



Philosophical Values in Thornton Wilder's *Our Town*

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Abstract

As one of human's expressions, literature is used to reflect lives, human behavior and effects of their actions. The objective of this paper is to explore and reveals social values in one of influential literary works, a play *Our Town* by Thornton Niven Wilder. The drama was appraised by critics for the messages it has about human life and the playwright was awarded Pulitzer Award in 1938. This drama is claimed as drama which is rich of philosophy about life. This bibliographical research uses descriptive method with qualitative data taken from the script of the drama. It applies philosophical approach to see the values of life reflected in the drama to human. From moral point of view, *Our Town* has strong messages that people need to learn to appreciate lives and others. The messages are not only meant for the past – when the play was written - but also for the present situation and even future.

Key Words: *Moral; Philosophical Values; Our Town.*

Abstrak

Sebagai salah satu bentuk karya ekspresi manusia, karya sastra digunakan untuk merefleksikan kehidupan, perilaku manusia dan pengaruh dari perilaku mereka. Tujuan dari karya tulis ini adalah untuk menggali dan mengungkapkan nilai-nilai sosial dalam salah satu karya sastra yang berpengaruh, drama *Our Town* karya Thornton Niven Wilder. Drama ini dipuji oleh banyak kritikus karena pesan-pesan yang dimilikinya tentang kehidupan manusia dan penulisnya pun dihormati Pulitzer Award pada tahun 1938. Drama ini dikatakan sebagai drama yang kaya akan nilai-nilai filosofi tentang kehidupan. Penelitian bibliografi ini menggunakan metode deskriptif dengan data kualitatif yang diambil dari skrip drama itu sendiri. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan filosofi untuk melihat nilai-nilai kehidupan yang direfleksikan dalam drama pada manusia. Dari sudut pandang moral, drama ini punya pesan kuat yang diperlukan manusia untuk menghargai kehidupan dan orang lain. Pesan-pesan ini tidak hanya berlaku pada masa lalu ketika drama ini ditulis – tapi juga untuk situasi sekarang dan bahkan masa nanti.

Kata Kunci: *Moral; Nilai-nilai Filosofi; Our Town*

Introduction

Even though the term of literature as “fact” and “fiction” works is questionable and somehow it is also defined as a work using language in peculiar ways, but undeniable it is as a reflection of human life. The literary work was neither a vehicle for ideas, a reflection of social reality nor the incarnation of some transcendental truth: it was a material fact, whose functioning could be analyzed rather as one could examine a machine (Eagleton, 2003). The term of literature always ends up in ideas, reflection of social life and the truth.

Indeed, literature is used as one of human’s expressions in revealing what happens in their lives. Through literary works, people can learn valuable lessons regarding to what they experience. More than that, people can also see the deepest meaning which is expressed in literary works such as human feelings, emotions, and characters. Literature presents social facts in the form of imitation of nature that exist in society (Wellek & Warren, 1956).

As one of literary works, drama is used to mirror human activities. Like a play *Our Town* written by a Pulitzer Winning Award, Thornton Wilderⁱ (1938), the delineations of human life from birth to death are delivered through the setting, characters and the dialogues. With its simplicity of language using, *Our Town* addresses the philosophical values to the readers and viewers very clearⁱⁱ.

Objective

The objective of this research is to reveal philosophical values in drama *Our Town*. The selection of the topic will regard moral teachings and the ethics which are usually close to human behavior. This research is expected to be able to promote the meaning of attention and caring toward human.

By evaluating *Our Town* that portrays daily events of ordinary people, it is expected that people will gain moral lessons and apply them in life. Academically, this research is very interesting for it use philosophical approach which is rare. To achieve the objective, it is necessary to reveal the philosophical messages from three acts in *Our Town*.

Review of Related Literature

Our Town is presented uniquely. To enrich his philosophical messages, Wilder used lack of property on stage in *Our Town* play. It is his intention to do so to make the messages of life could be imagined well by the audiences. Brokering (2010) claims that the aim is to reveal inner reality and qualities that are universally shared.

