

**HAPPINESS IN *THE ONES WHO WALK AWAY FROM OMELAS*  
BY URSULA K. LE GUIN**

**THESIS**



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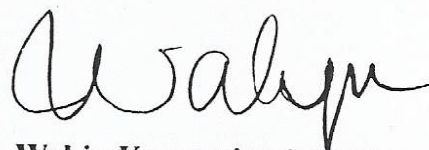


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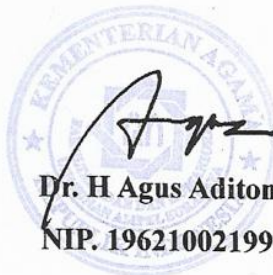
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on the creation of mood rather than plot. Short stories have no set length and considered both an apprenticeship form preceding more lengthy works. The researcher chooses the quite well-known post-modernist American short story by Ursula K. Le Guin titled “The One Who Walk Away From Omelas”

Ursula Krober Le Guin (1929-2018) was an American novelist. She worked mainly in the genres of fantasy and science fiction and authored children's books, short stories, poetry, and essays. Her writing was first published in the 1960s and often depicted futuristic or imaginary alternative worlds in politics, the natural environment, gender, religion, sexuality, and ethnography. She influenced Booker Prize winners and other writers, such as Salman Rushdie and David Mitchell. She won many awards and accolades like the Hugo Award, Nebula Award, Locus Award, and World Fantasy Award, each award she won more than once. Le Guin has continually challenged readers and critics by choosing genres often dismissed as popular, trivial, lacking in intellectual content and literary substance, then imbuing them with complexities of character and plot, meticulously structured narratives and compelling moral dilemmas, combined with a precision of language that reveals meaning like a sculptor reveals meaning in stone or a musician in sound. (Mid-America Library Alliance, 2010)

The One Who Walk Away from Omelas itself is one of Le Guin's earlier works, released in 1973 and firstly published in a science fiction anthology *New Dimensions*, volume 3 by Robert Silverberg. A short story with deliberately both vague and vivid descriptions, the narrator depicts a summer festival in

the utopian city of Omelas, whose prosperity depends on the perpetual misery of a single child (Spivack 1984, p. 158).

This short story describes the city of Omelas during the Festival of Summer. For the festival, the entire population of Omelas joins together in various processions through the city. In Omelas, the people have precisely what they need, and have managed to trim away the more destructive excesses of life. They live in an eternally happy way. Although there is a dark secret beneath the utopian city, beneath the city lives a nameless suffering child that lives in a tiny, windowless room underneath one of the most beautiful buildings in the city. The citizens of Omelas learn of the child's existence at some point in their lives but because the happy existence of everyone in Omelas depends upon the child's miserable condition, they eventually overcome their guilt and move on. There are, however, some who cannot reconcile the child's wretched existence with the comforts of their lives. These people are the one that walk away from Omelas.

The reason why the researcher choose the short story *The One Who Walk Away From Omelas* by Ursula K. Le Guin is because this short story fascinates the researcher with its ground-breaking plot twist. The author, while it is a short story, only needs 5 pages to made the researcher feel captivated and interested in analyzing the whole short story altogether. The short story's vague plot and the post-modernism themes in it are also open to anyone's imagination which means it's open to different interpretations and that short story are also much easier to be analyzed due to the length of the literary work.

For a greater understanding of the themes inside this short story, it needs to make an analysis and research of the literary works. To do that, the researcher needs two tools to make this research more thorough and accurate. The first one is called the New Criticism Theory, a branch of literary studies that emphasizes with explication, or close reading of the work itself. The second one is called the Reception theory, A branch of modern literary studies concerned with the ways in which literary works are received by readers.

According to Machor (2009, pg. 12) Reception Theory defines literature as "the process of how the reader and the text interact with each other, and it was a revolutionary way of looking at the history of literature and literary criticism. Reception study also has within it a postmodern turn. That is, in its postmodern form, reception study adopts the philosophical assumption that to justify particular claims of knowledge, it must reject grand narratives or philosophical ideals in favor of local histories."

Here, the researcher focuses on the researcher's own opinion and reception of the short story based on New Criticism Theory and Wolfgang Iser's Reception Theory.

## **1.2 Objective of the Study**

In connection with the background of this study, the study is formulated as follow:

1. How is Happiness described as the general theme in *The one who walk away from Omelas*?



*The One Who Walk Away From Omelas*. And also to inspire the students of English Literature Department of UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya with this research as their reference for their future studies.

### **1.3.1 Scope and Limitation**

This research would take more focus on the general theme of happiness and its literary devices inside *The One Who Walk Away From Omelas*. The limitation is about the researcher's own interpretation of the general theme of happiness and its literary devices of plot, setting, symbolism, point of view, and the narrative based on key principles of New Criticism theory and Wolfgang Iser's Reception theory.

### **1.3.2 Method of the Study**

Every research has a method to better understand the data and analysis process. In this case, the researcher uses descriptive method for this study. The core of the analysis is to read the short story thoroughly to understand the intended meaning and themes beneath it and then find and compile any specific description and quotations described by the Narrator about the main subjects/topics of the research which is the general theme of Happiness and its literary devices. These are the three comprehensive steps that the researcher takes in order to gather the data as accurately as possible.

### **1.3.2.1 Design of the Research**

In this study, according to the statement of the problem, the researcher applied the descriptive qualitative method to analyze the study. It means the data arranged in paragraphs which are taken from the library source such as books, e-book, and so on.

### **1.3.2.2 Data Source**

This study has the main data source that is taken from the work of Ursula K. Le Guin entitled “The One Who Walk Away from Omelas”. The data is in the form of any description and quotes described the Narrator that focuses on the subject of the research which is the general theme of Happiness and its literary devices. Besides that, the researcher used secondary data to analyze this study. Those are online sources. Data observation is online based. Therefore from the internet, the researcher has opportunities to have proper data and results straight from the resources found online.

### **1.3.2.3 Data Collection**

In collecting the data, the researcher took some steps to collect the data as accurately as possible, these was the steps that was taken by the researcher to collect the data:

1. Reading and understanding the short story of “The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas” by Ursula K. Le Guin.
2. Finding and collecting the data that relates to the statement of problems and also to the respective theories The data are specific to any description





## CHAPTER II

### LITERARY REVIEW

The theories that have been used in this research by the researcher is New Criticism Theory and Reception Theory. These theories correlates with the short story's theme and it's literary devices of plot, setting, point of view and symbolism.

#### 2.1 Definition of New Criticism Theory

What is New Criticism? According to Delahoyde (2013, pg. 1) New Criticism emphasizes "explication, or close reading of the work itself. It rejects old historicism's attention to biographical and sociological matters. Instead, the objective determination as to "how a piece works" can be found through close focus and analysis, rather than through extraneous and erudite special knowledge. It has long been the pervasive and standard approach to literature in college and high school curricula."

Delahoyde (2013, pg. 1) also states that "New Criticism examines the relationships between a text's ideas and its form, between what a text says and the way it says it. New Critics 'may find tension, irony, or paradox in this relation, but they usually resolve it into unity and coherence of meaning'. New Criticism attempts to be a science of literature, with a technical vocabulary, some of which all had to be learn in junior high school English classes (third-person, denouement, etc.). Working with patterns of sound, imagery, narrative structure, point of view, and other techniques discernible on close reading of the text, they seek to

determine the function and appropriateness of these to the self-contained work. New Critics, especially American ones in the 1940s and 1950s, attacked the standard notion of 'expressive realism', the romantic fallacy that literature is the efflux of a noble soul. The goal then is not the pursuit of sincerity or authenticity, but subtlety, unity, and integrity--and these are properties of the text, not the author. The work is not the author's; it was detached at birth. The author's intentions are 'neither available nor desirable' (nor even to be taken at face value when supposedly found in direct statements by authors). Meaning exists on the page."

Thus according to Delahoyde (2013, pg. 2), "New Critics insist that the meaning of a text is intrinsic and should not be confused with the author's intentions nor the work's affective dimension (its impressionistic effects on the reader). The 'intentional fallacy' is when one confuses the meaning of a work with the author's purported intention (expressed in letters, diaries, interviews, for example). The 'affective fallacy' is the erroneous practice of interpreting texts according to the psychological or emotional responses of readers, confusing the text with its results."

