers to the sense of place, time, social environment, and places that occurrence of the events depicted. The Setting is the background behind the environment that an event has a function as a supporting factor of events taking place. There are close links among events that are currently happening with the environment in which the event occurred that must be seen in the causal relationship between the setting and the event which are being told. So, it would seem from the

coherence of the event that was being told and what message is conveyed from that event.

> *"Menurut Stanton (2007: 35) Latar adalah lingkungan yang melingkupi sebuah peristiwa dalam cerita, semesta yang berinteraksi dengan peristiwa- peristiwa yang sedang berlangsung."*
> "According to Stanton (2007: 35) Setting is an environmental enclosing an event within the story, the universe that interact with the events that are taking place."

2.2.4 Theme

Theme is the basic idea or the main idea that serves to underlie a story. In a story, of course, there are messages that want to be conveyed by the author to a reader. Determination of a theme in the story is aimed at limiting what messages would like to be delivered by the author to the reader.

> *"Menurut Stanton (1965:20) dan Kenny (1966:88) dalam Nurgiyantoro (2012:67): Tema adalah makna yang dikandung oleh sebuah cerita."*
> "According to Stanton (1965:20) and Kenny (1966:88) in Nurgiyantoro (2012:67): Theme is a meaning that conceived in a story."

Therefore, the theme is one of the most important elements in a story because of the presence of the theme of the story is crucial that will determine how the author delivers the message given and what kind of messages can be delivered and beneficial to readers related to the predetermined theme.

> *"Menurut Hartoko & Rahmanto (1986: 142) dalam Nurgiyantoro (2012:68): Tema merupakan gagasan dasar umum yang menopang sebuah karya sastra dan yang terkandung di dalam teks sebagai struktur semantic dan yang menyangkut persamaan-persamaan atau perbedaan- perbedaan."*

9

"According to Hartoko & Rahmanto (1986: 142) in Nurgiyantoro (2012:68): The theme is a general basic idea underpinning a literary work and that contained in the text as the semantic structure and which concerns the similarities or differences."

2.3 Classification of Novel Themes

Human as a creature often have to deal with a lot of life's problems in their lives. Those problems are more complex than they think. Even though the problems are different, but there must be some existed universal problem. Those problems can be experienced whenever by everyone in anywhere. Novel which has theme of life's problems usually describes its story in an intense way and subjective. Some of authors are interesting to make life's problems as a theme for their literary works. It's chosen because most of them have been seen or experienced it in their real life.

There's many of life's problem that can be used for a literary work's theme, especially novel either from the individual problems or social problems, such as problem with love, religion, politics, friendship and many more. Some of themes which are chosen by the authors are subjective. They pick the most interesting life's problem and apply it to their literary works. They also make it become nice story in order to get the attention from readers; particularly to make them contemplate on each event of the story. According to Shipley in Nurgiantoro (2012:80), he interpreted theme as a discourse's subject, general topic, or main problem which is decanted into a story. Shipley distinguished theme into several levels based on soul's experience.

10

Those are five levels of theme that arranged from a simple to the highest level:

2.3.1 Physical Theme Level

In physical theme, man is called as a molecule. This theme is aimed more at physical activity rather than mental's problem. This theme also emphasizes physical mobility than psychological conflicts of characters which are concerned.

2.3.2 Organic Theme Level

In organic theme, man is called as protoplasm. This theme more concerns on sexuality problems of human's life. There are so many sexuality problems of human which is more emphasized in this level theme novel.

2.3.3 Social Theme Level

In social theme, man is called as socious. Social life is place that human can do the interaction with other people, with nature, and contains a lot of problems, conflicts, and many more that can be chosen as an object in seeking a theme. Social problems including economic, politic, education, culture, struggle, love, propaganda, relationship between senior and junior, and other social problems which often appeared in literature which contains social criticism.

.3.4 Egoic Theme Level

In egoic theme, man is called as individualism. Besides called as a social human being, man also called as an individual person which is constantly demanding recognition of the rights of individuality.