...*Our Town* be performed on a stripped-down stage with actors relying on pantomime as a means of revealing an inner reality that is at once utterly individual and has qualities that are universally shared... Wilder gradually weans the audience away from their reliance on material stage properties, until in the climactic scene of Emily’s twelfth birthday he is able to remove any and all props, forcing actors and audience alike to rely solely on their imaginations (Brokering, p. 95, 2010).

This previous research intends to see the philosophical values of the drama bases on how Thornton Wilder wrote it and presented it on stage. It does not scrutinize the dialogue in detail which is more related to the literary criticism. Yet, Brokering philosophical analysis is also interesting in a perspective of drama performance. In *Our Town*, Wilder exploits these conventions to their fullest. He initiates to take theatre back like what plays in ancient Greek plays and Shakespeare. The audience, then, must collaborate to furnish bedrooms, kitchens, soda fountain, and graveyard in their own imagination. (-----)

As the matter of fact, *Our Town* is very popular for its rich philosophy in the dialogues, setting and characters. So it is necessary to evaluate the drama based on the component of the play itself, particularly from the dialogues delivered by the characters. As the review of Pittsburgh Public Theatre, *Our Town* is a mirror of human life starting from the birth, marriage and finally death. The circle of life is long yet it can portray human behavior and obtain lessons from life experience.

Our Town is not just about the everyday lives, marriages, and deaths of its characters; it is a celebration of human life... Instead of following an additional plot, Wilder shows us snapshots of life in the three acts entitled "Daily Life," "Love and Marriage," and "Death." Wilder has stripped life to its essentials of routine, love, death, weddings and funerals, holding up a mirror so that we can see ourselves and each other.

Methods of Research

The data are taken from the script of *Our Town* and any reliable written sources. Regarding to this descriptive method Kenney (1966) says that such method allows writer to compose the analysis based on the related field of studies. He mentions that successful description is a matter of selection and arrangement based on the needs of the passage in itself and as part of the whole story.

This research is a combination of bibliography and library research. The combined method of this research is strongly related to qualitative research method that is suitable for descriptive research. The observation procedure makes descriptive data as written quotation or speech.

Here are the logical steps that suit to make this paper: Reading the play script extensively; gathering the primary data from the script; gathering review secondary data that relates to philosophical studies; transcribing and classifying the quoted data, analyzing the data based on the research framework, discussing the interpretation to the collected data and summing up the discussion.

As a reader, spectator, and listener, people have their own perspective to critic, analyze, evaluate and even to understand the literature. Some people may consider that what they think of *Harry Potter* book series is a product of literary criticism. Meanwhile some others could claim what they analyze about a cheesy song on a top ten chart could be categorized as literary criticism as well. But for some people they just could be a piece of references articles. As the matter of fact, not

every opinion, analysis or criticism is considered as literary criticism.

Literary criticism is the discipline of interpreting, analyzing, and evaluating literary works (Gillespie, 2010). The term of discipline stresses out that literary should be analyzed, interpreted and evaluated with particular knowledge. It is then why criticism theory and frameworks are required. Literary criticism is not about consuming literary line by line. Rather, it is the genuine act of reading the literary products very carefully, in critical approaches, and informed manner.

Regarding to literary works, Gillespie claims that literature is most commonly defined as works of writing that have lasted over the years because they deal with ideas of timeless and universal interest with exceptional artistry and power. This can include poems, stories, novels, plays, essays, memoirs and so on. The literary work usually stands out among the other writing works because its power and artistic values. The strengths make it is not easily wiped out by the new published writing works.

Our Town is just a simple example of literary works. With its exceptional artistry and power, it proves that the work is ageless for it has been performed, discussed and studied since it was firstly played in 1938. *Our Town* is assumed as a perception of Wilder's philosophy towards the reality of life. The play takes place in a small fictional town of Grover's Corner, New Hampshire; beginning in 1901 and ending in 1913. The play takes the audience through the cycles of life, with the purpose of getting a universal message stating that life shouldn't be taken for granted (St. Rosemary Educational Institution, 2010).