According to Graff (1974, pg. 72), he states that "not so very many years ago, the New Critics were academic radicals challenging the hegemony of the philological scholars, the literary and intellectual historians, and the literary biographers in the domain of literary studies. Then, after a period of theoretical polemics and departmental infighting, the New Criticism won its battle for academic respectability. But scarcely had it done so than the New Criticism began

to be attacked from other quarters. Some members of a new generation of teachers and scholars saw in New Criticism the epitome of all that was constricting and deadening about the academic study of literature. The New Critics, it was charged, had trivialized literature and literary study by turning critical interpretation into an overintellectualized game whose object was the solution of interpretive puzzles. This way of viewing literature tended to ignore or destroy the moral, political, and personal impact that literature might possess."

Leitch (2001, pg. 10) states that "Studying a passage of prose or poetry in New Critical style required careful, exacting scrutiny of the passage itself. Formal elements such as rhyme, meter, setting, characterization, and plot were used to identify the theme of the text. In addition to the theme, the New Critics also looked for paradox, ambiguity, irony, and tension to help establish the single best and most unified interpretation of the text. Although the New Criticism is no longer a dominant theoretical model in American universities, some of its methods (like close reading) are still fundamental tools of literary criticism, underpinning a number of subsequent theoretic approaches to literature including poststructuralism, deconstruction theory, and reader-response theory."

The researcher will use the New Criticism theory to determine the general theme and its literary devices of the short story by using the close-reading technique in reading the short story in order to correctly determine the exact general theme and literary devices.

## 2.2 Definition of Reception Theory

Among many literary theories that are created by the great theorists from the literary world, the researcher chooses the lesser-known Reception theory not because of the anonymity but for its suitability to the short story themes and characterization.

Temesgen (2017, pg. 2) defines Reception theory as "a variant of reader response theory which emphasizes how each individual reader has a part in receiving (i.e., interpreting), the text. Reception theory emphasizes the active roleplayed by the reader in constructing and interpreting the meaning of a text contrary to theories that understand the reader as a passive, silent recipient of the meaning embedded in a text."

German scholar Hans-Robert Jauss in the late 1960s was the primary advocate. The central concern in this theory of *Rezeptionsasthetik* is called a "horizon of expectation". Jauss said that "a reader's experience of textual meaning will dramatically alter depending on the time and place of the reader". This idea contrasts radically with the New Historicists or biographical critics who argue that textual meaning will dramatically alter depending on the time and place the author wrote the work.

Holub (2002, pg, 5) states that "Reception Theory refers throughout to a general shift in concern from the author and the work to the text and the reader. It is used, accordingly, as an umbrella term and encloses both Hans Robert Jauss's and Wolfgang Iser's projects as well as practical fieldwork and the traditional

position with sway". Holub said that "although Reception theory might be quite similar to Reader-response criticism what separates them, however, are several important features. First and foremost, the designation itself is not the banner under which any of these critics campaigned; Reader-response analyst is spread across the world, educating at various academies; they don't meet on a regular basis, nor do they produce in the same journals or appear at the same debates. If reader-response criticism has become an analytical effort, as some would retain, it's the benefit of the creativity of classifying rather than any commonness of effort".

By contrast, Holub (2002, pg. 6) also states that Reception Theory "must be accepted as a more cohesive, conscious, and collective commitment. It materialized as a group effort on both the academically and critical levels, requiring a constructive exchange of ideas among its proponents". Finally, Holub said that "reception theory may be detached from reader-response criticism on the basis of lack of mutual effect. Aside from Iser, whose writings have received substantial coverage in both camps, there has been realistically no contact whatsoever between the two camps. Indeed, if footnotes are any sign of impact, the exchange between them has been non-existent. The similarities in general critical perspective between reader-response criticism and reception theory are ultimately too superficial and too abstract for a merging here."

The researcher used Wolfgang Iser's Reception Theory as one of the main source theory for this research because of the source data of this research which is *The One Who Walk Away From Omelas* and the research questions which

includes the objectives of this research correlates with each other through the key principles of Iser's Reception Theory.

### 2.2.1 Wolfgang Iser's Reception Theory

Wolfgang Iser is one of the famous advocates of Reception Theory in the contemporary literary field. His Reception Theory is strikingly different from the works from other Reception theorists.

Shi (2013, pg. 2) states that "Iser's work in the realm of reception theory stands as his most significant contribution to literary theory. The background of Iser's own search for answers was the conviction that the literary text as an example for the aesthetic had a function radically different from other types of discourse and that in the text-reader relationship too much had been taken for granted, or not taken into account at all, by traditional criticism. The whole reading experience thus becomes an evolving process of anticipation, frustration, retrospection, reconstruction, and satisfaction."

Culpepper (1993, pg. 3) states that "Iser employs Roman Ingarden's concept of *Satzkorrelate* (intentional sentence correlatives) to examine the way in which sequent sentences act upon one another. His discussion examines how the reader's either smooth or interrupted reception of the sentence in literary prose allows for dynamic creation of the text based on two poles: the artistic (the text created by the author) and the aesthetic (the text received and in turn created by the reader)."

Iser (1974, pg. 311) states that "Reception theory was a reaction to what appeared to be a stalemate in literary studies. Of paramount concern for this theory was the impact a piece of literature has on its readers and the responses it elicits. Instead of asking what the text means, the researcher asked what it does to its potential reader. The message (of the text) that was no longer to be ascertained triggered interest of what happens to the text in reading in what has since been called text processing."

### **2.2.2 Key Principles of Wolfgang Iser's Reception Theory**

Wolfgang Iser's key principles of Reception Theory were initially presented in a lecture entitled *The Affective Structure of the Text* and after examining a number of English novels in *The Implied Reader*.

Iser (1974, pg. 274) outlines his approach by pointing out that, in considering a literary work, "one must take into account not only the actual text but also the actions involved in responding to that text". Iser suggests that "we might think of the literary work as having two poles: the 'artistic' pole is the text created by the author, and the 'aesthetic' pole refers to the realization accomplished by the reader". Iser pointed out that "reading is an active and creative process. It is reading which brings the text to life, which unfolds 'its inherently dynamic character'. If the author were somehow to present a story completely, the reader's imagination would have nothing to do; it is because the text has unwritten implication that the reader can be active and creative, working things out for himself. This doesn't mean that any reading will be suffice. The text uses many



tactics and devices to limit its own unwritten implications, but the latter is nonetheless worked out by the reader's own imagination."

According to Shi (2013, pg. 4) "Iser makes a distinction between the implied reader and the actual reader. The implied reader is formed within the text, and he is expected to respond in many specific ways to the response-inviting structures of the text. The actual reader, however, with his own personal experiences accumulated little by little, his responses actually are continuously and inevitably changed and reconstructed."

### **2.2.2.1 Reading Process**

Iser (1974, pg. 281) believes that "people draw attention to two important features of the reading process. The first is that reading is a temporal activity and one that is not linear. As readers, we cannot absorb even a short text in a single moment. Whatever we read sinks into our memory and is 'foreshortened', it may be evoked again later against a different background, enabling us to develop connections we had not anticipated. As readers, we also occupy a perspective that is continually moving and changing according to the way we make sense of the accumulating fictional material. The second important feature of the reading process according to Iser is that when we are confronted with 'gaps' or unwritten implications or frustrated expectations in the text, we attempt to search for consistency. Though our expectations are continually shifting, and images are continually being modified in their significance, we will 'strive, even if unconsciously, to fit everything together in a consistent pattern', such textual

consistency is the product of the 'meeting between the written text and the individual mind of the reader with its own particular history of experience, its own consciousness, its own outlook', we attempt to understand the material of the text within a consistent and coherent framework because it is this which allows us to make sense of whatever is unfamiliar to us in the text."

Iser (1974, pg. 286) sees that "the ambiguous nature of the text and the illusion-making of the reader as 'opposed factors', but both are necessary for the process of reading: if the illusion were destroyed completely, the text would be alien to us. And if the illusion were allembicing, then the ambiguous nature of the text would be reduced to one level of meaning, hence we try to find a balance between these two conflicting tendencies."

According to Iser's (1974, pg. 287) thoughts, "the dynamism of the text, its sense of life-likeness, presupposes that we do not actually achieve this balance. Even as we seek a consistent pattern in the text, we are also uncovering other textual elements and connections that resist integration into our pattern. In seeking a balance, we start out with certain expectations, and it is the shattering of these expectations that lies at the core of our aesthetic experience. The very indeterminacy of the text, the very fact that parts of it are unformulated or unwritten, is the driving force behind our attempt to work out a meaning that is coherent and consistent. It is the very shifting of our perspective that makes us feel that a novel is true to life, and we ourselves impart to the text this dynamic lifelikeness which allows us to absorb unfamiliar experiences into our personal world."

