

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Research

The Reign of Queen Victoria as the ruler of British Empire was the most productive era of the empire and still had a lasting impact until to this day. With the rapid development in a various field at the end of 19th and the beginning of 20th century, it makes the British Empire had a big transformation in the country especially in social and culture. Besides that, the rapid development of knowledge also led to new innovation that help society at the time. For example, in biology when Charles Darwin published his book *On the Origin of Species* that contain his theory of evolution, it shook the world to the core with his finding at the time. In this time, drugs like cocaine, opium and etc became prominent and heavily used in the society. Because of this type of drugs was heavily used by the society, many of the people did not realize that they are actually abusing these drugs to the extent of they have an addiction.

Drug abuse is not the latest trend that happened in this 21st century or in the 90s, 80s, 70s or even in 60s but this happened way back in the late 19th century Britain, where illegal drugs substance such as cocaine and opium was very popular among the society at that time even the scientist encouraged people to use drugs for their own good. According to Keep and Randall (1999:207) “ in nineteenth-century England, the foreign substance opium became “a major export commodity to Britain’s largest colony, India, and the British government was very sensitive to the profits that could be realized through the sale of the drug”. In addition, according to Cooke (2010:12). “Scientists, ironically, aided in the spreading of this epidemic by praising the use of opiates and cocaine in various medical procedures.”

*The Sign of The Four* is a second novel written by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and showing Sherlock Holmes as the main character of this novel. This novel was published in 1890 by

Lippincott's Monthly Magazine. The novel tells a story of a highly decorated private investigator and detective Sherlock Holmes tries to investigate the secret agreement between the prisoner and the corrupt warden. This novel has a complex plot because it has the flashback of the character who at that time works in India in the middle of rebellion towards the British Empire in 1857. In this novel, for the first time, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle described Sherlock Holmes addiction towards illegal substances especially cocaine which makes his character more human than the previous novel.

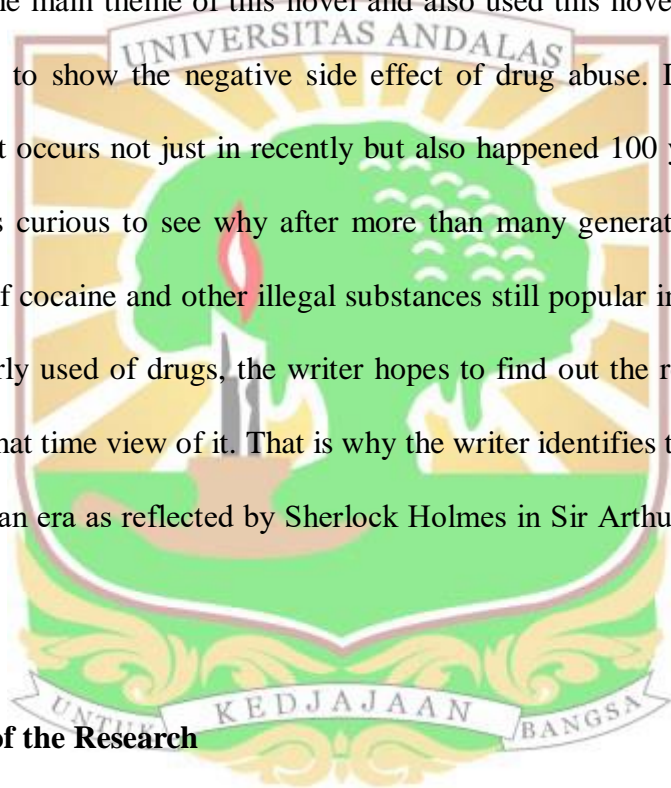
Speaking of cocaine that Sherlock uses in this novel, cocaine is also part of illegal substances that are very dangerous to a human being. Cocaine is a drug that can stimulate our brain and that can cause brain damage significantly. As Leshner (1999:1) states that "Cocaine is a powerfully addictive stimulant that directly affects the brain". He further explains that :

There are enormous medical complications associated with cocaine use. Some of the most frequent complications are cardiovascular effects, including disturbances in heart rhythm and heart attacks; such respiratory effects as chest pain and respiratory failure; neurological effects, including strokes, seizure, and headaches; and gastrointestinal complications, including abdominal pain and nausea.

The reasons why the writer chooses this novel because this novel is very interesting and the writer feel thrilled with the story that presented by the author. Another reason for the writer because this novel has become an eye-opener for the writer to know for the first time that drug abuse also happened in the 19th century and not just the latest trend where the media and movie make it a huge headline that happened in the late of 20th century. Therefore, the writer learns more about the history of drug abuse from this novel especially in British Empire and also this novel help shapes or give information regarding the history of British Empire at that time.