Life after death on Act III is one among the discussed subjects by experts on the field. Collier's Encyclopedia (1996: 485) even noted that Act III, "Death", shows the funeral of Emily, who has died in childbirth. She is granted her wish to return to life for one day, her 12 birthday, but seeing it again from the perspective of death, she realizes painfully how little life is appreciated while it is being live.

Brokering (2010) suggests that the particular mix of imaginary objects and actual stage properties dictated by Thornton Wilder

in *Our Town* is by no means illogical and that the delicate balance struck between the two is calculated to be the most effective way possible to express the major theme of the play: appreciating the significance of life in the face of an overwhelming universe. The play is not only about the story line but also about how Wilder presents

To catch the philosophical values that Wilder wants to deliver through his play will be easy to criticize in philosophical approach. This approach is to see the work as occasions for exploring. But, it should be highlighted that the critics working from a moral bent are not unaware of form, figurative language, and other purely aesthetic considerations. The important thing of this critic is the moral or philosophical teaching. The critic who employs the moral-philosophical approach insists on ascertaining and stating what is taught. If the work is in any degree significant or intelligible, this meaning will be there (Guerin et. al., 2005).

The term of philosophy is often used to reflect about moral and ethic in life. It is long time known that philosophy is an approach about to dig ideas and values. Gillespie notes that:

The word *philosophy* stretches back to the ancient Greek roots *philos* and *sophos* – literally meaning *loving wisdom* – and describes the ongoing human attempt to seek answers to the deepest questions of life: what is our purpose here? Does life have inherent meaning? How do we determine what is good, what is true, and what is right? How do we construct a world of justice and beauty? How might we best rule ourselves and be ruled? How do we balance the needs of the individual with that of the group? Do we have free will? (Gillespie, 2010).

These answers for such questions sound judgmental and might be different for everyone. People might think the critics that use philosophical approach could be abstract, dry and dull. And some believe literature should be judged mainly (if not solely) on its

artistic values, not its moral or philosophical content. On the other hand, Gillespie stresses that an approach to use some philosophical framework to help interpret a work. It means that it does not view literature simply as artsy works that is isolated from all moral insinuations. As known, literature can affect readers, whether subtly or directly, and that the message of a work is imperative.

So, how then we can make a good philosophical evaluation to literary work? Since human has own feeling, emotion, intuition that tell honestly what is good and what is right so in that way philosophical or moral judgment could be applied. In daily life, on the other hand, emotions and imagination play an important role in morality, not only in the sense that sometimes they enter in conflict with one's sense of duty but also in the sense that, as Aristotle asserted, right feeling is necessary for right judgment and, ultimately, for good character and happiness (Aoudjit, 2012).

Findings and Discussions

The reflection of Philosophical Values in *Our Town*

Due to the fact that literature has critical function, it usually contains philosophical messages to deliver to the readers. The richness of philosophical messages makes drama *Our Town* to become a valued literary work. The values which are beneficial in life can be traced through the components of the drama; characters, setting, theme and plot.

It is very interesting that the character Stage Manager in Act II informs the audiences, "The First Act was called the daily life. This is called Love and Marriage. There's another act coming after this: I reckon you can guess what that's about." (II,01). What the character Stage Manager tells the audience is about philosophy of life. The drama is divided into three acts in which every act represents the circle of human life: birth, life and death. The birth portrays about human in daily life, living the life is reflected by love and marriage, and death explains about the juxtaposition of life and death.

Daily Life

In Act I, the reflection of daily life is clearly described. It is begun with the opening speech of The Stage Manager saying that "...The time is just before dawn." The philosophy of dawn means life is just begun. It is followed by his announcement that "the sky is beginning to show some streaks of light over in the East there, behind our mount'in." It is like the human life process. After their birth, as the infant they will become a baby who is ready to start for their first step. That is a life. There is always a beginning for everything. And in *Our Town* morning is a symbol of the beginning of life.

If it is about life, then *Our Town* tells that people should appreciate their lives. People may have their own chores but they must not sink into their daily routine without paying attention to the core of their lives. Mrs. Gibbs as a wife tries to remind her husband about appreciating his time, and life of enjoyment he should walk through.