### 2.2.2.2 Production of Meaning

Iser (1974, pg. 290) believes that in reading a text, “we undergo a process of organization similar to that undertaken by the creator of the text. In other words, we must recreate the text in order to view it as a work of art. And this act of aesthetic recreation, says Iser, is not a smooth or linear process ‘We look forward, we look back, we decide, we change our decisions, we form expectations, we are shocked by their nonfulfillment, we question, we muse, we accept, we reject; this is the dynamic process of recreation’. It is why the interplay between illusion-forming and illusion-breaking that makes reading essentially a recreative process.”

Iser (1974, pg. 291) continues "The bases of the connection between reader and text, then, are: anticipation and retrospection, hence the unfolding of the text as a living event and consequently an impression of life-likeness. During the reading process, the work's efficacy is caused by its evocation and subsequent negation of the familiar; in other words, the reader thinks her assumptions are affirmed by the text; she is then led to see that these assumptions are overturned and she enters the assumptions of the textual world itself, her reorientation marking an expansion of her experience, which learns to incorporate unfamiliar perspectives. Reading, for Iser, reflects the way in which we gain experience: once our preconceptions are held in abeyance, the text becomes our 'present' while our own ideas fade into the past. We suspend the ideas and attitudes governing our own personality so that we can experience the unfamiliar world of the literary text.”

Iser (1974, pg. 294) claims that "The production of meaning in literary texts not only involves our discovering of unformulated or implicit components of the text; it also grants us the possibility to create our own deciphering capacity, to formulate ourselves and to expand our awareness by incorporating the unknown". According to Iser, "the reading process mimes the process of experience in general: the aesthetic dimension of a literary work is located in the act of its recreation by the reader, a process that is temporal and also dialectical insofar as it allows the assumptions of the reader to interact with those of the text, yielding knowledge not only of the text but also of the reader himself or herself."

But if the text at one level 'mirrors' the reader, and if it is the reader who makes the connections between a text's various elements, what is to stop the reading process from being entirely subjective and even impressionistic? In fact, this possible charge of uncontrolled subjectivism is confronted in Iser's *The Act of Reading*. In this book, Iser (1997, pg. 21) enlists "two basic arguments against such a charge, The first argument is based on the nature of meaning and the second hinges on the question of whether a truly objective interpretation is possible". The meaning of a literary text, says Iser, "is not a fixed and 'definable entity' but a 'dynamic happening'. It is, in other words, an event in time". Every fictional structure, according to Iser, "is two-sided: it is both 'verbal' and 'affective.' The verbal structure of effects embodied in the text 'guides the [reader's] reaction and prevents it from being arbitrary'; the affective aspect is the realization in the reader's response of a meaning that has been 'prestructured by the language of the text.'"

From the explanation of theories above, the researcher will analyze *The One Who Walk Away From Omelas* by Ursula K. Le Guin by following the key principles of New Criticism theory and Wolfgang Iser's Reception theory, such as New Criticism's close-reading technique and the dynamism between the two poles of Iser's reception theory, aesthetic and artistic. The researcher will try to analyze the general theme of Happiness and its literary devices of *The One Who Walk Away From Omelas* and to produce the researcher's own interpretation of the meaning of *The One Who Walk Away From Omelas*'s general theme of Happiness and its literary devices.

### **2.3 Definition of Theme in Literature**

Abrams (1999, pg. 170) states that, "to interpret a theme of literature is to specify the meanings of its language by analysis, paraphrase, and commentary; usually such interpretation focuses on especially obscure, ambiguous, or figurative passages. and is sometimes used interchangeably with 'motif', but the term is more usefully applied to a general concept or doctrine, whether implicit or asserted, which an imaginative work is designed to incorporate and make persuasive to the reader."

According to Battaglia (2019, pg. 2), she states that "a theme is not a summary of a piece of literature; it is a universal statement, moral lesson, message or idea that addresses the experience of being human. Themes are developed throughout a text and are expressed through different perspectives. A piece of literature, no matter how short, often contains more than one theme and when

writing a thesis on a theme, A theme is embedded in a work of literature, whether it's fiction, drama or poetry through literary tools such as character development, point of view, setting and plot, allegory, symbolism, alliteration, metaphor, simile, personification and repetition. First, identify the theme and formulate a thesis statement that makes a specific point about it. People can write about how the theme appears in the literature, why it matters and how it relates to the real world."

#### **2.4 Finding Themes in a Short Story**

According to Skiffington (2019, pg. 1), "to uncover themes and meanings, the researcher must begin the analysis by making verifiable observations. Observations that are verifiable are those that can be related to this research. These observations are the raw data of literary analysis; they are objective facts. Objective facts are the third person accounts that indicate who is doing what in the story or poem. They establish the when; they confirm the where. They recognize interesting key words and repetitions. They record character dialogue, and they note specific devices used by the poet. Keep in mind that the author made a decision about each of these objective elements. Researcher's role as a reader/analyst is to determine why these creative decisions were specifically made. At the same time, it is very important to pay attention to the personal thoughts and emotional reactions that surface when reading the details of the story. This type of information is subjective. Subjective information arises while experiencing the literature. Subjective information is the thoughtful first person 'I think, I feel, I know' responses that come from the reader's background of knowledge and personal experience."

The researcher will prefer to concentrate on the subjective information of the short story's themes due to the research questions on this research

## 2.5 Review of Related Studies

In this research, the researcher have taken two closely related research projects, one is from an article by Clara Srouji-Shajrawi, *Reception Theory in the Modern Arabic Novel: An Applied Study in Two Trilogies* and the second one is from a dissertation by William Cody Deaton, *An Examination of the Theme of Ursula K. Le Guin's "The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas"* as the research's related studies due to their theory and data source.

An article by Clara Srouji-Shajrawi entitled *Reception Theory in the Modern Arabic Novel: An Applied Study in Two Trilogies* presents the application of Reception Theory on the modern Arabic novel which was not done before. Reception Theory and the proposed method are applied to two trilogies that were popular bestsellers in the Arab world. The first one, which is known in its English translation as the "Cairo Trilogy", was written in the 1950s by the Egyptian writer Naguib Mahfouz who won the 1988 Nobel prize in literature. The second trilogy was written in the late 1990s by a woman writer from Algiers, Ahlam Mosteghanami, and was the first Algerian novel written in Arabic.

This study provides the information to understand more of the reception theory by proposing a suitable model/method for discovering the extra and intra literary criteria that influence the success or failure of a literary text.

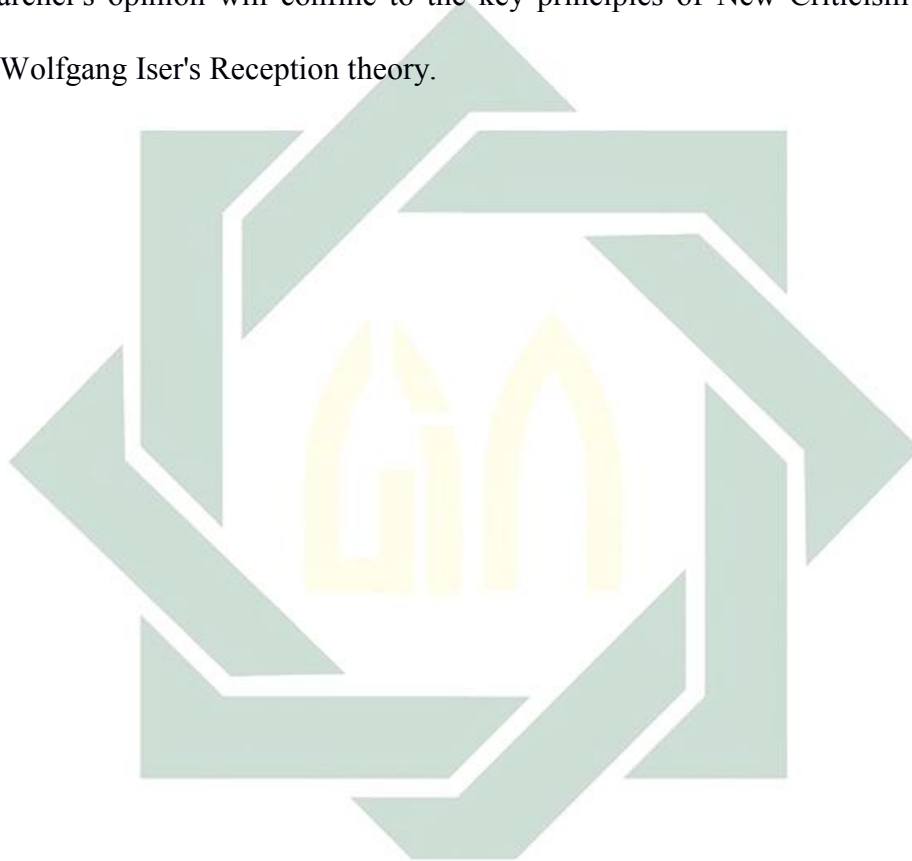
Intra-literary criteria, as this study concludes, "have greater influence on the readers than extra-literary criteria. The former criteria determine the aesthetic taste of the community of readers within a given place and time. The readers judge a literary work after reading it, though they may be initially influenced by the book's impressive cover and written comments."