11

In the position as an individual person, human also has a lot of problems and conflicts, for examples, in the form of human reaction towards social problems which are faced by them. Those individuality problems, pride, or other characteristic and human attitudes can be felt directly by the person whom is concerned. Individuality problems often show someone's identity and their personality.

2.3.5 Divine Theme Level

In Divine theme level, man is called as a creature who has the highest level in life, but not every human can experience or achive it. The problems which are more prominent in this novel theme about relationship between human and God, religiosity problems or other problems those are philosophically such as beliefs and visions of life.

2.4 Close Reading

Close reading is a term used of a method of reading and analyzing a literary work. The term born of New Criticism, New Criticism focusing their attention on the intrinsic elements as the basis for the analysis of a literary work without regard to extrinsic elements and a biography of the author. The purpose of close reading is to get a whole understanding of a literary work. According to (Tarigan, 1894:36) Close reading is an effort to gain fully understanding of a reading material.

2.5 Achdiyat Karta Mihardja

Achdiyat Karta Mihardja was born at Cibatu, Garut, West Java, 6 March 1911. After graduating from AMS-A1 (Literature) he followed

the lecturer of Naqsyabandiyah Qadariah from Kiai Haji Abdullah Mubarak (*Ajengan Godebag*), to study Thomism philosophy from Dr. Jacobs S.J., and Prof. Dr. R.F. Beerling on "philosophy today" at the University of Indonesia (1950 s. d 1951). Mihardja is a journalist-cum-literary editor who associated with the eccentric poet Chairil Anwar and the Socialist Party of Indonesia, wrote Atheist from May 1948 to February 1949. The Indonesian used in the novel was influenced by Sundanese and harkens back to earlier works by Minang writers, as opposed to Mihardja's contemporaries who attempted to distance themselves from the earlier style. Dealing mainly with faith, the novel also touches on the interactions between modernity and traditionalism.

2.6 Synopsis of *Atheis*

Atheis is a novel published in 1949 in Indonesia that tells about the life of a character named Hasan. Hasan is a young man that comes from a village called Panyeredan near Bandung. His parents are those people who can be categorized as a religious muslim. Since his childhood he has been educated by religious values. His belief in Islam is dense.

Those are the background of Hasan's religious life, a life under Islamic values. As he turns to be an adult he becomes more diligent in doing his religion duty and those religion values become more attached to him. Those are until he can be said as a fanatic muslim. Hasan then leaves his parents and starts his life in Bandung with his

13

aunt and work in government department office as a train ticket seller in Praja City.

There is where he meets people who eventually change his life. Started from the time he meets Rusli, his friend back in elementary school. He is invited by Rusli to come to his house. Hasan accepts the invitation due to his interest in Kartini when he meets her. Since then he becomes often visiting Rusli's house and getting along with Rusli and Kartini's friends who are Marxist ideology activist.

Hasan who used to live in unpretentious way even in Bandung as a modern city, starts to change. The main point is in his religious behavior. The more often he gets along with Marxist discussion forum with Rusli and his friends; Hasan slowly leaves his old behavior behind. However, there are times where Hasan tries to guide Rusli to the religious values which he believes to be right. But Hasan can not deny Rusli's arguments, and he gives up in the end.

He is then more influenced by those Marxists ideology. One day he comes back to his parents' house in Panyeredan with Anwar his most fanatic Marxist ideology activist. At that time he even tells his parents honestly about his new religion view. Apparently he must pay it with separation with his family forever.

However, even after Hasan entered into the Marxist environment, he is also not fully able and willing to follow the ideology. But, because of the existence of Kartini that has become an inducement for him to remain in the community make it mostly just be a passive

14

spectator in various existing discourse throwing at each other. Until he married to Kartini and initially happy, of course, shortly anyway there was also a time of misery with Kartini. Hasan began to frequent bickering. This quarrels led to separation. The source of the conflict is, primarily, Hasan's distaste on Kartini's modern lifestyle.

One day, he learned that in a hotel Anwar had intended to rape Kartini, in anger, when he was running looking for Anwar, he was shot by the army of Japan (Kusyu Heiho) who accused him of spying. Hasan fell down by the end of his rounds and window. Hasan still had time to say Allahu Akbar as a sign of faith.

Universitas Pasundan