"All told, you won't get more'n three hours sleep. Frank Gibbs, I don't know what's goin' to become of you. I do wish I could get you to go away someplace and take a rest. I think it would do you good." (I,02)

Being busy makes Doc Gibbs spend most of his time working. Her wife reminds him that he must enjoy his life. It is not about a wife's care, but about spending time in harmony. There is a time for work, there is a time for family and there is a time for him. The lines that are uttered by Mrs. Gibbs teach people that life supposed to be beautiful. People should not live in their regular chores without paying attention to the beauty of life. Despite responsibilities to work, people must give attention to their inner needs and maintain care to others and surroundings.

The nice thing about the line above is the care of a wife to her husband. It shows that women pay more attention to their family. They seem to know what the family members need to make them stay happy and healthy. Such attention is also shown by Mrs. Webb a wife and a mother. In a setting of a breakfast, she declares her children to eat their food off. It is not because they leave the rest of their

meal but she wants the children eat more to get healthy. "As for me, I'd rather have my children healthy than bright." (I,03) The statement is probably out of sense for every mother wants their children healthy and bright. They of course don't want to see the children healthy but less brainy. Yet here, the lesson is not to make the children eat much then become fat. More than that, it is about how to respect meals as a gift from God.

For some people food and having meals routine is considered small things, but people must learn that they should appreciate the food. Food makes people healthy but more than that, food makes them live. People must appreciate every piece of the meal that they consume.

Human not only tend to be ignorant to their inner happiness but also ignore the others and their surroundings. People sometimes fail to build harmony relationship among others. They may think that they are connected to one another yet they are not bound emotionally to each other. Ignorance, disregard, and lack of appreciation to everyone else unconsciously happen. Few people may notice this condition.

Seeing the relationship between Mrs. Gibbs and his husband is like ordinary couple marriage relationship. There is no a hard argument or a quarrel between them in the story. But, for Mrs. Gibbs, being married to Mr. Gibbs and become a mother has not been strongly enough to build closely emotional relationship to her spouse. Her idle conversation to her neighbor shows that she does not understand he husband very much. She says, "I haven't heard a serious word of him since I've known him." (I.03).

Of course that expression does not mean they never have serious talk as husband and wife, but that dialogue shows a usual condition happening between marriage couple. One does not understand to his or her spouse and vice versa. It shows a couple failures in building relationship in marriage. A couple needs to be listened, to be respected and to be noticed. Unfortunately, most of the times they just take for granted their couple's feeling.

The expression of Mrs. Gibbs reminds that how people disregard the others, even those who are close to them. Even though there is a care from ones around, most people

fail to appreciate it. Hence, the interaction becomes somber routines without meaning.

In family life, the same disregard behavior is also shown by children. Most children take for granted for what their parents do to them. They even abandon their responsibilities for the sake of their ego. The delineation of children failure to relate to their parents is shown by the dialogue between Dr. Gibbs and his son George. He advises his son due to his lacking time of helping her mother and does his duties at home. "...like she's some hired girl we keep around the house but that we don't like very much. Well, I knew all I had to do was call your attention to it." (I, 04).

The lines strongly slap the audiences as children of their own parents. Even up to present think that what their parents do for them is their fulfillment of responsibilities. But the sometimes forget that everyone has their own responsibility, including theirs to their parents. But at least children must respect and appreciate what their parents do for them.

Besides experience of human relationship, *Our Town* also portrays human relationship with nature or environment. This mostly appears in the setting described by character of The Stage Manager.

In the beginning of Act I, The Stage Manager reminds spectators about the beauty of nature. He expresses nature phenomena. It is just before dawn and he says, "The morning star always gets wonderful bright the minute before it has to go, - doesn't it?" (I,05).

His expression explicitly describes about the beauty of nature and actually people sometimes forget how nature colors their lives. Yes, morning star is always there, but he stresses that it is wonderful bright which means people must really look at his surroundings to appreciate the nature. The question tag in his final line is not just a question. He requires approval from the audiences if the statement is right. Implicitly he wants to make sure whether people really pay their attention to the same natural phenomena and realize that the world is created beautifully.