Although her research is using the Reception theory in a vastly different way to this research, the researcher found some similarities which made her research therefore relevant to this research. There are one key difference though between her research and this research, That one key difference are the topic, instead of determining the success or failure of a literary text using the Reception Theory. This research will use the Reception theory to explain the general theme and it's literary devices of *The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas* using the researcher's own interpretation.

The second related studies that the researcher takes as the benchmark of this thesis is William Cody Deaton's dissertation entitled *An Examination of the Theme of Ursula K. Le Guin's The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas*. In his dissertation, the author focuses on the same topic as the researcher's thesis, Examining the general theme in *The One Who Walk Away From Omelas*. Although, that's where the similarities end, there are some main key differences between his dissertation and the researcher's own thesis. Firstly, while his dissertation focuses on the same topic as this thesis, it differs when it comes to the objectives, his dissertation focuses only on examining the general theme of the short story. Although this researcher's thesis purpose is also to try to expand the



examination in a more detailed and delicate manner by closely examining the literary devices of the short story, paragraph-by-paragraph, page-by-page. Secondly, this thesis will have a broader explanation of the general theme and its literary devices in the short story by adding the researcher's own opinion of it, the researcher's opinion will confine to the key principles of New Criticism theory and Wolfgang Iser's Reception theory.



### CHAPTER III

#### HAPPINESS IN *THE ONE WHO WALK AWAY FROM OMELAS*

There are three main topics of analysis that the researcher analyzes in this chapter. Firstly, the researcher takes a thorough and careful analysis of the general theme of the short story "*The One Who Walk Away From Omelas*" which is Happiness, and then the researcher explains about the irony behind the citizens' happiness, so in this part of analysis the researcher will separate the analysis into two parts: the theme of happiness and its literary devices like symbolism, the setting and the narrative of the short story, the irony behind the citizens' happiness which includes the sudden change of tone by the narrator which leads into a shocking reveal at the end of the short story.

Secondly, this section or part of the analysis focuses on the researcher's particular view of Happiness in the short story based on the researcher's own life experiences and moral judgment. Thirdly, the researcher focuses on what are the true meanings of the short story's ending based on the researcher's own observation and opinion. How in the end, the citizens and the one who escapes Omelas are all, finally come to accept the true meaning of happiness in their own respective way. This part of the thesis will solely concentrate on the three main key aspects of analysis that has been mentioned above. The conclusion of the analysis will be discussed in the next part of this thesis.

This analysis has used the definition of theme in literature according to Abrams which is "Theme is a general concept or doctrine, whether implicit or

asserted, which an imaginative work is designed to incorporate and make persuasive to the reader." and the close-reading technique in the New Criticism theory as the research's two main foundations of how to define what is the general theme in the short story.

To identify the themes that are found in this short story, the researcher have used the two steps of uncovering themes based on the earlier chapter of this analysis, the researcher begin the analysis by making verifiable observations. Observations that are verifiable are those that can be related to this research. Although in this type of research, it is very important to pay attention to the personal thoughts and emotional reactions that surface when reading the details of the story. This type of information is subjective. Subjective information arises while experiencing the literature. Subjective information is the thoughtful first person 'I think, I feel, I know' responses that come from the reader's background of knowledge and personal opinion. A theme is embedded in a work of literature, through literary tools such as character development, point of view, setting and plot, or through literary devices such as allegory, symbolism, alliteration, metaphor, simile, personification and repetition. Therefore, in this analysis, the researcher will also analyze the literary devices in this short story, which is the symbolism, setting, plot and the narrator's point of view. The researcher fully prioritizes the subjective information over verifiable observations due to the usage of Reception Theory as one of the main theories in this research.

### **3.1 The general theme of *The one who walk away from Omelas***

The general theme of this short story are Happiness, in this part of the analysis the researcher has discussed the theme of Happiness found in the short story, the meaning of happiness itself is always different to each other's perspective, there is some general understanding of the meaning of happiness but not a concrete one. This is because we're gifted by God to have free will, we find, control and lose our happiness. Although there is some irony about the general theme of happiness in the later part of the short story.

The reason for the researcher to used the New Criticism theory and Iser's Reception Theory is to explore the different interpretation of Happiness through the eyes of the researcher. The researcher has used the close-reading technique of New Criticism as a way to determine the general theme and its literary devices that are found inside this short story. Iser's reception theory stated that the reader's either smooth or interrupted reception of the sentence in literary prose allows for a dynamic creation of the text based on two poles: the artistic (the text created by the author) and the aesthetic (the text received and in turn created by the reader), the artistic pole in this research are the short story as the base of the analysis and the aesthetic pole are the researcher's own interpretation and the analysis of the short story.

#### **3.1.1 The Festival of Summer as the symbol of happiness**

The first two following quotations from the short story is all about the narrator's introduction to the city of Omelas and the early processions of Festival

of Summer. These early passages of the short story is characterized by the narrator's happy tone and the bright, detailed, sometimes hectic imagery of the city of Omelas during the early processions of Festival of Summer. The narrator captured the jubilant scenes of the processions and the citizens of Omelas mingling with each other while gathering around the processions to perfection and it might've also been a symbol of happiness.

"With a clamor of bells that set the swallows soaring, the Festival of Summer came to the city Omelas, bright-towered by the sea. The rigging of the boats in harbor sparkled with flags. In the streets between houses with red roofs and painted walls, between old moss-grown gardens and under avenues of trees, past great parks and public buildings, processions moved." (Le Guin 1)

The journey begins with a typical happy and joyous beginning with vivid and beautiful imagery of Omelas by the narrator, it depicts the city's landscape of the harbor that packed with docking boats, the rustic houses in the streets and the sheer amount of gardens and parks in the city. The narrator's depiction of the city is stereotypical to a city that belongs in a fairytale. And this early narration from the narrator indicates that the beginning of the short story also coincides with the beginning of Omelas's annual tradition which is the Festival of Summer.

"Some were decorous: old people in long stiff robes of mauve and grey, grave master workmen, quiet, merry women carrying their babies and chatting as they walked. In other streets the music beat faster, a shimmering of gong and tambourine, and the people went dancing, the procession was a dance. Children dodged in and out, their high calls rising like the swallows' crossing flights, over the music and the singing." (Le Guin 1)

This is the next part of the narrator's introduction to the city of Omelas, it's a special day in the city of Omelas at the time of narrator's introduction and what appeared to be as some kind of traditional procession is actually a dance. The streets of Omelas seems to be in a festive mood with many of the citizens enjoying the dance procession, the musicians playing with their gongs and tambourines passionately, the elderly flashing their decorous clothing style, the mothers with their babies and the kids running around and seemingly in tune to the music, they were all enjoying the atmosphere and the scene.

In this following quotation, the narrator revealed the next destination of the Festival of Summer processions, the processions along with the citizens of Omelas are heading into a place called the 'Green Fields', in that place we could see naked boys and girls exercising their horses for the race, which can be categorized as a positive side of the story due to the narrator's way of describing the competitiveness side of the short story like for example: the energetic boys and girls exercising vigorously for the race, even to the point of being naked while doing it.