## 1.2 The Identification of The Problem

*The Sign of The Four* is one of the famous literary works written by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. The writer finds many interesting activities that British Society did at that time. One of the activities was the using of cocaine and opium which back then was legal in the society. Throughout the novel, the writer can see how drugs abuse affected not only the main character of the novel but also other characters. So, the writer believes that the author of this novel tried to describe and gave the description of how drugs abuse in British society even though that is not the main theme of this novel and also used this novel as a message to the society at that time to show the negative side effect of drug abuse. Drug abuse is a very serious problem that occurs not just in recently but also happened 100 years plus like in this novel. The writer is curious to see why after more than many generations since this novel published, the use of cocaine and other illegal substances still popular in this era. By looking back to the very early used of drugs, the writer hopes to find out the reason of drugs abuse and how people at that time view of it. That is why the writer identifies the problems of drugs abuse in the Victorian era as reflected by Sherlock Holmes in Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Sign of The Four*.



## 1.3 The Scope of the Research

In order to prove drug abusing problem in British Empire, the study is elaborated to these following questions

- a. How is Drugs addiction in British Society reflected in *The Sign of The Four*?
- b. What are Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's views and messages regarding drugs abuse?

## 1.4 Objective of the Research

This research can be a contribution to the English department students. First of all, this study means to encourage the students to study more about literature. The aim of this research is to analyze and explain the view and the message of the author regarding of drug abuse in Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's novel *The Sign of The Four*. In addition, this research also reveals the mindset of the society regarding drugs abuse at that time. The extensive use of drugs in Britain at the time was the main reason the writer made this research. Using this research, the writer can give the reader how drug abuse after so many years after it published still relevant until to this day by using a detail description of drug abuse that everybody can relate to. Meanwhile, society also can have benefit from this research because of this research gives the information of the culture and history of British Society. This University also has another different study and information regarding the culture and history of drug abuse from this research and this will enrich .literary research, particularly about drug abuse

## 1.5 Review of the Previous Study

To prove the originality of this research, the writer has found previous researchers that related to this research which deal with Sherlock Holmes and *The Sign of The Four*. The first research is written by Mae Leigh Cooke who analyzes this in her 2010 research titled "Fear of and Fascination With the Foreign in Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes Adventure ". In her research, she finds out that Doyle's inclusion of Victorian England's fascination with and fear of foreign elements within his detective stories made Holmes an instant success. Throughout her research, she says that Sherlock Holmes curiosity to the foreign substances like cocaine or morphine gives the public a message that someone like him also personal flaws and unhealthy habits.

Another research is written in 2000 by Katherine Mary Wisser titled "The Creation, Reception, and Perpetuation of The Sherlock Holmes Phenomenon 1877 – 1930". In her



research, she finds out that the author, the readers, the publisher play a big part in the success of the character. Each of them has a significant role in shaping the character legacy that includes how Sir Arthur Conan Doyle views and perceives of his character. The reader view of the context of the stories that they can relate to and also the publisher action to advertise this story for making it successful.

The final research is written in 1996 by Emma Karenno titled "Sherlock Pharmacy: Drugs in Detective Stories, 1860'S to 1890'S". In her research, she finds out that drugs in detective story have a big influence on the reader whether drugs in that story seen as exciting or even corrupting. Eventually, drugs have a significant role in detective stories to produce more thrilling and pumping the adrenaline for the reader to read the stories.

These three kinds of research are very helpful for the writer because their research gives the writer many perspectives and enlarge the writer knowledge on the history of drugs and the characterization of Sherlock Holmes. On the first research, the writer got to know more about how the British Society view on foreign culture and object that came from foreign land and how they respond to it and that can be reflected by Sherlock Holmes also this story influenced the society at that time. The second research gives the writer many perspectives on how the author views on his own creation and the influence of his surrounding shaping his own character. The third research gives the writer more knowledge on how drugs do not only affect the society but also affect the content of detectives stories of that time to make the stories more exciting to the reader. After all, there are differences between the writer research and their researches. The writer research tries to find out the history of drugs abuse on British Empire in the Victorian era and how Sir Arthur Conan Doyle views and messages of drugs abuse as reflected by Sherlock Holmes in his novel *The Sign of The Four*. Finally, by looking through history, the writer wants to find drug abuse on this story has an impact on British Society at the time.