Another reminding statement about life is announced by The Stage Manager in the beginning of Act II.

"Yes, the sun's come up over a thousand times. Summers and winters have cracked the mountains a little bit more and the rains have brought down some of dirt. Some babies that weren't even born before have begun talking regular sentences already." (II,06).

It is very obvious that The Stage Manager tries to remind people about time and questions them what they have done in life. From morning to morning, day after day, week after week, and even years after years, most of people disregard the time they go through. People fail to understand that they actually spend their age every second and should do meaningful actions.

Life will be more comfortable if people can learn to appreciate nature as well. Enjoy the rising sun, cheer the warm summers and living up the cold winter. People must understand that nature influence their lives.

How people should enjoy the life, nature and surroundings is shown by Mrs. Gibbs. Despite her intention to ask her husband to enjoy the time and his surroundings, she actually shows the people that how to appreciate time. Being in the same place and bound in the same routines make her longings for the beauty of other places in this planet. She say, "Only seems to me that once in your life before you die you ought to see country where they don't talk in English and don't even want to." (I,07).

The statement "before you die" means that people only live once. How could they just stay in the same place while the globe is very wide out there? This is not only about going travel, but to go to different places people must appreciate others and nature. People can not go around the world if the world is not in peace. People will not enjoy their travel if they do not want to try to understand people.

Yes, world is very large. There are different beauties out there. There are different people with cultures live around. People can start building relationship and make friendship to make life brighter.

In the whole play, the character Emily wants to show people that how the nature is actually adorable and influence her feelings.

She mentions how the moon is greatly beautiful twice by expressing it in opposite calling. First to her future husband, "I can't work at all. The moonlight's so terrible." (I,08). On the other hand, she makes a different statement with the same meaning about the moon to her father, "I just can't sleep yet, papa. The moonlight's so *won-derful*." (I,09).

In this way she tries to make an impression that how moon can influence her feeling. She enjoys the view of moon and it makes her feel even close to the nature and her surroundings. She feels more love to others.

On the other hand, people tend to pay more attention to the beauty for themselves. For the sake of their appearance they sometimes feel not enough to have complete look. They expect to have more than what they have got. Emily represents such feeling and shows that several times, like her dialogue with her mother:

Emily: "Mama, am I good looking?"

Mrs. Webb: "Yes, of course you are. All my children have got good features; I'd be ashamed if they hadn't "

Emily: "Oh Mama, that's not what I mean. What I mean is am I pretty?" (I,10).

Good looking is not enough for Emily. She wants people look at her as a pretty girl. It is very obvious that people need appraisal from others about their appearance, their strength. Even if there is more than that, they also want it. It is like people require perfection in their life, even though it seems impossible. Yet it happens like Emily again says, "I always expect a man to be perfect and think he should be." (II, 11). She shows that people often seek for something unrealistic which is called perfection.

Living however is only the same regular activities from past to present even for future. In *Our Town* the reflection of people passing through their lives clearly describes as the replay of monotonous routines.

What The Stage Manager tells in the beginning of Act I which started from dawn and closed in night is description of a natural phenomena that people are used to get

through. Furthermore he describes about the unwinding circle of human life:

Y'know-Babylon once had two million people in it, and all we know about 'em is the names of the kings and some copies of what contracts...and contacts for sale the slaves. Yet every night all those families sat down to supper, and the father same home from his wok, and the smoke went up the chimney,-same as here. And even in Greek and Rome, all we know about the real life of the people is what we can piece together...(I,12).

Life remains the same from past to present. That is the idea can be taken from the explanation. Time may pass, but people keep doing the same regular activities. The reign of government may change but people still live the same habitual way. It happen everywhere in every part of the world.

About being bound in routines, The Stage Manager again mentions it in his dialogue appraising Mrs. Gibbs and Mrs. Webb. He pities those two mothers, - which reflect mothers around the world - for their monotonous duties which seem will not end till the end of their lives. "I don't have to point out to the women in my audience that those ladies they see before them, both of those ladies cooked three meals a day-one of 'em." (I,13).