"All the processions wound towards the north side of the city, where on the great water-meadow called the Green' Fields boys and girls, naked in the bright air, with mud-stained feet and ankles and long, lithe arms, exercised their restive horses before the race." (Le Guin 1)

The dance procession and the joyous citizens of Omelas marched on towards the north part of the city known as 'Green Fields', a field that can also be used for horse-racing. In the Green Fields, naked boys and girls are preparing to race their horses with some exercises. It's revealed from the paragraph mentioned that with

naked boys and girls preparing their horses, it means that the city has a quite tolerant dress code, freedom to wear any dresses or not wearing any. This is an indication of a tolerant society and the first sign of the utopian setting of the short story.

In this following quotation, with the processions now finally arrived at their destination, the Green Fields. The narrator then evocatively described the scene surrounding the Green Fields at that moment with strikingly detailed imagery, the narrator's description of the high-spirited nature of the crowds at the Green Fields certainly is a positive side of the short story.

"Most of the processions have reached the Green Fields by now. A marvelous smell of cooking goes forth from the red and blue tents of the provisioners. The faces of small children are amiably sticky; in the benign grey beard of a man a couple of crumbs of rich pastry are entangled. The youths and girls have mounted their horses and are beginning to group around the starting line of the course. An old woman, small, fat, and laughing, is passing out flowers from a basket, and tall young men wear her flowers in their shining hair. A child of nine or ten sits at the edge of the crowd, alone, playing on a wooden flute. People pause to listen, and they smile, but they do not speak to him, for he never ceases playing and never sees them, his dark eyes wholly rapt in the sweet, thin magic of the tune." (Le Guin 3)

After the narrator explained about the lifestyle and explored the mindset of the citizens of Omelas, the narrator takes the researcher back to the Festival of Summer procession, where finally the procession reached the Green Fields followed by many citizens of Omelas. The narrator then vividly explained with perfect imagery about the scene surrounding the Green Fields at that moment, like for example: the appetizing smell of food cooking in the nearby tent and the one

who enjoyed that food, the children's faces "amiably sticky" and the man with grey beard full of "crumbs of rich pastry". The start of the race is getting closer with these young competitors ready to race their horses and started to move their horses to the starting line, the narrator captured the happy theme of the scene that surrounds the horse racing venue perfectly with an old woman happily passing out flowers to the crowds of young men, the excitement of the horse riders to participate in the Festival of Summer and also that one child playing a wooden flute beautifully catching the attention of the watching crowds.

This following quotation is about the narrator's description of the few seconds before the start of the horse race, the narrator's tense imagery of the competitors is completely in contrast with the bright imagery of the crowd's excitement. Although, due to the major occasion of the beginning of the Festival of Summer, it could be categorized as a positive side of the short story.

"As if that little private silence were the signal, all at once a trumpet sounds from the pavilion near the starting line: imperious, melancholy, piercing. The horses rear on their slender legs, and some of them neigh in answer. Soberfaced, the young riders stroke the horses' necks and soothe them, whispering, "Quiet, quiet, there my beauty, my hope. . . ." They begin to form in rank along the start-ing line. The crowds along the racecourse are like a field of grass and flowers in the wind. The Festival of Summer has begun." (Le Guin 3)

The narrator tells us about the few moments of preparation before the start of the horse race, the silence before the storm and the trumpet sound from the pavilion signaling the horse riders to prepare their horses to the starting line and get ready to race. These horse riders all solely rest their fate to their own respective horses, one of them even whispered "Quiet, quiet, there my beauty, my hope...." to his



horse, this is also the only conversation that is happening between the two characters (the horse rider and his horse). It's easy to see why this is important to him and other fellow horse riders because in horse racing the stakes are high and the results is almost entirely depending on whether the horses could perform competitively or not.

Then, the narrator captured the bright and colorful imagery of the festival flawlessly with a line like this "The crowds along the racecourse are like a field of grass and flowers in the wind", what it means is that the festival is fully-packed on every side of the racecourse with colorfully dressed spectators. Due to the fact that the earlier part of the short story's narrative, such as the narrator's description of the earlier processions until the last few minutes before the race begin means that the last line of the paragraph, "The Festival of Summer has begun" is in researcher's opinion, the climax of this short story because the purpose of these narratives is to build up the tension and engrossed the readers to the narrative of 'Festival of Summer' being the main key attraction in the city of Omelas.

### **3.1.2 Omelas's landscape as the setting of the short story**

This quotation is a description of the scenery surrounding the Green Fields area as the setting of the short story in a detailed manner by the narrator, the narrator's way of depicting the scene around the area with idyllic and peaceful imagery surely gave the readers a sense of captivation, A definite positive side of the story. It also revealed in this quotation by the narrator that the processions have almost reached their destination.

"Far off to the north and west the mountains stood up half encircling Omelas on her bay. The air of morning was so clear



"But there was no king. They did not use swords, or keep slaves. They were not barbarians. I do not know the rules and laws of their society, but I suspect that they were singularly few. As they did without monarchy and slavery, so they also got on without the stock exchange, the advertisement, the secret police, and the bomb." (Le Guin 1)

It is revealed by the narrator in the paragraph mentioned above that the city of Omelas doesn't have a government that could govern the city, the narrator also believes that the city only has few rules or laws of any kind, this is one of the strongest signs that the city of Omelas could be categorized as a utopian city. The city of Omelas is also not a repressive society at all with an anti-slavery stance which means under no circumstances that the people are allowed to keep slaves or to do any business of slavery and the city also doesn't have a secret police which means that the presence of a secret police is one of the most straightforward pieces of evidence of a repressive society. At this point in the analysis, it's almost impossible for the city of Omelas to be categorized as a dystopian city unless there's a shred of strong evidence to be found in this short story. Surprisingly, the researcher seems to find some striking characteristics of a dystopian society that will be discussed in the next part of the analysis.

#### **3.1.4 Narrator's point of view about Omelas and the citizens way of life**

This following short quotation is basically a confirmation from the narrator about the researcher's assessment based on the earlier part of the story that the city of Omelas is pretty similar to a city that exists only in a fairy tale. A positive side of the short story due to the narrator's point of view that Omelas is similar to a fairy tale city.

"Omelas sounds in my words like a city in a fairy tale, long ago and far away, once upon a time." (Le Guin 2)

In this paragraph in page 2, the narrator himself seems to agree with the general assessment that Omelas is stereotypically a fairy-tale city, a city that's just too good to be true in this modern world. From the narrator's description of the city and its people, the researcher could see why this short story was also one of Le Guin's finest works, the reason for that is because it can provoke the reader's thoughts to escape from the harsh realities of the world and imagining themselves to live in a utopian, fairytale-like world such as Omelas.

In this following quotation, the narrator discussed the lifestyle of the citizens of Omelas, the narrator explained that even without the technology of the modern world they still can live a happy life. This relaxed way of life of the citizens of Omelas is definitely a positive side of this short story.

"For instance, how about technology: I think that there would be no cars or helicopters in and above the streets; this follows from the fact that the people of Omelas are happy people. Happiness is based on a just discrimination of what is necessary, what is neither necessary nor destructive, and what is destructive. In the middle category, however—that of the unnecessary but undestructive, that of comfort, luxury, exuberance, etc.—they could perfectly well have central heating, subway trains, washing machines, and all kinds of marvelous devices not yet invented here, floating light sources, fuelless power, a cure for the common cold. Or they could have none of that: it doesn't matter." (Le Guin 2)

The paragraph mentioned above tells us about the way of life in the city of Omelas, the citizens are happy with what they have, they want nothing more or less than what they have. This paragraph also explained the narrator's view of the

meaning of happiness through the minds and thoughts of the citizens of Omelas, the citizens felt happy with their lives from the narrator's description, they choose to live in a simple and less-technologically dependent way of life even though they have the choice to have all those gadgets and gizmos of the modern world. Such a rarity in this modern world of advanced technology with humankind becoming more and more dependent with their gadgets, sometimes happiness in this modern world is all about how many likes in your Instagram photo or how many retweets in your Twitter posts. Although this short story offers the readers an escapade, away from this technologically-dependent society and into a pragmatic-minded way of life of the citizens of Omelas, they choose to live a simple lifestyle without technologies but that doesn't hinder their happiness. Happiness for them is about being grateful with what they have and that's a positive side of this short story and it's also the third sign that the setting of this short story is utopian, the narrator also prompted the readers to feel intrigued by the question of "what is necessary, what is neither necessary nor destructive, and what is destructive", this question will be analyzed by the researcher in the later parts of the analysis.