## 1.6 Theoretical Framework

In his widely admired book, *The Mirror and the Lamp*, M. H. Abrams gives a well-documented tracing of the origins of many prominent. The mimetic theories are all oriented towards the universe, seeking to explain art as essentially an imitation of aspects of the external world in which we live, whereas the expressive theories are author-oriented for its persistent recourse to the art producer to explain the nature and criteria of art.

One of the most basic approaches used in the analysis of literary work is the historical criticism. This approach focuses on the connection of work to the historical period in which it was written. Literary historians attempt to connect the historical background of the work to specific aspects of the work. A key goal for historical critics is to understand the effect of a literary work upon its original readers. This approach sees a literary work chiefly, if not exclusively, as a reflection of its author's life and times or the life and times of the characters in the work. (1999:51)

As Guerin explains above, by using history we can find the clue what the author left as messages or pictures of what happens in his or her lifetime that we can relate to. History made us know what happen to the author and then how his or her work influences the society at that time or beyond that. In addition, using Guerin explanations as the base of the writer approach, the writer wants to find the effect of *The Sign of The Four* novel to the readers of that time and also the readers at this time.

According to Kuntowijoyo (1995:17) "History is a reconstruction of the past. The thing that history reconstruct is something that happens to someone whether that from his or her word, jobs, feeling and other things". This theory from Kuntowijoyo is the basis for the writer research because his book that the writer uses in this thesis is very useful for the writer research to understand more about history.

In the early pages of this research, the writer said that this research also tries to find the view of the author on his works. Therefore, the writer adds another tool to analyze this novel using biographical approach. Biographical criticism is an approach which information about the author's life and experience is necessary to have more understanding of her or his works. According to Kennedy and Gioia (1995:1795) :

Begins with the simple but central insight that literature is written by actual people and that understanding an author's life can help readers more thoroughly comprehend the work." Hence, it often affords a practical method by which readers can better understand a text. However, a biographical critic must be careful not to take the biographical facts of a writer's life too far in criticizing the works of that writer: the biographical critic "focuses on explicating the literary work by using the insight provided by knowledge of the author's life.... [B]iographical data should amplify the meaning of the text, not drown it out with irrelevant material.

The uses of biographical can help the reader to easier to understand the deeper meaning of the theme, setting, characters, conflicts based on the author view.

Drug-using today is very popular in this world. Many of the people use it from the low class of the society to the higher class. They believe that drug abuse is the ways for them to escape from reality or in other words try to suppress their stress from their activity. According to Bono, CSA or Controlled Substances Act is an act that can control and regulating the distribution, sale, and use of controlled drugs by the federal or state government. In this act, there is a list of drugs that specially classified by the CSA according to Code of Federal Regulation. Because of the CSA, the government can minimize the quantity of drugs that people can abuse and also provides some of this drugs to legitimate purpose in the USA. (1998:17)

As explained above, any illegal uses of drugs are prohibited by law and can be punished according to law. But, still many people do not care about this law and still doing drug abuse and also the trade of this illegal substances is very bloody because of the government of the trade area are proclaiming war to these drugs trader like what happens in Mexico and Philippine.

In *The Sign of The Four* book, it is very different case like the writer explains above. In this book setting, there is no regulation of drugs using and every people in the British society are free using any drugs they like. Even at that time the British Empire engaging war with China because they knew how profitable the opium trade in British and another country they imported the opium.

According to Carter (1990:1) “During the period 1839-1842, Britain and China were engaged in an armed conflict that has become known as the Opium War. China was fighting the war to get rid its society from opium addiction. This required war with Britain to eliminate the opium source, as it was the primary nation doing the illegal opium smuggling. Britain was fighting the *war* to secure free trade”.

### **1.7 The Method of Research**

The writer uses three steps in constructing this research. Those steps consist of collecting data, analyzing data, and presenting data.

#### **Collecting Data**

In collecting the data of this research the writer uses the library research method which leads to two kinds of data, primary and secondary data. The primary data comes from the novel by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle entitled *The Sign of The Four* related to the issue of drug abuse by British society. The secondary data are collected from several sources such as articles, book, and journal related to the topic and theory used by the writers.



### **Analyzing Data**

The writer uses qualitative in nature to analyze this research. The writer starts by reading the primary data deeply and finding the culture of British which then relates to the drugs abuse by British Empire. In analyzing this research the writer finds the relationship between the issue and the theory and then describes the importance of history and drugs abuse by British Empire as the main theme in *The Sign of The Four*.

### **Presenting Data**

The writer uses a descriptive method to present this research and explain the issue of naming using primary and secondary data. The writer provides some opinions from other researchers and supports this research by adding some quotation from the selected data.