Love and Marriage

People can not live alone. In the social life people can find someone to believe in and then to love in. One must get their own couple to accompany them in life. That is the rule in life. People fall in love, they engage to one they love, make commitment to be their partner and feel completed.

In the beginning of Act II, this statement is offered to spectators. The Stage Manager tells it, "Nature's been pushing and contriving in other ways, too; a number of young people fell in love and got married." (II,14).

A convincing statement about people are destined to be in love actually appears several times. It is like in the conversation between Mrs. Gibbs and Dr. Gibbs. She exclaims,

“Yes...people are meant to go through life two by two. “Tain’t natural to be lonesome.” (II,14).

This statement is expressed again by The Stage Manager, “Y’see, some churches say that marriage is sacraments. I don’t quite know what that means, but I can guess. Like Mrs. Gibbs said a few minutes ago: People were made to live two-by-two.” (II,15).

In their lives, people can not live alone. No matter how introvert they are, they will need someone else. Normally people will fall in love and then they start to commit to build a relationship. Indeed not every couple will end in altar or marriage, but the drama explicitly tells that people can not live alone. That is what people have to get through.

In marriage people can share things with their spouses. In the sacred matrimony people end their lonesome and start a new life for happiness with destined couple. Even though marriage life is not always easy, but it makes people happy. As seen how the routines bind the housewives characters, yet they feel enjoy the family life. On his son wedding day, Mr. Webb tells George, “Marriage is wonderful thing,- wonderful thing. And don’t you forget that George.” (II,16)

Yes, even though marriage life is not always easy, but marriage makes people happy. Even for some people, to make commitment in marriage seems scary in the beginning. But later on, they can get through it facing up the burden together. Dr. Gibbs admits her wife that one thing he was scared when he married her is he doesn’t have anything to talk about. But later he says, “Well, you and I been conversing for twenty years now without any noticeable barren spells.” (II,17). So, there might be problems in marriage, but the couple just can get through it if they love each other.

The statement is convinced with the choir songs; Love Divine, All Love Excelling in George’s wedding day. It is divine because it is one of natural process that God bestows human. It excelling for people can share their happiness and sadness to somebody they rely on.

Although love is divine, it requires significance conditions in which people should fulfill. People can let themselves to do

whatever if they are in love in somebody else. True love is not about the feeling only it about how people can maintain the feeling. True love requires responsibility and sacrifice.

Responsibility to love is shown by George when he purposes Emily. He convinces Emily when she gets confused to her decision to marry George. He says, “Mr. Webb, I want to... I want to try. Emily, I’m going to do my best. I love you Emily. I need you,” (II,18).

George is not flirting his girlfriend, he wants to show his responsibility to her. When he says “I’m going to do my best” he means he will take responsibility for her as a husband. He realizes that once he loves Emily, he means it, and he is wants to take her to the altar. People who vow under marriage should not let their couple down. Both of the couples have to take cares each other for without responsibility people can not prove that they are really in love.

Since the marriage is the union of male and female, both of them must appreciate among other. A couple may not think he or she is better than the other. They must respect each other. They must do their best to keep the marriage runs well. And most couple needs to be convinced and requires a statement from her or his spouse. Like Emily requires George, “Well, if you love me, help me. All I want is someone to love me.”(II,19). She means that with love people will be ready to keep the feeling, to maintain the commitment, to protect the relationship and even to sacrifice for her as a couple.

Yes, by the name of love, George wants to sacrifice. The sacrifice is conducted by George by giving up his raising baseball career. As a rising star in sport, George does not care what cost he will take to keep his love. His decision is opposed by some people who presume that his decision is not worth for marriage. As Sir Crowell says, “I don’t see how he could give up a thing like that just to get married.”(II,20).

Many people fight for their fame and give up their love. But in this case, George shows that love deserves to be fight for. Only love can make people happy, love with responsibility and sacrifice.

Moreover, George tells Emily about truly love. With responsibility, he again sacrifice his plan to continue his plan to study.

Listen, Emily, I'm going to tell you why I'm not going to Agriculture School. I think that once you've found a person that you're very fond of... I mean a person who's fond of you, too, and likes you enough to be interested in your character... Well, I think that's just as important as college is, and even more so. (II,21).