The earlier part of this analysis discussed the description of the theme of Happiness and it's literary devices that are found in the short story but in this part of the analysis the researcher discusses the next part of this short story which is the irony and it's literary devices, the irony behind the citizens happiness due to the sudden change of tone at the later part of the short story and the big reveal as the plot twist of the short story.



This following quotation is a negative side of the short story due to the narrator's refusal to label the citizens of Omelas as "bland utopians" which means that it can be interpreted as a reinforcement of the implication that their happy attitude isn't exactly like what it seems to be.

"Yet I repeat that these were not simple folk, not dulcet shepherds, noble savages, bland utopians. They were not less complex than us." (Le Guin 2)

The quotation above is all about the apparent refusal of the narrator to stereotypically labeling the citizens of Omelas as "bland utopians", he doesn't want the readers to generalize these people as simpletons based on the narrator's earlier narratives. The narrator is actually trying to persuade the readers to reconsider their judgment regarding the citizens of Omelas with this couple of lines "these were not simple folk, not dulcet shepherds, noble savages, bland utopians. They were not less complex than us." This is the narrator's way of insisting the readers to not just assume that the citizens of Omelas is an ordinary utopian society, that these people were quite similar to us, us in here means the readers.

This following quotation is a negative side of the short story because in this the narrator seems to persuade the readers to reconsider their view of what is good and evil, and this quotation further convinced the readers that there's something going on behind the citizen of Omelas's facade. The narrator still continued with his stance of refusing to stereotypically brand the citizens of Omelas as utopians, he explained his justification of his stance by implying the readers to questioned themselves about their opinion of what is good and evil.

"The trouble is that we have a bad habit, encouraged by pedants and sophisticates, of considering happiness as something rather stupid. Only pain is intellectual, only evil interesting. This is the treason of the artist: a refusal to admit the banality of evil and the terrible boredom of pain. If you can't lick 'em, join 'em. If it hurts, repeat it. But to praise despair is to condemn delight, to embrace violence is to lose hold of everything else. We have almost lost hold; we can no longer describe a happy man, nor make any celebration of joy." (Le Guin 2)

This quotation above is Le Guin's way of comparing the citizens of Omelas with us, the world she has created (a utopian world where everyone is happy) and the real world. A sudden change of tone from the narrator, in a tone of despair, he blatantly persuading the readers to reconsider their view of what is good and evil, the narrator also moans about the behavior of people in this modern era in this particular line. "The trouble is that we have a bad habit, encouraged by pedants and sophisticates." The narrator thinks that modern people are too influenced by what the intellectuals taught them, he also considers happiness as "something rather stupid" which is a rather strange thing to say but understandable at this point, also he completely justified this statement with this couple of lines "Only pain is intellectual, only evil interesting. This is the treason of the artist: a refusal to admit the banality of evil and the terrible boredom of pain." This is also the narrator's way of trying to delve into the mind of an intellectual or in this case an artist's mind, Artists see evil as unique, worth writing about, worth centering stories around, worth painting and showing off. Evil fuels the news in this modern world and the narrator sensationally captured their mind. "If you can't lick 'em, join 'em. If it hurts, repeat it. But to praise despair is to condemn delight, to embrace violence is to lose hold of everything else." this couple of lines is the



narrator's way of hinting the readers to the bitter truth behind the eternal happiness of the citizens of Omelas and also could be taken as some kind of foreshadowing to the short story's biggest reveal at the later part of the short story.

### 3.1.6 The revelation of Drooz

This following quotation is about the narrator's revelation of a drug called 'drooz' consumed by some citizens of Omelas, this is a drug that has been used by some of the citizens of Omelas to increase their sex drive, to increase their memory and motoric capabilities and to give its users wonderful dreams in their sleep. It's a negative part of this short story because consuming drugs is a bad example and to see some of these people consumed this drug shattered the researcher's image of the once thought to be perfect, utopian society.

"I thought at first there were no drugs, but that is puritanical. For those who like it, the faint insistent sweetness of drooz may perfume the ways of the city, drooz which first brings a great lightness and brilliance to the mind and limbs, and then after some hours a dreamy languor, and wonderful visions at last of the very arcana and inmost secrets of the Universe, as well as exciting the pleasure of sex beyond all belief; and it is not habit-forming." (Le Guin 3)

The narrator begins the quotation by making the same assumption as the researcher that for a utopian society like Omelas surely it'll be a drug-free environment, followed by the narrator's complete destruction of this assumption by telling the reader that some of the citizens of Omelas may have consumed a drug called 'drooz'. The slightest hint of the smell of the drooz could be felt throughout the city, this is a drug that has been used by some of the citizens of Omelas to increase their sex drive, to increase their memory and motoric

capabilities and to give its users wonderful dreams in their sleep. And although the narrator then said that the drug "is not habit-forming", this is not a guarantee in the researcher's opinion because drug addiction is a dangerous thing, any person could suddenly have addicted to certain kind of drugs and it depends on the person's self-control whether they can deny the addiction or just give in. No drugs are guaranteed of "not habit-forming". There's also a hint of irony in this paragraph in the researcher's opinion, that the citizens of Omelas consuming a drug even though they're happy, people consumes drugs because they're depressed, sad and stressed out and consuming drugs is the only way for these people to find just a little bit of happiness.

### **3.1.7 The truth behind the citizen's happy attitude as the plot twist of the short story**

This following quotation is the biggest revelation of this whole short story, the narrator's finally revealed the hidden truth behind the eternal near-utopian happiness of the citizens of Omelas and it's a really dark, awful truth that should've not been revealed by the narrator in the researcher's opinion. And the truth is that there's a young child caged in a basement below one of the beautiful public buildings of Omelas, this child is dimwitted, malnourished and sadly neglected by almost all the citizens of Omelas. This plot twist is also a symbol of irony of this short story and that it's a shocking but also disappointing climax in the researcher's opinion, there's no doubt in the researcher's mind that this is the most negative part of the short story.

"Do you believe? Do you accept the festival, the city, the joy?  
No? Then let me describe one more thing. In a basement under

one of the beautiful public buildings of Omelas, or perhaps in the cellar of one of its spacious private homes, there is a room. It has one locked door, and no window. A little light seeps in dustily between cracks in the boards, secondhand from a cobwebbed window somewhere across the cellar. In one corner of the little room a couple of mops, with stiff, clotted, foul-smelling heads, stand near a rusty bucket. The floor is dirt, a little damp to the touch, as cellar dirt usually is. The room is about three paces long and two wide: a mere broom closet or disused tool room. In the room a child is sitting. It could be a boy or a girl. It looks about six, but actually is nearly ten. It is feeble-minded. Perhaps it was born defective, or perhaps it has become imbecile through fear, malnutrition, and neglect. It picks its nose and occasionally fumbles vaguely with its toes or genitals, as it sits hunched in the corner farthest from the bucket and the two mops. It is afraid of the mops. It finds them horrible. It shuts its eyes, but it knows the mops are still standing there; and the door is locked; and nobody will come. Except that sometimes—the child has no understanding of time or interval—sometimes the door rattles terribly and opens, and a person, or several people, are there. One of them may come in and kick the child to make it stand up. The others never come close, but peer in at it with frightened, disgusted eyes. The food bowl and the water jug are hastily filled, the door is locked, the eyes disappear." (Le Guin 3-4)

This part of the short story is also the climax or the plot twist part of the short story, Le Guin really wrote this part of the chapter really well with the shocking but subjectively speaking, disappointing climax. The quotation begins with the narrator questioning the reader's judgment once again, "Do you believe? Do you accept the festival, the city, the joy? No?" implying that the narrator seems to be hiding something. It turns out the narrator does hide something; the truth is that there's something hidden beneath the surface of the city of Omelas, a sickening, horrible truth. There's a windowless room underneath "a basement under one of the beautiful public buildings of Omelas, or perhaps in the cellar of one of its spacious private homes" the narrator himself seems pretty uncertain with the exact

location of this room, in this narrow, dirty, and appalling room lives a poor child. Even the narrator seems hesitant and unsure with his description of the child "It could be a boy or a girl. It looks about six, but actually is nearly ten. It is feeble-minded. Perhaps it was born defective, or perhaps it has become imbecile through fear, malnutrition, and neglect." to summarize the narrator's description, the child is in dreadful condition with malnutrition that stunted his growth and dim-witted due to the appalling living condition. And the worst part of this revelation? Almost nobody will come to look after this child unless if it's to fill his/her basic necessities and none of these people treated this child with at least a little bit of respect, this is the example: "One of them may come in and kick the child to make it stand up. The others never come close, but peer in at it with frightened, disgusted eyes." This whole revelation truly horrified the researcher's thoughts, it truly is a sickening and horrifying act by the citizens of Omelas. This sudden plot twist makes this Le Guin's work a true masterpiece, the researcher and probably some few readers could see that maybe a plot twist is coming but never would the researcher expect to see the plot twist in such a horrifying scale like this one. The irony in this paragraph is simple, the citizens of Omelas needs to sacrifice a child's life in order for them to live happily ever after even though happiness can be achieved in many other humane ways.