George gives up being a professional pitcher in baseball team. He sacrifices his plan to study in college. He takes that big choice in order to be able to live with his lover Emily. He is ready to abolish his plans and makes new long term plans with his lover.

People might think his courage to give up his dream as a professional baseball player and his academic goal is a stupid option. How could he rely on his life in the name of love? How could he live the love without doing what he loves? How would he afford his marriage while the career and the education could do him big favor?

Well, that is the secret of love. People might see in different point of view not like the way George does. He trusts his love and with love, he can do better than what he has been through. Love is amazing. People may mock that it is a stupid love or just a blind love. But as mentioned above, if love is done with responsibility by the people engaged in it, love will open better doors in live.

If a man and a woman are ready to fall in love it means they are ready to sacrifice. One can not push his personal interest upon love to get harmony relationship. Couple must sacrifice to make a perfect love.

Juxtaposition of Life and Death

At the end of the day, every living thing will die. When the death comes, people think it is the end of everything. All of the beauty and ugliness, sweet and bitter, bad and good and every experience in life will suddenly end. Death is the end of the living journey.

No matter how, death is another step that human must go through. Nobody will ever be able to avoid and hide from it. As The Stage

Manager says, "People just wild with grief have brought their relatives up to this hill. We all know how it is..." (II,22)

Here the stage manager says that life and death is a circle. If today ones burry their relative, in the future the same thing will happen and done by the other ones to him. People may have good life now but they will come to the death for the next time.

The Stage Manager announces very explicitly that what people is something that people don't want. But people must face the death no matter how they are afraid of it. He reminds people that death is certain. Death is a must for everyone.

Now there are some things we all know, but we don't take'm out and look at'm very often. We all know that something is eternal. And it ain't houses and it ain't names, and it ain't earth, and it ain't even the stars...everybody knows in their bones that *something* is eternal, and that *something* has to do with human beings. All the greatest people ever lived have been telling us that for five thousand years and yet you'd be surprised how people are always losing hold of it. There's something way down deep that's eternal about every human being.(II,23)

This section is not going to discuss about what death is neither to evaluate life after death. This section is going to discuss about how people see the life from different perspective, - a perspective of "the death". It is also to going to argue about people must rejoice their lives, thank the live and fill the life with meaningful actions before the death come. People will learn that actually death is the end of their painful journey and the healing of the sorrow in life.

When people realize about the goal of life, they will understand that they are not supposed to waste their time just to fulfill their ego. The goal of life is very abstract and everyone must have different point of view to see it. But, if we ask our heart the goal of life the answer could be the same that it is to find truly happiness. Heart will never lie. We can

say that we are happy by harming people but the heart knows it is not a truly happiness.

It is very normal that when people are not able to achieve what they want, they will feel disappointed. And when people feel the truly goal in life is not achieved, no wonder that people will regret. Regret could come when people are still alive, but it will be even worse if it comes when people are old, or when they lose their strength to achieve it, or in the edge of life.

Death is actually the sad moment for people to lose everything they used to have. Death is the time when every power, pride, and every people boast about are taken merciless. People can not do anything about it. Ready or not, they will lose everything.

The Stage Manager tells the spectators about death:

You know as well as I do that the dead don't stay interested in us living people for very long. Gradually, gradually, they lose hold of the earth...and the ambitions they had...and the pleasures they had... and the things they suffered... the people they loved. (II,22)

What is the relationship between losing and regret? Here, in *Our Town*, people must realize that before they lose everything they must appreciate what they have. Again he teaches us to appreciate life before life is replaced by death. Death is a phase for people to prepare themselves for losing everything. So before losing them, people have to be able to regard life.

It has been discussed before how people fail to relate well to one another. Even there is communication, but there is no feeling in it. People sometimes misbehave to others and surroundings. And it becomes another regret that comes in the edge of life or when the death is coming.

Despite the fact that human failure to relate to one another which was discussed above, Act III, - which is a stage of death - reminds again about that failure. This section will analyze that regret of disregarding others. This is what Emily complains when she revisit after her death.

Emily:

With mounting urgency.

Oh, Mama, just look at me one minute as though you really saw me. Mama, fourteen years have gone by. I'm dead. You're a grandmother, Mama. I married George Gibbs, Mama. Wally's dead, too. Mama, his appendix burst on a camping trip to North Conway. We felt just terrible about it don't you remember? But, just for a moment now we're all together. Mama, just for a moment we're happy. *Let's look at one another.* (II,23)

This is what normally happens in life. This is not about life after death, but it is a lesson delineating people about what they miss in life. People seem to show their love and care to each other in a perspective of outlook. Mrs. Webb must love and care about her daughter. She prepares everything for Emily's birthday. She cooks, she manages and moreover she is also busy with her routine as a mother and a housewife.

Yet, the final statement "Let's look at one another", is a hook of the lesson. The outlook of love and care are not enough. Human fails to relate to one another emotionally. People may say love and care but it is so empty for they do not pay attention to small thing which is look at one another. It means that people must really spend their time to one another and feel the importance of others around them, and feel the existence of others. It is just like Emily once again asks for notice, "*In a loud voice to the stage manager. I can't. I can't go on. It goes so fast. We don't have time to look at one another. She breaks down sobbing.*" (II,24)

Time flies. And people are so busy with their own business and routines. They connect to each other but they do not realize the importance of others until they lose them. Emily then again come with statement that can shove people into their heart.

I didn't realize. So all that was going on and we never noticed. Take me back -- up the hill to my grave. But first: Wait! One more look.

Good-by, Good-by, world. Good-by, Grover's Corners... Mama and

Papa. Good-by to clocks ticking... and Mama's sunflowers. And food and coffee. And new-ironed dresses and hot baths... and sleeping and waking up. Oh, earth, you're too wonderful for anybody to realize you.

She looks toward the stage manager and asks abruptly, through her tears: Do any human beings ever realize life while they live it? every, every minute?

Stage Manager: No. (II,25).

It is very clear statement telling about human waste their every minute life instead of spending it. People are amazed by the beauty of life hence they forget to thank it and appreciate the life. People are drowned into the routines they create. They are bound in the chores they make.

Death as the end of human journey is simply explained by Mrs. Gibbs to Emily when she insists to return to her past. Mrs. Gibbs does not want her daughter in law to re-experience what she experience before.

Mrs. Gibbs: That's not the only reason why you shouldn't do it, Emily. When you've been here longer you'll see that our life here is to forget all that, and think only of what's ahead, and be ready for what's ahead. When you've been here longer you'll understand.(II,26)

This is a sort of statement that death is the end of goal. Everything is too late when the death has come. Furthermore, if people are clever to see the meaning behind it, nothing could be taken back when time flies.

Act III is a clear explanation about the goal of life which is to appreciate life and the others. To run a meaningful life people may not ignore others and their surroundings. As the character Simon Stimson, one of the death, that say about life people usually run. He reckons, "Yes, now you know. Now you know! That's what it was to be alive. To move about in a cloud of ignorance...Ignorance and blindness." (II,27).

Living the life, people may not ignore and blind their eyes and heart to their surroundings. Based on failures that are done

by human, the goal of life is how to appreciate it and how to make it meaningful. People should appreciate their life and do not take it for granted.

Conclusions

Our Town is rich of philosophical values showing people about living the life. In Act I it tells about how people are drown into their daily routines. They are so busy with their own business and forget to see and appreciate people around them and the surroundings.

In Act II, it focuses on love and marriage, falling in love and love somebody is very natural for human are destined to be in love. But to live in a harmony of love people need to have responsibility and sacrifice.

Even though Act III is about death, but it sum up the whole story line of the drama. It again reminds people to appreciate life and every minute they go through. It is death should be the starting point for people to think to live the life with meaning. It is a remarkable closing stage that makes people think about the goal of life.

The three acts play has successfully sequences of human life. People tend to live busy with their own business and forget to regard other people and their surroundings. *Our Town* takes people to think back about the truly goal of being alive and interact with others. Life and any aspects in it may not be taken for granted and we have to pay small things in life which eventually means big.

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