### **3.1.8 Some of the citizens response to the bitter truth**

Now in this following quotation, the narrator, from his/her own point of view, tells the readers that he knows that the citizens of Omelas are aware of the presence of this poor child, some of them do understand the circumstances and

some do not but they all knew that this child's suffering is the key to their happiness, healthiness, friendships, and even the amount of fruits/vegetable harvests in the city. This dark, sickening truth is usually explained to the children of Omelas at the time of "whenever they seem capable of understanding." and most of the poor child's visitors are young people.

"They all know it is there, all the people of Omelas. Some of them have come to see it, others are content merely to know it is there. They all know that it has to be there. Some of them understand why, and some do not, but they all understand that their happiness, the beauty of their city, the tenderness of their friendships, the health of their children, the wisdom of their scholars, the skill of their makers, even the abundance of their harvest and the kindly weathers of their skies, depend wholly on this child's abominable misery. This is usually explained to children when they are between eight and twelve, whenever they seem capable of understanding; and most of those who come to see the child are young people, though often enough an adult comes, or comes back to see the child." (Le Guin 4)

This part of the short story is one of the major turning point of this short story, it shows the helplessness of the citizens of Omelas after finding the truth behind their happiness. They know that the city's treatment of the child isn't right but they couldn't do anything to help the child because of the truth revealed by the narrator in the earlier paragraph of the short story, that the child's suffering is the source of their happiness. The irony of this paragraph is that the people of Omelas simply believe this statement, that the only way for them to achieve eternal happiness is to sacrifice a child's life even though there hasn't been any proof of the truth this behind this statement.

### **3.2 The Researcher's view of Happiness in the short story**

This second part/topic of the analysis is all about the researcher's own interpretation of the general theme of Happiness and its literary devices in the short story, the researcher has only taken some key paragraph that can be further analyzed in this second part of the analysis to make this research more coherent.

This part of the analysis is all about the researcher's own interpretation of themes of happiness inside the short story based on either the researcher's own life experiences or researcher's own moral judgement.

#### **3.2.1 The lawlessness of the Omelas**

This part of the short story is a description of the bureaucracy or lack of it in the city of Omelas, the city only has few laws and it doesn't have a government.

"But there was no king. They did not use swords, or keep slaves. They were not barbarians. I do not know the rules and laws of their society, but I suspect that they were singularly few. As they did without monarchy and slavery, so they also got on without the stock exchange, the advertisement, the secret police, and the bomb." (Le Guin 1)

It is revealed by the narrator in the paragraph mentioned above that the city of Omelas doesn't have a government that could govern the city, the narrator also believes that the city only has few rules or laws of any kind. The city of Omelas is also not a repressive society at all with anti-slavery stance which means under no circumstances that the people allowed to keep slaves or to do any business of slavery and the city also doesn't have a secret police which means that as the presence of a secret police is one of the most straightforward evidence of a repressive society. But in the researcher's opinion the lack of stock exchange and

advertisement in the city is an alarming issue because it's signalling the city's lack of economic activities which means that the majority of the citizens is actually living in a state of poverty. Also, a city that only has few rules or laws of any kind isn't a perfect city in the researcher's opinion, the city's lawlessness means that the population are more likely to descend into chaos sooner rather than later with the city's lack of leader further supporting the researcher's opinion.

### **3.2.2 Omelas's stance on technology**

In this following quotation, the narrator discussed the lifestyle of the citizens of Omelas, the narrator explained that even without the technology of the modern world they still can live a happy life.

"For instance, how about technology: I think that there would be no cars or helicopters in and above the streets; this follows from the fact that the people of Omelas are happy people. Happiness is based on a just discrimination of what is necessary, what is neither necessary nor destructive, and what is destructive. In the middle category, however—that of the unnecessary but undestructive, that of comfort, luxury, exuberance, etc.—they could perfectly well have central heating, subway trains, washing machines, and all kinds of marvelous devices not yet invented here, floating light sources, fuelless power, a cure for the common cold. Or they could have none of that: it doesn't matter." (Le Guin 2)

The paragraph mentioned above tells us about the way of life in the city of Omelas, the citizens are happy with what they have, they want nothing more or less than what they have. This paragraph also explained the narrator's view of the meaning of happiness through the minds and thoughts of the citizens of Omelas, the citizens felt happy with their lives from the narrator's description, they choose to live in a simple and less-technologically dependent way of life even though

they have the choice to have all those gadgets and gizmos of the modern world. Although from the researcher's own life experiences, this is a near-impossible thing to do. In this day and age, nobody could escape from technology, and if people starts to use it wisely then technology will benefit them greatly. People, including the researcher, simply just can't live without technology like the internet, smartphones, etc. For example, in the researcher's life is that when the researcher went camping deep into the woods near Malang and just when it was the time to go home, the researcher's crew cannot remember the path to go back to the parking spot. It took almost 6 hours for the researcher's crew to finally reached the parking spot of the camping area, the thing is if only there's a phone signal around the camping area then it would significantly help the researcher's crew to reach the parking spot as soon as possible. And that's the moment when the researcher realized that people simply can't live without technology no matter how bad some of the people wanted the opposite thing to happen. Technology is here for good and it is up to us, the people, whether to use it wisely or not.

### **3.2.3 The citizens acceptance to the bitter truth**

Now in this following quotation, the narrator tells the readers that he knows that the citizens of Omelas are aware of the presence of this poor child, some of them do understand the circumstances and some do not but they all knew that this child's suffering is the key to their happiness, healthiness, friendships, and even the amount of fruits/vegetable harvests in the city. This dark, sickening truth is usually explained to the children of Omelas at the time of "whenever they



seem capable of understanding." and most of the poor child's visitors are young people.

"They all know it is there, all the people of Omelas. Some of them have come to see it, others are content merely to know it is there. They all know that it has to be there. Some of them understand why, and some do not, but they all understand that their happiness, the beauty of their city, the tenderness of their friendships, the health of their children, the wisdom of their scholars, the skill of their makers, even the abundance of their harvest and the kindly weathers of their skies, depend wholly on this child's abominable misery. This is usually explained to children when they are between eight and twelve, whenever they seem capable of understanding; and most of those who come to see the child are young people, though often enough an adult comes, or comes back to see the child." (Le Guin 4)

This part of the short story is also the climax or the plot twist part of the short story, Le Guin really wrote this part of the chapter really well with the shocking but subjectively speaking, disappointing climax. This particular paragraph is also quite related to the researcher's own real-life experience; The researcher's own neighbor life, unfortunately is pretty similar to this part of the short story, especially with the child in terms of unfortunate circumstances that happened in their own respective lives. The similarities started with how these two were mentally-handicapped in their lives and how the people mostly shunned the researcher's neighbor due to him being mentally-handicapped. Some of the kids in the researcher's neighborhood even viciously mocked him several times, the other similarities are the sense of security they gave to the people even though the child in Omelas and the neighbor in the researcher's life clearly have been suffering for a long time. The city's utopian society sacrificing a child's happiness in order for them to live that way while the researcher's neighborhood sacrificing the

mentally-handicapped man's well-being with him being in charge of guarding the main entrance gate of the neighborhood's lane in order to keep thieves and other people with bad intentions away from the neighborhood while being paid only with food and beverages in the process.

In this following quotation, the narrator continues to tell the readers about the reaction from the citizens of Omelas to the existence of the poor, suffering child. These young visitor's reactions were unanimously disgusted with the treatment of the child and how they wanted to help this child to get a better life but they couldn't because the consequences are just too risky. The citizen's happiness, prosperity and the beauty of the city will be gone if the child gets a better life. The irony of this situation is apparent in this line "to throw away the happiness of thousands for the chance of the happiness of one" which shows just how important this child's prolonged suffering to the happiness of all the citizens of Omelas.

"No matter how well the matter has been explained to them, these young spectators are always shocked and sickened at the sight. They feel disgust, which they had thought themselves superior to. They feel anger, outrage, impotence, despite all the explanations. They would like to do something for the child. But there is nothing they can do. If the child were brought up into the sunlight out of that vile place, if it were cleaned and fed and comforted, that would be a good thing, indeed; but if it were done, in that day and hour all the prosperity and beauty and delight of Omelas would wither and be destroyed. Those are the terms. To exchange all the goodness and grace of every life in Omelas for that single, small improvement: to throw away the happiness of thousands for the chance of the happiness of one: that would be to let guilt within the walls indeed. The terms are strict and absolute; there may not even be a kind word spoken to the child." (Le Guin 4)

In this paragraph, Le Guin really shows that the citizens of Omelas aren't all content and oblivious to the poor child and she gave the story another plot twist in this paragraph. The plot twist is that there are some citizens of Omelas, mostly young people who are ashamed with the city's dark secret. It's also pretty similar to the researcher's life experience with the researcher's mentally-handicapped neighbor, the similarities are in the fact that there are some other neighbors (including the researcher) who feel that this mentally-handicapped man needs to go to a mental asylum at the cost of a less-secure neighborhood. The reason for that is because the man is also pretty effective at warding any thieves or people with bad intentions due to being mentally-handicapped and that the risks were too high for the neighborhood to just put the man on a mental asylum. Although, this actually is also one of the biggest reveal of the story, that some of the citizens of Omelas are still human. It's perfectly okay to be mad, outraged, angry by this revelation, it means that their humanity is still intact in the researcher's opinion. We humans are not creatures of logic but we are creatures of emotion and we do not care what's true or not, we only care for how it feels inside our hearts.

### **3.2.4 The aftermath**

As the narrator continued from the earlier paragraph about how some of the young people of Omelas are ashamed and disgusted with the poor, suffering child. This following paragraph is the aftermath, the reaction from the young citizens of Omelas who have seen the child from the narrator's point of view, that these young people often going home in tears or just feels so enraged with the bitter truth. Although, eventually these people do realize that "even if the child

could be released, it would not get much good of its freedom" which means that due to the poor living condition the child has accustomed into, it wouldn't be much good for the child to escape from his underground chamber. Yet, these young people finally knew that their happiness has come at a cost. They finally knew that all of "the nobility of their architecture, the poignancy of their music, the profundity of their science" of Omelas is entirely dependent on this poor, suffering child and so, they're beginning to understand and eventually, accepted the situation. The acceptance of the citizens of Omelas about the bitter truth about their source of happiness is actually a positive sign in the researcher's opinion because the people of Omelas finally noticing and acknowledging the presence of the child although it's up for them to respond in what way, whether pretending to not know this information or whether to give the child his/her freedom. Even though the narrator insists that "even if the child could be released, it would not get much good of its freedom", this is certainly not true in the researcher's opinion because everyone deserves a second chance and this child's life is not an exception. It's to better to live miserably but free than to live miserably and be caged in a basement cell.

"Often the young people go home in tears, or in a tearless rage, when they have seen the child and faced this terrible paradox. They may brood over it for weeks or years. But as time goes on they begin to realize that even if the child could be released, it would not get much good of its freedom: a little vague pleasure of warmth and food, no doubt, but little more. It is too degraded and imbecile to know any real joy. It has been afraid too long ever to be free of fear. Its habits are too uncouth for it to respond to humane treatment. Indeed, after so long it would probably be wretched without walls about it to protect it, and darkness for its eyes, and its own excrement to sit in. Their tears at the bitter injustice dry when they begin to perceive the terrible justice of



woman who falls silently for a couple of days and then silently left their home. These people walk straight out of Omelas and never to be seen again, they actually do know where they're going, although the narrator doesn't know what kind of place or whether if the place even exists. What the narrator know is that these people are called "the one who walk away from Omelas."

"Now do you believe in them? Are they not more credible? But there is one more thing to tell, and this is quite incredible. At times one of the adolescent girls or boys who go to see the child does not go home to weep or rage, does not, in fact, go home at all. Sometimes also a man or woman much older falls silent for a day or two, and then leaves home. These people go out into the street, and walk down the street alone. They keep walking, and walk straight out of the city of Omelas, through the beautiful gates. They keep walking across the farmlands of Omelas. Each one goes alone, youth or girl, man or woman. Night falls; the traveler must pass down village streets, between the houses with yellow-lit windows, and on out into the darkness of the fields. Each alone, they go west or north, towards the mountains. They go on. They leave Omelas, they walk ahead into the darkness, and they do not come back. The place they go towards is a place even less imaginable to most of us than the city of happiness. I cannot describe it at all. It is possible that it does not exist. But they seem to know where they are going, the ones who walk away from Omelas." (Le Guin 5)

In this paragraph, the narrator finally reveals the last twist of the short story. That some of the citizens of Omelas, mostly teenagers, escapes from the city and never coming back. They couldn't bear the burden of living happily ever after while sacrificing the life of a single child. This is also a cliffhanger ending in the researcher's opinion because of the narrator's lack of knowledge of what is the actual destination of these people which is the best way to end the short story in the researcher's opinion. The reason for that is because of the way Le Guin's

handling the ending by sticking to the mystery tone in the later part of the short story, which means that the ending will make the readers feel even more intrigued. In the end, what is the true meaning of the ending of this short story? In the researcher's opinion, escaping or fleeing the city is the citizen's way of rebelling against the city by indirectly supporting the child's freedom cause, although the one who stays in the city could still live their life happily ever after due to the child's suffering as the guarantee of their happiness. These few people who walk away from Omelas have established something though, that humanity can prevail even in the most inhumane environment and it is up to the other citizens whether to follow these people or the majorities of the citizens of Omelas. Whether to begin their new life away from the city or choosing to stay in Omelas, the choice of being continuously oblivious to the misery of that one child in exchange to live happily ever after or choose to find their own way of Happiness without sacrificing a child's life.

## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION

#### 4.1 Conclusion

This chapter provided the conclusion of this research. This conclusion refers to the answer to the research questions that have been presented by the researcher that has been presented by the researcher in the previous chapter.

*The One Who Walk Away from Omelas* one of Ursula K. Le Guin's greatest works and for a short story, the way she started the story was completely different to the way she ended the story, it's also have pretty ground-breaking plot twist inside it. From the analysis conducted by the researcher, it can be concluded that the researcher decided to described the general theme of Happiness and it's literary devices in the short story. The researcher defined the two groups using Wolfgang Iser's Reception Theory and New Criticism Theory, Happiness here which is that of the side of the short story that are deemed by the researcher to be positive or having a positive connotation although in the later part due to the narrator's sudden change of tone and the short story's plot twist which is a side of the short story that are deemed by the researcher to be negative or having a negative connotation. From the current analyzation, the researcher finds out that the positive side of the short story, The Festival of Summer as the symbol of Happiness, Omelas's landscape as the setting of the short story, Omelas's bureaucracy according to the narrator, the narrator's opinion of Omelas and their citizens way of life was found mostly at the earlier part of the short story and the



negative or ironic side of the short story, The narrator's doubting the citizen's happy attitude, the revelation of Droot, and the truth behind the citizens happy attitude were found mostly at the latter part of the short story. The amount of what is deemed as the positive side of the short story is almost the same as the amount of what is deemed as the negative/ironic side of the short story, although in the end the short story seems to end with an open ending.

It also can be concluded from the researcher's view of Happiness in the short story according to researcher's own life experiences and moral judgment that the researcher felt that the short story can be ambiguous in its intended meaning, for example is that the researcher found one or two sentences in a paragraph that can also be classified as negative/ironic side of the short story even though most of the paragraph represented happiness and vice versa.

It can be concluded that the meaning of the ending for the short story is that escaping or fleeing the city is the citizen's way of rebelling against the city by indirectly supporting the child's freedom cause and to find their own way of happiness and the one who stays in the city could live their life happily ever after due to the child's suffering as the guarantee of their happiness. The short story's ending is an intriguing yet captivated the researcher due to Le Guin's excellent characterization of the disillusioned citizens of Omelas which she called "The one who walk away from Omelas".



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